# Audio file

[Episode 2\_ Direct Experiences with War - Refugees 1.mp3](https://unomail-my.sharepoint.com/personal/npuok_unomaha_edu/Documents/Transcribed%20Files/Episode%202_%20Direct%20Experiences%20with%20War%20-%20Refugees%201.mp3)

# [Transcript](https://unomail-my.sharepoint.com/personal/npuok_unomaha_edu/Documents/Transcribed%20Files/Episode%202_%20Direct%20Experiences%20with%20War%20-%20Refugees%201.mp3)

[Intro Speaker:](https://unomail-my.sharepoint.com/personal/npuok_unomaha_edu/Documents/Transcribed%20Files/Episode%202_%20Direct%20Experiences%20with%20War%20-%20Refugees%201.mp3)

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[Barbara:](https://unomail-my.sharepoint.com/personal/npuok_unomaha_edu/Documents/Transcribed%20Files/Episode%202_%20Direct%20Experiences%20with%20War%20-%20Refugees%201.mp3)

[Welcome Mav Nation this is the face of war podcast Barbara and I'm Jesse.](https://unomail-my.sharepoint.com/personal/npuok_unomaha_edu/Documents/Transcribed%20Files/Episode%202_%20Direct%20Experiences%20with%20War%20-%20Refugees%201.mp3)

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[This our particular episode is going to be on the experiences of those who've been displaced by war, people who have found themselves to be refugees. Jesse will be talking with Shar, John and Abdi for this very moving episode.](https://unomail-my.sharepoint.com/personal/npuok_unomaha_edu/Documents/Transcribed%20Files/Episode%202_%20Direct%20Experiences%20with%20War%20-%20Refugees%201.mp3)

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[So stay tuned. Hey, good afternoon, Maverick nation. This is Jesse Stewart for another one of our podcast series. We've got a really exciting podcast today and so I cannot wait for you all to tune in and listen to this one. I am like I said, Jesse Stewart, an English graduate student, and I have in here with me two fantastic gentlemen. That I cannot wait to have share their experiences with you. So without further ado, I'm going to jump right into it. Sure. John, would you go ahead and? Yourself.](https://unomail-my.sharepoint.com/personal/npuok_unomaha_edu/Documents/Transcribed%20Files/Episode%202_%20Direct%20Experiences%20with%20War%20-%20Refugees%201.mp3)

[Sherjan:](https://unomail-my.sharepoint.com/personal/npuok_unomaha_edu/Documents/Transcribed%20Files/Episode%202_%20Direct%20Experiences%20with%20War%20-%20Refugees%201.mp3)

[Well, just thank you very. Much for having us here and it's a it's a nice experience to share our experience of war. My name is Sherjan Ahmed Sai and I'm the director of Center for Afghanistan studies here at Ueno. I have been associated with Ueno since 2006, and my background is I was born in Afghanistan. I lived in. Refugee life in Pakistan for 20 years. I went back to Afghanistan after 911 happened, a work fair and came to the United States first in 2006 and with a few minute months break in 2007. The the life that I lived in, Pakistan was a refugee life. Of course we left Afghanistan right after the invasion of the Afghanistan by the Soviet Union. So that's where I grew up as a refugee in. Pakistan.](https://unomail-my.sharepoint.com/personal/npuok_unomaha_edu/Documents/Transcribed%20Files/Episode%202_%20Direct%20Experiences%20with%20War%20-%20Refugees%201.mp3)

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[Wonderful. Wonderful. Thank you. And, Abby, we have you in here as well. Tell us about yourself.](https://unomail-my.sharepoint.com/personal/npuok_unomaha_edu/Documents/Transcribed%20Files/Episode%202_%20Direct%20Experiences%20with%20War%20-%20Refugees%201.mp3)

[Abdul:](https://unomail-my.sharepoint.com/personal/npuok_unomaha_edu/Documents/Transcribed%20Files/Episode%202_%20Direct%20Experiences%20with%20War%20-%20Refugees%201.mp3)

[Hi, my name is Abdul Nasser Abdi and obviously my my first name is Abdul Nasser but I go by Abdi so I am. It's my second year Uno. I am studying to become an ESL teacher and I'm in Doctor Robbins class and my background is my parents were were you know were born and they lived in Somalia and then after the Civil War and how that impacted them, they moved down to Uganda and that's where I was born and that's where I was raised and that's why I grew up. And then I moved. To the United States in 2014, I first moved to Arizona. But then I moved to Omaha in 2015. So yeah, that's that's pretty much my background.](https://unomail-my.sharepoint.com/personal/npuok_unomaha_edu/Documents/Transcribed%20Files/Episode%202_%20Direct%20Experiences%20with%20War%20-%20Refugees%201.mp3)

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[That's amazing. So yeah, fabrication, as you have heard from Abdul and Sherjin, today's episode is going to be about the refugee experience and how that impacted them as individuals, how that impacted their family when it comes to war. We often think about the military, but it's not just the military. There are so many people. That are impacted by war. And that includes civilians that are sometimes caught, caught in the midst of it, whether they want to be or not. So the fair statement sure.](https://unomail-my.sharepoint.com/personal/npuok_unomaha_edu/Documents/Transcribed%20Files/Episode%202_%20Direct%20Experiences%20with%20War%20-%20Refugees%201.mp3)

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[Well, absolutely. You said it. Clearly the war does not just include the military. So for the hardware on military, it involves anybody living in the area of battlefield or anywhere where the war is happening. There is no doubt that the people who are fighting the war be the military or none. They feel it first because they are doing it. But. Their efforts and their work, whatever they're doing, fighting each other, impacts the people living where they're fighting at, and that impact has been in people's people losing lives, people losing limbs, people losing livelihoods and people forced to migrate. And flee the Warfield or the battlefield to somewhere safe. Some are lucky, some are not. Some are lucky to to go away to safer grounds, higher grounds to where their their out of the reach of the bullets and some, unfortunately, are not lucky. They either die at the battlefield or they die. On the way, getting out of the battlefield. Yeah, that has been has been my experience where I was lucky and lucky both.](https://unomail-my.sharepoint.com/personal/npuok_unomaha_edu/Documents/Transcribed%20Files/Episode%202_%20Direct%20Experiences%20with%20War%20-%20Refugees%201.mp3)

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[That's a good actually segue. Sherjin. Would you mind, since since you're talking about that to just deep dive a little bit earlier on your background and tell us that?](https://unomail-my.sharepoint.com/personal/npuok_unomaha_edu/Documents/Transcribed%20Files/Episode%202_%20Direct%20Experiences%20with%20War%20-%20Refugees%201.mp3)

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[Absolutely. When? I was really young, I don't remember exactly the first years and I was almost three years old when I wished to be in happen in Afghanistan, and I remember the time when we were fleeing Afghanistan. That is the. Lucky part. However, the unlucky part was where I lost my uncle. 1st. And before my uncle was lost where he we found his dead body, bullet riddled dead body, the Russians and and the pro Russian government had arrested my father, where nobody knew about it. He was taken by the security forces and the notion invasion. And my English skills, learning from all of that. My grandfather had a stroke. And he died. A few months later, so the war had direct and indirect impact on families and children and women. Losing 3 people. 3 male members of a family who were the main breadwinners or family. We had no choice but to flee our village. We went to Kabul and through Kabul we came to E&E, to Pakistan, and that was a voyage that I remember a few blips of the life in Kabul a little bit. Where I remember because one of my cousin was born on the way going out of Manhattan. And I remember that day, and I remember the time when we were crossing border into Pakistan, we were stopped by security forces. And I remember a Russian man with a head out of his tank there. And the security people asking us, where are we going? So and then of course, my life as a refugee started from a tent in a camp. In one of the mountainous areas of of Pakistan. And then from that camp, we went to another camp and we lived another camp and a few months. And a year or two later, we moved to the city. Nine people lived in one bedroom apartment. For years, but before that, we lived in somebody's garage house. The garage for, I think a month or two. That was his storage and all of us lived in that place. I still remember those antique chairs he was selling. He stored in that garage. And I would use them as my. Pedestal or setting because he was selling them, they were only place where they could give us some space to live. So, and then we rented that apartment. One bedroom apartment, one bathroom and A and a small courtyard where at. And that's my experience. I started my school. Sir, I remember. Living as a refugee is not something that anybody would like to wish to somebody. It is not a choice that anybody would lovingly make. It is something that you have to make because there are no other better options. And. In Pakistan, when I was living, I was neither a citizen nor a person with my family, nor people with some good economic status. So my uncle was working. My grandma was working. Those were the two breadwinners of the family in our culture back in those times, women don't work, and if a woman work, that means it's a sort of a shameful thing for the men because you have men. Why would the women need to work? Because the men are supposed to be the breadwinners, supposed to hold on the family's economic status up and bring money. The family and my uncle, who was just a few years older than I am, also started working and my grandma was working so. And watching other, you know, doing laundry for other families. So. So that's how I grew up in in Peshawar for 20 years, a life with no passport, no identity in a sense, I'm not a citizen ammonia item that I had was a card showing that I am a refugee coming from Afghanistan. Uhm. We couldn't buy property because first of all, we didn't have money to buy property and then we didn't have. Rights to own a property in Pakistan. So I went to school. A school was a refugee school that started from there and a little good school supported by international communities. And eight. There were other schools that refugees were worse than than they were. But overall there was something missing in me. The missing part was of course my family. I lost my father that I never saw when he was arrested, my uncle. That my family said that I was. I had seen it, but I don't remember. I have no visuals of him and it was a bullet riddled body dumped in a water pond and my grandfather, who was buried next to our house because we could not take his body to the cemetery because it was fighting. The only thing they could do is bury it next to our house and I visited the grave after many years back going to our. And and and and all of that. The life in Pakistan and we're going through all the hardship, millions of kids like me survived and lived better lives. Brought millions of kids like we didn't survive. They were killed. They lost their body parts, their limbs. They had the miserable life. Coming down, the impact of war. The the world, the brutal part of war is the negative. Remnants. It has and effect it has on children and women, especially in poor countries. Psychologically, they are the easily affected and they are the easily who get depressed. Men usually are busy with stuff they do outside. But women and children? Are not physically able enough to do as men would do in our societies over there. So. I remember my. Grandmother, who because of losing 2 kids and a husband in in a matter of months, started having severe migraines and she would put ice on her head always. That was something that I could never forget. Because of what she suffered always. I've never seen her without an ice piece of ice on her head. Wherever we would go, she would put put ice and cover it with the smallest car. So that would hold on to her head. And there is. And you would ask why you were doing because she said. My head is burning. My brain is on fire so I have to have something to cool it down. And that was. That is psychological pressure. That where your your your head literally feels as if burning and the only thing that could calm. You down is a piece of ice. And I would see water dripping down on her sides, on cheeks, on behind her ears, and her part of upper shirt or red. And there was those things. My mother, as a young woman with two kids, me and my sister, who was born after we lost her. Father. A couple of months after we heard that. He was gone and she was born. She has. No memory of my father of our father. At all and and then coming and making it shorter, the the final part how I found out about my father that he was killed, it was. A few years. Ago here and and Omaha. Where I was sitting at in my office here, you know, and I heard the news on social media that somebody in Holland, Netherlands, had been arrested and he had lists of people who were buried alive or killed at a prison in Kabul by the communist regime. And there were 5000 people in that list. And and I found the list I was going through the list and I was my heart starting beating faster because I was. I don't wanna see. My dad in there? Yeah. And I found him.](https://unomail-my.sharepoint.com/personal/npuok_unomaha_edu/Documents/Transcribed%20Files/Episode%202_%20Direct%20Experiences%20with%20War%20-%20Refugees%201.mp3)

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[Oh. How did that make you feel?](https://unomail-my.sharepoint.com/personal/npuok_unomaha_edu/Documents/Transcribed%20Files/Episode%202_%20Direct%20Experiences%20with%20War%20-%20Refugees%201.mp3)

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[It was difficult first. Very difficult because I was always expecting that there would be somebody calling me. That's your father.](https://unomail-my.sharepoint.com/personal/npuok_unomaha_edu/Documents/Transcribed%20Files/Episode%202_%20Direct%20Experiences%20with%20War%20-%20Refugees%201.mp3)

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[Yeah.](https://unomail-my.sharepoint.com/personal/npuok_unomaha_edu/Documents/Transcribed%20Files/Episode%202_%20Direct%20Experiences%20with%20War%20-%20Refugees%201.mp3)

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[So it was a closure for me too, because now I know my father is dead. And The funny thing was in the list they would say why this person was killed or or executed to a number of them that was written. He was a troublemaker and that's it. That's it. That's it.He was killed because he was. A troublemaker that was a troublemaker. There was a high school student. There was a professor from a university. There was a shopkeeper. There were Muslims, there were Hindus who were killed just because they were against the the government at that time. So. It has its effect on anyone just like me when when I remember that situation I I just started choking up because. Because I see millions of other kids like me had similar experiences. And the most. Unfortunate part is that I was expecting that the wall would be over in my lifetime. Which didn't happen. That even hurts you more because he questioned how many more of us would be sacrifice. For this, whatever cause they're fighting for. How many more of us would become the fire would for this fire? And I don't have any answer for that. I am glad that my kids are here safe and sound. When my first one was born, I came home and I touched his hand and I kissed his hand and I said, well, my father might have done the same. When I was born. So emotions were there and. Very different experience. When I first became a father myself and then I could say, yeah, my dad might have expected the same. For me. But he's not with me. Here. So. And my sister, who never saw a. Father, you know that his. I'm sure difficult for her. And many others in in Afghanistan were any other country that is suffering from the war, be that Afghanistan, Somalia, Sudan, anywhere in Africa or Ukraine anywhere, the stories of war in the 50s is? Those are always the same of suffering. Losing relatives rule in losing. Family members losing property and being desperate and trying to leave to somewhere safe.](https://unomail-my.sharepoint.com/personal/npuok_unomaha_edu/Documents/Transcribed%20Files/Episode%202_%20Direct%20Experiences%20with%20War%20-%20Refugees%201.mp3)

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[And that's actually a really good segue. Sherjin, to Abdi over here. You mentioned Somalia earlier, Abdi, we were talking earlier and you mentioned that your family of course had had. Yeah. Suffered civil war in Somalia. Can you share a little bit about your families experience as well?](https://unomail-my.sharepoint.com/personal/npuok_unomaha_edu/Documents/Transcribed%20Files/Episode%202_%20Direct%20Experiences%20with%20War%20-%20Refugees%201.mp3)

[Abdi](https://unomail-my.sharepoint.com/personal/npuok_unomaha_edu/Documents/Transcribed%20Files/Episode%202_%20Direct%20Experiences%20with%20War%20-%20Refugees%201.mp3)

[Well, for me, you know, as he said, you know, some people are very lucky. And I believe I'm very lucky because of because of my parents and the decisions that they made because I don't, I I I myself, I didn't really experience war first hand, but it was my father experienced it first hand and he doesn't really talk about it as much and he is now really open to talking about it a lot. I didn't know him before any of this happened, so I'm not sure, but he right now, he seems like a very quiet and he keeps him to himself and everything. So yeah, so usually some mother that tells us the stories and everything. But yeah, they they my father when he was young he left his family to, you know he left the village. And took a fight in the Civil War. And before he did, he had he had, he had his own little family as well back then. They used to get made under like 1718, so it was like a different culture and everything. So he had his own family and he left the family as soon as he left, he went to go fight in the Civil War. After that, he lost his. Family and he also lost his father as well. So when he came back, he.](https://unomail-my.sharepoint.com/personal/npuok_unomaha_edu/Documents/Transcribed%20Files/Episode%202_%20Direct%20Experiences%20with%20War%20-%20Refugees%201.mp3)

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[In fighting with the family.](https://unomail-my.sharepoint.com/personal/npuok_unomaha_edu/Documents/Transcribed%20Files/Episode%202_%20Direct%20Experiences%20with%20War%20-%20Refugees%201.mp3)

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[Yeah, yeah. He while while he was gone, he didn't even know until. He came back. Then he knew that, you know, he lost his father. And his family. So I. Mean when he came back. He married my mother. And then. They both decided that he wasn't safe to start a whole new. Family in Somalia, so we they moved down to Uganda and that's where my my oldest brother was born and there's like 10 of us. So yeah, it's it's very interesting because it does impact the people that what is it called the people, especially the, the, the, the children people have gone through. What is it called civil wars or wars, anything like that? So for me it's always been. They called for me and my father. We don't really speak a lot because he's always been kind of like that. He doesn't. He doesn't speak much. So it's I kind of grew up kind of kind of thinking like that's what all dads do there. So when I first when because when I first met like people here or like whenever I see like TV shows where the fathers and this. I'm talking. That's like, that's like weird to me because I'm like, I don't. I don't do that at all. It's like my my father doesn't come and sit down and like, ohh, how are you? I'm like, not really. He only comes like if he needs something from me or we need to talk about. Something serious. That's pretty much it. And if there is something serious, he wouldn't come to me, he would got an older son. So that's how it kind of goes in our family. But yeah, it's. But The thing is, is my mother has been like the person who has been like, and I kept the whole family together because my father has, you know, obviously with everything he went through, he kind of like. Going to quiet down and everything. So my mother has had to be like the father and the mother at the same time. Kind of basically taking care of everybody and making sure that, you know, we understand what he's been through and not to push anything and not to like and for us, we never really thought about it until I came here. I was like, is that how offer was supposed to be? Because I've seen like different things like this is this is now what this is not my experience and you know and it's it's kind of it did affect me a little bit because. I'm also kind of quiet and like I don't like like sharing my what does it call my feelings or anything like that. And I think that's what it has to do with it. I'm not sure but yeah, because I don't like even my mom always. She always makes fun of us as well. She's like you guys never like never tell anybody that you love everything. That sounds weird to me cuz. I'm like, I don't say it at all, and it's not a bad or I don't mean it, but it's just, I don't say it and it's always interesting and it's kind of like the way that it's been affected. It's it's, it's, it's it's kind of sad at the same time, the way I see it as it as normal. But yeah, it's yeah.](https://unomail-my.sharepoint.com/personal/npuok_unomaha_edu/Documents/Transcribed%20Files/Episode%202_%20Direct%20Experiences%20with%20War%20-%20Refugees%201.mp3)

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[Now you both. Had mentioned previously you've you've had these experiences with war, you were talking a little bit earlier and and you mentioned. Becoming a refugee and trying to to come to a new country. What was that experience like for you, Abby, coming. Coming to a new country here? Yeah.](https://unomail-my.sharepoint.com/personal/npuok_unomaha_edu/Documents/Transcribed%20Files/Episode%202_%20Direct%20Experiences%20with%20War%20-%20Refugees%201.mp3)

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[To. OK. It's. It was obviously it was hard and it was difficult to adapt into the like the United States like life and and even it it made even harder as a Muslim because in Uganda there was the Community that we lived in. There's a lot of Muslim people and there was like mosques around and it was easy like to pray and do all those things. But when we first came to the. When we when we came to. You know, all of that was kind of like kind of wash the way in in the Bay because we had to adapt into like the to American Society. And we had to learn English quickly cause in Uganda, we, well, we were going to school and. Everything. But I mostly spoke either my my language at home and then I spoke Luganda at at school, so English was not really like. It was not really my. I didn't speak that well. So when I first came here, I had to learn that pretty quickly to talk to anybody and to make some friends or anything like that so. All of like my all of my culture and everything I was trying to push it away in order like to get to get like some new friends and to fit into with my peers and everything. And it's been very interesting. Like for the past after high school. It's been interesting because that's when I started looking back on like, that's when I started focusing back on my religion. And I was like, you know. This is my culture and this is I should not just put it put aside and you know to focus fully on this and yeah. And now I even it's interesting cause I even forgot a little bit of Somali. In doing all of that while I was learning English and now I can barely even speak some more, I can barely speak Luganda. But I did learn Somali again. I had to relearn it and everything because it was getting. Hard to communicate. With my parents and that kind of bother me like this shouldn't be that hard. I'm like, that's that's not right, because I solely focused on learning English and that was pretty much it I was watching. So I used to listen to music videos just like. To sing along. With that, I used to watch TV shows so that I could learn pretty quickly just because I wanted to communicate with like my fellow peers or, you know, with anybody. So it has it it it is. It was interesting too. It was difficult and interesting to to adapt into a whole new country.](https://unomail-my.sharepoint.com/personal/npuok_unomaha_edu/Documents/Transcribed%20Files/Episode%202_%20Direct%20Experiences%20with%20War%20-%20Refugees%201.mp3)

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[So it sounds.](https://unomail-my.sharepoint.com/personal/npuok_unomaha_edu/Documents/Transcribed%20Files/Episode%202_%20Direct%20Experiences%20with%20War%20-%20Refugees%201.mp3)

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[And our first thing.](https://unomail-my.sharepoint.com/personal/npuok_unomaha_edu/Documents/Transcribed%20Files/Episode%202_%20Direct%20Experiences%20with%20War%20-%20Refugees%201.mp3)

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[To me, I'd be like. You, as a young person, quickly transformed and and adapted to your new surroundings in order to to fit into you know, your new country is is essentially what that sounds. So did you have a similar experience here? Sherjin, you came over as a.](https://unomail-my.sharepoint.com/personal/npuok_unomaha_edu/Documents/Transcribed%20Files/Episode%202_%20Direct%20Experiences%20with%20War%20-%20Refugees%201.mp3)

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[Yes. Yes. When I came over to United States, my experience was a difficult, different, totally different than opting. I was an adult working in in Afghanistan after my life in Pakistan as a ref. I was here for my studies. I had a set goal. I had left my two kids and a wife and a mother. Back in Kabul. With the goal that I'm going to go out and study and make life. Better for all of us. I had a good job in Kabul that I had to lift, and the situation in Kabul overall because of working in a in a, in a, in a in a place where that required extra security because I was working for the President of the country and that was difficult to maintain as a person. So when I came as a student here, starting my studies. For me, life was a bit easier because I had a clear idea of what am I going. To. Do, but that does not mean that I adapt it so quickly and I just live just like any any American kid or any American student on campus. I had to adopt. I had to learn things I knew English. I was fluent in English before coming here because I was teaching before as ESL teacher in Pakistan, I did that. But overall, learning new things, adopting the new tricks of life in in the United States, living, catching up with the pace of life here in United States, I've never been to American school. And then I started with American University catching up with that as international student. Was something not challenging? But I made it and that was shown in my GPA 4.0 in my first semester here at Ueno. But it was I was alone. My family goes back home in Kabul. It was not easy. I remember the first night I cried. Because I miss my family, everybody. But then I sat and I said yeah, suck it up. You're here for something. You're here for a goal and just go ahead and pursue it. And after that, I never cried for. I never. I missed my family and kids, but I never cried because I was away from my family. Because this is a new country, because this is something new to. Because I had a set goal and I just pursued my goal and I graduated exactly in four years and I started masters afterward and at the same time I was working here, At UNO.](https://unomail-my.sharepoint.com/personal/npuok_unomaha_edu/Documents/Transcribed%20Files/Episode%202_%20Direct%20Experiences%20with%20War%20-%20Refugees%201.mp3)

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[Did you go home? Ever to visit your family during that time.](https://unomail-my.sharepoint.com/personal/npuok_unomaha_edu/Documents/Transcribed%20Files/Episode%202_%20Direct%20Experiences%20with%20War%20-%20Refugees%201.mp3)

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[I did the year after I was went back home and then I brought my family. Wonderful, my kids and my wife. But then I had to leave my mother because I couldn't bring her. And my mother joins us just three.](https://unomail-my.sharepoint.com/personal/npuok_unomaha_edu/Documents/Transcribed%20Files/Episode%202_%20Direct%20Experiences%20with%20War%20-%20Refugees%201.mp3)

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[Years ago, and what an interesting story in both different, right? Well, that's wonderful, yes. Similar experiences brought you together and in A and probably one of the worst times in your life. And yet. When you came out and you came to a new country, it's your experiences at adapting to the environment that you came into remarkably different. Maybe it had something to do with your age as well. And your experiences?](https://unomail-my.sharepoint.com/personal/npuok_unomaha_edu/Documents/Transcribed%20Files/Episode%202_%20Direct%20Experiences%20with%20War%20-%20Refugees%201.mp3)

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[Probably. Yeah, absolutely, yeah. Your update is 21. I was 21 when, He was born.](https://unomail-my.sharepoint.com/personal/npuok_unomaha_edu/Documents/Transcribed%20Files/Episode%202_%20Direct%20Experiences%20with%20War%20-%20Refugees%201.mp3)

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[Wow. And you came here much how?](https://unomail-my.sharepoint.com/personal/npuok_unomaha_edu/Documents/Transcribed%20Files/Episode%202_%20Direct%20Experiences%20with%20War%20-%20Refugees%201.mp3)

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[Older age. I had a 10 year gap in my studies from high school. OK, so I did exactly 10 year gap graduating from high school and come again to you and I'm starting my classes because I worked in the.](https://unomail-my.sharepoint.com/personal/npuok_unomaha_edu/Documents/Transcribed%20Files/Episode%202_%20Direct%20Experiences%20with%20War%20-%20Refugees%201.mp3)

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[All right, it makes a it makes a big difference. So that's really. An interesting walk through about two different experiences, which are really they're really powerful. And so we we touched a little bit on on the aftermath, right of you had mentioned, sure, John, that you had worked hard and brought your family here. Now you did your masters and you continued and and here you are still working in Afghan studies, right?](https://unomail-my.sharepoint.com/personal/npuok_unomaha_edu/Documents/Transcribed%20Files/Episode%202_%20Direct%20Experiences%20with%20War%20-%20Refugees%201.mp3)

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[Interestingly, I work for the same office that. Printed the books for my school, the textbooks. From my school, from my refugee school in Pakistan. Really. That's amazing. When first time when I saw the, you know in Nebraska press. In the books printed by the press, I never knew that I would sometimes come to the same university and lead the same office that printed my books. And here I am. I need to know I would I would meet the author of the 5th grade geometry book. And I met him. The same book that I studied and learn from, I met the author of that book, the textbook here in Omaha. He lives here right now. You never know what life takes you there. But I did have a goal. And I said, I'm going to go and study in the United States. I did my SAT exam in 2000. I did my TOEFL exam in. 1000 my graduation was done in 1997. After three years, I did my SAT with the goal of coming to United States. I applied at a College in Iowa and Grinnell College, and I was accepted. But I didn't have financial means to come. But I had this go I'm going to come to United States and finally. Finally I found some resources that I could come and get out of Afghanistan and continue with my always goal of continue my higher education in United States when I when I came here, I realized this country is a country of opportunities. If you try you will achieve it. And that's what I've seen. I tried and I got what I wanted and I'm proud. The fact that. A refugee. Is leading the same office that produced the books of his school.](https://unomail-my.sharepoint.com/personal/npuok_unomaha_edu/Documents/Transcribed%20Files/Episode%202_%20Direct%20Experiences%20with%20War%20-%20Refugees%201.mp3)

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[I mean, that's so powerful. That's so powerful. Abdi, when we look back on it, you mentioned it just a bit, but I wanted to circle back around to the feelings that the war and being a refugee for your from your standpoint, you know your parents. But it sounds like that very much passed down to you and your in your family structure to some degree or another. Is that experience with war in your family still affecting you today?](https://unomail-my.sharepoint.com/personal/npuok_unomaha_edu/Documents/Transcribed%20Files/Episode%202_%20Direct%20Experiences%20with%20War%20-%20Refugees%201.mp3)

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[In a way, it is because at whenever the like the somebody talks about war and everything it does come to in the back of my mind, I'm like, yeah, I do know how it feels to be in the family, that somebody that that is, you know, that has been through that line through or that there has been through war and everything. And I am lucky enough that I never really experienced. Myself and I, I'm really I'm I'm blessed and I'm grateful that you know my that you know, I was. I wasn't the one that. Had to go through all. But in a way it did. It did affect me because I see the world differently than most of like the people that that are kind of my age. The way, you know, I sit in the in the way of like, you know what? I came here to the United States. He was saying like, you know, is the land of opportunities. Honestly, I came to United States for one thing. And that's like to get my education. To set up a life for myself and to make sure that you know my future children and wife or anything like that, you know that they don't have to experience what I had to go through, especially within my family and everything. And I'm very grateful for my mom because we never really had to go through any hard time, anything like that because. She was also she was always kind of like, you know, keeping everything calm and keeping everybody kind of happy, especially with my with my father. And I was keeping the relationship there and everything. So he's it all actually goes down to my mother and everything because she is the one that did most. The work and you know my father, obviously. You know. I'm. I'm. I'm not blaming him because obviously what he's been through. But you know our relationship is is a bit different and that that's because of what he's been through. So that's the way it can affect me mostly because of my father and I you know we don't really have much of leadership but it is. Is. I don't know. Yeah, that's I think I don't know. But that's the best way I can say it affected me the most. Yeah, yeah.](https://unomail-my.sharepoint.com/personal/npuok_unomaha_edu/Documents/Transcribed%20Files/Episode%202_%20Direct%20Experiences%20with%20War%20-%20Refugees%201.mp3)

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[Sherjin, do you think that your experiences of the refugee still impact? You today.](https://unomail-my.sharepoint.com/personal/npuok_unomaha_edu/Documents/Transcribed%20Files/Episode%202_%20Direct%20Experiences%20with%20War%20-%20Refugees%201.mp3)

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[It does. It has shaped my thoughts and my opinions about various things. Living the life as of a refugee in a tent in Pakistan living. A poor life. Has shaped my thoughts and opinions about. The politics of the world. About the political positions that I make and take, because our life experience make us who we are, all of us go through different life experiences and that is a formative period of our thoughts and mental status against something. Umm. I don't like guns. I would like to hold one. But. I've seen what a gun can do. In my country, I have seen their bodies. I went back to Kabul in the Civil War. Time I saw bodies. I heard rockets coming down to the city. I was stuck at 1:00. For a night or I think two nights they couldn't get out. I saw our Rockets going over our head hitting the mountain. I saw. Me travelling in the middle of the night, going from one city across the border to Pakistan and our convoy was attacked and I saw the Rockets with fire going over our head. And the trucks that we were on on purpose couldn't have the lights on because they would have been spotted. So all that experience shapes our personalities, shapes our thoughts, shapes our view about our lives. And. It. It sticks to your thought and memory. Are you 42 plus right now? And when I remember all those things, the trauma kicks back in. And what I remember my dad, I start choking because. It brings back the memories that I that I shared with many other kids as a poor kid and a refugee camp, and then after. I remember times when I had no money to buy an ice cream, but my friends have money to ice to buy ice cream. We're all together, but I couldn't eat ice cream because and I was just looking at them. I couldn't do anything because I didn't think. I remember times when I was when I didn't have clothes for my eat, for example, and now in two days we have aid and I'm proud that my kids have beautiful clothes. But I didn't when I was young. And that shapes our perspective. The children perspective that I don't want my kids. To go through a life life like that, I was separate, separated from my mother for a while. I live with my grandma. In shipping that experience, shipping my thoughts about my my kids. I don't want them to be away from their mother. I can live without them, but I don't want them to be away from their mother because I don't have that chance. I don't want them to lose that chance because there's a bond between the the kid and the mother. That I didn't enjoy when I was quite young, so that shaped my opinion about life and how I would behave and how would react against something or about something.](https://unomail-my.sharepoint.com/personal/npuok_unomaha_edu/Documents/Transcribed%20Files/Episode%202_%20Direct%20Experiences%20with%20War%20-%20Refugees%201.mp3)

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[And so as we kind of wrap up the discussion today, I turn it back over to both of you. To. Talked to the Uno community, both of you obviously have a tiny or no, that's part of part of what we're doing in this series of episodes is everyone that we talked to is connected to Uno some way somehow. You're a student, has a person sitting next to you. It's a, it's a. It's a faculty. Member in the room or a director? Of a of A you know program. They're all around you and so. In your capacity as a is connected to the Uno community, what would you say to them? The people that are listening today?](https://unomail-my.sharepoint.com/personal/npuok_unomaha_edu/Documents/Transcribed%20Files/Episode%202_%20Direct%20Experiences%20with%20War%20-%20Refugees%201.mp3)

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[My words will be to our students, to our staff and faculty members or community members who are listening to this podcast is. Let's not turn this life for granted. We have been through many difficulties that many of us around us have not been to. Through those difficulties. It's something valuable that millions in this world don't have. What we have here? These things. Look at. The live from that perspective and be thankful to what we have. The Great University, wonderful teachers and faculty members teaching us. Millions of people are aspiring. For such a life towards such a life, they don't have a chance and we already have those chances. Let's use it to our benefit for students. You might seem that there is. Everything is easy, but ask your parents. What have they done to help you to to bring you to? Where you are right now. For me, my parents were not there for me right now, but for you, for the students, they were your parents who give you the life right now. So be thankful. To what you have.](https://unomail-my.sharepoint.com/personal/npuok_unomaha_edu/Documents/Transcribed%20Files/Episode%202_%20Direct%20Experiences%20with%20War%20-%20Refugees%201.mp3)

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[Abdi. What would you say to your classmates?](https://unomail-my.sharepoint.com/personal/npuok_unomaha_edu/Documents/Transcribed%20Files/Episode%202_%20Direct%20Experiences%20with%20War%20-%20Refugees%201.mp3)

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[What I would say is along the same lines, as you know, Sir John, because you know so many people take this, you know, this kind of opportunity for granted and you know. They see college as like something that I have to go and have fun with. I don't see it that way. I see it like as an opportunity to like to start a career and to have. A family and. Yeah. You know, obviously my family went through a lot of things to get me to this point and it would be really a disappointment if I don't take full advantage of this opportunity and. For the faculty and other program members, what I would say is like get to know the students and you know, just don't judge everybody the same way like cause everybody have their own stories, their own unique way and their own little stories. So. Although you know we do, we do have well, like each one faculty have just for a semester. Just get to know like the student like get to know them what they are. You can learn a lot of things from them and yeah you know that that would be my thing and. Same thing for. The students just, just all that would be nice to each and basically let's all get to know each other. I think that's that would be really awesome.](https://unomail-my.sharepoint.com/personal/npuok_unomaha_edu/Documents/Transcribed%20Files/Episode%202_%20Direct%20Experiences%20with%20War%20-%20Refugees%201.mp3)

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[That's amazing. Well, I want to. I want to wrap up today first by saying thank you, Sherjin. Thank you, Abdi, for coming in to, to, to. To hear this today, this was, I think this was really powerful and really important to share your experiences because not everybody listening today does have those same experiences. Right. And we feel like the way that we Understand each other. Probably the better the world will be right.](https://unomail-my.sharepoint.com/personal/npuok_unomaha_edu/Documents/Transcribed%20Files/Episode%202_%20Direct%20Experiences%20with%20War%20-%20Refugees%201.mp3)

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[Yeah.](https://unomail-my.sharepoint.com/personal/npuok_unomaha_edu/Documents/Transcribed%20Files/Episode%202_%20Direct%20Experiences%20with%20War%20-%20Refugees%201.mp3)

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[So, well, Maverick Nation, thank you very much for tuning. Today and thank you again, we. Will see you on the next podcast.](https://unomail-my.sharepoint.com/personal/npuok_unomaha_edu/Documents/Transcribed%20Files/Episode%202_%20Direct%20Experiences%20with%20War%20-%20Refugees%201.mp3)

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