

Do you get where I'm coming from?

Ahmad Ahmadi, 18, reports on what it's like growing up in a country at war

My name is Ahmad Ahmadi and I'm 18 years old. I was born in Panjshir in Afghanistan and at the age of 15 I began the difficult journey out of Afghanistan and crossed Europe to safety.

For the past 30 years, all my life, Afghanistan has been in war. I feel sad for it. We had a very nice country – beautiful, modern and built up – but in the 1970s and 1980s war just broke my country. Over a million Afghani people were killed then. Nobody ever said sorry to my people.

Lots of my family have died in wars since then – two uncles, cousins, loads of people I know were just in their own houses when bombs were dropped. My family are still in Afghanistan. I'm in contact with them once a week but I miss them, worry about their safety and I pray for them.



Life in Afghanistan

The main languages spoken in Afghanistan are Dari, Farsi and Pashto, but there are many dialects. There are also languages that are similar to Turkish, like Turkmen and Uzbek. I speak Farsi, Dari, Urdu, Greek and English.

I had a happy childhood – happy, busy and noisy. Afghani people are kind and friendly and they care for each other. They've seen visitors from different places and they respect them and always try to do the best for them. I really miss the land and the people there.

There are many differences between life in the UK and in Afghanistan. Where I'm from there are lots of mountains and school is different too. In Afghanistan there is not so much money for books and things and it's strict. You could not have conversations in class, but the teachers were always nice.

Building a new life

Alone, I travelled across Europe. I lived in Greece for two years, then Italy and France. I've experienced racism in some cultures. The people in Italy and France were friendly and in Britain people are easy to talk to and are smiley. Here people understand my experience a bit more because they have an open mind. I like the UK.

When I came to England the government helped me to start building a new life. I've lived in different cities in England including London, Birmingham and now Newcastle and I've found that people have different personalities in these cities, but I love Newcastle.

The future for Afghanistan

I'm a positive person so I'm going to say that the situation in Afghanistan is going to get better. The people who have fled Afghanistan for their own safety – people like me – love their country. They love their people and they are always thinking of it.

While there is war there we cannot build it, but when the war stops my generation will go back and take what they've learned – their experience, the technology and ideas from Europe, America and everywhere and help to develop a better country.

To believe in something

I can't say I don't like England, the people have been good to me, but what I don't understand is that people here don't believe in anything. I find it very sad because, for me, to believe in something is to build a family and to make children better people. There is the law to stop you doing something bad in England. I believe the same thing should happen in families – there should be proper guidelines for living that come from the family.

I don't understand how children are so free to use drugs, drink and to smoke here. What is the job of parents? They should look after them and give them a good life.

In the future I want to continue with my drama group. I want to use my experiences to teach and help my people. Travelling has taught me many things and languages, but mostly I've learned how to get along, be friendly with people and be myself.

1 comment

understanding
now I think I get why people come to England and its really good England are being freindly to them
peter (age 16) from Newcastle, 13 February 2010 18:14

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