



# I Need to Continue with My Life

Lidia Martinez

## BEFORE YOU READ:

1. Learn the word *fortunately*. Try using it and its opposite (*unfortunately*) in a few sentences.
2. Practice more vocabulary: *frustrated*, *encouraged*, and *sincere*. Learn these words. Talk about a time you felt *frustrated* with technology. What *encouraged* you to keep trying? Use *sincere* and its opposite (*insincere*) in a few sentences.
3. What do you think the author means by the title? Re-state it in your own words.

## No More Children to Take Care Of

Last summer, my youngest grandchild started kindergarten. There are no more kids to take care of in my home. Now I have more time for myself. It's time to go back to school. I was looking for an English class, and *fortunately* my neighbor told me about a free school near my house. That was great for me because I do not have much money. I signed up for class, and I was excited to start my first day.

## I Wanted to Run!

But then something happened. Nobody warned me that we must use a computer in class and for our homework. I never used a computer at home or at work. I felt angry with myself. I wanted to go home and cry and not return to my English class. The first two weeks were tough for me. Sometimes in the middle of the class, I wanted to stand up and run to my house. However, I continued going to the class.

One day, I told my daughter I would no longer attend my English class. I said, "I like the English class but I can't work on the computer." The teacher and my classmates always help me with the computer, but I feel *frustrated* because I don't learn the steps quickly. My daughter gave



*Digital literacy is a central part of adult education.*

me her old computer and taught me a few things. She, my sister, and my brother *encouraged* me to continue attending my English class. I decided to continue.

## A New Challenge

My brother has been married for almost 50 years. He always looks happy with his wife and children. He is a *sincere*, religious, hardworking man dedicated to his family. My *sister-in-law* is an honest, spiritual, lovely woman dedicated to her family too. She is very sick now; she is in bed. Doctors say there is nothing more they can do for her. We are very sad about it. I am helping my brother to take care of her. Every day, I go to my brother's house. I cook, clean, and spend time with my sister-in-law.

When my brother asked me for help to attend to his wife at home, I thought about quitting my English classes and not seeing my grandchildren on Sundays. However, I need to continue with my life, and I need some time for myself. Besides, when I am with my grandchildren or when I am

in my English class, I forget every other thing, at least for that time. No matter what happens, I believe in God; I have faith and hope.

**AFTER YOU READ:**

1. How does the author get help to improve her digital literacy skills?
2. When her sister-in-law gets sick, she thinks about quitting English class but she does not. Why doesn't she quit?
3. In this piece, the author shows a lot of emotional intelligence – an important transferable skill. Read more about emotional intelligence in [Issue 60](#), pp. 30-35.

*Lidia Martinez is a student at Ysleta Community Learning Center in El Paso, Texas. She was born in a big and loving family; she is the fourth of ten brothers and sisters. She has always liked reading and writing and she hopes one day she can speak English fluently.*



*The author with her family at her 70th birthday party.*

## Who Are Your In-Laws?

Do you have a sibling who is married or who has a partner? This person is your brother- or sister-in-law. Do you have a spouse or partner who has a mother or father? These people would be your mother- or father-in-law. Do you have a child who is married or has a partner? This person would be your son- or daughter-in law.

Your “in-laws” are related to you by marriage, not by blood.

Try any of these activities to practice this vocabulary:

- Talk with a partner about your in-laws.
- Make a family tree that includes in-laws and other relations.
- Write a paragraph or essay about one of your in-laws.

In addition to biological family members and in-laws, we also have “chosen” family. These are people we choose to make family with. Who are your chosen family members?

