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Interviewer Jared Matsunanga-Turnbull, camera Don Bouzek

Q: Tell us about your early life.

SR: I was born in Mexico. My professional early life had nothing to do with the work that I've been doing for the last 20 years in Canada. I was working more in communication producing videos and educational materials and things for the Ministry of Education and Health. It's always been tied together with that, my work.

Q: Where in Mexico did you grow up?

SR: I grew up in Mexico City; that is a very big city compared to Edmonton. When I came here it was like a tiny little town. I remember distinctly, coming from a city that was very vibrant and cosmopolitan to a wee tiny city where on Saturdays the shops were closed at noon or altogether, and Sundays of course nobody would go shopping. It was a cultural shock to me. I think in general for everybody that comes from a different place, to come to a city where everything – the climate, the sounds, the language, the food – everything is different, you have to learn many things along the way.

Q: How did you happen to come to Edmonton?

SR: My husband was already living here when I met him, so we decided that Canada would be our home. I had a career, I had all my family that are still back down in Mexico. Everything was there for me; I was never planning to live in a different place. He was already established here, so we thought it was best that I would come and live in Canada.

Q: How did you meet your husband?

SR: Through friends, actually. It was a very large group of friends that we got together, and he was a friend of one of my friends. So that's how I met him.

Q: Talk a bit about your career in Mexico.

SR: I was interested in doing educational television. At that time, there were places in Mexico where the access for people to get an education was limited. At that time we were still using tapes, and we had to videotape the teachers in order for them to deliver classes to the rural areas. We started doing that particular kind of work because we knew that there were places where people had to go for miles just to go to school. It was interesting, because it was also part of showing farmers not only how to read and write, but different ways that they could learn how to have their crops and do their things. The education was from elementary school to university basically, and things in between. We adapted it to the places where we needed to deliver those programs. It was very interesting work because it was important, it had meaning. The other piece of the work that I was doing, I started working with the Ministry of Education, sorry, the Minister of Health. In there it was a different aspect of the educational component, where we were teaching workers that were already in the field working there how to do better jobs. For instance, workers that were cleaners at hospitals, for instance, they were to learn how to clean an isolation room, for example, or why it was important that they wash walls in certain ways. That was one. The other was teaching people that were working in offices how to do better jobs than they were doing with their filing, with everything – secretaries and things like that. And of course there was a lot of training for new doctors and new nurses; we did a lot of those programs as well.

Q: Was it just you, or were there a couple of you?

SR: This was a team. We had to have a lot of people doing all the research on what kind of components we needed and how to build a program and do those on tape. It was training on the job kind of thing.

Q: How long did you do that work?

SR: I worked right from after I came out of school. It was a decision, and I didn't want to go into the commercial aspect of programming. I did have some programs for children in commercial television, but it was not what I wanted to do. I wanted to do the work that we were doing.

Q: What do you think created that need in you to do something meaningful?

SR: I always believed that education will help people to get out of the situation they're in. I saw a lot of poverty, I saw a lot of people that needed help, so that was the reason behind trying to do some of the educational programming.

Q: What was it like arriving in Edmonton?

SR: First of course is the usual – this is wonderful. But thinking about Canada was like thinking about a Christmas card – everything is nice and white, especially in the wintertime. But reality sets in very quickly; it's very cold. You don't have a support system. It takes time to make friends, it takes time to adjust to living in a different place. But you adapt and start learning how to live in different circumstances. I had under my belt that I'd lived in Europe for a while, because I was studying in Europe as well. So it was not unfamiliar to me to live in a different city. But at the same time, when I was in Germany I knew I was coming back. But here this was home, this was already home, and I needed to make it work.

Q: What did you need to do to make it work?

SR: You have to be open, first of all. You have to be open to the new experience and how you're going to do things in a way that they're going to work for you and your family. You go through a

lot, because there are many things that you have to learn. It's different when you're a tourist or you go to take a course for several months somewhere – okay this is interesting; there's a specific task. But when you're planning a life someplace, you have to think of many things.

Q: Did you know English before coming here?

SR: Yes. I was not as fluent, because you learn the language in school but if you don't practise you don't feel like you really know it. So that helped a little bit, but still sometimes it was difficult to try to understand others or the little things that you don't know. Why is it that they're saying that this way, or what does that mean?

Q: Can you give an example?

SR: I don't know if I remember one of those, but sometimes I think I felt that way.

Q: What was the first job you ever had?

SR: The first job I had was I had the opportunity to meet a scientist, a professor, who was interested in doing colour television. It was way back when all those things were happening. I just went and said, I would like to learn more about this, so can I help? Can I come and be your assistant? He actually was very influential because he was the one that really led me to the path of doing more educational programming than commercial. He was a very interesting person. His family was wonderful; I met his children and his wife. He was an older gentleman but he was a really interesting person and full of knowledge. That was the first job actually, that I did with him. It was experimenting with cameras and things like that.

Q: Were there any challenges or issues with that job?

SR: Yes, I think at that time just the fact that I was a girl, it was challenging. It's a very male dominated field, especially when I started doing my own programs. I had a children's program and I had to direct some of the cameramen there. You always find something that, well you're a girl, what do you know about this; are you really trying to direct me to do things? I remember one time we were in the middle of programming, because this was a live program and whatever happened happened. This guy, I was asking him to do a certain angle, a shot. He said, I don't know how to do that; can you come down and show me? I said, are you sure you want me to come down? He says, yeah, because I don't know what you're asking me. So I just left and went down to the studio and said, what I'm asking you to do is this, and I showed him what to do. Oh, so you know? I said, yeah, if I'm asking you to do something it's because I know how to do it. So after that he was more respectful. But oh yeah, there was a lot of that at the time. It was difficult to try to get something done, because you're a girl, you don't know about these things.

Q: What was your first job in Edmonton?

SR: Strangely enough, at the beginning, because I had young children, my intention was more to feel comfortable, and as a mom, I needed to learn other things. I decided that I was going to stay home with my children, because they were little. I started looking for work, and there were some things that I wanted to do that were more familiar to what I was doing before. In the meantime, I went to university here, I took some classes, I did other things. But work, no, I wanted to wait until my kids started going to at least kindergarten. One day I thought, there must be something here that I can apply. It was a new studio that they were opening for television and I said, well maybe I'm going to apply there. But again, it was that kind of programs that not necessarily were my interests, so I thought, well, maybe not that one. So I looked at the university, because they had some studios at the university where they were doing some programming there, and I thought, well maybe there. I worked a little bit to do some of the graphic work, more the sign work than actual television, at the university. Then one day I noticed that there was an advertisement for a position in a television department at the General Hospital. I thought, I'm just going to go and find out what that is. So I went to the General Hospital and they sent me to

the Human Resources. I asked them about that posting and she said, well actually, do you have a resume? I said, well yes, but I don't have it here with me. She said, today is the last day. Do you want to apply? You have to apply today before 4 o'clock. Okay, I said. So I went home, I got my papers and went back and said, here it is. The next day I had a phone call, and it was the supervisor of that department. He said, yeah, we got your application and your resume, and would you like to come for an interview? I said, sure. Can you come tomorrow? Okay, tomorrow sounds fine. So I went the next day. At that time they were opening the Grey Nuns Hospital. It was the most strange interview that I've ever had. He was a wonderful gentleman. He actually did all the talk. He said, well I see here that you have this and this, so I'm going to tell you more about what we're doing. So he explained to me all the work that had to be done there, and of course now they were dealing with the transferring of the department to this other site. He said, if you are interested, the job is yours. I said, sure I'll do it. It was my position to do the transferring, to make sure the department was up and running by the time the hospital opened. From there, it was just to work with the hospital staff. We did a lot of medical photography and I prepared lots of events where lecturers would come to train or give a lecture for the medical staff there. I worked very closely with staff, all the psychiatrists and psychologists at the site units and others. I had opportunity to go and tape in ORs and other things like that.

Q: Was it a good job?

SR: It was. Unfortunately, because my position was one of the newer positions in the institution, when the government changed and cuts were made here and there, my position was cut and I had to leave that work. But it was very interesting. I think it was a very good experience to work, especially with psychiatrists and others. You see the human condition, you see other things. That's what I was doing at the beginning when I had to tape some of the close interviews with patients. I needed to adapt my equipment to the needs of those physicians, because they were using those as a training tapes to present when they went abroad to do presentations on their cases. One of the things that I did, I had equipment built more of the photography kind of equipment. It was not a tripod, it was more of a column where I could more the camera up and

down. Sometimes it was isolation rooms where we had to just sit on the floor in padded rooms that they have sometimes, and we had to talk to the patient that was on the floor. So I would position my camera behind the doctor so it would not be intrusive to the conversation, and it worked. It worked for what they needed to see for the reactions that they needed for that particular patient.

Q: Did you belong to a union in that job?

SR: Yes.

Q: What was your sense of it?

SR: My sense of the union was that they were trying very hard to protect workers, to do something with things that were wrong. Unfortunately, there are forces that even unions cannot help, and my case was one of them. They tried to fight for those positions, but it was not successful.

Q: How long did you work at that job?

SR: Almost ten years. That was a moment where I had to decide what else to do. At that time I thought it's important to help others. I have gone through what it means to come and live in a place that is different, what it means to try to find work. Many people in Edmonton don't have families to help them. I said, I need to give back to the community and help others not to go through so many steps, if possible.

Q: Did that lead you to where you are now?

SR: Yes.

Q: Can you talk about your work?

SR: I've been working in the brokers for 20 years I guess, many years. When I lost my job at the hospital, I went through retraining and all these other things, so I was doing other things that weren't necessarily what I wanted to do. One of the counselors there in one of the conversations said, you know there are other things that you can do. You can use other things that you have. One is that you speak other languages, you have opportunity to help other people in your community. I thought, hmm, that could be something I could do to help. Then I met one of my colleagues that we used to work together and she said, there's this group of women that are doing this kind of work. Would you be interested in learning more about it? I said, yes. So I started coming to the meetings and that's how I started working with the co-op.

Q: Was this at the beginning of the co-op?

SR: Very close to the beginning. At the very beginning they were only a handful of women that started working with women, but just right after that is when I came to be part of the co-op.

Q: What is the co-op?

SR: The co-op has been a very interesting place. It was created because Yvonne saw a need to help all these mothers and others, that they were perhaps misunderstood because of the cultural differences, because of the way they would do things. I met Yvonne before I started working with the co-op; I met Yvonne one time when she went to the Grey Nuns Hospital to do a workshop for the nurses. She was there and I taped her. She was there to do this workshop talking about Chinese mothers when they come to the hospital. She knew sometimes the nurses would say, well these moms have these awful soups that they bring for them to drink, and it's very difficult to convince them that they have to go into the shower, and things like that. So Yvonne went and explained why is it that all these rural-area mothers that come to live in Canada have cultural customs that they have with new mothers. First of all, they have lots of help. The mother-in-law



and others try to make sure that the mom rests, and they take care of the baby and the food and all these sorts of things. That's why they were doing that in the hospital. So that was interesting. At that time when that happened, I had no idea of the co-op. But it intrigued me, and I talked to Yvonne briefly at that time and said, this is very interesting. She said, yes there are all the cultural aspects from the other women that are working with us. I knew that among there, there was Spanish speaking broker and there were others from South Asian communities and different places. So we explored that kind of thing when I started working with them. It was because of a need that we saw. The co-op has always been interested in finding better ways to discover how to help people. It's not only that people have to learn the language and have to do certain things to get integrated, but how do you balance the culture and how do you balance the needs of these families, and how do you balance the misconceptions and other things that happen to people when they come? We have been able to help not only new mothers, providing them with information about prenatal care and nutrition, but when there are other issues, like diabetes. Right now we are working with Children's Services, so we always try to find better ways to address issues that are perceived as difficult.

Q: Why would people need help from Children's Services?

SR: It's not only the language, sometimes appearance. In this particular situation, somebody reported or one of the schools reports a situation with a child. Sometimes we discover that it's not as terrible as they tend to believe at the school. I'll give you an example. One time in another community the parents were called because this child had come to the school with a mark on her face, a bruise on her cheek. She was a very young child, kindergarten or grade 1 I think. Of course they were very alarmed – this poor child, who knows, the parents probably beat her or something. Of course the whole thing starts in motion, because by law they have to call Children's Services to investigate. Of course we all agree that you have to protect children when there's a situation, but also we have to protect children when there's a misunderstanding. What happened in that case was that the parents were busy trying to get ready to go to work, and the child didn't want to go to school; she wanted the mom to stay with her at home. The mother said,

no we have to go, it's getting late. The child tried to hold mom and the mom says no, and when she moved her like that, the child turned around and hit her face on the corner of the wall. So that was the cause of that injury on her face. The mother was very alarmed, because of course she was worried about the child with that bruise, but was very alarmed that they thought she had hit her child. Things like that we have to help, especially when the parents have no language to explain; we have to explain for them or help them.

Q: What's your role in the organization?

SR: We have different programs. In my role I have worked with young families, I have worked with seniors, I have worked with temporary workers. There's a wide range of help that we provide for families. Maybe they don't know what happens or how to go about things. They may have questions about how to open a business, for instance. People coming now are more interested in, okay if I need to do something here and I'm not going to be able to find good work, maybe I can create my own. So what do I have to do, whether it is food industry where they have to go and take a course about how to really provide safe food if they are going to sell it, what are the laws if they are going to start something, or if they can do it at home, or all those kinds of things that they have no clue how to go about finding out that information. Out of the blue I get a call from somebody I don't know who says, you know, I've been having difficulties at work; my boss is mistreating me and he doesn't want to pay me extra time. What do I do, where do I go, where do I get help? So we need to help them to first unfold the story, because sometimes from their perspective they are also maybe misunderstanding the situation.

Q: What's the reason people come to the brokers?

SR: I think over the years it has been a lot of word of mouth where if you have helped one family, that family relates that to others. I'm talking about when the people come directly from community institutions for instance. They also come to us because they say, oh we have this senior or we have this mom that doesn't speak English but needs some help; can you help them?

That's when we receive families from institutions or from others that are trying also to help them. But when they come directly from community, it's more about that, that somebody knows that we have helped somebody before. They say, oh yeah, Cultural Centre, they may be able to help you. I think for us it's honest to say, if I cannot help you, I might have to point you to the right direction, making sure that if I'm going to refer somebody to somebody else. . . . Because you have to remember, we brokers straddle between the two cultures and we are supposed to at least know where to go to have help. If I'm not able to help somebody because that isn't part of my knowledge, my mandate to help that person, then I have contacts with others in other institutions. I can phone and say, can you help this person? This is the situation, this is what is happening. Can you help that person, can I refer it to you? Then I send that person, knowing for sure that somebody can help.

Q: Can you define brokers?

SR: It's a concept that is sometimes a bit difficult to understand. The brokering piece through history has been an interesting concept. If I go back to my own culture, there was this woman that, when the Spanish conquerors arrived, she was the one who very quickly learned the language. She was able to not only translate but tried to help both sides to get to an understanding. That would be a simpler way to say what is the work that we do. We straddle two cultures. We have been long enough here already now that we can understand how things work and help newcomers, people that have no, or are so far different culture from the Canadian culture that they don't get it, they don't understand the way things happen.

Q: Let's talk about the New Alberta Workers Program.

SR: At the beginning we started talking about how are we going to build this program in a way that is going to be easy for workers that come to work as temporary workers or workers that have perhaps the interest of trying to build something here, because it's a good opportunity to come. How do we help them to understand why it's important they know about this safety thing? We

had lots of rich and good discussions when we were building the program. I think that the contribution of so many people had different ideas on how to approach the program and how we were going to deliver the program, whether it was workers that had just arrived or workers that were already in companies that had been here for a long time but still didn't have - not necessarily that they didn't have the knowledge, but they didn't have the ability to really digest what that means to be safe at work. I think at the beginning it was a little bit foreign for us because it was not something that brokers had done in the past; it was a very different topic. We talked more about new moms, babies, discipline, and other things that were more to the core of the family. But I think there's something about working with the men in the community, guys that come and work. Sometimes workers are not open to expressing, not only feelings, but if they worry about something. That's their job, they have to worry about things. But talking about safety and what does that mean for them, I think it was a good program.

Q: Can you describe the program?

SR: The Alberta Workers, the program that we did with you. We worked three different communities: we were working with the Filipino community, and Eastern European, and the Spanish workers. And we had others included in the program. We created a program where we were going to help the workers understand their rights and responsibilities when they have a job, regardless of what that is. It was a way to present to new recruits or new workers or people that they are just starting to train. Women that are trying to find their first job in Canada, also they needed to know about this, and why it was important for them to know this. And discovering that, in their own experience back home, they had a little bit of knowledge about occupational health and safety. Some did. Some others, no, that wasn't something that they would consider important, or they never heard about it. Depending on the communities, I guess. It was an interesting time where we saw different groups and saw different people from different communities, and how they approach that and what were the situations at the moment. Sometimes we learn about accidents and things that happen because people were not aware that they could say no or they could say, this is dangerous, I won't do it. It was a good program.

Q: What stands out for you about that program?

SR: I learned that you cannot take for granted that just by delivering a little spiel to say to somebody, oh yeah, well you have to do things this way, that people are understanding and they are going to do it. What for you in your mind might be a priority, not necessarily means the same. They are thinking about other things. They are not really thinking this is important. They might think, I have to go and sit for an hour to listen about this safety thing? What a waste of time. I know how to do it, I don't need somebody to come and tell me. But in reality, it's not that. To me it's more, are they understanding, not only the concept, but the why, why it's important? I think it should be also the companies, that they have to make sure that they have the training done in a way that not only can help their workers, but they're helping themselves. If the workers are not going to get injured, they are not going to have times down or losses. It comes down to basic dollars and cents as well.

Q: When you teach them about their rights, does that mean they're going to participate and use their rights?

SR: I think there is an awareness. To what degree can they participate and apply it? It's difficult to know, because you have to consider other aspects of it. For a worker that is temporary, the income to feed his family back home and make sure that he has enough money here to feed himself depends on that job. If he's going to question or if he's going to say, no, I'm not going to participate, might mean that he's going to lose that job and they are going to send him back. So he's going to think twice before he does that. In those circumstances, I think you have to make sure that those particular workers are also aware of other consequences. You might lose your job, but you don't want to lose your life. It's more of a common sense in a way. But the strengths that they have... that work means survival for their families. They don't want to do something that they are going to lose that job. It's not so simple to say, I'm just going to go across the street and find another one. The regulations and the way that it comes sometimes won't allow them to do

that. They are changing now a little bit those laws for temporary workers, but not everybody will have an open permit. Not everybody will have a way to say, “They are not treating me right in this job, and I’m going to complain and I will find another work.” So it’s a lot of other things that fall into place – not only the educational component, but it’s also the circumstances of those workers.

Q: What would help them participate in their own health and safety?

SR: For starters, I think that they should not feel that, if they do something, there’s going to be something wrong. For instance, they could say, no, that job is dangerous, I cannot do that. They have the freedom to say it without the consequences of knowing that they’re going to lose it. There are different components to it. There is not only one solution. It’s the way that the programs are geared to bring workers here. People that hire them want somebody to do the work. They don’t want to think about what are the circumstances of this family. I must say that I have encountered also very good companies, people that are really interested in the wellbeing of those particular workers. I remember one company calling me one time. They were very concerned because something was happening and they didn’t understand what was the problem. After they had a meeting with him, and I was there, they left the room and asked me to stay with the man and find out what the problem was, because they wanted to help. It was one of many other situations that they were helpful for; they wanted to help those workers. But the majority is, well, you don’t want to work, there are ten more waiting to get hired. It’s not one simple solution or one answer to that.

Q: What would you say to someone who is looking to help workers participate?

SR: I think they have to look a little bit deeper. Why is the reason that this worker is not doing what he’s supposed to do or not learning what he’s supposed to do? Is it the language, is it the concept, or other things? I don’t think that many people think about circumstances in the life of these workers. It might be unrealistic to think in that way, but if you go a bit deeper, if you have

happy workers you are going to have very good results. The majority of the people that come, they're willing to do anything. They work harder, sometimes without breaks; they don't complain about it. I don't think there's a reason to mistreat anybody.

Q: With the company that was willing to help, how did that process happen?

SR: That particular company, actually the company directly, I don't know how they found me. They knew that I was working with temporary foreign workers, and they asked me if I could come to their office because they had a large group of workers and they had made one of them supervisor and they were having problems with that. They didn't know exactly why it was a problem. They thought, "The supervisor is one of them, the supervisor speaks the language, the supervisor can come and tell us what the problems are. So we don't understand why they are not happy. What is happening?" They were really good. They had provided the workers with face time with their families, and they could talk to their families. That's the other piece, that when they come here for a long time and it's wintertime, in that particular industry they don't have enough hours to work because it's winter. Sometimes the workers get very depressed. It's lonely and they miss their families, they don't have many friends here. The circumstances are really hard for them. So the company knew that they needed to do something. But they were at a loss. They didn't know, "why is it that they aren't happy? We hear this rumbling, but we don't know what that means." When I went to the office, I agreed to go and help them, and they talked to me first. He says, "We are going to go to a meeting with a whole group of these workers, and we would like them to tell us how we can help." But they were not going to say anything. They are sitting around this big table in the conference room, and the workers were just quiet. They also told them that I was going to sit with them if they wanted to talk to me afterwards. So they talked to them and told them that they were concerned, and they wanted them to help them to help them. "How can we help, how can we do something better for you guys?" So they finished their little conversation and said, "We are going to leave you now." They left the room and they left me with the workers. As soon as they closed the door, they started talking to me. One of the things that happened is that they were not happy with the supervisor. When they had that

supervisor, “well, now I’m entitled, now I’m the big boss. Now you have to do what I say, because I’m your supervisor.” Instead of helping, that created a bad feeling with the other workers. He was no longer one of them, he was higher up. That was one. The other, honestly the people were so homesick that they were absolutely not happy. They said, “I don’t care about the money. I miss my family, I miss my country, I miss my food. I need to be able to wake up in the morning and see the sun shining. I want to go home. But how do I tell them? They have been good to me. How do I tell them?” So there were a lot of conflicts as well. When I talked to them I told them, “You know, this is a good company. They care about you guys. They’re trying to help you, so you have to be honest and you have to tell them what you need, because they are open to that.” So some of those issues were resolved, and they stayed with the company.

Q: Can you think of an example where you helped a worker solve a problem around health and safety?

SR: We had a group of workers, and we had lots of experiences with the program where sometimes we had a group of women that had a different language altogether. We had to go and talk to them and then it was the translation in their own language, and then they talk among them because they couldn’t understand even in their own language what we were saying. I think we went two or three times. And we had to divide that hour workshop into three sessions because, every time we had to review what we had talked about the time before, but make sure that they understood that part. Then we started with the new part and make sure they understand that part, not only in English but in their language, and then the actual concept. So that was very interesting because we learned a lot about, especially women. Some of them would say, “I have a friend that she was so afraid when she got injured on her hand, she didn’t go right away to say that she was injured, or they didn’t allow her to go and do something about it, and now she cannot move her hand.” Or “we had a friend that hurt her back and now she cannot walk properly.” Things like that. Those were opportunities for us to say, you know, when something like that happens, you cannot be quiet. If you know of someone, not only yourself, but if you know of someone in the group that you’re working with, that something has happened, you have



to go and get help. That, in the long run, is going to be bad for this worker, for your friend, and it doesn't work that way. You have to have help. So those were some of those.

Others, when we talk about workers that they have no idea that they could say no to a job or they could go and complain about something. Again, the circumstance is their language. Even if they want to, sometimes they have nobody else among the workers that they can say, "I need some help." We always talk about when they have somebody besides them. Many of the workers, when they talk in a workshop or something, they will always say, Yes. Did you understand what we are saying? Yes. Everybody says yes, even if they have no clue and didn't understand a word of that. They are afraid to ask questions. They are afraid that, "well, I don't want to sound that I'm dumb or that I didn't understand what they were saying." But they don't ask questions. I think in those situations, you have to have that little more sense, that perhaps it's not really, how do you bounce back what you just said. "Tell me, what did you understand about this? How is it that you're going to do this? When is it that you're going to go and ask for help? Who do you go and talk to?" It's good and fine to say, we have this binder with all the resources here. They're not going to learn about that. You can have 20 binders there, they are not going to go and look in there. If you have signs that are in the language of those particular workers, that can help. If you have somebody that is open in that group of people to really help others, that will help. You want to make sure that you make drills or you look for ways to engage people in how they can look after each other, so they are going to make sure it's not only for me but my co-worker beside me.

Q: What are the complexities of situations where women come from cultures where it's uncommon for them to work outside the home?

SR: That is a big issue. The majority of families, when they come together as a family, the whole group, mom and dad and the kids, most of the times women are the ones who find work first. Why? Because they're willing to go and clean houses or offices or whatever, and usually it's the type of work that doesn't require a lot of language. If somebody can tell, well, if you're able to come and clean up here and do this and that, they are going to do it. Why? Because they

need to support their families. They do that even though sometimes it's very difficult because the relationships, the customs, the family, it's not usually the woman who goes to work. It also changes, especially in cultures where the man dictates the rules of the house, the man is the one who provides for the family. The woman is the one who stays at home, takes care of the house, the children and all that. They still exist, all those kind of situations. The dynamic changes, because the roles change. Women feel a bit more power and there's a conflict. There's a conflict because "now you're not going to tell me what to do. I earn my own money, so you cannot tell me." So those things change, and it also makes a difference for the children. It's complex. The family dynamics in these families, it's difficult. It's difficult because if there's a financial situation where the husband cannot work or can't find work, the wife is having some hours here and there working, what does that mean for the children? Their mom is not always home, so what is happening there? That's why that's where we pick up in the work that we do. We talk a lot about how you discipline your children, how you go about having a better understanding of relationship. How do you go and talk to the teachers about what happens when a child is not doing the work that he's supposed to be doing? Language is a problem and stress is a problem and financial situation is a problem, so it creates a whole new environment for that family. How can you make that family happy and healthy, regardless of their financial level? I think that is a lot of work.

Q: Is there anything else you'd like to talk about?

SR: I think we have talked a lot. In my experience, and I think that I said that to you one time, when I see young men, just your average kid in Canada, that goes to work, whether it is in a warehouse or in a shop, and I see them lifting things without having the proper equipment or doing things that they are not supposed to be doing, that should be taught right from the start. When the kids are going to start working, what is it that we can do to help them? Forty years from now, when they are old men, they are going to have lots of health issues. How do we prevent that? We have to start shifting more, instead of being reactive to what happens, to being more proactive and stopping from happening. The system here in general is very reactive. You

cannot do something until something happens, and that is a wrong idea for me. It should be the opposite. Let's prevent things from happening by instructing people from the very beginning how to do it.

Q: How do you see that happening?

SR: I think we have to shift the whole concepts about many things. The systems in general are geared to react to something. We cannot do something, somebody's missing. Well if it's after so many hours or so many days, we cannot do anything about it. Very quickly people are not going to do something. So how do you do that? Also you have to understand that not everybody is going to go running around trying to find this person, because 48 hours have gone and they don't know where he is. But in general I think it's a lot of common sense and a lot of different ways of looking at things.

[ END ]