

Taking Care--Documenting the Occupational Culture of Home Care Workers
Archie Green Fellows Project, 2014-2015
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Archive of Folk Culture, American Folklife Center, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Nargiza Turanova interview, 2015-03-07 : interview conducted by Sonia De La Cruz and Helen Marie Moss

INTERVIEW LOG

Nargiza Turanova Interview

00:30:09

00:00:00 Consent to interview. My name is Nargiza Turanova. I have lived in Portland for the last 9 years. Working 6 years with this client. I work mainly with sick, elderly clients.

00:01:40 What led you to be a home care worker? Always interested in this kind of work. When I came to US, I took English classes, and when my English was better, I talked to friends, did research, and found the job in home care.

00:02:38 Other jobs? First when I came here, I worked at a local hotel. I began to wonder about other jobs, including the one I have now. Always interested in this kind of work, went to internet and found this job.

00:04:15 How is home care different than other jobs? I like to work with people, the communication, and I like being helpful. I used to see elderly and think, why wouldn't I help them?

00:05:19 Skills needed? First of all, you must know the specifics of this job, and like what you are doing before you start doing it, and it is hard work.

00:06:01 How did you learn? I learned in my own country. Lots of elderly and helpless people around the neighborhood. I would stop by the neighbors and help them, doing it out of goodwill. Did you take classes here? Yes, of course, and I keep taking the classes. And I went to the meeting in Salem. Already knew a lot? Yes, because I go online and read about my work, I want to know more about the job I am doing and how to do it right.

00:07:43 Typical day? Goes through a typical day: If they have plans, I accompany them, arrange it. A walk, a doctor appointment, shopping, lunch, bath 3x a week. Laundry. I clean, freshen up the bedroom and bath. How many clients? One, I go every day.

00:10:00 I am not that good at English, my client speaks Turkish, which is my language, not Russian. Have clients that don't speak Turkish or Russian? No, that would be difficult.

00:11:04 Do you become close to the client? Yes, we have to find a common language. Hard on the rest of your life? Yes. This is my job, but I also have a family. Do you need to set boundaries? No. I am always happy to help.

00:14:25 Intimate tasks, how approach? (Explain what I mean by intimate, bathing, toilet.) Always do with an open heart, I do whatever is in their interest to never hurt or harm them. I am never repulsed or disgusted.

00:16:33 Story? My client likes music, so I find music that lifts her up, if she is in a good mood, I am in a good mood.

00:17:45 What do home care workers talk about when together? About the job, are they working or not, do I like my job or not.

00:18:50 Music important. Sense of humor important too. When my client goes to an appointment, she is an entertainment for both of us. She is really is a really good person and an entertaining person even though she is 79.

00:20:11 What is rewarding? I really find the communication and spending time together rewarding. She is a very happy person, times flies because she is a happy person.

00:21:05 Challenging? To have time with your own family and do the work. But now doing so well I don't notice the shift back and forth between them.

00:21:58 Union? I am very happy to have the union, I feel very protected, always get answers to questions. Thank you to them; and you for being interested in us.

00:23:06 Lobby days? In 2013, went to a meeting in Salem, we talked, happy to be there.

00:24:50 One thing you want people to know about the job? Some friends of mine have very sick clients, so that they cannot take part in anything. I try and bring them the information about the union. They ask me and I share.

00:26:05 What do you do when not working? I have family, we go places, and I offer to take them to see my client. So they know where do I work and what do I do. Have you done this? Yes. How old are they? 20 and 16, and they have visited my client.

00:27:17 Anything else? No, you asked all the questions.

00:27:43 I am impressed that you speak Turkish and Uzbek and Russian and some English. She tells her immigration path: family from Turkey, lived in Uzbekistan, then Russia, where she went to school, then here as a refugee. At first, no English, worked with volunteers to learn, and I practiced at the hotel.

00:30:09 End of interview.