

## Ahmed's First Year in Canada



1. Read about Ahmed's first year in Canada. Notice the phrasal verbs.

“Last year I came to Canada with my family from Syria. I brought my two sons and my wife. My mother and father stayed back home. I choke up every now and then when I think about the possibility that maybe I've let them down by moving here. It always cheers me up when we're able to Skype or FaceTime and I can see that they're hanging in there. It hasn't been easy to leave everything behind and start a new life in a new place.

Trying to learn a new language is hard enough, but we've had to try to learn two new languages! The children have picked them up so fast. I'm very proud of how they've taken to life here. It hasn't been as easy for me. The other day at work, I lashed out at one of my co-workers for always arriving late. My wife thinks I lash out because I bottle up my emotions. She thinks I'm angry about the elections we've just had. We live in Quebec where a new right-of-centre government has just been elected. If we felt stressed about living here before, their stance on religious symbols certainly hasn't helped.

My wife cracks me up by reminding me not to eat my feelings! I tend to eat a lot when I'm feeling stressed out or anxious. She reminds me to look on the bright side; there are certainly many improvements to our lives here. I need to remember to keep my chin up. Adjusting to life here is an ongoing challenge in so many ways. Lately, I've been trying to better understand how all of the changes affect me emotionally and mentally.”

### **2. Match the phrasal verbs with their meaning:**

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|----------------------|---|
| ___ 1. Let down      | A. remain persistent and determined in difficult circumstances                                  |
| ___ 2. Choke up      | B. burst or cause to burst into laughter  |
| ___ 3. Hang in there | C. to go away and not take something or someone with you  |
| ___ 4. Leave behind  | D. to begin to like someone or something, to get into the habit of.                             |
| ___ 5. Lash out at   | E. to disappoint someone by not <u>doing</u> something that they are <u>expecting</u> you to do |
| ___ 6. Crack up      | F. to become too emotional or upset to speak  |
| ___ 7. Bottle up     | G. To contain or suppress something, especially emotions  |
| ___ 8. Take to       | H. someone suddenly and unexpectedly speaks to someone in an angry way                          |

### 3. Comprehension Questions:

1. Why does Ahmed lash out according to his wife?
2. What does Ahmed tend to do when he feels stressed or anxious?

### 4. Use one of the phrasal verbs from the previous activity to complete the sentences:

- A. My soccer coach always tells us to \_\_\_\_\_ whenever we're feeling tired or defeated.
- B. LOL! That joke really \_\_\_\_\_ me \_\_\_\_\_!
- C. In order to move on, I had to \_\_\_\_\_ my past \_\_\_\_\_.
- D. I \_\_\_\_\_ during my wedding speech.
- E. It's not good for your mental health to \_\_\_\_\_ your feelings inside.
- F. My children have really \_\_\_\_\_ their new school/ They love their teachers and have made so many new friends.
- G. My husband really \_\_\_\_\_ me \_\_\_\_\_ when he forgot about our anniversary.
- H. I \_\_\_\_\_ my wife because I had a bad day at work.
- I. When I moved away I had to \_\_\_\_\_ my cat \_\_\_\_\_. It was very hard for me.

### 5. Discussion Questions

1. **Are the type of person who bottles their feelings up? Or are you someone who can express their emotions well?**
2. **What aspects of migrating to Canada have you found most challenging?**
3. **How has the election of the CAQ in Quebec made you feel? Have you thought about it at all?**
4. **What aspects of life in Canada have you found to be the most difficult to adjust to?**