

*Latinos & Immigrants of all Backgrounds ask: “Why Are We Being Attacked?”
“How Can We Survive This Period of Anti-Immigrant Sentiment?”*

A SURVIVAL & ADVANCEMENT MANUAL FOR IMMIGRANTS TO THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

With a Special Section for All Immigrants=Most Americans
entitled:

“A Reminder & Wake Up Call: How We Can All Survive & Advance Together”

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INTRODUCTION: “WELCOME TO THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA!” “E PLURIBUS UNUM”

We know that many of you have been here for a long time and some have just arrived. You may have been initially welcomed in different ways—by family members, employers, and others—though recently some Americans may have made you feel unwelcome and under attack. (There are a few who unfortunately make a lot of hateful noise arising out of their own fear of change, the unintended consequence of which causes pain and suffering to others—a situation which every new immigrant group to this country had to endure.) So, on behalf of most ordinary Americans of all colors and backgrounds, who are all descendants of immigrants, we are happy that you have come and are grateful for your significant contributions to this great country, and **WE WANT TO WELCOME YOU!** One reason we produced this booklet is because of our firm belief that your coming is no accident, that you came here to both benefit yourselves and this country, and that, if you are not yet a citizen or permanent resident, in the very near future you will begin the path to becoming a citizen of this ongoing “melting pot experiment” called the U.S.A., still very much a work in progress. In the meantime, whether you are already a citizen or not, we want to help you survive and even advance during this period of anti-immigrant sentiment (which, as mentioned above, has nearly always happened to new immigrant groups when they first came to this country; see Chapters 1 & 2). This is also an expression of our great appreciation for and admiration of your many contributions to our country, through your hard work & service, family values, intellectual and educational attainments, and vibrant cultures (including tasty foods ☺).

And please, no matter what your temporary status is, do not let anyone label you as “illegal”, or “an illegal immigrant”, or “illegal alien”, for a number of important reasons:

- 1) No human being is “illegal”. Certain actions and behaviors may be against the law, hence illegal, but a person, even if he is convicted of a crime, is not “illegal”.
- 2) If you have not been charged with or convicted of a crime by any court, in this country and legal system you are innocent until proven guilty in a court of law and only by a competent court of jurisdiction, hence no individual Americans, including individual elected officials, media personalities, local law enforcement personnel or even Immigration agents can claim or decide that you are guilty of any crime. As an individual human being living in the U.S. no one can take away

- your right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness without due process by a court of law. (See Chapter 7, Legal Survival & Advancement, for more details.)
- 3) Labeling groups of individuals derogatory names, like “illegal immigrants”, is a way of trying to dehumanize them in the eyes of others, enabling the name caller to feel superior and trying to make the targeted individual or group feel or appear inferior. It is really a form of bullying others, and, as I tell my children about bullies: they are not happy with themselves and their lives so they pick on others to hide that fact. So do not listen to or pay any attention to anti-immigrant bullies, they are a small minority. The vast majority of Americans who are worried about “illegal immigration” are being manipulated by these bullies, through fear tactics and misinformation spread largely by talk radio and TV show personalities who make money as professional bullies and haters. When most Americans realize this fact, and the fact that you are human beings just like them who are trying to raise their families and work hard to build this country, they will welcome you and abandon the anti-immigrant rhetoric and those who espouse it. (This has already happened to some extent in the recent Presidential election as the candidates who were most anti-immigrant were cast aside by the voters, leaving only those candidates who promised Comprehensive Immigration Reform which includes a path to citizenship for our current undocumented immigrants.)
 - 4) In fact, as you will see in Chapters 1 & 2, many of the current Americans’ ancestors were characterized as “illegal immigrants”, or worse, by the dominant groups of the time. How soon we forget! And, according to the Native Americans whose land was stolen from them by most of our ancestors, we are all “illegal immigrants”.

So, do not accept the negative labels and keep your heads high and proud without ever stooping to the level of your detractors!

In Chapters 1 & 2 of this booklet you will find a brief history of immigration to this country and a history of the prejudice and discrimination which every immigrant group had to endure at the hands of the dominant group(s) of the time. It is important to learn about the environment in which you are living and some of its history in order to both survive and advance in it. It is also important to know that you are not the first group to be targeted with prejudice and negative stereotypes. In every country there are some prejudices against one or another group, which have often been institutionalized into systems of racism and discrimination.

In Chapters 3-8 you will find tips for both survival and advancement, some of which are common sense but always bear repeating and reminding, and some of which one only learns after living in this country for a while.

Chapter 9 is a special section dedicated to all immigrants and ancestors of immigrants to this country, meaning all Americans, with tips on how we can all get along and cooperate to continue growing this country to its great moral destiny.

In Chapter 10 we try to provide resources and references which you can contact for further information and assistance, however, since this list and the information in this booklet is not exhaustive, if you cannot get your questions answered or needs met we will provide a referral number where you can reach us or leave your message with your unresolved questions or needs which we will research and respond to.

Another practical use of this booklet, since it is provided in both Spanish and English, is as a language learning text for those who wish to learn English or Spanish.

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