

INTERVIEW 1

Interview day/time: February 12, 2021.

Participant: Vietnamese male.

Speaker 1:

With the identification of the information, I know you mentioned it, but if I'm identified, so how is it sort of presented? Or like is it for like everything that you use the information, you get from the information but if it's like if I-

Speaker 2:

It's just for our data analysis, that's all.

Speaker 1:

Data analysis, okay.

Speaker 2:

The second stage that I mentioned though we'll do a video ethnography where we film you using your appliances. That's again also of our analysis and we won't be disclosing that to anybody else, just stays within the research team. If you don't wish for your face to be visible we can also ensure that we blur out your face or we do things to make sure you're not visible at all.

Speaker 1:

Where would the video footage and all that stuff be?

Speaker 2:

It'll be stored securely in our digital files so it'll be kept confidential, except of course as required by the law. But you're not required to provide your name or any other personal details on the audio recording.

Speaker 1:

Because I don't want to sort of be on YouTube or something like that.

Speaker 2:

Oh don't worry. Oh no, no, no we will never do that.

Speaker 1:

Oh my God.

Speaker 2:

We are researchers with ethical standards, so please be assured of your anonymity.

Speaker 1:

Yeah, I'll do that. Okay.

Speaker 2:

Thanks. Thank you. And then at the end of the interview I will get you to just finish all that for me.

Speaker 1:

Yep.

Speaker 2:

I'll put my recorder on now, that's one that I have on. Just using a back-up one just in case.

Speaker 1:

That's okay.

Speaker 2:

Thank you. Okay. Let's start with some background information. First of all, thank you so much for making the time. So let's start with some background information. Can you tell me what year you were born in?

Speaker 1:

'85.

Speaker 2:

1985, thank you. Do you have any siblings?

Speaker 1:

A sister.

Speaker 2:

Sister? Does she live here?

Speaker 1:

No.

Speaker 2:

Okay, so it's just you here?

Speaker 1:

Yeah. Oh no, my partner but she's working at the moment, so yeah.

Speaker 2:

Okay. What would you say is your position in the family? So when you say you have a sister, you younger? Is she younger?

Speaker 1:

Younger.

Speaker 2:

Younger. Okay, so you're the eldest?

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

Speaker 2:

Okay. Do you identify with any specific cultural background?

Speaker 1:

Vietnamese.

Speaker 2:

You mentioned your partner earlier, so are you married, partnered?

Speaker 1:

Well partnered, we're getting married.

Speaker 2:

De facto?

Speaker 1:

No, no, no. No, good question. Everyone's been keep asking me that.

Speaker 2:

Sorry, I have to do my little-

Speaker 1:

No, we're going to get married soon. No, no. Yeah, I'll just say partnered.

Speaker 2:

Partnered.

Speaker 1:

We're not the de facto yet.

Speaker 2:

Okay, partnered, excellent. And so you live together in this apartment?

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

Speaker 2:

Okay. How many bedrooms is this apartment?

Speaker 1:

Just one and a study.

Speaker 2:

One. Okay, one plus study. Do you have any children?

Speaker 1:

Not yet.

Speaker 2:

Not yet? Okay. How long have you lived here in this house?

Speaker 1:

Wow.

Speaker 2:

In this unit?

Speaker 1:

Wow. It's funny because we bought another property as well, but that's another time. Wow, good question. I'd say seven years.

Speaker 2:

Seven years?

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

Speaker 2:

Okay. In this apartment?

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

Speaker 2:

And in Sydney?

Speaker 1:

All my life. All my life, like I moved in from what, I moved in, in Sydney around, I'm just trying to remember because obviously I was young. I think I came in Sydney probably around 1987.

Speaker 2:

Oh, wow.

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

Speaker 2:

Okay, that's your whole life really, yeah. Okay.

Speaker 1:

Yeah. When I was quite young, so like there's a couple of like...

Speaker 2:

Yeah. So you live with your partner?

Speaker 1:

Yep.

Speaker 2:

Do you enjoy living in this house?

Speaker 1:

Do I enjoy, what in-

Speaker 2:

In this apartment, this unit?

Speaker 1:

I do but we just bought a brand new property at Wentworthville.

Speaker 2:

Oh, okay.

Speaker 1:

Yeah so we're-

Speaker 2:

Are you going to be moving there?

Speaker 1:

We're going to be moving there soon, yeah.

Speaker 2:

Ah okay. So is it a house or a?

Speaker 1:

It's also apartment but it's like much bigger.

Speaker 2:

Bigger? Okay, okay.

Speaker 1:

But to answer your previous question, yes I do.

Speaker 2:

You lived here seven years, you obviously enjoyed it, yeah?

Speaker 1:

Yeah, yeah, yeah. It's quite, yeah.

Speaker 2:

Okay. So you don't see yourself staying here but you're moving into your new-

Speaker 1:

Oh, you never know. Like I'm going to rent off this place and I might come back here one day, you never know.

Speaker 2:

Okay, so you own it?

Speaker 1:

Yeah, I definitely do own it, yeah.

Speaker 2:

Okay, great.

Speaker 1:

Definitely, yep.

Speaker 2:

Well done.

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

Speaker 2:

So you'll be moving to your new place soon, how many bedrooms is that?

Speaker 1:

That's three bedrooms.

Speaker 2:

Three bedroom apartment as well, okay. And where did you say it was?

Speaker 1:

Wentworthville. That's near Parramatta way.

Speaker 2:

Near Parramatta, okay. I'm not from New South Wales.

Speaker 1:

That's cool, that's cool. Don't worry.

Speaker 2:

Excuse my ignorance, sometimes, if I ask questions.

Speaker 1:

When you mentioned Queensland, because I actually just booked flights to Sunshine Coast in June.

Speaker 2:

Oh, lovely.

Speaker 1:

So I'm like I don't know anything about Sunshine Coast. So I'm doing my research of that too.

Speaker 2:

You won't be disappointed, picked a nice part.

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

Speaker 2:

Okay. So who else lives with you here? Your partner?

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

Speaker 2:

So it's just the two of you?

Speaker 1:

Yeah, correct, yeah.

Speaker 2:

Okay. And it has been the two of you for the last seven years?

Speaker 1:

No, she's been here for probably the last nearly five years, so yeah.

Speaker 2:

Okay. So now let's talk about your heating and cooling practices, all right? So overall would you say that you feel comfortable in this home?

Speaker 1:

In what aspect?

Speaker 2:

In terms of, so let's take summer for example, summer time.

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

Speaker 2:

So how do you cool down in this apartment in the summer time?

Speaker 1:

Through the ducted air con. Would I say I feel comfortable? Yeah, I would say yes. But I'm not like totally sort of convinced, I guess.

Speaker 2:

Okay. Why is that?

Speaker 1:

Well out west here, being here, West Sydney, it's much warmer than the CBD. Like today is what? Nearly 32 degrees. Out in Sydney is around 27, 28. So it's always-

Speaker 2:

So you feel the heat a lot more here?

Speaker 1:

Yeah. That's what I mean about the comfortable part because I know the heat it sucks in, it could be quite tough in the summer, too, yeah.

Speaker 2:

Okay. So would you use the air con quite a bit?

Speaker 1:

Yeah. Like I'm sort of saving it because I used to use it a lot. But I'm still saving it because I am, funnily enough, I don't know if this research is based on usage or whatever-

Speaker 2:

We want to understand your use as well.

Speaker 1:

... but I've sort of been using it less because of the electricity and all that stuff.

Speaker 2:

Is that something you've always done or has that come more into the forefront recently?

Speaker 1:

Recently, recently. Probably a year.

Speaker 2:

Okay.

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

Speaker 2:

Why is that do you think?

Speaker 1:

Because probably the bills that we've been getting since we've used air con is probably, when we started using air con quite a lot our bills, surprisingly, for the quarter, we were shocked.

Speaker 2:

Shocked?

Speaker 1:

Yeah we were shocked. Yeah. So we were like what's one thing that sort of causing that.

Speaker 2:

It's usually the air con.

Speaker 1:

Air con, like it was something like leaving the TV on, like the power on, or appliances on and all that stuff. So yeah.

Speaker 2:

Okay. How often would you say you used the air con in the summer? A few hours a day?

Speaker 1:

In summer? Good question.

Speaker 2:

It is reverse cycle, yeah?

Speaker 1:

Yeah, yeah. I might probably say two to three hours per day, yeah.

Speaker 2:

Mm-hmm (affirmative), okay.

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

Speaker 2:

Are there other major appliances apart from the air con, TV, that you would use?

Speaker 1:

TV, dishwasher.

Speaker 2:

Dishwasher, yeah?

Speaker 1:

Oven.

Speaker 2:

Oven.

Speaker 1:

We've got a microwave.

Speaker 2:

Fridge?

Speaker 1:

Fridge, definitely fridge. Washing machine, dryer.

Speaker 2:

Okay. Yep. Vacuum cleaner?

Speaker 1:

Vacuum cleaner's in there somewhere. I know my laptop, my electronics. When I think about it, it's actually a lot that I've bought. So, yeah.

Speaker 2:

Yeah, yeah. Okay do you think that they're quite expensive to run in your opinion.

Speaker 1:

Just trying to remember when I got the dishwasher the first time. I think it was like three, three and a half stars. So, if I base it on that one I would probably say not really.

Speaker 2:

Okay.

Speaker 1:

Because I follow the star rating when it comes to electricity and all that stuff. So, based on that I'm assuming probably not really.

Speaker 2:

Okay.

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

Speaker 2:

So in your purchase decisions then, when you buy these appliances, is that the key consideration for you?

Speaker 1:

No, no, no.

Speaker 2:

Yeah?

Speaker 1:

Definitely not.

Speaker 2:

Not the energy rating?

Speaker 1:

No.

Speaker 2:

What would you say is the most important factor for you when you're buying an appliance.

Speaker 1:

I think when I bought the washing machine and all that stuff I think it's more the usage, and the features and the ease of pretty much using it. I know price is quite important, I think that's probably the top.

Speaker 2:

The top.

Speaker 1:

I'm not trying to, I think it's probably just the ease, the use, the usage.

Speaker 2:

The features?

Speaker 1:

The features like how big the load is, I guess.

Speaker 2:

Okay.

Speaker 1:

Like how much it can handle when it comes to a washing machine.

Speaker 2:

Okay. With your washing machine, how often would you do laundry, for instance?

Speaker 1:

Probably maybe once a week, maybe once every nine days. I wouldn't say once a fortnight, definitely not. Like I've got my laundry over there, too. I would say around that, yeah.

Speaker 2:

Okay. So in terms of the winter time then, we know the house gets really hot in the summer, right? This one gets hot in the summer. In the winter how do you manage your energy use? Do you use the heater?

Speaker 1:

I probably use more. Not much of the heater, no. I'm not a big fan of using the heater, the air con or all that stuff with the heat settings.

Speaker 2:

Okay, yeah?

Speaker 1:

I'd probably say no. I'm sort of more, use of like the cooking stuff. Because, obviously, maybe it's the heat or whatever and all that stuff. I don't know, I find that maybe at winter you're maybe cooking, whatever, more compared to summer.

Speaker 2:

Okay, you find a difference in your bill between summer and winter time?

Speaker 1:

I say yes, but slightly.

Speaker 2:

Only slightly?

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

Speaker 2:

Okay, okay. And when you get your bill do you see, I don't know if your energy provider does this, but you know how they rank you based on where you sit with your neighbors in terms of your energy use, where you're placed?

Speaker 1:

I just got my gas bill the other day and that information is on it.

Speaker 2:

Okay.

Speaker 1:

The only thing I could see is the bar comparing per month or per quarter.

Speaker 2:

Okay, so it compared you to yourself? Your usage?

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

Speaker 2:

But not really to households in your area?

Speaker 1:

Do you want me to show you the bill?

Speaker 2:

Yeah sure, if you want to.

Speaker 1:

Yeah, I only just paid it like literally yesterday. I sort of [inaudible 00:11:15] I look at the price and I don't really...

Speaker 2:

Was it a shock when you got the bill?

Speaker 1:

No, this is like a really small gas bill. If you're talking about winter, autumn I think it's quite low compared.

Speaker 2:

Okay.

Speaker 1:

Was only like \$17.

Speaker 2:

So your energy bill is separated into electricity and gas?

Speaker 1:

Correct, yeah.

Speaker 2:

Yeah, okay.

Speaker 1:

That's right.

Speaker 2:

Do you use the same provider?

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

Speaker 2:

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Speaker 1:

Oops, just double check it.

Speaker 2:

Do you have a fan?

Speaker 1:

Fan? No. I think it's just all like air con.

Speaker 2:

Air con, yeah.

Speaker 1:

The air con do the fans setting as well but... Obviously my electricity bill is going to be more than my gas bill, obviously.

Speaker 2:

Yeah, yeah.

Speaker 1:

But I think what I mentioned about the winter and summer I think probably the summer's more and the winter's probably slightly more less.

Speaker 2:

Okay.

Speaker 1:

As I mentioned.

Speaker 2:

So you don't tend to use the heater in the winter at all to keep yourself warm?

Speaker 1:

Not really, I want to say.

Speaker 2:

Okay.

Speaker 1:

No.

Speaker 2:

Does that mean that this apartment is sufficiently warm enough that you don't really feel-

Speaker 1:

I would say yeah.

Speaker 2:

... so cold in the winter?

Speaker 1:

I would say yeah. I would yes, yeah to that.

Speaker 2:

Okay. Was your previous house like that? Your previous home?

Speaker 1:

I was with my family so if you want me to describe the family one I can.

Speaker 2:

Yeah, did you grow up using air con as well?

Speaker 1:

Ah yeah in the family one. So like that's pretty much really it.

Speaker 2:

Oh, okay.

Speaker 1:

That's the summer.

Speaker 2:

Oh, wow.

Speaker 1:

That's a lot.

Speaker 2:

Yeah.

Speaker 1:

So you can see as we continue on it's slightly low. And yeah, it doesn't compare much about it.

Speaker 2:

No it doesn't. Okay. That's interesting. Thank you.

Speaker 1:

Yeah, it's quite basic.

Speaker 2:

Who's your provider, Click Energy?

Speaker 1:

Click Energy, yeah.

Speaker 2:

How did you chose them?

Speaker 1:

I'll be honest with you, I was sort of quite hooked with the discount that I got with them.

Speaker 2:

Okay.

Speaker 1:

Yeah. And they're actually going to move to AGL. I got an email.

Speaker 2:

You're going to?

Speaker 1:

No, no, no. Their company's moved to AGL.

Speaker 2:

Oh right, it's been taken over by AGL or something?

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

Speaker 2:

So when you said that they offered discounts, how did you come to be aware of the discounts? Was it an ad? Or word of mouth?

Speaker 1:

I'll be honest with you, I went to my local Westfields just down the road at Liverpool, and I'll be honest with you, a sales person just got me.

Speaker 2:

Okay.

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

Speaker 2:

Okay. So what sort of discounts do they offer?

Speaker 1:

I think it was, I think my gas is like 20% off my bill. And I think my electricity at the time was probably around 35% off.

Speaker 2:

Oh wow, that's a good incentive.

Speaker 1:

So that's why the gas bill's quite low. So yeah.

Speaker 2:

Who were you with previously?

Speaker 1:

Who was I with previously? Energy Australia, yeah.

Speaker 2:

Okay. So now you said you're going to be moving to AGL.

Speaker 1:

No, no, no, I'm not moving.

Speaker 2:

Sorry, they're moving.

Speaker 1:

The company. I can show you the email that says that. Click Energy's been sort of take over by AGL.

Speaker 2:

Will that change then how they bill you and the discount structures that they have currently?

Speaker 1:

Probably yes.

Speaker 2:

Yeah.

Speaker 1:

Which I will probably be slightly worried about if I look at my next bill. I'll probably give them a call and say, "What's going on?"

Speaker 2:

Okay.

Speaker 1:

So yeah.

Speaker 2:

Okay, should be interesting. See how that unfolds.

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

Speaker 2:

Okay, can you tell me about any other major electrical appliances that you have in your home? Can you remember when you purchased them? Your reasons for purchasing them?

Speaker 1:

Like I said the fridge is probably the main one, the washing machine.

Speaker 2:

Is your dryer?

Speaker 1:

The dryer was included here so I didn't buy that.

Speaker 2:

Okay. Do you use it though?

Speaker 1:

Yes, yeah. That's a good question also. I don't know, maybe I tend to sort of think about using that more in the summer time, whereas I dry it like, maybe it's hot. That's actually a good question because that's probably, do I use it more in the winter or summer? It's probably more equal because I'm a little bit lazy guy don't want to go hang it out.

Speaker 2:

Hanging our clothes on the line. I can understand that.

Speaker 1:

And it dries or it might not.

Speaker 2:

I can understand that.

Speaker 1:

That's probably causing the electricity go a little bit higher too.

Speaker 2:

So do you think the convenience then of just being able to dry your clothes in the dryer is worth the additional costs, perhaps, that it adds to your energy bill?

Speaker 1:

I don't think it's that much on top of the bill, so I'll probably say yes.

Speaker 2:

Okay.

Speaker 1:

I'm not conscious of maybe my usage of the dryer and how much that actually adds on. So I don't know. But I would say not much.

Speaker 2:

Okay, Okay. So when I asked you earlier about energy ratings, do you know if that was at the top of mind when you were purchasing some of your appliances? For example, your fridge says three and a half stars, yeah, energy rating. When you were purchasing your fridge was that a big consideration for you or one of the considerations?

Speaker 1:

I wouldn't say it was a big one, I think it's probably in the middle.

Speaker 2:

In the middle?

Speaker 1:

Yeah. Well like I said before maybe the usage, the size of the fridge as well. Obviously when I bought the fridge I was conscious of if it was going to fit in. Like I said, what was inside of it, and that's the usage.

Speaker 2:

The features.

Speaker 1:

And then I think it was probably like the fourth, fifth level up, next category when it comes to the energy.

Speaker 2:

Yeah, okay.

Speaker 1:

Because I know if it's like really low it's going there's going to be a lot of usage, and I don't know, that could maybe affect the price, too. I actually don't know. So yeah.

Speaker 2:

Okay, okay. Do you think about the environment at all?

Speaker 1:

I think probably maybe, like I said, not using the air con and having shorter showers, or...

Speaker 2:

Is it something that you think about consciously in your every day life?

Speaker 1:

I wouldn't say consciously, no.

Speaker 2:

Okay, okay, okay. But do you think you're influenced by maybe some of the messages in the media about environmental consciousness?

Speaker 1:

I'd like to know more, actually.

Speaker 2:

Yeah?

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

Speaker 2:

Okay, okay.

Speaker 1:

If I maybe got a bill or something that told me more about it. Or, if there was more information about it and by doing this that would sort of assist me with my bill, or my electricity and gas. I'd like to know more.

Speaker 2:

Okay.

Speaker 1:

I actually don't like, you saw my bill, it's got nothing so yeah.

Speaker 2:

Okay. With your gas bill it seems quite low, right? Was that...

Speaker 1:

That's quite low, yeah. But the one with the bar one was quite high.

Speaker 2:

It was quite high, yeah, yeah.

Speaker 1:

That was on the summer so I was like-

Speaker 2:

The contrast, right?

Speaker 1:

Yeah the 150 so, that's what I said about summer. It's more about the summer.

Speaker 2:

Yeah, actually so any sort of support should look at times of the year, like summer, what kind of specific things that you can do in the summer to help reduce your costs, right?

Speaker 1:

Yeah. But seeing that, yeah I would definitely, if that was in any way in regards to assisting me to make that bill go down in the summer.

Speaker 2:

Yeah, absolutely.

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

Speaker 2:

At the end of day that's what we want to learn about, what are some of the challenges that you experience with your energy use and how can we help to navigate some of those challenges and come up with a solution to help you feel more empowered. Yeah. So let's talk about how energy's consumed in your home. So talked about some of the major ones that you use and the things that you consider when you use energy in your home. So billing costs. Comfort? Would you say comfort is a big priority?

Speaker 1:

What do you mean by comfort, though?

Speaker 2:

So when you use energy in the summer time you turn the air con on because it's comfortable, yeah?

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

Speaker 2:

Better than not having, sweating and being uncomfortable just to save money on your bill. So you would prioritize your comfort over maybe the cost?

Speaker 1:

Well that definitely applies in the summer.

Speaker 2:

In the summer?

Speaker 1:

In the summer when it comes to more air con usage. I wouldn't say it's like fully comfortable but sort of somewhat comfortable, sort of bearable.

Speaker 2:

Okay.

Speaker 1:

I recharge my laptop and my phones every day, use the TV.

Speaker 2:

Yeah.

Speaker 1:

Microwave, fridge, and the kettle. I don't know if that counts, kettle. Oven. Like I said, washing machine, dryer probably every once a week or every nine days, that's just on average. Shower. What else? What else would I be using?

Speaker 2:

Vacuum?

Speaker 1:

Vacuum, that's rare.

Speaker 2:

Kettle?

Speaker 1:

Kettle.

Speaker 2:

Do you have like food processors, things like that?

Speaker 1:

I've got a toaster.

Speaker 2:

Do you do a lot of cooking?

Speaker 1:

So-so.

Speaker 2:

Yeah, what about your partner?

Speaker 1:

Yeah she's more, yeah.

Speaker 2:

Okay.

Speaker 1:

Good question, what else? Oh I haven't mentioned the dishwasher. Probably the dishwasher's a little more regular.

Speaker 2:

Yeah, you would use it every day maybe?

Speaker 1:

Probably maybe every three, four days.

Speaker 2:

Okay.

Speaker 1:

And I think one of the things that I did recently was I used to do two and a half hour, I don't know why. You can see. If I press it on I always used to do the cycle for some reason was that. And then I don't know why I just stuck with that. And then I changed it to one hour.

Speaker 2:

Okay.

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

Speaker 2:

When did you start changing it to one hour?

Speaker 1:

Probably last year because I just realized why do I really need two and a half hours to wash my dishes? And that was the normal mode. So I used a 60 minute mode and there's like intensive, heavy so.

Speaker 2:

Oh wow, that's actually interesting the way you changed your behavior to more responsible.

Speaker 1:

Yeah, because I think that would definitely, it affects the bill.

Speaker 2:

It would, it would. I imagine it would.

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

Speaker 2:

So were you thinking consciously then about being a responsible consumer of energy?

Speaker 1:

I'll be honest with you, my partner Tina tells me, "Why are you using two and a half hours when I can just do it on one hour?" She still didn't tell me, or we didn't discuss about the electricity use, but I think it was more of a time thing.

Speaker 2:

Yeah.

Speaker 1:

But we didn't talk about the electricity use.

Speaker 2:

But time is an interesting concept, too.

Speaker 1:

Yeah in perspective yes, it's more electricity use compared, two and a half hours to one hour.

Speaker 2:

Yeah, yeah.

Speaker 1:

So the electricity use and that would be, I don't think it's quite high, I would probably say-

Speaker 2:

It would suck up a lot of energy, I imagine.

Speaker 1:

yeah.

Speaker 2:

Yeah, that's good. So then you do have discussions about energy use with your partner?

Speaker 1:

That was basically time, but yeah. Like sometimes we talk about the dryer, like why do you need to do it you can just go outside. And I'm just like, "Na."

Speaker 2:

Okay.

Speaker 1:

I just want to get it over and done with. So that's the point, like if you do it outside you save electricity and all that stuff.

Speaker 2:

Yeah.

Speaker 1:

And like our load for the washing machine we tend to use more of the cold water. Because I know with hot water, I think personally, it probably is more electricity use. And then, like I said, the load and also with the time as well. I think we used to do one and a half hours but we've reduced it down to probably around 30, 40 minutes.

Speaker 2:

Oh, okay.

Speaker 1:

I don't know why. I don't know why. But yeah, is it time wasting? Probably. But yeah.

Speaker 2:

That's good to know. I mean it's important to understand how you use your energy. And you're using the washing machine, for example, do you think about using that cold water function as opposed to hot water because you're trying to save on your bill there?

Speaker 1:

I wouldn't say saving bill but I think we just prefer using cold water, maybe it is probably because of electricity.

Speaker 2:

Thing is I'm trying to understand is that is it part of your decision making part of costs, saving costs? Or is it more...

Speaker 1:

Personally I think it's more effective using cold water than hot water.

Speaker 2:

Okay, it's just a preference, yeah?

Speaker 1:

It's probably a preference but I don't know about in regards to, probably is. I think yes, that you're using cold water than hot water to save electricity probably yes, in hindsight.

Speaker 2:

But at that time it wasn't really?

Speaker 1:

Probably no, no.

Speaker 2:

When you were growing up or before you moved here living in your family home, did you use cold water more when you did laundry? Is that something you learnt and you brought into your own home?

Speaker 1:

No, I want to say no.

Speaker 2:

Okay.

Speaker 1:

I think I learnt it because when I was renting, before I was here I was renting and that as well and my room mate and all that stuff, they started using it.

Speaker 2:

Okay.

Speaker 1:

And that's probably when they said, "Oh, saving electricity, works better." That's probably where I got it from. But back in the day with the family and that was a good mix, if not leaning towards more hot water.

Speaker 2:

Okay, okay, okay.

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

Speaker 2:

Would you say that there are practices within your family that have influenced your own energy use practices now? Growing up, or?

Speaker 1:

Well if I had a garden I'd probably be very conscious of like reusing water.

Speaker 2:

Okay.

Speaker 1:

That's probably one thing I'd probably be conscious of.

Speaker 2:

So you had a garden growing up? With your family?

Speaker 1:

Like a family, yeah. They made me use the shower water, all that stuff. Or reusable water, like water from other sources, and just used it for like garden and all that stuff. Or like washing a car or whatever.

Speaker 2:

Yeah, okay.

Speaker 1:

What else, I don't know.

Speaker 2:

That's all right, we'll move on. How many rooms did you say you had here? Three bedrooms, yeah? Are there any rooms that you avoid? Or do you use all?

Speaker 1:

Are you talking about the new place?

Speaker 2:

Sorry, this.

Speaker 1:

For this place?

Speaker 2:

Yes. Yeah, one plus study here, right?

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

Speaker 2:

And then the new place is three bedrooms?

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

Speaker 2:

Okay, so in this place are there any rooms that you avoid? That'd be difficult wouldn't it? In one plus study?

Speaker 1:

I probably say no. I probably try to avoid using that.

Speaker 2:

That's the laundry?

Speaker 1:

Like the laundry.

Speaker 2:

Yeah, okay.

Speaker 1:

But no. Or maybe using less of the TV or less of the PlayStation. Maybe using less of the air con, and maybe just opening my windows up more because I'm using electricity as we speak.

Speaker 2:

Okay, okay. Can you tell me on an average day what appliances, materials that you use that consume energy?

Speaker 1:

Average day?

Speaker 2:

Average day, yeah.

Speaker 1:

Yeah, for me laptop charger, phone charger, TV, fridge, microwave, maybe the dishwasher, definitely the oven, definitely the kitchen top.

Speaker 2:

How often would you cook?

Speaker 1:

Oven, probably nearly every single day.

Speaker 2:

Oh, okay.

Speaker 1:

Kitchen top probably maybe every two, three days, depending what we're cooking. But that's definitely every single day.

Speaker 2:

Okay.

Speaker 1:

Microwave probably every single second, third day.

Speaker 2:

Yeah.

Speaker 1:

So that's quite popular too. And then the washing machine, dryer like I said probably maybe once a week. But I think I mentioned those two. Shower, I don't know if shower counts at all, but, yeah.

Speaker 2:

Okay, great. Thank you. So what do you think about how much energy you use, personally?

Speaker 1:

I probably want to say medium. But I think overall, I think it's a probably a low level.

Speaker 2:

Low, yeah.

Speaker 1:

But I think it's probably teetering towards to medium level. It's not high.

Speaker 2:

Okay, low to medium.

Speaker 1:

But yeah, but I don't know what based in what numbers. That's what I don't know.

Speaker 2:

Yeah, it's just an average really. So what do you think then about how much energy that people from your shared cultural background use? Do you have conversations about energy use?

Speaker 1:

I do, don't ask me why, but I with my account I always do my mom's bills with her address as well, and hers is high.

Speaker 2:

Oh is it?

Speaker 1:

Quite high.

Speaker 2:

Okay, okay. Is it based on the number of people in her household?

Speaker 1:

She's only living by herself so she's quite high?

Speaker 2:

Have you explored why that might be?

Speaker 1:

She loves TV, leaving the TV on. She loves-

Speaker 2:

Does she live by herself?

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

Speaker 2:

Okay.

Speaker 1:

She loves leaving the TV on. Maybe using like the air fryer, or oven, microwave. Maybe more the washing machine.

Speaker 2:

Okay.

Speaker 1:

Yeah, she's definitely a high user. Yeah, based on the bills I've been getting for her place, yeah definitely.

Speaker 2:

Okay. So in terms of your knowledge about your energy consumption how much do you think a fridge uses?

Speaker 1:

Fridge uses? Can I give it maybe like a rating? Or? I don't know.

Speaker 2:

How ever you want's fine. Do you think it uses a lot of energy? [crosstalk 00:29:05].

Speaker 1:

I'm not going to say a lot. I'm going to say probably towards the medium side of it. I don't think it's low, so I wouldn't say low, no.

Speaker 2:

What about lighting?

Speaker 1:

Lighting?

Speaker 2:

How much energy do you think?

Speaker 1:

I use these, apparently these, is it like LED lights or something like that?

Speaker 2:

Yeah.

Speaker 1:

So I'm going to probably say low.

Speaker 2:

So because you own this apartment, right, you would have had to make decisions about which sorts of lights, yeah?

Speaker 1:

Correct.

Speaker 2:

So how did you make that decision? What were the considerations for these lights that you chose?

Speaker 1:

I'll be honest with you I think when I got the place they recommend me to do this government thing.

Speaker 2:

Okay.

Speaker 1:

It was like government like light bulb thing where you register and you get like a, what's the word? Not a plumber, not a technician, what's the lighting person? To come in and they give you a recommendation.

Speaker 2:

Electrician?

Speaker 1:

Yeah electrician. And they give you recommendations for it. And then depending on your status or whatever it was you can get like a government incentive based on the lights that you have purchased. And then they installed it at sort of a discounted rate. It wasn't like full price.

Speaker 2:

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Speaker 1:

Yeah and they didn't really talk about the electricity usage, but I think because I was assuming because there was a government thing where the lights that they provided they were probably aware or conscious of the electricity usage. I would assume probably low. But I might be wrong, I don't know.

Speaker 2:

That's all right.

Speaker 1:

Yep.

Speaker 2:

What about your TV?

Speaker 1:

TV.

Speaker 2:

How often would you watch TV?

Speaker 1:

I would definitely, I don't know if you watch Married at First Sight. But I generally watch that Monday to Wednesday now, or Amazing Race on Sunday. So I would say probably every day, probably say two to three hours a day. And I want to say that's probably high.

Speaker 2:

High, okay.

Speaker 1:

Like before in the past I left the little switch TV thing on but now I've turned it off.

Speaker 2:

Oh, okay.

Speaker 1:

Because I know maybe that little turning off thing, turning on thing could be electricity usage.

Speaker 2:

Cost saving as well, okay, okay. And we've talked about dishwashers. What about music sound systems? Do you?

Speaker 1:

I've got a Bluetooth speaker and all that stuff but I don't use it as much. So I want to say probably low.

Speaker 2:

Low?

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

Speaker 2:

But dishwasher probably high?

Speaker 1:

I actually don't know. When I got it, I'm trying to remember the star rating. Yeah, I'm going to say high. Yeah.

Speaker 2:

Dryer?

Speaker 1:

Dryer I would probably say high, yeah.

Speaker 2:

Okay. How about your air con?

Speaker 1:

Air con electricity usage, probably high. Yeah.

Speaker 2:

But you don't use the heater? The heating function?

Speaker 1:

No, definitely not. I would assume if there was a heating function it would definitely be high, yeah.

Speaker 2:

What about video games and computers?

Speaker 1:

Video games and computers, yeah I use the laptop and the old PlayStation. I'm going to say probably high, too.

Speaker 2:

Mm-hmm (affirmative). Okay.

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

Speaker 2:

Okay. Do you use any hair straightening, hair dryers, grooming appliances?

Speaker 1:

Well a shaver.

Speaker 2:

Yeah?

Speaker 1:

Electronic shaver.

Speaker 2:

What about your partner?

Speaker 1:

The hair stuff? Yeah, yeah.

Speaker 2:

Yeah. Does she do that every day? Use a hair dryer every day? Straightener?

Speaker 1:

Maybe every single second day maybe, yeah.

Speaker 2:

Okay. What about you with your shaver and things.

Speaker 1:

Shaver, I'll probably say, I don't know if it's high, though.

Speaker 2:

Yeah? Low to medium?

Speaker 1:

I'd say, yeah, low to medium.

Speaker 2:

Okay. Are there any other appliances or things that use energy in your home that we haven't talked about?

Speaker 1:

I don't know maybe my NBN modem. I don't know.

Speaker 2:

Okay.

Speaker 1:

No I don't know, my modem.

Speaker 2:

You never know, exactly.

Speaker 1:

What else? What else would I use? PlayStation. I actually have no idea. See I've got a toaster that I use. Maybe the stove top thing in the kitchen.

Speaker 2:

Oh yeah, the range-hood?

Speaker 1:

Range-hood thing. That would definitely would use electricity.

Speaker 2:

Kettle?

Speaker 1:

Kettle, yeah, definitely.

Speaker 2:

Okay, that's all right.

Speaker 1:

I had like a wash basin thing but that's using water, but that would be using electricity.

Speaker 2:

Unless it's hot water, then gas?

Speaker 1:

It's like a thing to wash, like these ones.

Speaker 2:

Oh right, okay.

Speaker 1:

I don't know if that's using electricity as well as the dryer.

Speaker 2:

Oh okay. Maybe not.

Speaker 1:

Oh the dryer is two star, oh one and a half.

Speaker 2:

One and half stars?

Speaker 1:

No, two stars.

Speaker 2:

Two stars, okay.

Speaker 1:

What a deal.

Speaker 2:

But it was installed already, right?

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

Speaker 2:

As part of the apartment.

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

Speaker 2:

Okay. Now let's talk about your energy use among people from your cultural background.

Speaker 1:

Yep.

Speaker 2:

How much do you know about their energy uses, is there much discussion about any of their use?

Speaker 1:

Ah no, because well my English used to be much worse, so my English is okay. But like if I'm coming from my family or relatives, they don't care, they don't understand. So they're high users. They would have no idea. If you asked them like to look at something, at a bill, or come to electricity, no idea.

Speaker 2:

So they don't generally talk about energy use at all?

Speaker 1:

No, they would have like no idea. They wouldn't know what kilojoule is or all that, no.

Speaker 2:

Oh, okay, yeah. Among people from your cultural background, your Vietnamese background, are there any traditional cultural practices that you're aware of that involve using energy? Cooking practices, for example? Or tools?

Speaker 1:

Or maybe like rice, for example. They use the rice cookers a lot.

Speaker 2:

Okay.

Speaker 1:

Karaoke, I don't know.

Speaker 2:

Yes.

Speaker 1:

I don't know.

Speaker 2:

Karaoke's fun.

Speaker 1:

Ah, never. They would use that a lot...

Speaker 2:

Ways of heating or cooling the home that's different?

Speaker 1:

Probably more the heater type, and they probably like to use those portable heaters.

Speaker 2:

The small, portable heaters.

Speaker 1:

There probably heavy users of the air con, heaters, yeah.

Speaker 2:

Okay.

Speaker 1:

They're probably more, definitely more users of the cleaning stuff like the washing machines and that. They're definitely more high users of that.

Speaker 2:

Okay.

Speaker 1:

But they're not conscious of energy use, or electricity use and all that stuff. They just go all for leather.

Speaker 2:

What about the cost then? If they use it, all of these appliances, surely it adds up, right?

Speaker 1:

It does, yeah.

Speaker 2:

So they're able to afford the bill and they don't [crosstalk 00:36:27].

Speaker 1:

Like I said, my parents' one for the quarter for electricity was close to \$200 per quarter. So that was quite high compared to looking at that graph. And she was quite shocked when I told her, so yeah.

Speaker 2:

So does that impact on how they then use their energy in the home?

Speaker 1:

She would generally ask me, "Why so much?" I said, "Because you're probably leaving the TV on, you're using too much electricity." And she'll probably say, "Yeah." But she'll probably will do nothing about it.

Speaker 2:

It won't change her behavior?

Speaker 1:

No. Yeah, well she's not educated or hasn't been told.

Speaker 2:

Aware of, yeah. Do you think that if there was some sort of program or effort to support her and people like her to reduce her energy use that maybe she would actually do so?

Speaker 1:

If there was an incentive and obviously if it's their language, yeah definitely.

Speaker 2:

Okay, in language, that's important.

Speaker 1:

Yeah, in their language or whatever's like incentive. So I know in New South Wales we have a program, I don't know if it's still there. Like the showerhead for example. I don't know if that's electricity bill related or if you use the water and that. But you could replace it with like a free, not for free but it's like a low cost showerhead to save water or like, I don't know if it's electricity purpose. But something on those lines.

Speaker 2:

Yeah, it's still sustainability, yeah.

Speaker 1:

Or like what are those things, like maybe, what are those things? I don't know what they're called but there's like a box and you can set it up somewhere and it shows you your electricity use. I don't know what it's called.

Speaker 2:

I think I know what you're talking about, yeah. Don't know what it's called.

Speaker 1:

It's fairly newish in New South Wales.

Speaker 2:

Okay.

Speaker 1:

Apparently you can buy those and you can just put that somewhere and then just test all your electricity usage.

Speaker 2:

Oh, really?

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

Speaker 2:

So it helps you to kind of monitor and regulate your usage?

Speaker 1:

Correct, yeah.

Speaker 2:

Oh, right, okay. When did you become aware of that? Is that recent?

Speaker 1:

Yeah recently. I've seen people just get that and be conscious of their electricity or like-

Speaker 2:

Within your community? Or are these people largely outside of your community, Vietnamese community?

Speaker 1:

Definitely not within my community, they would have no idea. Just seeing it on maybe the news or people like talking about it and all that stuff. But definitely not in the Vietnamese community.

Speaker 2:

Have you thought about getting one yourself?

Speaker 1:

Yeah, definitely.

Speaker 2:

Yeah?

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

Speaker 2:

And will you get one for your new home?

Speaker 1:

Ah yeah, if we go to solar.

Speaker 2:

Ah, okay.

Speaker 1:

I think it's sort of more based on, the box thing, was based in solar.

Speaker 2:

Solar, right.

Speaker 1:

But if it was more based on electricity then that would be useful, too. I don't know if they have one of those, but yeah.

Speaker 2:

Okay. Yeah I've asked you about any traditional cultural practices that involve using energy. Yeah, I think we've covered that. What do you think that responsible energy use means to people from your cultural background within Australia?

Speaker 1:

Responsible energy use?

Speaker 2:

Like what does that mean?

Speaker 1:

Like for the cultural background? They would have no idea because number one, it's just more about, if they say responsible they probably think about not to use too much.

Speaker 2:

Okay.

Speaker 1:

But they'll still use too much, if you know what I mean?

Speaker 2:

Yes.

Speaker 1:

So they won't go overboard but they'll still overall, in general, it is a bit excessive. They're probably using too many appliances, or using too much. But I probably wouldn't know what responsible is with regards to how much you're using and all that stuff.

Speaker 2:

Okay.

Speaker 1:

But for the community or like the cultural part of it, it's probably what I've just said.

Speaker 2:

Yeah, okay. So then coming back to you, so what does responsible energy use mean to you?

Speaker 1:

Probably controlling, probably understanding how much, say maybe, appliances or things that use at a time to effect electricity rates, or something like that. Or like usage, sorry. I don't know if that's

sort of close to the answer, but yeah. Like you don't want to be overboard and you don't want to be excessive.

Speaker 2:

Yeah, you still want to be comfortable as well when in your home.

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

Speaker 2:

Okay. So what are some of the main challenges that you face when you thinking about using energy?

Speaker 1:

I think probably one of the things is if I don't use it. If I don't use it I need that benefit, if you know what I mean. It's like if I don't use the TV, I'm not going to watch this. I might have to use the laptop which probably be using more energy to watch a episode. I come home from work in the evening sometimes and I miss watching the TV, but I have to watch it on a laptop and it's probably more usage. I think it's just more if I use less then I am conscious of, yes it may help the bill, but I'm sort of sacrificing things, I guess.

Speaker 2:

Yeah, your own convenience and comfort, yeah?

Speaker 1:

Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Speaker 2:

Okay. So there's a trade-off almost, right?

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

Speaker 2:

So how do you negotiate these challenges? How do you strike a balance?

Speaker 1:

I think I would generally plan on like maybe washing the clothes I said probably one week to nine days. I know if I can hold it longer, but maybe I would sort of push it towards nine days or maybe not using the dryer. Or having less showers, or the time, or using less of the dishwasher. Maybe using less of TV, but I'd be missing a lot of things. Yeah, I don't know if that answers that. But I know sacrifices, but the problem the sacrifice, for example, the TV example is a good one. If I missed an episode I would generally watch on my laptop, but that would generally be more Internet data. Or more usage of the laptop which could be, if not level, or much worse when it comes to the TV.

Speaker 2:

And also probably the enjoyment factor of watching something on TV versus laptop is not quite the same experience, is it?

Speaker 1:

Correct.

Speaker 2:

Okay and so thinking beyond yourself to say people from your cultural background, what do you think are some of the main challenges they face when thinking about using energy? Do you think it's the same challenges that you?

Speaker 1:

No, I wouldn't say it was the same challenges. They don't care.

Speaker 2:

Okay.

Speaker 1:

No, I'm just being with you. They can go create all they don't care about the energy usage or how much stuff they've used and that. They're probably more apparent with the culture they tend to leave a lot of things on. I don't know like the good old thing that we have in Asian cultures when we leave the household we like to leave the lights on, leave the TV on just to avoid robberies.

Speaker 2:

Oh, that's actually very interesting, I do that too in Brisbane.

Speaker 1:

But that's high. Yeah. But that's quite regular.

Speaker 2:

It does add up.

Speaker 1:

My mom does that quite regularly so when she goes out or whatever.

Speaker 2:

But you don't?

Speaker 1:

No, because I'm in an apartment, thank goodness.

Speaker 2:

Yeah.

Speaker 1:

But that's probably a well known thing, they're lights are on. Yeah, the TVs on. Like something's definitely on. They're not aware of the electricity usage but that's a common thing a lot of Asian people do, I guess. Even like using the radio, for example, they would leave that on.

Speaker 2:

Wow, okay. Just giving that impression that somebody's at home, right?

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

Speaker 2:

Just sort of maybe a sense of security or safety?

Speaker 1:

Yeah, yeah.

Speaker 2:

Yeah? Okay. And they continue that practice?

Speaker 1:

Yeah, definitely, definitely, definitely. That's probably a common thing for Asians. Like definitely Vietnamese or Asian cultures where when they leave the household they would leave, like I know that my partner, we talked about their family, they leave, what's it called? Like those cameras.

Speaker 2:

CCTV cameras?

Speaker 1:

But it's like a type of brand. The cameras that activate every thing, so like that the lights are definitely on.

Speaker 2:

Oh yeah.

Speaker 1:

But they leave everything on.

Speaker 2:

Everything.

Speaker 1:

Lights on, and TV on.

Speaker 2:

So you say you don't do that because obviously you live in an apartment. So when you move to your new home, that's still an apartment was well, right?

Speaker 1:

It's apartment but it's kind of quite open-ish.

Speaker 2:

Will you be doing the same?

Speaker 1:

Probably, maybe, maybe. Talking about it, probably not. But maybe at the odd time probably lights on. Maybe not the TV, but lights on, yeah.

Speaker 2:

It's interesting. Are there other cultural practices that affect energy use and the way you think about energy or the way your community thinks about energy? Because I found that really interesting, what you just said, about leaving the lights on.

Speaker 1:

I don't think I could think about anything else. But that's probably the common ones. Yeah, TV, radio, lights on. Everything's on, like literally everything's on, so yeah.

Speaker 2:

How connected are you to the Vietnamese community?

Speaker 1:

Probably was quite well back in the day, but probably not as much now.

Speaker 2:

Not as much? So you wouldn't have big get togethers or entertaining people in your home?

Speaker 1:

Used to but not as much.

Speaker 2:

Not like you used to, no?

Speaker 1:

No.

Speaker 2:

Okay. How would you say your energy use has changed as you've lived in Australia for longer?

Speaker 1:

I think it's more awareness and understanding of the purpose. Like in my time getting electricity bills, like I said when I moved into a place and all that stuff, and I got the property seven years ago and all that stuff. I think personally, I think for me, you get the first bill shock and then you're like, "Oh, what am I going to do with it?" I think it's probably the same, like a lot of people especially culturally, myself definitely, we get the bill shock and we're like, "Oh, why is it so much?" But then you need to think about actually what needs to be done, I guess. And then, like I said, the practice of talking about the dishwasher, or the dryer, and doing less of that. Or using less of the air con, and just sacrificing things to ensure that-

Speaker 2:

You don't get that bill shock.

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

Speaker 2:

Yeah, okay.

Speaker 1:

Yeah, that's probably developed in the last, I would say definitely when my partner moved in. Probably in the last four years. Not the first year we were together, like she moved in here. Probably, say, more the four years when we we're getting bill shock and we're using things together. And then we're like, "Oh!" We sit down together and look, what's with this bill? And then we're thinking, yeah, to use less and that's the sacrifice thing, too.

Speaker 2:

Yeah. And where do you go to to access information about the things that you can do, practices around energy use?

Speaker 1:

Honestly, I don't know. I think we just talk about it.

Speaker 2:

Okay.

Speaker 1:

I'll be honest with you, I don't know.

Speaker 2:

Just your own initiative.

Speaker 1:

Yeah. I might see it on the news or something like that. I don't know.

Speaker 2:

Okay, okay. How would you say your energy use has changed since COVID?

Speaker 1:

My energy use during COVID was high, as you probably saw with the bills and that. They were definitely high. We were at home a lot, so we were working at home.

Speaker 2:

Working from home?

Speaker 1:

Yeah, well for me it was three months, but for her it was six months.

Speaker 2:

What do you both do for work?

Speaker 1:

My title is faculty supervisor for Fairfield City Council, so I control all the gyms and all the centers and that in Fairfield.

Speaker 2:

Okay.

Speaker 1:

So we were out for three months with the COVID.

Speaker 2:

So you had to work from home.

Speaker 1:

So we yeah, worked from home. And then my partner's a copywriter so she was out of the office in the city for six months.

Speaker 2:

Six months?

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

Speaker 2:

Wow.

Speaker 1:

If not, probably, not longer. Wait, let me think about it. So it was around March and then she came back to the office in, no it's longer. She probably came back in the office in November. So probably eight months.

Speaker 2:

Wow, okay.

Speaker 1:

So she was definitely doing all her work at home. And as we speak, I think she works at home on Wednesdays.

Speaker 2:

Okay.

Speaker 1:

Yeah, because of the city.

Speaker 2:

And you've gone back?

Speaker 1:

Yeah, come back.

Speaker 2:

Okay, yeah. So compared to pre-COVID, post-COVID now, or we're going through COVID, what were the difference in your bills quite marginal or significant?

Speaker 1:

Oh I'd say significant before, like during COVID and all that stuff, yeah bills were much higher.

Speaker 2:

So do you think you are now back to pre-COVID levels?

Speaker 1:

No.

Speaker 2:

No?

Speaker 1:

No. Even though I'm not working from and home and that.

Speaker 2:

How many days were you working from home before?

Speaker 1:

I wouldn't say pre-COVID. It's a tough one. I wouldn't to say pre-COVID, I'm not convinced yet because obviously Tina still works one day a week here at home.

Speaker 2:

And you, do you still?

Speaker 1:

No, I'm at the office.

Speaker 2:

Okay. Five days a week?

Speaker 1:

But I'm generally like at home, yeah like using my laptops and my phones and all that Stuff. But I wouldn't say pre-COVID, no. I wouldn't say that fully committed.

Speaker 2:

That's fine, that's okay.

Speaker 1:

Were you saying something before?

Speaker 2:

No, no, no no. I'm sure I'll remember if I was saying anything else.

Speaker 1:

You were saying something and then, yeah.

Speaker 2:

Perhaps let's talk about your, oh yeah, I was asking about whether you worked from home maybe how many days a week would you work from home? Or are you fully back in the office?

Speaker 1:

No, I'm fully back in the office, but before-

Speaker 2:

So today's your day off or something? Or?

Speaker 1:

No, I started work at 8:30.

Speaker 2:

Oh it is late, isn't it.

Speaker 1:

Yeah, 8:30 to like 2:00 -ish.

Speaker 2:

Oh, okay.

Speaker 1:

So it's like some days I get, my Fridays generally I get five, six hours but the rest of the week is quite full on.

Speaker 2:

Okay. Oh, wow.

Speaker 1:

So 8:30 to around probably say around 4:30, something like that.

Speaker 2:

Right then, okay. All right. So let's talk about your views on Australian energy policy, okay? So what do you know and think about Australia energy policy for culturally and linguistically diverse residents in Australia? What do you know or think about?

Speaker 1:

Like in terms of?

Speaker 2:

Energy policy, just do you know anything about, do you feel empowered? Do you feel supported by the Australian energy policy? Because remember earlier when we were talking about the lights, even your selection of these lights, you said there was some kind of government discount.

Speaker 1:

I'd know maybe about government discounts but I wouldn't know about policies. Are you talking about things per kilowatt? I actually don't know. I don't know much about policies sort of thing.

Speaker 2:

Okay, that's what I wanted to know, like how much do you actually know.

Speaker 1:

Yeah I think the cultural aspect of people I have no idea, that's probably the last thing they're, so, no.

Speaker 2:

Okay.

Speaker 1:

So, yeah. The only thing I could really think about is like recently the government or somebody that had sort of agreements, and then because of that the bills have gone slightly smaller. But probably that's through like an agreement between both, maybe through all electrical retailers where they would sort of negotiate or discuss about electricity rates, and all that stuff. And that's probably caused a lot of people to switch and compare their electricity. But that's probably really the only thing. I don't do that stuff, I have no idea where to begin with that, like comparison.

Speaker 2:

The compare the market type service, yeah?

Speaker 1:

I have no idea.

Speaker 2:

Do you think that's useful, though?

Speaker 1:

I would say yes, but I don't know where to start with that.

Speaker 2:

Do you know anyone in your community or within your immediate-

Speaker 1:

They would have no idea.

Speaker 2:

No?

Speaker 1:

If you thought I would know of it. Just be conscious, for my community and my area their English is not the greatest. And then coming to using a computer, or doing research when it comes to those things or comparisons it's quite, not good.

Speaker 2:

Yeah, so it's inaccessible in a way?

Speaker 1:

Yeah, or like they haven't been taught, or like how to, shown. So they would have no idea.

Speaker 2:

Made aware, educated. Okay, okay. So that's a real gap, isn't it?

Speaker 1:

Yeah. Like you mentioned before, if someone speaks something in Vietnamese or incentivizes them to sort of understand electricity use, they would maybe be a good start, because people don't know.

Speaker 2:

Yeah, you think they would be interested?

Speaker 1:

Oh, I wouldn't say...

Speaker 2:

Because you know how you said they don't care, but to get them to care?

Speaker 1:

If they were shown or taught, or understanding the savings in front of them by going in this and doing that or whatever, then probably yes. But it's a hard sell, if you know what I mean.

Speaker 2:

Yeah.

Speaker 1:

But the probably is with the Vietnamese or Asian community, like I said, I got hooked up with a sales person down the road in the shopping center. A lot of people would do the same thing, like the Asian, they'd go, "Oh yeah, yeah, we'll just sign up for it." Understanding why their electricity usage, they don't care. Like they just go up and they don't understand. They'll just sign the contracts and go for it. They're like sort of reckless, I guess.

Speaker 2:

Okay. Would you say that they're more well off then? That they're able to afford the bill when it comes? Because they use everything, they don't really care, so when the bill comes it's huge. So they can still pay it no problems? So cost is probably not a huge concern really?

Speaker 1:

They're not concerned. I wouldn't say well off because, they are probably. A lot of this area and south west Sydney and those areas are probably are. Like you'd be surprised. Everyone pictures south west Sydney, whatever, they're poor and all that. They're not. Like you'd be surprised, a lot of people have money or disposable income around this area. I'd say it's 50/50.

Speaker 2:

Okay.

Speaker 1:

And I think when it comes to Asian community, like you go to Cabramatta. Yes, they think it's a poor suburb and all that stuff. But, actually, a lot of people out there they probably have a lot of disposable income. And because of that they don't care about the electricity bill. They just pay the bill and just move on.

Speaker 2:

So it's really too different issues, you have the cost and the bill shock. Bill shock is probably more of the problem than the cost.

Speaker 1:

Yeah. Like for example, my parents' one, recently for the quarter for electricity it was \$200. She's like, "Yeah, yeah, I'll just pay it off." Done. If it was like three or 400, then you'd be like, "Ah no, I've got to do something about it." So yeah.

Speaker 2:

Yeah, yeah. Okay.

Speaker 1:

I think there has to be a level of assurance.

Speaker 2:

Yes, yes.

Speaker 1:

Or when it comes to like the level of yeah, you'll see they're happy to pay for it, whatever. But then there's a level of, "What's going on here?"

Speaker 2:

There's a limit.

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

Speaker 2:

Okay, okay. What do you know or think about any programs? Are you aware of any programs available right now to support people of culturally and linguistically diverse?

Speaker 1:

Like a majority of those people like the cultural aspects, like Centrelink and all that stuff, and they probably they don't know. But there is a program that I know that you can get, I think I can get electricity discounts per quarter because you're on Centrelink. Or like concessions or something like that.

Speaker 2:

It's through Centrelink?

Speaker 1:

It's not through Centrelink but it's like Service New South Wales, which is our government thing.

Speaker 2:

Oh, okay.

Speaker 1:

And then because of that I think you get like \$150 per year or \$200 off your electricity bill because you are qualified for Centrelink.

Speaker 2:

Okay, have to qualify for Centrelink.

Speaker 1:

Yeah, that's for New South Wales only. Obviously is probably different in Queensland.

Speaker 2:

So you don't think many people are aware of this? Of the opportunity?

Speaker 1:

Many people are definitely not aware of it.

Speaker 2:

And you're aware of it because maybe you work for the council so you know more about?

Speaker 1:

Yeah, that.

Speaker 2:

Yeah, government.

Speaker 1:

Or my mom is a pensioner, so she gets it.

Speaker 2:

Okay.

Speaker 1:

Yeah, so yeah. She didn't sort of speak to me about this stuff.

Speaker 2:

Oh okay, she doesn't?

Speaker 1:

Like I said, I told you, my mom's bill's under my account thing as well.

Speaker 2:

So you manage that for her?

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

Speaker 2:

Okay.

Speaker 1:

So that's probably the only program I can think of. I don't know the name of it, maybe you could search it up. But it's like Centrelink and with your concession card holder you get, I would say, quite a big discount.

Speaker 2:

Okay.

Speaker 1:

I can't remember what it is, but that's probably the program, yeah.

Speaker 2:

Okay, I'll look it up. So it's based-

Speaker 1:

I can look it up if you want.

Speaker 2:

Okay sure, so this is New South Wales you mentioned?

Speaker 1:

Yeah New South Wales, yeah.

Speaker 2:

Does that help her feel empowered, do you think?

Speaker 1:

I don't think empowered is the right word. I think it's just like a, I don't like to say the word benefit because, you know Centrelink and tax payers money and all that stuff. It's just part of the process of benefit that you get.

Speaker 2:

It's more benefit rather than empowerment?

Speaker 1:

Yeah it's more of a benefit, definitely not empower. It's not like something, "Oh, I'm going to Centrelink and I'm going to get this." Electricity rebate. Yeah, so it's called Applied for Seniors Energy Rebate or there's one called a Family Energy Rebate, or a Low Income Household Rebate. So there's three of them. The Seniors Energy one which my parents is with, they get a \$200 per household discount per year.

Speaker 2:

\$200, okay, okay. Yeah.

Speaker 1:

And then there's a family one which I don't know how much that is. Family one if you have children but you also have to be under Centrelink as well.

Speaker 2:

Okay.

Speaker 1:

And it doesn't tell you how much it is. And I think the low income household one is also with Centrelink. I think that one's like, I think it's just \$100. Oh wow, okay. Yeah I think it's probably just half of that, something like that.

Speaker 2:

Okay.

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

Speaker 2:

So, it sounds like there are programs out there but probably not enough awareness?

Speaker 1:

Yeah, yeah, definitely not enough awareness about it.

Speaker 2:

If you could tell the government one thing about energy use amongst culturally, linguistically diverse people, what would it be?

Speaker 1:

I think it's more education. I think it's just more about awareness and people understanding and the difficulties that people like Vietnamese, like culturally and all that stuff. They don't understand, they don't know. They need people to translate or to explain things to them.

Speaker 2:

In language.

Speaker 1:

They don't anything about all like things being spent. I bet you like probably 80% of those people don't know about those incentives or benefits, they have no idea. Just...

Speaker 2:

So we need to make it more accessible for them?

Speaker 1:

Yeah accessible, and awareness, and education, and sort of telling people the benefits of it. Yeah.

Speaker 2:

Okay. So if you could ask the government or anyone else to do something to help? I think you've pretty much answered the question.

Speaker 1:

Yeah I think it'd be just like maybe more spending-

Speaker 2:

About their energy use probably be?

Speaker 1:

The government probably needs to spend a little bit on actually understanding and giving awareness of those. Maybe educational programs about electricity usage, and ways that you could save, and rebates, and all that sort of stuff. Like I said, the majority of people don't know, have no idea about it, which is quite alarming actually. Yeah, you'll be surprised. I'll give you an example, like even though this is not relevant. The Fairfield area which is just nearby, we just had a Active Kids Expo last Sunday and we had 476 people. But based on New South Wales Government the suburb of Fairfield is actually the lowest of using rebates.

Speaker 2:

Oh, okay.

Speaker 1:

It's one of the lowest. Yeah like Liverpool's quite high which is this suburb, but Fairfield is actually one of the lowest in New South Wales using rebates in general.

Speaker 2:

Wow.

Speaker 1:

Because no one knows about it.

Speaker 2:

No one knows?

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

Speaker 2:

Wow, okay. So that's really important, that awareness is key here.

Speaker 1:

I don't live in Fairfield, which is literally 15 minutes down the road. But Liverpool's quite high, their usage of rebates is quite high. But based on the information in the Expo that I did last week, yeah it was quite-

Speaker 2:

Low.

Speaker 1:

One of the lowest when it comes to usage.

Speaker 2:

What's the demographic make-up there in Fairfield?

Speaker 1:

Are you talking about Asians or culture?

Speaker 2:

Culture, yeah.

Speaker 1:

Arabic.

Speaker 2:

Arabic?

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

Speaker 2:

Okay.

Speaker 1:

Yeah. And at Cabramatta which is nearby, that's all Vietnamese.

Speaker 2:

Oh, yeah.

Speaker 1:

Or Asian.

Speaker 2:

Okay.

Speaker 1:

So if you go to that area and you ask this they'll be, "I have no idea."

Speaker 2:

Sydney's quite segregated, culturally.

Speaker 1:

Multicultural.

Speaker 2:

It seems so.

Speaker 1:

Very multicultural.

Speaker 2:

So different suburbs have particular concentrations of cultural groups?

Speaker 1:

Correct. Definitely. Like Wentworthville, the place I bought, it's all Indian.

Speaker 2:

Oh, okay.

Speaker 1:

The majority Indian.

Speaker 2:

Okay.

Speaker 1:

It's unique. In New South Wales, and Sydney especially, it's very unique, and very multicultural. It's good, so yeah.

Speaker 2:

Why did you chose where you bought your new home? Why did you chose that area?

Speaker 1:

The reason is because we wanted something obviously within our price range in Wentworthville, and it was sort of close to the city. Because obviously Tina works in the city. I work probably like down the road, like 20 minutes down the road. And sort of that areas was close to Parramatta which is, Parramatta's sort of a goodish area. It's comparatively they're saying it's the new CBD.

Speaker 2:

I've heard that too, yeah.

Speaker 1:

And we thought the price was reasonable. So we thought we want to go closer towards the city.

Speaker 2:

Do you worry about being disconnected from your community?

Speaker 1:

I'd say yes, because I was sort of connected with my community in the past but now not as much. Obviously with COVID, or we don't know about programs or awareness or things in regards to connecting with the community. I am quite affected, or maybe it's where I'm living at in Liverpool, there's not much of the Vietnamese community. Where if I went towards Cabramatta there's heaps of programs or heaps of things I could understand in the community and that. So yeah.

Speaker 2:

Where does your mom live? Did you tell me that?

Speaker 1:

Vietnam.

Speaker 2:

Oh your mom is in Vietnam as well.

Speaker 1:

So we're all from Vietnam. So I've obviously got the Australian accent and that. My mom's from Vietnam, I'm from Vietnam, so I'm from like Dak.

Speaker 2:

No I mean where does she live currently?

Speaker 1:

Oh live, Bossley Park so that's literally like 20-ish minutes down the road, something like that.

Speaker 2:

Okay, okay. And will that still be close enough when you move to your new place?

Speaker 1:

No.

Speaker 2:

No? Oh, wow.

Speaker 1:

No. It's further out.

Speaker 2:

Further out?

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

Speaker 2:

Okay. Do you see her often?

Speaker 1:

Maybe once a week.

Speaker 2:

Okay.

Speaker 1:

Yeah, yeah, if she needs help with stuff, so yeah.

Speaker 2:

So is there a strong Vietnamese community where she is? Or?

Speaker 1:

No, that's more Italian.

Speaker 2:

More Italian? Okay, okay.

Speaker 1:

The Asian, Vietnamese area, the number one spot is Cabramatta, which is literally down the road.

Speaker 2:

Down the road, okay.

Speaker 1:

That's 100% like Vietnamese.

Speaker 2:

So it's still close enough to be connected to the community if you wanted to. If you wanted to.

Speaker 1:

So Bossley Park to Cabramatta it's probably around a 20 minute drive.

Speaker 2:

Okay.

Speaker 1:

I'd say yes because there's a lot of Buddhist temples and temple stuff around this area, and that sort of has the Vietnamese community and that as well. She is quite connected with all that stuff, not me.

Speaker 2:

Okay, okay. Let's continue. So, lastly do you have any other things you'd like to say about your own energy use or energy use amongst your community or other culturally, linguistically diverse?

Speaker 1:

I think I sort of mentioned it all. Like I said I'm very interested in regards to ways of saving electricity and how to, like you've seen my bill, you've seen there's no information. You said comparing neighbors, I've never heard that until today.

Speaker 2:

Oh really? Okay.

Speaker 1:

I've never seen a bill that has information to compare with your neighbors or other things.

Speaker 2:

It shows you your usage compared to the households around you.

Speaker 1:

Never seen that before.

Speaker 2:

In Queensland that's what we get.

Speaker 1:

Never seen it before.

Speaker 2:

Okay.

Speaker 1:

So maybe bills or maybe ways to save electricity. I think, like I said, I've mentioned all. Yeah.

Speaker 2:

Okay. Well I've come to the end of all my questions for you.

Speaker 1:

Oh, cool.

Speaker 2:

Thank you so much for your time.

Speaker 1:

Yep.

Speaker 2:

I will now turn this off.

Speaker 1:

Hopefully the information required was okay.

Speaker 2:

Oh yes, it was. Thank you. I really particularly enjoyed hearing about the cultural practices. It's always intr-

Interview day/time: February 11, 2021.

Participant: Vietnamese male.

Speaker 1:

That's okay, and we'll get started. As I mentioned, A, thanks for taking part. The project is about supporting CALD Australians to be empowered energy consumers. There's no right or wrong answers, it's just about your own views and experiences, so don't feel there's a certain way you need to answer. You've kindly agreed to take part. Really, just to start us off, can you tell us a bit about your background? Can you start with your age and what year you were born in?

A:

I was born in 1982, so I'm 38 years old. I'm Vietnamese-Chinese, hence the non-Vietnamese surname. And I lived in Cabramatta pretty much most of my life. Grew up there... I don't know, because you came from Scotland, Cabramatta's the well-known Vietnamese area.

Speaker 1:

[inaudible 00:00:52].

A:

What's good about that area is there's a lot of cultural food and easy to get the parts we normally get.

Speaker 1:

I play soccer and I've got some teammates that are from Cabramatta. Can you tell us a bit about your position in the family? Are you the oldest, the youngest or only child?

A:

I'm the second oldest. I've got a twin and I've got three brothers. We've got four boys. My parents and then four boys.

Speaker 1:

Four boys.

A:

There's six people in my family.

Speaker 1:

What's your role in the family? Do you play a specific role in terms of what you do for others in the family or what people come to you for?

A:

As you can see, I'm out of home and same as all my other... One of my brother has gone to work in Indonesia, so he's pretty much not involved in family affairs. Then there's me and then my twin brother lives in Hurstville area, and then my younger brother lives in Parramatta. We're all pretty much out of home now, but I'm probably the one that deals with all my parents' finances, all the, I guess, the financial aspect of it, I will deal with that for my parents.

Speaker 1:

You help them with organizing, admin, managing, that kind of stuff?

A:

Yeah. My parents got investment properties around Sydney. I'm the point of contact for the real estate agents. When there was any money transferred from A to B, pretty much any, I guess, serious matters, I'll be the one that deals with it.

Speaker 1:

Cool. And then you mentioned at the start, you're Vietnamese-Chinese. How would you identify in terms of your cultural background? Is it a mix or do you say you're more engaged with Vietnamese culture? How would you describe your cultural life?

A:

I would say a mix, based on the food that we eat. We eat some Vietnamese food that my parents know how to cook and also Chinese. And maybe I judge my background based on the food that we eat. We don't solely eat Chinese, we don't solely eat Vietnamese, we eat a mix of both. I would consider myself both.

Speaker 1:

Would you say that you engage with both of those communities in Sydney or just generally? Are you an active participant in Vietnamese cultural life or Chinese cultural life? How does that...

A:

Oh, that's a hard one to say. I would say more Chinese maybe because Chinese New Year, I was part of a line dance group. Some people call it dragon dance. I've been part of that. To me, that's more Chinese-based. And there are some communities out there in Cabramatta, there's one called the Teo Chew Association. So T-E-O C-H-E-W, and that's pretty much a dialect of Chinese associations, and I'm part of that group. There's also Vietnamese groups as well, but for me, I've always gravitated to them, the Chinese ones. I'll probably say, if you had to say my following at the moment, would probably be that. But by all means... For example, on Chinese New Year, there's some years I go to the Vietnamese temple and then some years, I'll go to the Chinese one. I'm not strongly either way, but right now, the affiliation seems to be more Chinese-based.

Speaker 1:

Is there any particular reason why you think you've drifted more towards those groups? Was that just the way it happened or what was the particular driver?

A:

I think maybe partly... I think my friends have changed over the years. When I go in high school, I was a lot hanging around the Vietnamese crowd, and then slowly I've gravitated with uni mates and

all that that's around this area, I've gravitated with the Chinese crowd. I still connect with my Vietnamese friends from high school, but just the time I spend more with them because I'm out of the area now. And I'm talking about Cabramatta, which is where I grew up. I'm out of the area, I seem to have... And this area seems to be more Chinese-based, so maybe towards that kind of thing. Maybe just again, if I decided to move out of here, went back to a house because houses are cheaper in my area, then ask me that in one year, probably a different opinion.

Speaker 3:

I'm sorry, I just had a question. I wonder, is there a community of Chinese-Vietnamese people like you or are they two separate community groups?

A:

The association itself, it seems to gravitate to either just Vietnamese or Chinese, but they don't restrict you. If you were Chinese to come into a Vietnamese group, they would be more than open to welcome you. But just a lot of the wording, the name, and then in line dance you have the ribbon that comes down, a lot of it would be one or the other. Because there are sometimes they'll have both. Because there's Chinese and Vietnamese businesses in Cabramatta, which is where we do most of our line dances in, they would usually cater to both. Say you have two lions, one would have a Vietnamese slogan, one would have a Chinese one. If you had three, then you might have an English one as well. I think at the moment, I wouldn't say there's any... I don't know how to say it. I saw on the news last week there's an Indian and say Pakistani, they hate each other. There's not that kind of tension between Vietnamese and Chinese.

Speaker 1:

Got you.

Speaker 3:

That's great.

Speaker 1:

Definitely where you lived in Sydney, shaped, as well, what you're more connected with. Cabramatta, more Vietnamese, here, a bit more Chinese.

A:

Correct.

Speaker 1:

That location, the geography...

A:

Yeah, and I'll also say Cabramatta has slowly moved to a lot more Chinese. Growing up, it was purely all Vietnamese and then now, you talk to business owners, a lot of them are multilingual, and you see a lot more Chinese owners. That's something that might influence it.

Speaker 1:

Absolutely. And then you mentioned that you moved out of Cabramatta, you're now living in North Ryde. How long have you lived here, in this place?

A:

This place, probably two years.

Speaker 1:

And then in this home, who do you live with? Obviously, you've moved out from the family home and-

A:

I live with my partner who's working in the office, and then she sub-leases it out.

Speaker 1:

... do you enjoy living in this house in this area of Sydney? How do you like it?

A:

I think the convenience is a lot better. To get to work, it's only 30 minutes away. It's a lot smaller than I'm used to, because in my area, it's suburbia. You get big backyards and all that kind of stuff. And this one's... I think the small space is something getting used to. Less cleaning, which is great.

Speaker 3:

That's always a plus.

Speaker 1:

It's a trade-off between space and [inaudible 00:07:31].

A:

And then there's a lot more people, because in my one, it's a decent size land, so you're a bit more further distanced from everyone. And you've got all these rules you need to follow in there. There are good and bad, I would say.

Speaker 1:

In terms of community connectedness, do you feel more part of a community here or when you were in Cabramatta?

A:

I would say because they have a Facebook group. This one is a development of three buildings. There's this one, there's one across there and another one. It's A, B, C. And they have a community group and in that community group a lot of people share maybe cooking ideas or sell stuff. They also give away things. And I'm part of the strata committee in this one and we work with the other two buildings. I feel I'm more connected. As opposed to the house, I'm just keep to myself. I'll say and bye to my neighbors, but other than greetings, we don't really interconnect in any way, while this one we... One of the building managers, because there's strata and then there's building managers, they have barbecues every year. Not last year because of COVID, but prior years they have barbecues for everyone and they come down and people get to meet each other and all that kind of stuff.

Speaker 1:

As well as connecting with your neighbors and a community on Facebook, you actually do get together face-to-face and do stuff like that?

A:

Not regularly.

Speaker 1:

Not regularly.

A:

I just mentioned that happening in Cabramatta, someone having a barbecue, invite all your neighbors. Here you can, even if we're not paying for it, the people that we employ who manages the three buildings, they will do it, and then they build their community.

Speaker 1:

That's good to know. Thanks, that's really helpful just to get a bit about your background and where you're at in life at the moment. Now we're going to talk a little bit about energy use practices. Admittedly, some times we don't think much about using energy because we're actually doing something else that uses energy, like cooking or cleaning or heating or whatever. But we'll start off by talking about heating and cooling practices. First question would be, this is quite a modern apartment, would you say that you feel quite comfortable in this house? What's it like living here?

A:

I would say what's good about it is because it's not high up to the top and it's now way up to the bottom, in summer it's cooler than if it was down on the ground or up high, I've noticed. I try to minimize the turning on of air conditioning. That's one of the perks of it. I know that if it was in my house in Cabramatta, there's no choice, you have to turn it on if it's really hot because I'm up on a hill kind of thing and we pretty much get all the temperature. And we did the insulating, insulated batts when Kevin Rudd did that kind of stuff.

Speaker 1:

The pink batts thing.

A:

I haven't found that it did much out of it, as opposed to having 13 levels above me, that does a long [inaudible 00:10:36] with insulation. I would say that helps.

Speaker 1:

You think because this is a modern building it's more efficient, or is it better with being cool?

A:

I would think that they would have built it more efficient because they have to, but I would also say that because of where it's located, I get all the buildings above me to insulate the temperatures.

Speaker 1:

That's right.

A:

But in winter though, I think it's a lot colder as well.

Speaker 1:

Is it, than your Cabramatta home?

A:

Yeah. And again, maybe because maybe the bottom gets all the heat. I don't know, I just find that... But for me, I'm very conservative by using electricity for air conditioning because I grew up with my parents try to minimize our usage as much as possible. I would say usually in winter I'm under the blanket as opposed to... I try to conserve in that way. I think my biggest expense would probably be cooking.

Speaker 1:

Cooking [inaudible 00:11:30].

A:

I don't hardly ever use the dishwasher. That's only for decoration or for drying my dishes and stuff.

Speaker 1:

You must be pretty good at washing the dishes [inaudible 00:11:43]. I'm lazy.

A:

[crosstalk 00:11:45]. [inaudible 00:11:45] use it, because... We probably use it once or twice, just to make sure it's still working and it's under the warranty period when we bought the place. But oven we use quite a bit, and cooking and the vent we use a lot because one thing we notice is when we cook, especially if we're deep frying, the smoke alarm always goes off. And there's been cases where the firemen have to come and then-

Speaker 1:

Do they charge you coming in?

Speaker 3:

[crosstalk 00:12:14].

A:

... yeah, they'll come to me. When we cook, we do that and we open the thing to minimize. And it's beeped a few times.

Speaker 1:

I had an apartment, was the same. And I think if the fire brigade come out, it's like 500 bucks or something.

A:

Or is it 2,000.

Speaker 1:

That's interesting. It sounds like summer it's easier to keep comfortable, winter is maybe a more challenge because it's colder. You mentioned you wear blankets. Are there other the things that you do to keep warm, and what are the challenges in keeping warm in the winter?

A:

I would say that even under the blanket, it's hard to do your work, for example. You still have certain body parts out. You can perform as you would normally do, had you had air conditioning on. That would probably be the biggest thing. And I think in winter you probably don't want to go out that much because you feel like dress up like an Eskimo and go out kind of thing.

Speaker 1:

Are there any other appliances that you use? Is there any, right in a really cold day in winter, you've put a blanket on, maybe an extra layer on, but you're still too cold, is there any other appliances like portable heaters or anything like that you've ever put on? Or would you ever put reverse cycle air con on or anything?

A:

Yeah, we only would really, really do it maybe on ultra extreme days. We do have a portable heater. It's not here, it's in the, what do you call it, downstairs in the cage. We would do it on ultra extreme conditions, but we try to minimize it where we can.

Speaker 1:

Does that work for you in this home? Would you say that for the most part how you manage that is doable? Are there very few days when you feel you'd have to do that, or is it quite a lot when you're sitting thinking, oh I wish I could...

A:

I think I can manage cold a lot better than hot. I've also forgot to mention there's a humidifier [inaudible 00:14:23] or maybe it got moved. We have a dehumidifier here somewhere maybe. Oh, it's over there around the corner. Let me just show you. Let me just get it and show you. There's this thing. That one other thing that consumes a fair bit of energy. That one actually makes hot air come out and what it's trying to do is try to minimize the water in the air. I've used that quite a bit, and that one goes for hours and hours. And what it does, at the end of it, it will have a section that contains all the water. I don't know if you've had the dehumidifier before, but that is what that does, and that one keeps the house quite warm.

Speaker 1:

You would use that more in winter, would you, or is it...

A:

I do it on both.

Speaker 1:

You do it in both, winter and summer.

A:

Especially if it's raining. Because at the moment, what's happened is in this humidity, when it rains, you can see condensation on the glass and the frame. I use it on that.

Speaker 1:

Thinking about these devices, you mentioned you think the humidifier might be expensive to run, what about say using the air con in the winter to heat, would you think that that's expensive?

A:

I think just using that in general would be expensive.

Speaker 1:

Would you think it's the same in summer for cooling as winter for heating?

A:

Yes, I think they'll both be just as expensive. I've never measured it, but...

Speaker 3:

You hardly use it, right, because you said you were influenced-

A:

I hardly use it, yeah.

Speaker 3:

... by your family practices growing up.

A:

Correct.

Speaker 1:

Practices.

Speaker 3:

Are there other influences as well on your decision not to use your electricity as much?

A:

I wouldn't say not use electricity as much, just don't use-

Speaker 3:

[crosstalk 00:16:10].

Speaker 1:

Don't use that.

A:

... air conditioning. I would say I use it more when I do go home to my parents. And they're an older air conditioning unit, so I don't really know why. Maybe because my parents pay for it, I don't know. But I think-

Speaker 3:

The cost maybe.

A:

... just the bill shock. I think one of the concerns about using it is because you don't get your bill till the end of the month or three months, depending on what you want to do, and I just don't want to get the bill shock.

Speaker 1:

You can't see what you're using and how you use it.

Speaker 3:

Bill shock.

A:

Correct. If they had a meter reading there and I used my energy, it will tell me anyway that this is your price for the month. It will probably make me more comfortable using it knowing that I won't get a bill shock at the end of the month.

Speaker 1:

And thinking back to your parents, obviously it sounds like your parents had some influence on how you think about energy.

A:

Yes, I think they had the biggest influence on it.

Speaker 1:

What would they say? Thinking back in time and it's hot summer's day and you want to put air con, say if you put it on, what would they say to you?

A:

They're going to say it costs us so much money. It's going to be a massive bill. That's all they talk about is just the bill. They don't think about environment, don't worry about environment. It's always about oh, we're going to get a big bill at the end. But having said that, my brother came down in January this year, he did a 14 day lockdown, all that, and he came in January. He's left already in early March. And what he does is, because he's currently living in Indonesia, so he's used to having air conditioning on 24/7 where he lives. When he come back to Australia, when he lives in my parent's place, I notice he turns on air conditioning 24/7. And then I asked my parents about it. Because even in non high extreme temperatures where they'd be really cold or really hot, he'll have it on because I think he probably thinks it filters the air or whatever. And I asked my parents when they got the bill the next bill cycle, and they said it didn't really cost that much.

A:

One of the things that's getting to me is seeing that it didn't cost that much, I think they said it only cost about a 100 bucks more, and for the amount of time, because he would turn it on say 10 o'clock all the way till eight o'clock the next morning. That's like 10 hours and the bill wasn't that bad. That's turning what my parents are saying on its head.

Speaker 1:

Do you think there's some ideas that you've had and people generally have about the cost of these things and how it works, but it would be helpful, it might be good to actually know what's really the case? If you had actual evidence or numbers of figures what it cost of each thing really was.

Speaker 3:

Some monitoring, like a tracking system.

A:

For me, I just don't want the bill shock.

Speaker 3:

I understand.

A:

If I knew that this is my cost for the month, and it told me that this is what it is, I would probably be more keen to use it. I'll go, oh yeah, this is not too bad, I'll use it. And at the end of it I'll know it only went up by X amount. And then the next month I might be even more comfortable to use it. But just the not knowing part.

Speaker 1:

Does that mean for you in your head then, whether it's summer or winter, you're having to make trade offs between your own personal comfort and worrying about cost?

A:

Yeah.

Speaker 1:

Do you feel like comfort comes second to cost? What's important?

A:

I would say historically I would say comfort comes second to cost. I think in really, really extreme circumstances I see that I'll walk over to Coles, which is just across the road, and shop for a bit longer than I would normally.

Speaker 1:

Just to cool down?

A:

Yeah. Or have a cold shower. Or there's a gym downstairs. I think maybe we're cutting costs, but we cut the air conditioning the last summer, but in the past we've had it on, so that was good. But I would find ways around not using it where I can. Again, if it's really, really bad, like 40 degrees and I have no choice, then I'll turn it on. The other thing I do is I lower the blinds. When I know that it's going to hit 35 degrees, the blinds will go down pretty early to minimize the heat. And so far it's worked to a degree.

Speaker 1:

Are there any times where you think I'm really uncomfortable? Have there been periods where you've been really uncomfortable in the home? Still not-

A:

Yeah, in temperature wise. Usually more the heat. The cold, I think I can bear it. Just the heat. Yes, there's been times where it's unbearable and that's when I would need to do something to keep cool.

Speaker 1:

... what are the hardest things about cooling the house in the summer or what are the biggest challenges for you in doing that?

A:

I think keeping the heat out would be one, and I guess I've got a portable fan in there, a tiny one, and let's just say it's pretty good fan for the size, but I don't think it does a well enough job. I think if I had say a fan that could get rid of the heat but have fan inside, something that just pushes out the heat, then I'll be fine.

Speaker 1:

You mentioned taking a cold shower, going to the gym, going to the supermarket. How did you find out or figure out how to do those things?

A:

I think it just came naturally. It's not something strategically planned.

Speaker 1:

You just figure it out, trial and error.

A:

I know that when I take a cold shower I'll feel cooler for maybe the first hour after the shower, and then the heat kicks in. One thing is I can take more showers. But one, it's a hassle, and two, then your water bill goes up. It's a weighty-

Speaker 3:

Trade off.

A:

... there's a trade off. If I really want to be cheap, I can go down to the gym and shower there, but then I just don't like sharing showers with strangers.

Speaker 3:

Same. Fair enough.

Speaker 1:

We talked a bit about heating and cooling.

Speaker 3:

Can I just [crosstalk 00:22:08] the cost issue again, because I think what I'm hearing is that there's the bill shock and then there is the cost, right?

A:

Yes.

Speaker 3:

If you knew the cost well in advance, you'd be actually more willing to use your air con.

A:

Yes, very much so.

Speaker 3:

It's not so much the cost, it's more minimizing the shock of your bill, right?

A:

You're correct. Just not knowing what it's going to be.

Speaker 3:

Not knowing. The uncertainty.

A:

You're right. 100% correct for that one. If the sky's the limit, that's the thing. If I knew the maximum the bill was going to be for this month was say a \$100.

Speaker 3:

Then you can prepare yourself.

A:

Then yeah, I would like, that's fine. At least I know it won't exceed a \$100.

Speaker 1:

Can you tell me a bit about your engagement with energy utilities? How did you think about signing up to a plan and did you look at different plans in terms of are you paying a certain amount or just getting charged every month or quarterly? What did you think or what are your thoughts?

A:

I wanted to get charged every month just so it minimized, what we mentioned, the bill shock. At least I know if I'm killing it this month, next month I have to be cautious. But one thing I don't like about it is the gas bill is you get... What's crap about it, because I'm with AGL, what's the crap about AGL is they'll give you monthly bill as you requested on the day that you requested. And on the third month is when they send someone out to look at it. Then that's when the third month of every, I guess, quarter is when I get a bill shock because they just estimate the first, second month, and the third month is when they actually check. I hate how they do that, but electricity, they don't do that. Electricity, I think, they must have a smart meter here or something.

Speaker 1:

Your experience is being that they, is it that they've been underestimating the gas?

A:

Correct, and then shocking me every month.

Speaker 1:

And not charging you enough, and then going whack, we're going to...

A:

Yeah, think of it at the moment it's like 40, 4000, that's what they-

Speaker 1:

[inaudible 00:24:04] and say 66 and 60.

A:

... to even it out. That annoys the crap out of me. And the thing is, it's the same company, AGL. I'm using them for both AGL energy and [inaudible 00:24:10] and gas. They do it for the gas one, but they don't do it for electricity one. And I'm just surprised they don't have a smart meter for gas. I don't know if you can, but.

Speaker 1:

How would you say you feel about AGL and the energy companies generally? Obviously they're a market player. What do you think of them?

A:

Well, I think you probably hear energy in Australia's so expensive, which is what I feel. We're the biggest resource providers in coal, gas, and we supply it to the world, and yet we get hit with a massive bill. I was watching a documentary, I think, a few days ago about Hong Kong. I don't know if you know, but Hong Kong has the most air conditioning per capita.

Speaker 3:

Is that right?

A:

Because every unit has an air conditioning unit. And it used to be a status symbol, but now everyone's got it. And their bill is regulated based on the more you use, the more you pay, but in big enterprise, the more you use, the less you pay per kilowatt. And I'm thinking in Hong Kong everyone's got an air conditioning unit and they pay so much less than what we pay. Anyway, just detour.

Speaker 1:

Where do you think that comes from? Is that companies like AGL charging too much, or do you think there's another reason for this?

A:

I reckon it's governments. I think if government regulated... I'm sure Hong Kong must have some regulation to allow that to happen because Hong Kong, I don't think it would have any natural resources, so they must be subsidizing by their business or something. In Australia, I just feel like... I think when I was younger electricity wasn't that bad. I think it's only in recent years that it's become so high.

Speaker 1:

And now you're paying the bill, right? It's not your parents, so you notice it.

A:

I think government would have a good influence if they really wanted to.

Speaker 1:

Apart from that issue about the gas meter, what would you say about the customer service that AGL provides you?

A:

Well, honestly, I don't really, really ever call them. As long as I pay my bill. I haven't had any, I guess, issues with utilities here. Because the first point of contact will be with building management to confirm if it's a building thing. And then outside of that would be anything else. I think maybe after this discussion it might be time to review and see if AGL is the right company. Maybe I should go to Origin or something, but honestly, haven't really dealt with them other than signing up.

Speaker 1:

And when the bill comes, right? That's the only time you ever call them, right?

A:

But even when the bill comes, I just pick it up, pay it and then never really deal with the customer part of it. At the moment I don't really have comments on them.

Speaker 1:

You touched on this a bit earlier about other appliances, so can you walk us through what other major electrical appliances you use in this house?

A:

Humidifier, oven, the stove top, the boiling water kettle, the rice cooker, the fridge and the microwave. Those would probably be the main ones. I've got a portable fan inside. And my laptop.

Speaker 1:

You're laptop.

A:

It's on 24/7 pretty much.

Speaker 1:

Laptop's on the most, would you say?

A:

Yes.

Speaker 1:

Can you tell me-

A:

Well, fridge is probably on...

Speaker 1:

... fridge is on. Fridge is on.

Speaker 3:

What about microwave?

A:

Microwave is probably just between meals, but I would say fridge, especially when I packed it to the max during COVID. I was one of the hoarders. It was-

Speaker 1:

Did you have all the toilet roll?

A:

... that's a secret. No, I wasn't that bad but we did stock up on food during COVID. I've got heaps of canned stuff as well. Honestly, because my bill was about, if it's electricity, it's about 40, 50. I'm usually on the lower... I don't know if it's water. I think water does it, I don't know if electricity does it. I think electricity does do it. They'll tell you the averages of where you sit as a household.

Speaker 3:

Compared to others.

A:

Compared to everyone I'm usually on the lower end. I would say I'm pretty conservative.

Speaker 3:

Does that influence you in anyway when you see where you sit compared to your neighbors in terms of your usage?

A:

Not really.

Speaker 1:

You don't [crosstalk 00:28:10].

Speaker 3:

You don't go [inaudible 00:28:10].

A:

No, not really. I just like to know that I'm not... I guess-

Speaker 3:

Have you ever been higher?

A:

No. What I like about it is maybe to gauge that I'm not at the extreme. I'm not paying higher than a lot of other people, I guess.

Speaker 3:

Do you find it useful?

A:

I would say it's good to be there.

Speaker 3:

Good to know.

A:

It's good to know, yes. But it's not something I would look into detail of.

Speaker 1:

Let's talk about the appliances that you've got. What went in to choosing those ones? I know some of them are built-ins, but the humidifier, the jug, fridge, what were you looking at, what were you thinking at? Was it star ratings, cost, brand? What comes into that?

A:

Because to me they're small appliances and the only one that I really care about is the air conditioning unit, I don't think energy was a key factor in my decision. It was more the cost of the item. First of all, to get items, I didn't really care. That one there is less than a 100 bucks, the kettle. To me, I didn't compare kettle to kettle. Just said, this is good enough, I'll take it. The fridge one was more to do with capacity, how big I needed it and how much things I was going to put in it.

Speaker 1:

You needed it to fit in that space, for example.

A:

Yeah, that's the one thing, and then how much I was going to buy for household or say three people. But on hindsight, this is before COVID, if I knew COVID was going to happen, every time I just think to myself, I wish I got a bigger fridge. Again, not thinking about the energy factor. If it came into really this is going to cost you an arm and a leg to run it, then obviously not going to do it, but at least you can see that one's, I think it's a three star. A medium ground is fine. It does what it does. And that costed about, I think it was between three to 600 bucks. Probably wouldn't spend a \$1,000 on a fridge coming here. And then the microwave was, again, I think that was less than a 100 and something. That one, again, energy I can tell you was not in my consideration because to me they're small appliances and I don't think they will use a lot. But say I was buying a portable air conditioning unit, then I would.

A:

And then I've got a Dyson over there right near the power point. That one was more to do with how to make my vacuuming life a lot easier. And to be honest, energy was not even [inaudible 00:30:38]. And that was expensive. That was like 800 bucks or something, something crazy.

Speaker 1:

For that you would want to spend on that, the convenience and the brand, right?

A:

Yeah.

Speaker 1:

Was there a particular reason for that? What is it about vacuuming you're wanting to make easier or wanting to deal with?

A:

I like the fact that Dyson is one of the most innovative company in the area that they specialize in. The thing I want about a vacuum is one, it's easy to do the vacuuming because I hate vacuuming. And then the next thing is it cleans really well. You got two functions, the max suction and normal function, and you'll notice that it sucks up a lot better than say Electrolux or any of the other ones. And then just the cleaning aspect of it is quite transformative as in you can take it apart, clean it and put it all back together again. You know that you can clean all the components in the Dyson quite good and quite clean. The other thing is their customer service is off the roof. And what I mean by off the roof is when I bought it I noticed that the tube was broken and then we just contacted them and then they said, "We'll send another one." And they didn't even bother giving the old one back, which is fine. And then also the battery, it seemed to die a lot quicker, and then they just said, "That's fine," they send you another one. No questions asked, they would just send it to you. But at the same time, you're paying a premium, a high premium. I expect a high premium service, which is what they've accomplished. I fully support Dyson, even going forward.

Speaker 1:

Can we go back to the fridge a little bit. That star rating thing, you mentioned it's a three star. That label, you can see a bit of information in there. Can you just explain to me in your view what that's telling us? What does it say about the fridge?

A:

Well, you mean the star rating or just the fridge in general?

Speaker 1:

The star rating sticker. See it's got the stars and some numbers on it. What would you think that's trying to tell us?

A:

The star rating to me means the higher the star the more energy efficient the product is. I think it's been around forever, since I was small, so it's not something I really looked into in how they rate or anything, but just something that I know the higher the star the more efficient it is. That's probably all I know about it.

Speaker 1:

What about the number that's on there? It says 328. What do you think that means?

A:

Well, I think it's out of five. The higher the number, I think it corresponds with the coloring of it. The higher it is the more efficient it is. There's also a washing machine behind there. I don't know if you want to look at it, but that's an in-built one.

Speaker 1:

Does it have a sticker like that as well?

A:

I have never looked.

Speaker 1:

We can see there now.

A:

It's got a four star at least.

Speaker 1:

Is there two stickers?

A:

Yeah.

Speaker 1:

Maybe is it a washer and dryer?

A:

Yeah, it's a washer [crosstalk 00:33:45].

Speaker 1:

Maybe ones for the washer part and one is for the dryer part.

A:

You taught me something today.

Speaker 1:

Not really, I'm just [inaudible 00:33:53].

A:

I didn't even notice the star. That's how [inaudible 00:33:56] star.

Speaker 1:

How helpful do you think that star rating, energy rating sticker is? Do you think it's good?

A:

I think it's good. Say for example if I had a fridge that looks like that and another fridge that looks like that and they look exactly the same, different brand, and similar brand, whatever, Westinghouse and say LG, whatever, I'll look at it go how do I make the decision? If everything was the same and I had to do the eliminating factor, that star rating would be the last influence. It is important, but when I did my shop, it wasn't key on my...

Speaker 1:

It's there, but it's not the big driver of the decision?

A:

Yeah, I think the purchase price was more the... Or maybe I'll look at them now when I should be looking at the future. But I looked at the now and what the price was.

Speaker 1:

We've talked a bit about things you consider when you're using energy, and obviously billing cost is important. We've talked a little bit about comfort. What about other factors like care, say for caring for your partner or caring for yourself? Maybe you're sick, you're not feeling well, do you think you need to keep the house nice and warm or cool yourself down. Does that come into things? And then the other thing I wanted to ask you about is the environment. Thinking about using less energy for the environment. Are either of those factors ever at play when you're using energy?

A:

The first one about if my partner was sick or something, yeah, that is something that we would take care of each other. Sorry, sneezing. Sorry. Again. The last time I was sick I just remember getting... We would boil water, use hot water bottle. Again, we didn't use that and that was sufficient. I would say we used more energy to try to keep the other person warm, but necessarily through air conditioning. And your other question was? What was it, sorry?

Speaker 1:

It was about the environment. Whether thinking about the environment effects how you use energy at all?

A:

Not to sound bad, but no. I never really considered the environment as a key factor in my decision of purchases appliances.

Speaker 1:

You mentioned your parents were the same, their focus on the air conditioner was more about the cost rather than environment. Just never really been part of-

A:

Never been a part.

Speaker 1:

... your family discussion or something?

A:

No.

Speaker 1:

Want to talk a little bit about where you hang out in the house. What rooms do you spend most of your time?

A:

There pretty much.

Speaker 1:

The sofa's yours, right?

A:

It's a sofa.

Speaker 3:

But there's no TV. You don't have a TV?

A:

No. We were thinking of getting one, but I just said... Because I can watch everything on YouTube and I'm thinking of getting a projector instead. But no, we chose not to get a TV because it's quite distracting. But I have three TVs in my parent's house.

Speaker 1:

And then what do you do in here? You spend a lot of time in here, what are you doing? Is it working, chilling out? Why do you spend time in this room mostly?

A:

Working is definitely one. I use that table if I want some light, I guess. What else do I do? That's pretty much all I do there. I can't think of what else I do. We'll eat here.

Speaker 1:

You'll have meals here?

A:

Meals here. Sit there. Maybe sometimes lie down there. I don't think I do much else, because usually we're out, if anything.

Speaker 1:

Do you spend quite a lot of time out of the house?

A:

Yeah. I would say majority. Pre-COVID I was out pretty much in a week, probably 80% of the time. I'd come home, shower and sleep, that's pretty much it.

Speaker 1:

Are there any rooms or parts of the house that you avoid a bit more, that you don't hang out there as much because it's not as comfortable or you don't like it as much?

A:

I don't know if you'd count the cage downstairs, B2. I rarely ever got to B2 where the cage is and where the carpark is. There's no carpark for this apartment. It didn't come with one, so you will rarely ever see me go downstairs to B2. And the cage, if I can avoid picking up stuff from there the better. I would say, if anything, that would probably... Because this is not really that big, so there's not really any part I can avoid.

Speaker 1:

Are there any rooms in the house that you think are hotter or cooler than others?

A:

That's a good question. I don't go there because it's [inaudible 00:38:39] I think that's [inaudible 00:38:42] in summer. It pretty much takes all the heat.

Speaker 1:

Is that just because where it's facing with the sun and whatever?

A:

Yeah.

Speaker 1:

You mentioned that the bill's come through and it shows you use a bit less than people. I mean, what about people generally from your shared cultural background that live in Australia? Thinking back to people you knew in Cabramatta, how much do you think your energy compares to how they might use it? And do you think generally people from your background in Cabramatta use a lot of energy or little energy?

A:

I think it depends on the person. I don't know if I would consider it on a background because I've got some friends who have... I just think about when I was in high school and I went over to their house and it was in summer, and because his house is all towed up and very insulated, I just remember going to his house and it felt like the North Pole. And it's in summer. To me, that person would never ever need to turn air conditioning. Then there's other people who have old, fiber house. And then that one always has air conditioning on 24/7. I think it depends on the family. And not going to generalize all other Vietnamese people would use more or less, it just all depends on the person.

Speaker 1:

You know how you mentioned that your parents focused a lot on saving and the cost and stuff like that, was that ever much of the dialogue in Cabramatta? Were other families similar in trying to manage cost?

A:

Growing up, because I think my parents was first generation Australian because they came, they were the first one to come here out of the generation. I think growing up we were extremely not financially well off. Because come from a big family, I got four brothers, so everything to them was cost. Thinking about how to minimize this, how to minimize that, and they're working 24/7 kind of thing, sewing and all that kind of stuff. To them, every cent, they needed to penny pinch. I think a lot of people in Cabramatta social economically has improved quite significantly. If you go there for soccer, I don't know if you go down there, but if you go down there for soccer, you will notice that there's a lot new cafes and everything. Everything is getting a lot better. And I think that has changed a lot in people's imagery of spending money and all that kind of stuff. I would say my older brother now, because he's doing really well, he never really thinks about money. Where for me, I'm still thinking in that old mindset.

Speaker 1:

Got you. That idea of managing cost and getting by, recalling about that, was energy and how you use energy part of that picture would you say?

A:

I wouldn't say in small appliances. My parents never ever nagged me about this appliance, that appliance. And in my old parent's place they've got gas as well. But one thing we always do is we always cook outside and we get LPG, the gas tank, we fill it up. That one, because you're putting in the effort, you have to go to the petrol station, fill up, one, there's work involved, and two, there's work involved and there's cost involved that you pay upfront. You know what you're paying and you know you have to do this work.

Speaker 1:

You don't get bill shock.

A:

My parents are conservative in how we spend that one as well.

Speaker 1:

Is energy use something you've talked to many people about? Whether it's family or friends or people you know in the groups that you're involved in? Or even the Facebook group you mentioned.

A:

Generally it's not one of the key topics we talked about, but I just thought of one situation. In the Teo Chew Association in Cabramatta, they've got a line of air conditioning because it's a big center and they got a line of them of about probably 10 of them. And they've got fans. What I've been told is we are to never use the air conditioning unit because it's a club thing. They will always use the fan even when it's really hot. There was one time they used it and I was really surprised. Walk in there, go, "Why are they using the air conditioning for?" I would say the club even is very conservative about using air conditioning. But they never complain about anything else. It seems like air conditioning is the only topic that, in the community, we think that it's a luxury item that uses a lot of electricity.

Speaker 1:

One people worry about or get guarded about using too much?

A:

Yeah. I think one other thing is if you go into a friend's house and it's really hot and you turn on the air conditioning, it's to me, indirectly a sign of respect. You're turning it on because you're respecting enough to feel comfortable in this house that you would turn it on. And I've been to other places where I feel disrespected because go in there and they don't really want to turn on the air conditioning. Again, this year I haven't [inaudible 00:43:48] had anyone over, but I think if it were someone that I respected and they're really uncomfortable, I would turn it on just to make them feel comfortable.

Speaker 1:

That's an interesting point then about comfort. There's your level of comfort and what you are prepared to do in terms of using stuff, but if you have visitors, you might change that?

A:

Correct, to make sure they're comfortable. Because my tolerance might not be their tolerance and you want, at least what you consider the important guests, to turn it on.

Speaker 1:

How do you figure that out? How would you know a really hot day or a really cold day in winter, how would you know how to judge whether a cold place or a heated place?

A:

One, I can feel it myself. Because I hate heat so I will be the first one to know it's hot, I think. But I'd just bear with it. And then the other one is if you look at the person and she's sweating, I think I need to turn it on.

Speaker 3:

Would you ask first or would you just assume that they would appreciate it to turn the air con on?

A:

Good question. I'm trying to think what I would do. I would ask. I would say I would ask first, and then if as we interact and I still see that you're drenching, then I'll just go I'm just going to turn it on, I won't even ask. Because I think partly in our community or people, I don't know, they are too, how do you say it in English? I don't know. They hesitant to ask for it.

Speaker 3:

To ask.

A:

And to even want you to use it if you're not comfortable. I think I just have to take the prerogative.

Speaker 1:

Can I ask you, I saw there you were thinking about how to say that in English. How would you say it in language?

A:

You want me to say it out? Hey. That's in Cantonese, by the way. I don't know if you've got any Cantonese people.

Speaker 1:

And then are there any kind of traditional cultural practices that you perform or that you're aware of that involve using energy? Particular ways of cooking or even bathing or traditional...

A:

As in conserving?

Speaker 1:

No, just I mean generally, like in every day life or even for special occasions, are there cooking practices? You mentioned about cooking.

A:

Outside. I would say I don't know how many other Asian people you're going to talk to, but I think 99% of them will cook outside using the LPG gas thing or have something connected to the gas. And the reason for that is cleanliness. I don't know if it's specifically for energy, but it does use a different

source of energy, especially for me, I use LPG. That would do it, because when you fry stuff and you have to clean a lot, we don't really like cleaning. We'll have a normal kitchen that you never touch if you have a house, and you'll just have an outside kitchen. That's what you'll notice if you talk to 99% of Chinese. Here you can't do it because they're not going to allow me to do it. But we do have a barbecue upstairs and I've done it before when I had time. I would just go upstairs and barbecue because I don't want to use my electricity. And I thought it would taste better, but no, the thing upstairs is terrible. It's not good at all. Takes too long to heat up.

Speaker 1:

That's cleaning thing, right?

A:

Yeah.

Speaker 1:

Cooking outside. Can you tell me why that's better for cleaning? What does it do for you or for family?

A:

First of all, it preserves the house. Say I fried something, I can clean around it, but there might be stuff in the roof that I'm not going to clean. I feel like that is one factor. The other factor is it's a lot of work to clean up that I don't want to soap and wipe everything down all the time. That's the main factor. As opposed to just cooking outside, I'll cook the area that I'm cooking in, the table, and then just the wok and stuff.

Speaker 1:

And then you mentioned about taste, it doesn't taste very well up there. But from your background, your experiences, is cooking outside and eating food outside, does that taste better than say if it was cooked by a family member or a friend in the kitchen?

A:

That's a really good question because I've cooked inside and I've cooked outside, and when I cook outside I use a big wok. And one thing is when I use the wok, the cooking is a lot quicker. The temperature and the holding of the temperature is a lot easier. And maybe because I'm more used to it, but pretty much I'll find that cooking is a lot easier, a lot quicker. I feel it's more efficient [inaudible 00:48:21] cook inside. And I know in my parent's house it's gas as well, so they're both gas. [inaudible 00:48:26] there and you put it on top of the cook top, whatever thing, and you cook it and it feels like it takes a lot longer still. Definitely, I would say I think I save more energy cooking outside.

Speaker 1:

And how did you learn about these kind of practices? To cook in the wok and cook outside, where do you pick that up?

A:

My parents. My parents made me do it.

Speaker 1:

Made you do it.

A:

Yeah, because I helped my mom cook when I was young. She would do the preparation, the chopping, and I would do the wok work. 99% of the time I've cooked with her is always outside. The only time she cooked inside was when my older brother came, because his wife doesn't want to cook outside and my parents doesn't want to cause any confrontation, so she just lets them do whatever she wants. But I've seen that every time that she cooks, my mom's cleaning the whole thing and she's not entirely happy but she does it.

Speaker 1:

And when did you start doing that? You mentioned when you were younger you started cooking. Can you remember the first thing you started doing it?

A:

20. 20 that she let me... She didn't trust me early on ever touching the wok. She used to do all of it, but she wasn't working at the time, so she would do everything. And then when I hit probably uni age, then I said, "I'll just help you out," and I helped her cook and all that kind of stuff. And that's how I started. And now she appreciates it because her cooking time is cut in half. She does all the preparation and while she's preparing the next dish, I'm cooking it. Because I remember every Saturday, because she'll cook for the week, she'll cook for at least six hours for all of us because we were still at home. Because we're still at uni, all my brother's went through uni. And then we cut her time in half and she felt like she had so much time on her hand after that. It was good.

Speaker 1:

Also, do you see it as a way of connecting with family or something to do together? Does that come into it? Is it more just about being efficient and getting it done quickly?

A:

Honestly, my mom just hates cooking now because she's done it for so many years. For her it's all about how quickly can we do it? Definitely not community. I think if it was a barbecue, that's more community. During Christmas and stuff we'll have barbecues on coal and all that kind of stuff, so then it will be more community based.

Speaker 1:

Are there any challenges you face when thinking about using energy? Say for not only yourself but your parents or people you know, has it been easier enough to figure this all out, managing energy and using it for every day life, or are there any challenges you think are out there on this?

A:

That's a good question. Honestly, I've never thought of energy as much as I've thought of it today.

Speaker 1:

It's invisible, right.

A:

And there's nothing to measure. All the measurements are outside in the common ares and I'm not allowed access in there because building management contains it. They lock it up and no one can

see it. I think if there was a system like you mentioned, a tool, a smartphone or something that helps me regulate it, and maybe tips on how to minimize stuff, then it will be something useful that I would consider. And maybe be more in the forefront. Say [inaudible 00:51:39] my intercom and my air conditioning unit have another thing like a meter, I would see it every day and that will make me actually put it front of mind. Even though I say my bill is quite expensive, it's like 40, 50 bucks a month, depending which one it is, and then the bill shock. I think it's not something I really consider front of mind at the moment.

Speaker 1:

What about thinking from back in Cabramatta, are there any people that you knew of that had bigger challenges? It might be through language barriers or not knowing about all the different energy companies or anything like that. Have you ever seen or heard of anything like that going on?

A:

Yeah, I think there's a whole bunch of other companies out there like Dodo Energy and all that kind of stuff, and my parents have never switched out of Energy Australia, mainly because one, I don't think that they know of the other companies, and their awareness is very limited outside of the big ones. If there was some communication to let them know and give them confidence, like say Dodo Energy was doing something, maybe have something in their language. And then have it in a way that is easy for them to understand and know that this company can be trusted. It may get them to look at cheaper options, because at the moment they've been with that company forever, they never changed.

Speaker 1:

Do you know of many people in Cabramatta that still mostly you communicate in language every day rather than using English?

A:

Yes.

Speaker 1:

And who does that? How does that work?

A:

Ultimately, the generation above us or above me. This is why Cabramatta is Cabramatta is because the people there don't want to learn say English. They stay with Vietnamese or Chinese or whatever. They stay in there and they're comfortable because everyone knows in that community you can talk to each other. And that's why they don't want to get out of it. I would say that is probably something that's still strong in that area. I think once that generation goes, then I think you will see that that completely changes.

Speaker 1:

Would you say that your energy use has changed much over the years, living in Australia, living in different parts of Sydney?

A:

Yeah, I would say that growing up, again, my parents was very conservative with any outgoing costs. I think because we're in a better position now, it's not as... we are not that concerned about pricing as much. It's still a factor, but it's not something that is front of mind.

Speaker 1:

You know there might be a bill shock, but you know ultimately you'll still be able to pay it?

A:

Yeah.

Speaker 1:

Whereas in the past you might need to think more about can we afford to pay it?

A:

Yeah.

Speaker 1:

What about COVID-19, would you say your energy use has changed since that's become an issue?

A:

I don't think so. I probably am at home a lot more than prior, because I wouldn't come home on days. But no, not...

Speaker 1:

You've not noticed the bill going up since being at home more [crosstalk 00:54:57]?

A:

I would say I don't change the way I use things, but I would say because I'm home more the bill has gone up.

Speaker 3:

But not considerably, just maybe marginally?

A:

Yeah, because the really thing I'm doing is my laptop, so I don't think it was a huge increase. Five, 10 bucks.

Speaker 1:

Last things we want to talk about today is just about general views on energy policy in Australia. And you've hinted about that, about the government and the retails. What do you know about Australian energy policy and how do you think it relates particularly for people from culturally and in what linguistically diverse backgrounds?

A:

That was a question I have no answer on, because I don't know about what the energy policy is. Probably trying to rip customers off as much as possible. That's my understanding of it. I don't think they have any for a specific culture background. Again, this is new to me, so unfortunately I don't know any of what you just mentioned. That's a first for me.

Speaker 1:

Would you say you feel supported and empowered as an energy consumer?

A:

No.

Speaker 1:

No?

A:

Totally not.

Speaker 1:

Totally not.

A:

I'm just a number.

Speaker 1:

And then what about people from that older generation, do you think they're supported and [crosstalk 00:56:16]?

A:

No, totally not.

Speaker 1:

Would you say there's a difference there between the generations?

A:

Did I say that? I don't know.

Speaker 3:

Would they feel even more disempowered perhaps?

A:

I would say they're more because maybe I haven't seen anything in their language or whatnot. And I think the awareness aspect of it is not really out there. Again, my parents have never changed energy company. I don't think they are aware of these other smaller brand companies that are available that can offer a cheaper price, so no.

Speaker 1:

What about any programs about energy support, culturally or linguistically diverse people?

A:

Never heard of anything.

Speaker 1:

Never seen anything like that on TV or social media?

A:

No. Totally not.

Speaker 1:

If you could tell the government one thing about CALD people and use of energy that might help support them, what would you tell them?

A:

Cold people or culture?

Speaker 1:

CALD, culturally and [inaudible 00:57:11].

A:

Sorry. I would probably say maybe education, having things out there in the community that support people from, I guess, culturally diverse backgrounds to know how to get the best bang for their buck on energy. And maybe even educate them on things like what the star rating is and stuff, because I don't really know. My grandma, I don't think she would know anything about what star rating is.

Speaker 1:

If you're in charge for a day, if you're the prime minister, what would you do to help make this better?

A:

Maybe set a limit on what the pricing can be on energy. Maybe bring it back to sustainable levels as opposed to [crosstalk 00:57:55].

Speaker 3:

I feel your pain because I'm battling with my energy providers too.

A:

Are you? Are you from Sydney as well?

Speaker 3:

No, I live in Brisbane.

A:

Is Brisbane worse in energy?

Speaker 3:

In my experience. I don't know about Sydney.

Speaker 1:

And last thing, is there any other things that you would like to bring up or mention or tell us today about what we've talked about generally about energy?

A:

Other than education, I think education would be key. And regulation would be the second thing. Maybe follow the Hong Kong model.

Speaker 1:

Subsidized prices or more affordable prices, and then better educational supports, things like that. Well, that's everything that I've got in terms of questions. Have you got any questions for us at this point?

Speaker 3:

Anything else?

A:

Just curious to know where you guys are going with this.

Speaker 1:

Ultimately, our objective out of this project is to try and better support and empower culturally diverse communities in their energy use. That might mean things around language, it might mean things about better targeted programs, specifically for different groups. We'll monitor that and we'll learn about that as we go through the project. Ultimately, our objective is to try and develop a tool kit to try and support how energy policy makers or even energy companies do some of this stuff. As we go through the project, that's what we're hoping to get to.

Speaker 3:

Ultimately, we want to advocate for culturally and linguistically diverse people so they have it easier.

A:

Awesome. Thanks so much for that.

Speaker 1:

That's great. We really appreciate your time today, A. What we'll do is we've got around about 15 or so interviews for this first stage. We'll then do some analysis and then we'll get in touch with you, follow up with the second part, and then the third part. We'll be in touch with you, we'll be in connection with you.

A:

Awesome.

Speaker 1:

But that's great. Really appreciate your time today.

A:

Thank you for coming out.

Speaker 3:

Thank you so much. [crosstalk 00:59:56] really informative.

Speaker 1:

If you've got any questions, you think I should have asked about that or I'd like to know about that, just reach out to us.

A:

Will do. Thank you so much.

Speaker 1:

Last thing is just to get your-

Speaker 3:

[crosstalk 01:00:10].

Speaker 1:

... details so we can send you the voucher. All I need you to do, sorry it's just a bit small, is just here, just write down your name and then put a signature, just at that last box.

A:

Signature or write down the name? Or both?

Speaker 1:

Both, if you don't mind. And we've got [inaudible 01:00:36] here, so we'll get that sent across to you by Morgan.

A:

Awesome. Thank you so much.

Speaker 3:

Thank you.

Speaker 1:

Thank you. I'll just put this off.

A:

What's the next session going to be? Is that going to be Zoom or is it in-person as well?

Speaker 1:

No, the next section will be in-person and what we'll do is we'll ask you to maybe show us some things that you do. It might be how you cool the home or cook or whatever and we'll just take videos or pictures of that.

Interview day/time: February 12, 2021.

Participant: Syrian female.

Speaker 1:

Thank you J, for making the time. All right. So, as I explained to you, this project is about supporting people of culturally and linguistically diverse Australians to be empowered energy users. So today,

I'm going to ask you a series of questions, but we'll start with your background. Okay. So can you kindly tell me your age? What year were you born?

Speaker 2:

On 1975.

Speaker 1:

1975, thank you. So, what is your position in the family? Do you have any brothers and sisters?

Speaker 2:

Yes. I have two sisters and two brothers.

Speaker 1:

And did they live in Australia?

Speaker 2:

In Australia.

Speaker 1:

In Sydney?

Speaker 2:

Sydney.

Speaker 1:

Okay. So two sisters and two brothers?

Speaker 2:

Two brothers.

Speaker 1:

Two brothers. Okay.

Speaker 2:

Two sisters and two brothers.

Speaker 1:

Two brothers. Okay. All right. So do you identify with any specific cultural background? Your ethnicity? Culture?

Speaker 2:

What's the meaning of this question?

Speaker 1:

So what cultural group would you say you belong to? Community?

Speaker 2:

Syria. I am from Syria.

Speaker 1:

Syrian community. Okay. And do you have a Syrian community here?

Speaker 2:

Yes. Yes.

Speaker 1:

Yeah. You're a big part of it?

Speaker 2:

Yes. Yes.

Speaker 1:

Okay.

Speaker 2:

Especially in Liverpool.

Speaker 1:

In Liverpool? Okay. That's good to know. All right. So are you single, married, partner?

Speaker 2:

Married.

Speaker 1:

Married? Yeah. How long have you been married for?

Speaker 2:

About 20 years.

Speaker 1:

Oh, wow.

Speaker 2:

Too long.

Speaker 1:

That's an achievement. Yeah, I was married for 10 years.

Speaker 2:

Oh 10.

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

Speaker 2:

Still young.

Speaker 1:

Do you have any children?

Speaker 2:

Three.

Speaker 1:

All right. Excellent. How old are they?

Speaker 2:

My son, 18. And my daughters, 16. Twins.

Speaker 1:

Wow. Lovely.

Speaker 2:

[foreign language 00:02:11]

Speaker 1:

No problem. I'll pause it. That's a good match.

Speaker 2:

[foreign language 00:02:18]

Speaker 1:

So do they live with you? Your children?

Speaker 2:

Yes.

Speaker 1:

Okay. So how long have you lived in this house in Sydney?

Speaker 2:

This house?

Speaker 1:

Yes.

Speaker 2:

About two years.

Speaker 1:

About two years. And before that?

Speaker 2:

In Liverpool, but other, other street.

Speaker 1:

Okay. So you live with your...

Speaker 2:

Husband and kids.

Speaker 1:

Husband and kids? Okay. Is that your son, who is [crosstalk 00:03:03]

Speaker 1:

Do you enjoy living in this house?

Speaker 2:

Yes. I like it.

Speaker 1:

Yeah?

Speaker 2:

Yeah.

Speaker 1:

Yeah. Okay. And you see yourself staying here?

Speaker 2:

Sorry?

Speaker 1:

You think you'll stay here?

Speaker 2:

I think so.

Speaker 1:

Yeah?

Speaker 2:

I think so. Yeah. I like it.

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

Speaker 2:

And it's close to the shopping center, to everything.

Speaker 1:

That's convenient.

Speaker 2:

Yeah.

Speaker 1:

That's good. Okay. So has anybody else shared this house with you in the last several years? You say you live here with your husband and your children?

Speaker 2:

Yeah, just my husband [crosstalk 00:03:34].

Speaker 1:

Just your immediate family?

Speaker 2:

Yep.

Speaker 1:

Okay, great. So, you've only been here two years, but in terms of your energy use and the appliances that you use, what are some of the key ones that you use?

Speaker 2:

What's the thing I use?

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

Speaker 2:

TV, fridge, stove, oven, AC.

Speaker 1:

Okay.

Speaker 2:

Yeah. And... What it's called?

Speaker 1:

The fans?

Speaker 2:

Yeah, the fan. Yeah.

Speaker 1:

Okay. Great. All right. I'll explore that a bit more later. But just going back to living in this house, do you feel comfortable in this house?

Speaker 2:

Yeah.

Speaker 1:

What is it like in the summer or winter?

Speaker 2:

Yeah, it's good. It's cold in summer and warm in winter because it's brick.

Speaker 1:

Yeah. I can see that. It's very comfortable. Yeah. Okay. So you see yourself being here long term. Okay. And so, can you tell me about how you heat the house in the winter time?

Speaker 2:

Sometimes with AC, but it's too old. So I don't turn it on too much.

Speaker 1:

Okay.

Speaker 2:

Yeah. Maybe with the heater. Electricity. And sometimes I have the gas one.

Speaker 1:

Okay. Gas heater?

Speaker 2:

Yeah. I turn it on.

Speaker 1:

Uh-huh (affirmative) Okay. All right. So the gas heaters, is it one of those big ones or the...

Speaker 2:

Yeah. Big bottom?

Speaker 1:

Okay. Does it hit the whole?

Speaker 2:

No. No, just here. Just the living.

Speaker 1:

The living. What about the other rooms? [inaudible 00:05:16]

Speaker 2:

Just sometimes, not always. It's just for when they want to sleep, they go upstairs. All the day, they sitting [crosstalk 00:05:26]

Speaker 1:

Okay. Do you think about the cost of your appliances during the winter when you used them? For example-

Speaker 2:

Yeah. It's too much. Yeah.

Speaker 1:

It's too much. Yeah.

Speaker 2:

The last one I paid, it's 550. The last paid bill. Yeah.

Speaker 1:

Wow. How did that make you feel?

Speaker 2:

Yeah. Very... What can I do? I have to pay. And the one before, it's about 500.

Speaker 1:

Oh, wow.

Speaker 2:

Yeah. 490 or 500. Yeah.

Speaker 1:

So that's the regular for you?

Speaker 2:

Yeah.

Speaker 1:

That's wow. When you get your bill, do you get to compare with the rest of your neighbors? See how you're-

Speaker 2:

I think, the same. Yeah. One time I asked my neighbor, yeah, they said around 500.

Speaker 1:

Wow. Okay. Okay. So you don't use that air-con much in the winter because it's quite old?

Speaker 2:

Yeah.

Speaker 1:

Are you thinking of getting a new one maybe? Or...

Speaker 2:

I asked the owner, he doesn't want to change anything. If you want to change, you can change it by yourself.

Speaker 1:

Right. So you rented this place?

Speaker 2:

Yeah.

Speaker 1:

So it's quite expensive to run.

Speaker 2:

Yeah.

Speaker 1:

500 is quite big. It's a huge bill. Is that standard for a household though? Because of your family size, do you think?

Speaker 2:

This house?

Speaker 1:

The bill that you-

Speaker 2:

The bill. I don't know, because I think we don't use electricity too much like others. I just have the very, very important devices and not too much devices. Yeah.

Speaker 1:

Okay. Yeah. Cause that would be quite expensive to run, I imagine. And the TV, how much do you use your TV and the fan?

Speaker 2:

Just afternoon.

Speaker 1:

Afternoon?

Speaker 2:

Yeah. Because in the morning, all the kids at school and sometimes I am at work, my husband at work. Just afternoon.

Speaker 1:

Okay. What do you do for work?

Speaker 2:

Dental assistant.

Speaker 1:

Okay. So, you work full time or part time?

Speaker 2:

Part time. Just two days.

Speaker 1:

Okay. So, you're not working today?

Speaker 2:

No. Today is off.

Speaker 1:

Day off. Nice day to have off too. Okay. So when it gets hot in the summer, because this house looks really well-built with the bricks and everything, it probably doesn't get as hot for you, right?

Speaker 2:

Yeah, it's hot because the sun come from this side, so it's hot in afternoon.

Speaker 1:

Okay. But the fan helps you-

Speaker 2:

Yeah. We turn on the fans, the AC, yeah. When it's too much hot? We turn on everything.

Speaker 1:

Oh, gosh. Yeah. So, do you expect that you will have a big bill? How often do you get billed?

Speaker 2:

Every...

Speaker 1:

Every month?

Speaker 2:

Every two months. Every two or three months? I think

Speaker 1:

So in your mind, you're prepared that it's going to be a big bill. So you just use it-

Speaker 2:

Yeah, every three months. Yeah.

Speaker 1:

Okay. So the heating practices that you use in your home... Let's go back to winter time now. You say you use the gas and you use... You use a small portable heater or not? [crosstalk 00:08:44]

Speaker 2:

Yeah. Yeah. The small heaters with electricity. Yeah.

Speaker 1:

Yeah. So how did you learn about using those heating practices? What are some of the influences? Did you experience that growing up or is it more just a choice that you made that you want to keep your family nice and warm?

Speaker 2:

Yeah, of course. Yeah. I don't want them to get cold or to get sick in the winter. So I can turn on everything to get them warm. Yeah [crosstalk 00:09:18] Yeah.

Speaker 1:

Okay, that's really good. So, how long have you had some of your appliances for? So the heaters, the fan, for example. Some of the ones that you use more regularly, how long have you had them? Two years in this house, maybe?

Speaker 2:

Yeah. When I rent this house, I bought them. Yeah. For the winter.

Speaker 1:

Okay. What about things like your fridge, stove, oven, dishwashers? Do you have washing machine?

Speaker 2:

No.

Speaker 1:

No

Speaker 2:

Washing machine, yeah. But dishwashers, no.

Speaker 1:

Okay. What about clothes dryer?

Speaker 2:

No. Just the washing machine.

Speaker 1:

Just the washing machine. Okay. So in terms of your big appliances, you would say maybe TV, air con, dishwasher, stove.

Speaker 2:

Stove, yeah. Fridge.

Speaker 1:

And the fridge. Yeah, okay. Can you remember when you bought them and what were your reasons for choosing this type of appliances?

Speaker 2:

Actually, I can't remember because we were new in Australia and we just want something cheaper. Yeah.

Speaker 1:

Yeah. Okay. So you didn't consider the energy rating? Or anything like that.

Speaker 2:

No, no, no. Just that cheaper thing. We have to buy it because we don't have money. Yeah.

Speaker 1:

So comfort is, like you said, is very important for you, caring for your family.

Speaker 2:

Yes, of course. Yeah.

Speaker 1:

So don't matter how much it costs. Okay. So is there much conversation about how you use energy between you and your household?

Speaker 2:

Of course. Turn the lights off, always. Because always they left it on, turn the lights off, turn the lights off. Yeah, all the time.

Speaker 1:

I cannot [inaudible 00:11:11]

Speaker 2:

Even the AC. Because in each room, I have AC. And in the summer, always, I have to tell them to turn it off and come down to the living room.

Speaker 1:

How many bedrooms have you got?

Speaker 2:

Three.

Speaker 1:

Three bedrooms. Wow. Yeah. I can completely understand growing up is... So my mom's like, "Turn off the fan, turn off the light, turn everything off."

Speaker 2:

Turn it off and come down.

Speaker 1:

Yeah. I completely understand. And do they listen?

Speaker 2:

No.

Speaker 1:

You have to go and do it up for them, right? Okay. So, which room do you spend the most of your time? Would you say here?

Speaker 2:

Living room.

Speaker 1:

Living room. Yeah, Okay. Okay. Are there any rooms you avoid in particular?

Speaker 2:

No.

Speaker 1:

No. Okay, okay. Any room that's too hot or too cold? Like you said, the sun comes from that side.

Speaker 2:

Yeah. This side, the kitchen, my bedroom, the master bedroom it's too hot.

Speaker 1:

Too hot.

Speaker 2:

Yeah, in the summer. So I always sleep in my son's room. It's colder.

Speaker 1:

Cooler?

Speaker 2:

Yeah. Cooler.

Speaker 1:

And where is he then, when you're sleeping? [crosstalk 00:12:13]

Speaker 2:

During the night. Not at night. During the day. During the day.

Speaker 1:

The day. Okay. So on an average day, can you tell me what appliances you would use that consume a lot of energy?

Speaker 2:

TV, fridge, stove, oven. And in the summer, the fans, the AC, everything. We use everything, everyday.

Speaker 1:

And computers? I imagine you have computers for kids.

Speaker 2:

No computers, just iPads. Yeah.

Speaker 1:

Okay. What do you think about the energy that you use personally? Yeah.

Speaker 2:

Me?

Speaker 1:

Yeah. Do you think that you use a lot.

Speaker 2:

Washing machine, fridge.

Speaker 1:

You do laundry every day?

Speaker 2:

Every two days.

Speaker 1:

Every two days.

Speaker 2:

Yeah, every two days.

Speaker 1:

That would use quite a lot of energy, wouldn't it?

Speaker 2:

Yeah. And the oven and the stove.

Speaker 1:

You do a lot of the cooking?

Speaker 2:

Oh, everyday. Big family.

Speaker 1:

Yeah, yeah. Do your children help you?

Speaker 2:

And we Arabic, we really likes to eat too much.

Speaker 1:

I understand my mom's side of the family is Muslim. So when we were growing up [crosstalk 00:13:35] always cooking. Yeah, always. Okay. So do you cook inside the house.

Speaker 2:

Yeah, in the kitchen. Yeah.

Speaker 1:

Okay. What do you think about how much energy that people from your cultural background, your Syrian background, what do you think about how they use energy as well? Do you think that they use a lot of energy?

Speaker 2:

Where? In my country?

Speaker 1:

No. Here, in Liverpool. You said you have a Syrian community here.

Speaker 2:

Yeah, the same.

Speaker 1:

Do you thing they all use the same amount of energy?

Speaker 2:

The same, yeah.

Speaker 1:

Yeah. Okay. You think it's a cultural thing?

Speaker 2:

The same cooking.

Speaker 1:

Yeah, the same.

Speaker 2:

The same house work. Yeah.

Speaker 1:

Okay. So can I ask, if cost is important to you, but you use everything, how do you manage that? How do you manage the cost of how much it cost to use all of your appliances? [crosstalk 00:14:27].

Speaker 2:

Yeah. As I've told you, I'm trying to reduce the-

Speaker 1:

The cost.

Speaker 2:

Yeah.

Speaker 1:

Yeah. Okay. So let's talk about your energy consumption, your knowledge of energy consumption. Do you know actually how much energy say, a fridge uses? Do you think about energy [crosstalk 00:14:49] ?

Speaker 2:

I tried to read the bill. Yeah. Sometimes I cannot remember how much should I use it, how much I did. Yeah. But I always forgot.

Speaker 1:

Have you had the same fridge since this... So you moved here two years ago, you said. Is it the same fridge that you've had or did you bring it from a previous house? Did you buy a new fridge when you moved here?

Speaker 2:

Yeah, buy a new one. So I use two. The first one is too small, so I buy another one bigger.

Speaker 1:

So you have two here?

Speaker 2:

Yeah. But one small and one bigger. Yeah.

Speaker 1:

Wow. That would definitely use [crosstalk 00:15:32] Okay. What about lighting? So just standard lights everywhere.

Speaker 2:

Yeah.

Speaker 1:

Okay. And how many TVs yo have?

Speaker 2:

One.

Speaker 1:

One. Okay. It's all right. Music, sound system? Okay. What about coffee makers, blenders, food processors or anything like that?

Speaker 2:

No, I don't them here.

Speaker 1:

Okay. And no dryer?

Speaker 2:

No.

Speaker 1:

What about the heaters. How many heater do you have? How many heaters do you have? Do you have one in each room? During the winter?

Speaker 2:

No, no. Just one. Two. Sorry, two.

Speaker 1:

Two. Okay.

Speaker 2:

Yeah, I have two.

Speaker 1:

Those little heaters. They're terrible, aren't they? They use so much-

Speaker 2:

Yeah. It's so small. Yeah, but it's give [crosstalk 00:16:16] heat.

Speaker 1:

I know, I use that too. Okay. What about your son? Does he play video games or anything like that on a computer?

Speaker 2:

No.

Speaker 1:

iPad, no?

Speaker 2:

iPad, yes.

Speaker 1:

Do you use hairdryers, straighteners, irons?

Speaker 2:

Hair dryers but just once a week.

Speaker 1:

Okay. So, I'm curious to know more about energy use among people from your cultural background. So, is there much discussion about how you use energy with others? You may use energy in your own house, but do you actually talk about how you use it with others? From your cultural background?

Speaker 2:

Yeah. Yeah, of course. When we have this bill, yeah, we can discuss about this bill. About the electricity.

Speaker 1:

Okay. Do you share tips or challenges about what costs so much to use and how to minimize your cost?

Speaker 2:

Yeah. We were just talking about this. What you use, what to have, what can I do to reduce this bill and this general engineer.

Speaker 1:

Okay. Does that help you?

Speaker 2:

No.

Speaker 1:

So, you're all in the same boat.

Speaker 2:

Yeah.

Speaker 1:

Okay. You mentioned being Syrian, you cook a lot. Do you have any other cultural practices that maybe consume energy? Like consume a lot of energy?

Speaker 2:

No.

Speaker 1:

Any traditional cultural practices, cooking practices, rituals? Nothing?

Speaker 2:

Just normal.

Speaker 1:

Yeah, normal. Yeah, okay. When I was growing up, my parents would always cook outside because it was-

Speaker 2:

Just the fryer.

Speaker 1:

Fryer?

Speaker 2:

I put the fryer outside. Just if you want to fry anything.

Speaker 1:

Yeah, good.

Speaker 2:

For the smell.

Speaker 1:

It changes the flavor, doesn't it? And it gives it better flavor, maybe when you cook outside?

Speaker 2:

No, just for smell. Smell. Not to put the smell in my house. Just outside.

Speaker 1:

Yeah. That's fair enough. Okay. Do you have anything from your cultural background that you can share with me that is maybe different to how you live here in Australia now in terms of energies?

Speaker 2:

I brought with me from my country, the machine. It's for Kibbeh. Bulgur. Kibbeh. This machine to crush the Bulgur. It's it's called Bulgur, I don't know what it's called here.

Speaker 1:

Okay. What does it look like?

Speaker 2:

I will show you. This one.

Speaker 1:

Oh, okay.

Speaker 2:

To make Kibbeh, we mix it with meat.

Speaker 1:

It's like rice, a little bit?

Speaker 2:

Not rice. It's not rice.

Speaker 1:

It's grain.

Speaker 2:

Grain.

Speaker 1:

Yeah, Bulgur. Yellow [inaudible 00:19:35].

Speaker 2:

Yeah, we crush it with this machine and mix it with meat to make the Kibbeh.

Speaker 1:

Yeah. Sounds yummy.

Speaker 2:

Yeah, this is from my country.

Speaker 1:

Where's the machine? Do you have the machine here?

Speaker 2:

Yeah.

Speaker 1:

Can I see it? Yeah.

Speaker 2:

This one.

Speaker 1:

Oh, like a food processor.

Speaker 2:

Not food processor. This is not it's box.

Speaker 1:

Okay.

Speaker 2:

Can you hold, please?

Speaker 1:

Yeah, of course. Wow. Okay.

Speaker 2:

It's many machines in one. This one, for Bulgur, for Kibbeh and this blender, and this... But I don't use this so much. I just use this for Kibbeh.

Speaker 1:

So how long would you use that for when you're making your [crosstalk 00:20:39].

Speaker 2:

About four, five times a year. Yeah, because it's too heavy.

Speaker 1:

Yeah. And the process of making it, how long does it take? Like one hour, half an hour.

Speaker 2:

About four or five hours.

Speaker 1:

Wow, that's intense.

Speaker 2:

Yeah. That's why just few times a year. We do it.

Speaker 1:

Special occasion?

Speaker 2:

Yeah.

Speaker 1:

Okay. Okay.

Speaker 2:

On Christmas, on Easter and here.

Speaker 1:

Well, that's good. And that's something that people from Syrian background tend to do?

Speaker 2:

Yeah.

Speaker 1:

It's a traditional food you [crosstalk 00:21:13].

Speaker 2:

Yeah.

Speaker 1:

Lovely. Okay. Okay. So did you learn about that growing up, obviously in Syria?

Speaker 2:

Sorry?

Speaker 1:

You learned about it growing up in Syria?

Speaker 2:

Yeah. Yeah. Of course.

Speaker 1:

From your family?

Speaker 2:

Yeah. My mother was doing this and her mother and all. Yeah.

Speaker 1:

Yeah. Okay. Okay. Okay. What about other practices that remind you of your culture or connected to your community? Anything else?

Speaker 2:

Everything normal here.

Speaker 1:

Okay. Okay. So are you a big part of the Syrian community here? So you said, Liverpool has a certain community, so you would go to events? Community events?

Speaker 2:

Yeah, of course.

Speaker 1:

Okay.

Speaker 2:

We go to church every Sunday.

Speaker 1:

Okay. And do you bring people here and entertain.

Speaker 2:

Yeah, of course. Our friends, our families.

Speaker 1:

Lovely. And you cook for them?

Speaker 2:

Yeah, of course. That's the first thing.

Speaker 1:

First thing. Yeah. Okay. Okay. So what do you think that responsible energy use means to people from your background living in Australia?

Speaker 2:

What that mean?

Speaker 1:

What do you think that means to you? When somebody says to you, responsible energy use. Being responsible or being mindful of conscious of your energy use? Not just in terms of your bills, but maybe in terms of environment sustainability, things like that.

Speaker 2:

No.

Speaker 1:

Does it mean anything to you?

Speaker 2:

No [crosstalk 00:22:55].

Speaker 1:

All right. Okay. Okay. All right. So, would you say that your culture, your traditional practices, that really shapes how you use energy? Yeah.

Speaker 2:

Yeah.

Speaker 1:

Mm-hmm (affirmative). So, responsible energy use does not really mean much to you. But when you think about energy... Do you think about energy at all? Energies besides when you get your bills?

Speaker 2:

What do you mean of thinking about energy?

Speaker 1:

So, is it at the forefront of your mind? Say when you think about how you use energy, is it something that you consciously think about? "Oh, I need to be more conservative with my electricity. I need to use less electricity or I need to be mindful."

Speaker 2:

Yeah. When I saw this bill it's too much, I will try to, to reduce the cost, reduce the using of electricity, like AC, like...

Speaker 1:

Yeah. But it can be difficult, right?

Speaker 2:

It's very difficult [crosstalk 00:24:15] You can't reduce so much. You need to use everything.

Speaker 1:

That's true. And when you talk to other members of your community about their energy practices and you share tips on how to manage some of the challenges, I remember you said earlier that, you still end up using everything.

Speaker 2:

Even if I talk about it, I have to use it. [crosstalk 00:24:46]

Speaker 1:

So, are there any ways to help you manage your bill? Do you go back to your provider and do you ever complain about the huge bill? Do you try to negotiate...and reduced?

Speaker 2:

No. Because I know I will not have anything. Yeah. I have to pay first, then I have to negotiate.

Speaker 1:

Yeah. Well, okay. Who's your provider?

Speaker 2:

Origin.

Speaker 1:

Origin. Okay. Okay. Have you shopped around to see if you could get a cheaper deal from other [crosstalk 00:25:15]

Speaker 2:

Before Origin, I was with AGL.

Speaker 1:

AGL, okay.

Speaker 2:

It's expensive more than Origin. So that's why I changed the origin because I think it's cheaper, but I don't know.

Speaker 1:

How did you come to that decision? Talk me through your process. So you were with AGL and then you switched to Origin. What made you-

Speaker 2:

I think one of my friends told me about Origin. It's cheaper than AGL. So I-

Speaker 1:

And have you found that it's actually cheaper, in reality?

Speaker 2:

I don't know. All the same.

Speaker 1:

Okay. Okay. But you're not thinking of switching? Or...

Speaker 2:

Not now.

Speaker 1:

Not now? Okay. Okay. So are you so used to your bill now that you just expect that, "Well, this is how much I pay." So, you just pay it?

Speaker 2:

I always choked with this bill because before this house, I did pay more than 350 or maximum 400. Yeah. But here, I don't know why it's 500, more than 500.

Speaker 1:

Where did you live before?

Speaker 2:

Moore Street. Liverpool, but Moore Street.

Speaker 1:

Moore Street, okay.

Speaker 2:

It's unit.

Speaker 1:

And this is more, Townhouse?

Speaker 2:

This Memorial. This townhouse. Yeah.

Speaker 1:

Townhouse. Okay. And where you lived previously, how many bedrooms was it?

Speaker 2:

Two.

Speaker 1:

Two.

Speaker 2:

Two bedrooms.

Speaker 1:

Okay. So this is maybe a bigger space, huh?

Speaker 2:

Maybe, maybe. But, the same thing I used. I didn't change any. I didn't bring anything new. The same devices.

Speaker 1:

But back then, were you with AGL or Origin?

Speaker 2:

AGL.

Speaker 1:

Okay. So maybe [crosstalk 00:26:59] you need to... Okay. So would you say that your energy use has changed as you have lived in Australia for longer? No?

Speaker 2:

I don't know.

Speaker 1:

You don't know? Okay. What about since COVID, the COVID pandemic?

Speaker 2:

Maybe this bill is big because of COVID because we spend all the time at home.

Speaker 1:

That's true. That could be a reason. Yeah. Okay. What about your views on Australian energy policy? Do you know much about Australian energy policy? What the government is doing? No?

Speaker 2:

No.

Speaker 1:

Yeah. So you don't know whether or not they... Do you feel empowered? Do you feel like the government supports you in any way to help you with your energy use or energy bills? No?

Speaker 2:

No.

Speaker 1:

Do you think that or do you know of any programs that support people like us? No?

Speaker 2:

No.

Speaker 1:

No. Okay. So, you're not aware of any, you've never accessed anything. You don't really have any information. Just to providers?.

Speaker 2:

Yeah.

Speaker 1:

Yeah. Okay. Okay. So would you say then that you would probably rely more on your community, your Syrian network, your community of fellow Syrians, to understand or to manage your energy use in terms of what works, what's cheaper, how to manage your bills?

Speaker 2:

Yeah. Just when we talk between our friends. They just tell me, I am with this provider, I am with this provider, and this cheaper and this expensive. Yeah. And I will choose which one I have to go with.

Speaker 1:

Do you have any experience or exposure to TV ads or any kind of media messages about energies?

Speaker 2:

No.

Speaker 1:

Okay. Do you get anything from Origin or previously. From AGL? Any marketing materials?

Speaker 2:

No.

Speaker 1:

Anything find... Encourage you to... No?

Speaker 2:

Nothing.

Speaker 1:

Do you think it's important? Would you like to get more support from them?

Speaker 2:

Of course.

Speaker 1:

And what sort of support do you think would help you?

Speaker 2:

I always pay on time. They have to give me discount for this. I called them once to give me discount for pay on time, because I pay every time before the due date.

Speaker 1:

That's good.

Speaker 2:

They told me, "We already give you a discount."

Speaker 1:

Okay. How much is the discount?

Speaker 2:

I don't know.

Speaker 1:

So, who's in charge of paying the bills in your house? Is it you? Or...

Speaker 2:

Me and my husband.

Speaker 1:

Do you split?

Speaker 2:

Yeah.

Speaker 1:

Okay, okay. If you could tell the Australian government one thing about energy use for people of culturally diverse background, what would it be?

Speaker 2:

What I want to say?

Speaker 1:

Yeah. Yeah. If you could tell the government one thing about how you use energy, what would you tell them? What would be the thing that you'd tell them?

Speaker 2:

We have in Australia a lot of the sources of electricity. Yeah. It should be much [inaudible 00:30:37] It's too expensive.

Speaker 1:

Too expensive.

Speaker 2:

Too expensive. And [crosstalk 00:30:42] we have to use everything. I can't prevent anything. I can't let my kids to stop using the fridge or the TV or the heater or the AC. The electricity should be cheaper. We have all of the resources her in Australia.

Speaker 1:

I agree. It doesn't make sense that we have all these resources and we pay more [inaudible 00:31:11] All right. So, what do you think they can do to help make it cheaper? Do you know of any examples of other countries or place?

Speaker 2:

Yeah. They can't put solar for us.

Speaker 1:

Solar?

Speaker 2:

Yeah. We can pay our bills and give the rest to the government. Yeah.

Speaker 1:

Okay. I think it's the set of costs that makes solar a little bit inaccessible. But I agree, solar is probably the solution. It's better for the environment too.

Speaker 2:

I think when I buy home... If I bought it home, I want to put a solar, the first thing.

Speaker 1:

Okay. I think I've come across, I don't know the exact details, but I've come across a subsidy program that the government is doing. If you're building a house, you can get a discount for installing solar. But I don't know the details.

Speaker 2:

I don't know. [crosstalk 00:32:13] I will not build a house. I don't have the money to buy, to build the house.

Speaker 1:

Maybe someday.

Speaker 2:

Yeah, I hope so.

Speaker 1:

Yes, inshallah.

Speaker 2:

Inshallah .

Speaker 1:

Okay. Is there anything else that you think you'd like to say about energy use and about energy practices?

Speaker 2:

No, nothing. That's it.

Speaker 1:

Well, thank you so much for your time. I think it's been really useful to understand some of your challenges.

Speaker 2:

Thank you.

Speaker 1:

Yeah. But it's good to know that at least you have support from your community and they're all going through the same thing.

Speaker 2:

Yeah, of course. Support with talking.

Speaker 1:

With talking. Yes, exactly. Exactly. But yes, it would be good to find other ways to manage [inaudible 00:33:01].

Speaker 2:

I hope so.

Speaker 1:

All right. Well, thank you very much. If there is anything else that you think of that you would like to add, please do get in touch. Okay?

Speaker 2:

Thank you so much.

Speaker 1:

Thank you. I hope I haven't forgotten anything. I think we've covered most of the information. Would you please put it in your details for me? So I can get you [inaudible 00:33:30] Sign that we have had this interview. Just put your name there. Thank you.

Speaker 2:

My name?

Speaker 1:

Yep. And then, I'll email it to you. Because I've got your email address.

Speaker 1:

So, I forgot to ask you about your daughters because you said they're 16, teenagers. I understand because I have a teenager niece and she stays with me sometimes. Always in the bathroom, straightening their hair, doing stuff with their hair. Do you find that your daughters do that too? Do they spend use a lot of appliance?

Speaker 2:

Yeah. Just one of my daughters because the other one doesn't like anything for the girls.

Speaker 1:

Really?

Speaker 2:

Yeah. Just one of them. She do her hair twice a week. Three times a week. Yeah.

Speaker 1:

Blow drying? Straightening?

Speaker 2:

Blow drying, straightener.

Speaker 1:

And what about you?

Speaker 2:

One a week.

Speaker 1:

One a week?

Speaker 2:

Yeah.

Speaker 1:

Okay. I guess it's manageable when your hair's shorter. You can-

Speaker 2:

Yeah.

Speaker 1:

Yeah. Okay, great. And I think that's all I have from my end. Yeah. I don't think I have any thing else that we haven't covered. So, all right. Well, thank you very much. I just wanted to make sure that I covered everything. And the last question I'm going to ask you though, is about your attitude towards the environment and maybe thinking about energy and the environment. Is that at the top of your mind at all? Do you think about, not just in terms of cutting costs and reducing the cost of your energy bill, but do you think about how your energy use can also help the environment? Is that something a consideration at all?

Speaker 2:

No.

Speaker 1:

It's funny because me too, growing up, I don't ever really think about that.

Speaker 2:

I don't have time to think. Yeah. I have many, many issues to think about.

Speaker 1:

Yeah. Environment is probably the least of your worries.

Speaker 2:

The last thing.

Speaker 1:

Yeah. I just wanted to confirm because yesterday, it was a bit like that too. And I started to think about growing up as well in a different culture. We never really think about the environment. It's just about cost-

Speaker 2:

Maybe we have too much problems [crosstalk 00:36:02]

Speaker 1:

Yeah. Other problems to worry about. I feel like, yeah, the environment, sometimes is a first world problem.

Speaker 2:

Should be the first, but we don't have time to think about it too much.

Speaker 1:

Yeah. I think people who lived in developed countries, born and bred here, they think more about that because they probably don't have this any other problems you think about...

Speaker 2:

Yes. And especially we are new here, we have to learn everything. We have to see everything, we have to... Yeah. Many, many things we don't have how it's goes.

Speaker 1:

How did you learn that process eventually? How did you integrate and start to understand how things work here? What helped you?

Speaker 2:

It's everything from our friend's experience. When we talk to each other, we know how you deal with this, how you deal with this. Yeah.

Speaker 1:

That's so important to have that support network, isn't it? All right. J, thank you so much.

Speaker 2:

Thank you.

Speaker 1:

For your time.

Interview day/time: March 12, 2021.

Participant: Syrian female.

[TRANSCRIPTION IN PROCESS].

Interview day/time: April 9, 2021.

Participant: Lebanese male.

Speaker 1:

Okay. So thanks for taking part in the project T, I really appreciate that. So can you just mention there a bit for the purposes of the recording, can you just start with your age, what year you were born in and your background about coming to Australia?

T:

Yeah. My whole family came to Australia in 1978, I was six years old. I'm one of five kids. I'm the youngest. My dad passed away 2011 and my mom's still here in Petersham. She's got dementia. You'll probably see her next time [crosstalk 00:00:38] go there. Yeah. I'm 49 turning this year, 49. And I work for the Council on weekends.

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

T:

And during the week, I'm a carer. For mom.

Speaker 1:

For your mom, yeah.

T:

And this house here belongs to my partner, my girlfriend, she's inside.

Speaker 1:

Yep, yep.

T:

Giovana, she was born here.

Speaker 1:

Yes. Yep, okay. So, your position in the family is a key one then. You play the primary carer for your mom?

T:

Yeah. Yeah, we've got live-in carer.

Speaker 1:

Yep.

T:

Because a lot of things also I can't do.

Speaker 1:

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

T:

I can't do what females do.

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

T:

But she can't, I got a toilet in there.

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

T:

So we got a live-in carer and I'm just a... I've been a carer for about four years.

Speaker 1:

Right. Yeah.

T:

She's been sick for about four years.

Speaker 1:

Uh-huh (affirmative).

T:

Which now she's in stage seven dementia.

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

T:

Yeah.

Speaker 1:

Yep. And then can you tell me a little bit about your cultural background then? So, you mentioned you moved from Lebanon in the late '70's. How would you identify your cultural background and can you tell me a bit about that?

T:

Yeah, there's not much I know being six years old. I know six years of my background, that's all I know. I came here I was so young, I [inaudible 00:01:59] much about how Lebanese people were living there because I spent most of my life here.

Speaker 1:

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

T:

But, what else? What else can I say? I don't mind this country, I didn't choose to come here, I was forced.

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

T:

So, I get along with people, I work, I use the power and water utilities like everyone else. I don't use any more being Lebanese than Chinese or Spanish.

Speaker 1:

So, would you say growing up in Australia then from a young age, do you identify with Lebanese culture? [crosstalk 00:02:42] part of a community [crosstalk 00:02:44] Lebanese people? Or do you just kind of not think of it-

T:

No, no, I don't speak or read Lebanese. I don't mix with a lot of Lebanese communities because most of my friends are either born here or been here for so long.

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

T:

So, I'm more Australian than Lebanese.

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

T:

The only thing... If something happens, for example the government identifies you as non Australian, whether you're born here or not, just by the color, that's bad. Identifying criminals as Middle East background. But, they're born here, that's... They're racist, it starts from the top. So, the government identifies people by their color.

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

T:

But if I win the gold medal, Australian.

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

T:

But if I kill someone, "No, no, you're Lebanese. You got to get back to where you came from." But you were born here.

Speaker 1:

So, do you feel [crosstalk 00:03:39] do you feel you've experienced that? Have you seen that?

T:

Yeah.

Speaker 1:

You've felt that?

T:

Yeah, it's 100% racist. This country is racist because whether you're black, pink, purple, or orange, they treat you as not Australian if you do something wrong, and Australian if you do something right.

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

T:

And the people that [inaudible 00:04:04], they're not Australian themselves, because they're white. Which Australians are black.

Speaker 1:

Indigenous, yeah.

T:

I mean that's so... It's coming from someone that are not even Australian themselves.

Speaker 1:

Yeah, yep.

T:

So yeah, if I go to Lebanon, I'm Australian. The way I talk, I'm Australian. And when I'm here, although I've spent 90% of my life here, I'm still Lebanese because of my color and the way I look.

Speaker 1:

And where do you get that most from? Is it people you work with? People you see in the street? Where does it come from and who says these kind of things?

T:

Usually when you get in trouble, the police, and the media, and the public. You're automatically not part of the group because you're a different color.

Speaker 1:

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

T:

Mainly the police.

Speaker 1:

Yep.

T:

When they identify a group of people that have done something bad, and when they do a team to get those people, they call them Middle Eastern squad.

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

T:

Wrong. There shouldn't be an Middle Eastern squad or Asian squad to catch people that aren't born and bred here.

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

T:

Regardless of what shape they look and color they look.

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

T:

Until that changes, it will never change. Because it's coming from the top. So, you don't build a house from the top, you fix the foundation.

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

T:

And the foundations aren't fixed because it's still there.

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

T:

When I hear the word Asian crime squad chasing the... They're not, they're Australian, simple. That's it.

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

T:

So, yeah that's been going on for many, many years.

Speaker 1:

So would you say that's part of the problem in Australia?

T:

Oh yeah.

Speaker 1:

There's all these categorization rather than treating everyone as Australians.

T:

Oh yeah, yeah, yeah. For example, I'll give you a name, [Dawn Facer 00:06:06]. She was studying [inaudible 00:06:09] when he done something bad, "Get back to where he came from."

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

T:

He was born and bred in Canberra.

Speaker 1:

Yeah, yeah.

T:

Just because he doesn't look white, and even white isn't Australian, they're all European, some European background. She told him to get back to where he came from. And that's coming from an old lady, and she's even... Her DNA isn't from here, from European background.

Speaker 1:

Yep.

T:

So, if she's saying that and [inaudible 00:06:38].

Speaker 1:

Yeah, so [inaudible 00:06:40].

T:

Yeah, yeah, it's stupid.

Speaker 1:

Yeah. So, you mentioned you got a partner that's here. Can you tell me, do you have children? What's the-

T:

Yeah, yeah. I got married in 1998.

Speaker 1:

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

T:

2001.

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

T:

Sorry, I met her in '98 in Lebanon. Got married in 2001. I was divorced in 2010.

Speaker 1:

Yeah. Yeah.

T:

And I got two kids.

Speaker 1:

And are they here? Is your ex here and your kids here?

T:

They're all here, they're 19 and 21.

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

T:

And I met this person here called Giovana.

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

T:

Nine years ago.

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

T:

So, we've been going here for nine years.

Speaker 1:

Cool.

T:

Yeah, she's... When I ask people where you from? I say, "Where's your DNA from?" It's your DNA.

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

T:

It's not where you're from. You could be born here, but your DNA is in Mexico, or Swedish, or wherever.

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

T:

It's where your DNA came from.

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

T:
So...

Speaker 1:
Exactly. And then you mentioned your place in Petersham, is that your main house?

T:
Yeah.

Speaker 1:
How long have you lived there?

T:
Yeah, I've lived there for most of my life. My dad bought that house in 1982.

Speaker 1:
Yeah.

T:
And I've been there for over 40 years.

Speaker 1:
Right.

T:
I bought a house in Bexhill.

Speaker 1:
Mm-hmm (affirmative).

T:
And Canterbury.

Speaker 1:
Yep.

T:
Sold that. I gave that to my ex.

Speaker 1:
Yeah.

T:
Charity.

Speaker 1:

Yeah. And for the children, yeah. Kids.

T:

Yeah, so yeah I lived most of my life in the [inaudible 00:08:16] Petersham.

Speaker 1:

Yeah. So the place that you're in, in Petersham now, is that the place that your mom and dad had and now you're there with your mom?

T:

Yeah, that's right, yeah.

Speaker 1:

Yeah. So it's always been the family home?

T:

Oh yeah, always, yeah.

Speaker 1:

Yeah. And do you enjoy living there? And do you enjoy living-

T:

Yeah, yeah.

Speaker 1:

That part of Sydney and stuff?

T:

Yeah, we came here like everyone else. [inaudible 00:08:36] mom and dad. [inaudible 00:08:38] told my dad where to go, and just follow the leader.

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

T:

Stayed there, lived there, grown up there.

Speaker 1:

What's it like there? What was Petersham like growing up and what's it like living there? Can you tell me about it? If you were going to describe it to someone that doesn't know it?

T:

Yeah, Petersham back when I started, when I started there it was a lot of immigrants. Not a lot of young Australians like there is now.

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

T:

A lot of Greeks, Vietnamese, and a lot of immigrants lived there.

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

T:

Now it's all mixed, a lot of single families, there are young families. Not many European background.

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

T:

Living there anymore.

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

T:

They have moved on. They're not there. A lot of shops now, a lot of shops. There's not a lot of European food shops. A lot of take-a-ways, a lot of pubs, and clubs. It's changed, yeah.

Speaker 1:

It's changed, yeah. I mean would you say it's changed for the better or do you like the changes that have happened there?

T:

Well, the changes, yeah, I don't really... It doesn't affect me, but it's probably... yeah, it's probably better because it's a fast life now because everyone's in a rush. It's not that good though because you don't speak to your neighbor until something happens or someone dies. Back then, if you're new to a place, you go in and have a coffee, you get to know your neighbors and your friends. Now they're all a bit tight, they don't mix and match until something happens or something. That's the only problem.

T:

You walk down the street, they look the other way, or they're on the phone pretending their talking. They don't talk a lot like you see in the olden days.

Speaker 1:

So would you say there was more community spirit when you were younger?

T:

More communication back then. Yeah, yeah, much better.

Speaker 1:

And do you see yourself staying in Petersham? Do you think you'll stay in that house where you are? Or have you got ideas to-

T:

Yeah, yeah, I've got ideas. Once mom goes, she's right at the end, we'll probably end up selling the house. I'll probably end up moving out of here or buying a house in the country.

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

T:

I don't want to be living in Petersham anymore.

Speaker 1:

Yeah, yeah.

T:

Not just the price, because astronomical.

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

T:

I mean [inaudible 00:11:08] to buy a house or even to rent, it's twice as much.

Speaker 1:

Mm-hmm (affirmative). Yeah. So, okay that's really good to get a bit of your background, just kind of understand your lifestyle and stuff. So, now I want to talk a little bit about the main focus of this study which is about energy use.

T:

Yeah.

Speaker 1:

So, one of the first things to talk about is heating and cooling. So, obviously quite important here in Australia, it's gets very hot in the summer. It can get cold in Sydney in the winter as well. In the house you've got in Petersham, would you say overall you feel comfortable in the house?

T:

Yeah.

Speaker 1:

What's it like? [crosstalk 00:11:46]-

T:

Any problem when it's billed, I get a shock sometimes. You don't know how expensive it's going to be. They don't update you like what's your current usage or what's your current bill at the moment.

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

T:

You don't know if it's going to go up or down. You don't know whether to put this on or off. That's the problem with utility companies, water, gas, power. It's a lottery.

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

T:

Because you don't know.

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

T:

Until that bill comes in the mail.

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

T:

Yeah, it's a...

Speaker 1:

And have you felt that? Have you gotten bills and you think, "Whoa, that's high?" Or, "That's-

T:

Yeah, yeah, of course. Yeah. You ring up to complain, they put you on hold, and then you got to tell them why this, why that. Then they'll say, "Oh because the current situation, we had to buy some energy from this company and they're at a higher rate, we had to use that rate, you use that much rate, that much kilowatts, and [inaudible 00:12:49] and whatever watts." They don't need to explain that. You got no choice.

Speaker 1:

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

T:

What other choice you got? Buy candles or keep using their products. What are you going to do?

Speaker 1:

Yeah. Can you tell me about the Petersham house, how do you heat it in the winter? How do you keep warm?

T:

We got a gas, we got a gas heater. We got a gas heater, that's not too bad the price of gas.

Speaker 1:

Is that one that you put... Is it a plugged in one?

T:

Yeah.

Speaker 1:

Or is it one where you just-

T:

No, [crosstalk 00:13:20] the main gas. It's connected to the main gas, yeah. The main gas. Yeah, that's reasonably cheap compared to the electric heaters.

Speaker 1:

Yeah, yeah.

T:

Yeah.

Speaker 1:

So, is that the main thing... The main device you [crosstalk 00:13:34]-

T:

That's the main one, yeah.

Speaker 1:

Yep. Is there anything else you would do to try and keep warm in the winter?

T:

Obviously you close windows and stuff and keep the house warm while you're working. Everything is shut. I don't have wood fire or anything, it's an old house. You can't burn any wood.

Speaker 1:

What about clothing or anything, would you put-

T:

Oh yeah, yeah, of course-

Speaker 1:

Extra layers on?

T:

Yeah, yeah of course. I've got something, I've got arthritis in my hip.

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

T:

So, I can't be too cold.

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

T:

So, I like to stay warm.

Speaker 1:

Yeah, so you feel that. [crosstalk 00:14:09]-

T:

Yeah, sometimes. In the morning, going to work it takes time to warm up and then it'll be okay.

Speaker 1:

Yep.

T:

But yeah, for sure, yeah. Clothes.

Speaker 1:

What are the challenges in keeping the house comfortable and warm? Are there parts of the house that are colder? Or are there issues with the house that you need to try and deal with to keep warm?

T:

Not a great deal of issues. I've only got a few dozen doors, I don't have a mansion. Easy to maintain, to keep warm. I don't have 25 bedrooms. I mean, it's just close those windows and stuff. It's really compact, it's not fully wide open living.

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

T:

Got quite a bit of walls in there, so...

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

T:

The walls themselves, they give you a cushion.

Speaker 1:

Yeah, okay. So, you feel it's kind of relatively-

T:

Yeah.

Speaker 1:

You don't fee too often that it's really cold in this house then?

T:

No, no, no because it's got sun from east and west. We're not covered with a lot of trees, it's open from the outside. But in the inside, yeah, it's just not that cold at all.

Speaker 1:

Yeah, okay. And you mentioned about the gas, do you think... How expensive is that to run when you use it in the winter?

T:

It's cheaper than power. Way cheaper than power. But, still some fee. Like any other utilities, you just... It's a lottery, you don't know if you've used so much last week or not, you can't remember. Sometimes you don't know what you had for breakfast.

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

T:

So, if you don't... Beginning of the month, you don't know if you've used so much or so little, or, "Should I leave it on? Is it just after the cycle of the gas bill or before the cycle?" Yeah, sometimes it's a lottery.

Speaker 1:

So, how do you manage that? How do you feel about that when you're thinking about-

T:

Yeah, it's a nightmare. Like here, lights are on, we don't know how long the bill's going to be. [inaudible 00:16:17], your current bill is 120 and it's going up everyday for... It's a lottery.

Speaker 1:

So, uncertainty's not nice, yeah.

T:

Yeah, they try to make things easier. To get online, to go online, do this, do that. But, if you don't know what your current usage, your current account balance, what's the use of going in a lot of things online to make it efficient and fast? To pay your bill and stuff. They want you to do everything online.

Speaker 1:

Yep. Yep.

T:

But if you can't actually see visually your current account from one cycle to right at the end-

Speaker 1:

Yeah, yeah.

T:

It's useless.

Speaker 1:

So, you mentioned about mostly using gas fire to keep warm, a gas heater. Is that something you figured out yourself? Or is that something your mom and dad always used to do in the house as well? Have you always-

T:

Always. Always-

Speaker 1:

Always used that gas heater?

T:

Always used gas, yeah. We've had gas from day one. Petersham. A lot of areas, they don't have gas, but Petersham's always had gas. And yeah, we've been told many years gas is a lot cheaper than power, so yeah.

Speaker 1:

Yeah, yep, okay. Okay, what about in summer, what's the house like in summer?

T:

Summer, we don't have... We do have it now, air-con, air conditioning now, we've got air conditioning. That's not too bad, even that uses a lot of power, but with the air-con, usually we put it on in the morning and close all the windows.

Speaker 1:

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

T:

And usually that'll keep most of the day. We have it on low volt low, the control.

Speaker 1:

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

T:

And usually that lasts most of the day.

Speaker 1:

Yep.

T:

We try not to use that everyday because it's a guzzler. It's an incredible amount of power that's used. Unless it's really, really, really hot I put it on.

Speaker 1:

Yep.

T:

Our bill is a bit more now because of mom.

Speaker 1:

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

T:

But [inaudible 00:18:23] not use it that much.

Speaker 1:

Right. So do you think it's become more important to use it because, to keep your mom comfortable?

T:

Yeah, yeah. Back then we usually only use it when we had visitors coming over and stuff. When we're having dinner or lunch, and it's boiling hot.

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

T:

I don't usually put it on just for the sake of putting it on because it's 35 degrees and I'm by myself at home.

Speaker 1:

Yeah. And you mentioned that... So, you didn't always have air-con did you? When did you get that put in the house?

T:

That was in there in 1998? Wasn't there when we bought the house.

Speaker 1:

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

T:

So, '98 I think, '97.

Speaker 1:

Yeah. And then can you tell me then what sort of day it would need to be in summer for you to actually decide, "Let's put it on." How would you be able to tell, "We should put it on."

T:

Oh, to me I can last if it's... I can keep it off if it's 40 degrees, but usually 38. 37, 38. After 35 we usually put it on. And that's only if everyone's in the house or having guests coming over.

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

T:

But if I'm by myself, I don't usually put it on.

Speaker 1:

Yeah. Okay.

T:

Doesn't affect me much. But over 35 usually.

Speaker 1:

Are there any other things you do to try and keep comfortable in the summer?

T:

Yeah, close the blinds. Close the blinds, close the windows and keep the sunlight out.

Speaker 1:

Yep.

T:

That usually helps.

Speaker 1:

Okay. What about the cost of the air-con? You mentioned... Have you seen that? Have you used it the air-con and then got the next bill?

T:

Yeah.

Speaker 1:

What do you see?

T:

Yeah, a big spike obviously. We're talking about 100 plus, a huge spike in usage of air-con.

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

T:

We don't have solar, we don't have some new air-con, it doesn't have the inverter, it's a big one.

Speaker 1:

So do you think the air-con's one of the most expensive things to us for energy?

T:

Probably not. I mean with the new models coming in, you've got the automatic, the inverters good, really good, they don't chew much. But, usually I bought fans. Put a fan on, they're usually just as good.

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

T:

And also you can get the portable air-con. Portable air-con, they're not too bad.

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

T:

But still, of course they suck just as much.

Speaker 1:

So, fans are something you will use?

T:

Yeah, fans I'll use.

Speaker 1:

Yep.

T:

Yeah.

Speaker 1:

Where have you got those? Are they in every room? Or have you just one one?

T:

Yeah, only one. Got two, two in the house.

Speaker 1:

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

T:

Yeah, don't use them much. Every time we use it, you got to clear [inaudible 00:21:06] to get all the dust out.

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

T:

I don't use it much.

Speaker 1:

So, where do you put those? Is it in the bedroom? The living room?

T:

Yeah, yeah, in the garage. In the garage, plastic shed. To store in the garage. I don't leave it open though, it gets a little dust in there.

Speaker 1:

Oh, right.

T:

Yeah.

Speaker 1:

So you only bring them out when you-

T:

I bring them out when I need them.

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

T:

And then put the plastic back on.

Speaker 1:

Okay. And then what about keeping cool, how did you learn how to do that in that house? Was it again learning through what mom and dad did or did people tell you? How to keep cool, or did you find out by yourself?

T:

Oh, yeah, just common sense stuff. Dad used to tell us what to do when we were little, "Do this, do that. Then do that, then do..." But yeah, it's just common sense.

Speaker 1:

So, do you think that's important then? A lot is what you learn from family? Your parents and stuff like that?

T:

Yeah, yeah. My dad was very, very tight with his money. So, he used to tell us exactly what not to do, what to do, keep the house warm, close all the windows, conserve energy and stuff.

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

T:

But...

Speaker 1:

What about with your kids? You learned that stuff from your dad, did you teach them about the same things?

T:

Yeah, they're a bit different because I spent most of my life away from the kids because I got divorced and she took the kids when they were seven and eight.

Speaker 1:

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

T:

So, I didn't spend too much time with them. I still seen them of course, but she had more input in what they do around the house than I did.

Speaker 1:

Yeah, yep.

T:

Yeah, same thing. Open the windows, anything to save money or save money on bills. If you can do it the natural way, why not? Yeah.

Speaker 1:

Are there any times whether it's winter or summer and you feel, "I feel a bit uncomfortable here, but I'm worried about the bill," is it ever a trade-off between... Do you ever feel like you're not able to do what you'd normally like to do?

T:

Sometimes. But very rare, very rare I wasn't able to afford the bill because I had a good job and there was more than one person living in the house. So, the bill was shared.

Speaker 1:

Yeah, yeah.

T:

Very rare we had a massive bill and everyone had a heart attack because of the bill. It wasn't just for one person. But if it was for one, yeah of course.

Speaker 1:

Yeah, yeah. What about any other major electrical appliances you've got in your house? What other things do you think chew up energy that you use a lot?

T:

Yeah, I notice the charging of the batteries and also if the switch is on, that chews some... It chews some, a little bit. But, if you have a lot of switches that are just on, not even plugged in, just on, that chews it. It chews a lot of... Some power, but usually I'll turn them off. A lot of people don't know, but having that exposed it chews a little bit of energy.

Speaker 1:

Yep.

T:

Kettle, microwave, electric oven, gas stove. I have all those around the house.

Speaker 1:

Yep.

T:

They're all-

Speaker 1:

What about a fridge? Do you got a fridge?

T:

Yeah, fridge, yeah-

Speaker 1:

What about that? Do you think that uses much?

T:

The one we have now, I think it does, yeah. It's a good old, don't know how much it chews. But that's a problem, you're supposed to estimate how much... We're not scientists to find out, "Okay, this chews this, that takes that much, that takes that much."

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

T:

Companies, the don't inspect your house and tell you, "Okay, yeah your house... That chews that much, that chews that much," add it up, "End of the week your appliances will take off that much and if you do this, you'll save that much."

Speaker 1:

Would you like to know that stuff? Do you think it would be helpful?

T:

Yeah, yeah.

Speaker 1:

To be told?

T:

Yeah, yeah it would be helpful for sure.

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

T:

If you can save \$10 a week, that's \$520 a year.

Speaker 1:

Yep.

T:

Yeah.

Speaker 1:

It makes a difference.

T:

Huge difference.

Speaker 1:

What about, have you bought any appliances recently? Have you ever thought about how much energy they use up when you buy them? Or-

T:

Yeah, yeah a lot of stuff. When you get [inaudible 00:25:41], they give that stars, four stars, three stars, two stars. And then when you ring up the company and say, "Why is my bill that much?" "Oh, we estimated that much." It's all estimation because your smart meter isn't so smart, it's too old and you need a smart meter. They're sitting behind the computer, "Okay, we estimated you used that much." How can they estimate something? And the stars, it doesn't make any sense whatsoever.

T:

Let's say I need shops to sell products, if you buy four stars instead of three, well, why is it three, not, four, not two? It's just a... I don't think it make much... Excuses. By the time you bring it home you don't know. Okay, if you get [inaudible 00:26:26], it is four, three, five. Even if it's five, how much have I saved not being a four? Then when you ring up, "Okay, no you bill's too expensive because you've used so much." And then I say, "Well, have you checked my meter?" "Oh no, we don't check your meter because you've got the old meter, we estimated your meter."

T:

It's a joke.

Speaker 1:

So you think the estimation-

T:

Yeah.

Speaker 1:

Of the meter is a big problem?

T:

Yeah, it's wrong. It's wrong.

Speaker 1:

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

T:

It's not estimating, "Okay, next week you're paying \$300," right? And the week after, "We estimate you're going to pay \$400," so it's.... Or even water use, "We're going to estimate you're going to use more water." It's lottery.

Speaker 1:

And what about with the appliances with the stars, you're saying you think it doesn't make much of a difference. Have you ever bought an appliance in a shop because it had more stars?

T:

Yeah, yeah, salesman used to say, "Spend an \$10 get five stars or four stars." By the time you take it home, then all the stars go missing because now it's old. You forget what stars it is, you don't know, "Okay, how much have I saved?" But they don't say how much you saved if you keep it closed. When you open it, that affects the stars because you can't... That's probably the stars if you keep it closed. But every time you open, you close, open and close-

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

T:

The light comes on, ah, it's just not... It's a joke, the stars.

Speaker 1:

Yeah, yep. So, what could they do better then? If you were going to buy an appliance and you wanted to know whether it can save energy-

T:

Well, it should be [crosstalk 00:28:16]-

Speaker 1:

What can they tell you?

T:

In the house connecting, say, "This is your meter in the house."

Speaker 1:

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

T:

And your appliances are here. They're all connected to the meter.

Speaker 1:

Yep.

T:

Your current account is \$120.

Speaker 1:

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

T:

Next day it's \$122. Next day... And why has it gone up? Because this appliance used a bit more than that appliance. It's all there.

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

T:

Instead of... You've used the fridge yesterday, so now it's gone up \$2. You've used the air conditioning yesterday, that's why it's gone up \$4.

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

T:

Everyday you keep track of your bill.

Speaker 1:

Yeah, yep. So, having that and [crosstalk 00:29:01] you're in control-

T:

For sure.

Speaker 1:

Information.

T:

For sure. But, you can't live on estimation. "I'm not sure how much is this..." I earn good money, but with the stars and the estimation thing, it's not 1980, it should be more modern.

Speaker 1:

Yeah. Yep. Use technology.

T:

I can't blame you because you live in a house that doesn't have a smart meter. And even if it does, how do you know how much you've used yesterday? Do you know how much you've used yesterday? You got that thing inside your house and go, "Okay, my current account is \$160."

Speaker 1:

Yeah. Yep. [crosstalk 00:29:43]-

T:

Yeah, yeah, you don't have it.

Speaker 1:

Yep.

T:

Not just power. Gas, water. You should be able to find out exactly what is your current account for that utility.

Speaker 1:

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

T:

Inside your house.

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

T:

You might have a water leak. By the time you find out you had a water leak, it's gone up \$300.

Speaker 1:

Yeah, yeah.

T:

And then they ring up, "You probably got a water leak." "You sure?" See, by the time you find out, from \$300 to \$800. But if you had that thing in your house, it identifies a leak somewhere-

Speaker 1:

Yeah, you would see.

T:

Then you can fix it before it gets to \$600.

Speaker 1:

Yeah, yeah.

T:

That's all of them, not just power, all of the companies, they should be more modern.

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

T:

They want you to be modern to get online and do this online, and go that online. But, when it comes to finding out what you've used, they're back in 1980's.

Speaker 1:

Yeah. Yep. That's a good point. So, we've talked a bit about energy and these issues with tracking what you're using. What's most important to you when you're thinking about using energy? As doing the things you want to do in the house, is it caring for your mom obviously? Or are you always thinking about the bill? What do you take into consideration when you use energy in the house?

T:

If the appliance isn't a money guzzler like an air-con, I don't worry about it. If I'm making an extra cup of coffee from the kettle, it's not going to affect my way of making coffee or stop making coffee. It just depends on appliance. But having the air-con on an extra five hours or six hours, that's the only appliance I'm usually careful of.

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

T:

Having the TV on, it's not going to kill me an extra hour.

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

T:

Your bill's not going to skyrocket to \$1,000. So, it depends on the appliance. The main appliance is the air-con.

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

T:

And the electric heater, which we don't have anymore.

Speaker 1:

Yeah. So, the heating and cooling are the big things you think?

T:

Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Speaker 1:

Everything else is-

T:

[inaudible 00:32:00] more heating. Heating, the gas isn't too bad.

Speaker 1:

Mm-hmm (affirmative), yeah you said-

T:

It's the cooling. It's the air-con.

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

T:

You can't cool with gas. You can't cool your house with gas. If you can, it would be good. So, cooling, that's the main [crosstalk 00:32:18]-

Speaker 1:

Big thing, yeah.

T:

Unless you have solar.

Speaker 1:

Does that mean... Do you prefer, do you look forward to dealing with winter more than the summer? Do you worry about the summer being hot and having to deal with the heat and the air-con? [crosstalk 00:32:33]-

T:

Summer person, I don't mind the heat. I like swimming, diving, I like going out in summer, it doesn't affect me. I don't like living in Norway for example, Sweden, cold. I'll die.

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

T:

I don't mind heat. I've managed heat.

Speaker 1:

Yeah. Okay, cool.

T:

Especially being Lebanese background, over there, the heat goes on and on and on.

Speaker 1:

Yeah. Okay, what about within your family or even in your home in Petersham or even here, do you talk much about energy? Is it a discussion that you think or talk about? About how much you're using or how [crosstalk 00:33:18]-

T:

I mean here, Giovana doesn't have air-con, it's only a unit. Don't worry too much about power bills here. At home, over the summertime, I don't worry too much because there's more than one person using it. My sister's come in, they contribute as well with the bills and stuff.

Speaker 1:

Do they help? Yeah. Yeah. That's good.

T:

It doesn't hurt much. We don't use the air-con that much.

Speaker 1:

So, when would you talk about energy, is it mostly when the bill comes in?

T:

Usually when it's a bit more than normal. A bit more. If it's \$300 more than average we usually talk about it.

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

T:

But even the bill, I don't find them very accurate. That's the only thing, but you can't fight it, you can't tell them... You don't know exactly. Is there a power leak somewhere? They give you a bill, you pay the bill, that's it, move on.

Speaker 1:

Yeah. Yep.

T:

So you don't know-

Speaker 1:

Do you feel that you've got to pay it?

T:

Yeah. Yeah [crosstalk 00:34:22] they got your teeth. You've signed a contract, here's your bill, pay it every month, move on, that's it. They don't... If you try to explain it, [inaudible 00:34:35] \$300 or \$100, where'd that come from? Does that come from this kettle? Air-con, this and that? It's just the... Then they figure out no, we estimated your bill from last bill and now this bill matches your last bill. And sometimes if it's summer, you probably use an extra air conditioner, you've a bit more than last bill. You can't win.

Speaker 1:

Yeah. What sort of things, if a bigger bill comes in and you have a chat with your mom or your sister about it, what do you talk about? Do you talk about how you're going to pay it? Or do you talk about how you can make sure it's not as high? What sort of discussions do you have?

T:

We don't usually talk how it's going to be cheaper for next bill because most of the appliances, they're old. Fridge, old. You'll see whenever you go there, it's fridge, it's several years old. All the appliances are old, old house.

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

T:

So we don't usually talk about why this bill is \$10 more than last bill or \$20 less or what. We just pay it.

Speaker 1:

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

T:

Everyone pays half and pays their share, and we just pay it.

Speaker 1:

Do you ever talk about getting different appliances? Getting new appliances to try and see if it saves energy that way?

T:

That's the only problem. Once they're used, when you don't know how much you're currently using, it doesn't display inside your house what that appliance is... How do you judge it?

Speaker 1:

So, you'd want information to know it's worth investing in a new appliance?

T:

Yeah. You're telling me to estimate, I'm going to save \$60, not \$50 if I get a better air conditioning than my current. But how do you know when you don't have the actual mechanism to visually see what's going down, what's going up?

Speaker 1:

Yeah, yep.

T:

I like having a system inside the house, like a clock, stopwatch. And the more time you leave it on, the faster it goes. Turn it off, it slows. So \$300, by the time it gets to \$400, it usually takes a week. But we're having the air conditioning on, now it'll take you a day to reach \$400.

Speaker 1:

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

T:

It's like a poker machine, it goes up. Okay, a roller coaster, it goes up and down.

Speaker 1:

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

T:

If you can't visually see what you've used or not used, it's useless.

Speaker 1:

Yeah. So, in the Petersham home, are there rooms that you spend more time in than others? Are there parts of the house that you like more than others because it's more comfortable or it's cooler or warmer?

T:

Yeah, lounge room. When you go there, the lounge is probably twice the size of this. Usually I stay there 90% of the time because it's near the kitchen. It's all open, near the kitchen, the TV on, and you're watching the news and stuff. I spend most of my time there and it's always [inaudible 00:37:52] too because it's cold or too warm. Too cold or too warm. Because it's all open.

Speaker 1:

Yeah, so you can't get [crosstalk 00:37:58]-

T:

Yeah, but it doesn't get too hot or too cold. But if it does, we just close the blinds and the windows.

Speaker 1:

Yeah. Are there any parts of the house that you don't like going into because it's not comfortable at all? Is there any room that's particularly cold or particularly warm?

T:

Oh, no, no it's all very, very similar. Very similar. It's not a huge house.

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

T:

Very similar.

Speaker 1:

Okay. What about... So, reflecting on your home energy use, would you say you think compared to other people you use a lot? A little? Average? How do you think your household goes-

T:

I've spoken to my neighbor. They're very, very similar. They use a bit less. They're a bit more modern appliances.

Speaker 1:

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

T:

Their water usage is a big more, they've got a pool.

Speaker 1:

Yep, yep.

T:

When it comes to power, they have a very, very similar, very similar.

Speaker 1:

Yeah. So you think that's helpful to speak to them? To kind of give you a sense of where you're at?

T:

Yeah. I don't speak to them every time I get the bill, but if I get a massive spike in bill, I usually have a word with them, "Madison, have they over estimated your account too or what's going on? Is your bill like mine?"

Speaker 1:

Yep.

T:

[crosstalk 00:39:18] if you keep asking them, they [inaudible 00:39:20].

Speaker 1:

But have you found that, if you had a big spike, did they have a big spike as well?

T:

If they got a big spike he never told me. He never asked me.

Speaker 1:

Yeah, yeah.

T:

Maybe that's to show off he's got more money than me, I don't know. But if I've got a big spike, I don't go in there and show him the bill, "What's going on?"

Speaker 1:

Yeah. [crosstalk 00:39:46]-

T:

As me.

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

T:

He got the same meter.

Speaker 1:

Yeah. So-

T:

A bit embarrassed to go in there with the bill and...

Speaker 1:

What about generally people from your cultural background, do you think they use more or less energy than-

T:

No, I think we use a bit more. My mom used to cook a lot more with the gas, used to do a lot of European foods, all the time cooking.

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

T:

But lately getting take-a-way and stuff.

Speaker 1:

So you think that's part of the lifestyle of cooking at home, having people around?

T:

Yeah, Lebanese people used to always cook, home cook. Mom used to cook all the time.

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

T:

Now she can't walk a lot.

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

T:

Now I spend more money on Uber.

Speaker 1:

Yeah. Yeah.

T:

European you'll find a lot of home cooking.

Speaker 1:

Yeah. So, that's kind of important to do. So would people see that as happy they use more energy because you get to do that?

T:

I don't think you notice it. My mom, all the Europeans do more cooking than... Not Europeans... I've never asked them what they actually do, but that's probably why I've got a bit more than him. Because he lives by himself.

Speaker 1:

Yeah. Yeah.

T:

Don't think he cooks as much as mom used to cook.

Speaker 1:

Yeah, yep. Okay, so cooking's part of it. Okay, I want to talk a little bit about different appliances and how much energy you think you use. So you mentioned the air-con uses a lot. What about say the lights? Putting the lighting on and off? Would you say that's something that uses much energy?

T:

See, that's another thing. It's getting... I don't know, I've changed all the lights with the-

Speaker 1:

LEDs, yeah.

T:

Those LEDs. But how do I know they're passing on that saving on my bill or have I've saved? How much have I saved by not having that [inaudible 00:41:52]? There is no info. It's like [inaudible 00:41:53] say, "Yeah, okay this is cheaper here. You save here, you save here, you save on that." But when you put it on, it's a lottery. Because it's all up to the estimation.

Speaker 1:

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

T:

They might keep estimating the same amount [crosstalk 00:42:14]. They don't know if I've saved. You saved from here, but it hasn't changed from their end.

Speaker 1:

Yeah. So, if you've bought the light bulbs and then not seen a difference in the energy bill?

T:

I haven't seen much difference at all. Because they're still estimating.

Speaker 1:

Yep.

T:

And I've still got the old meter.

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

T:

I haven't rang them up and told them I went to buy [inaudible 00:42:37]. How do I know I've saved? Saved money, but it's still stuck on this end. You don't know if you've saved or not.

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

T:

So, you can't see your account until you get it in the mail.

Speaker 1:

Yeah. What about television?

T:

Yes, again it's just... How do you know? How do you know what to buy and what you've saved, and what stars to buy or not? You might be doing the right thing, but from their end, is it going to then... Am I getting the rewards like I'm supposed to by buying the safety appliances?

Speaker 1:

Yeah, yeah.

T:

I don't know.

Speaker 1:

What about doing the laundry? Do you have a washing machine? Do you have a dryer?

T:

Yeah, we got a washing machine. Yeah, we got a washing... No, not dryer.

Speaker 1:

No dryer?

T:

We got a washing machine.

Speaker 1:

So, if you're doing the laundry, how would you do that and how would you dry your clothing?

T:

Yeah, on the clothesline. No problem.

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

T:

But the usage again, it's an old washing machine. But then again, it's still... How do I know if I leave it on an extra hour, how much I've saved? Or how much I've used, more power? I don't know.

Speaker 1:

And did you just never have a dryer there? Or is there [crosstalk 00:44:00] is there a particular reason why you wouldn't have a dryer or use one?

T:

Yeah, dad never used to like dryers. He used to like for his clothes nice and naturally dried from the sun.

Speaker 1:

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

T:

Didn't like the humidity on clothes.

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

T:

Yeah. That's....

Speaker 1:

So, it's more a preference rather than a cost?

T:

Yeah, more a preference I reckon, yeah. More a preference. Back in his days in Lebanon, never used to.

Speaker 1:

Okay. So, we kind of touched on this, but you mentioned your neighbor, you kind of chat to them about energy use as well. But anyone else in your community? Even people you know from Lebanese or other background? Have you ever had conversations about energy with them?

T:

Not really. If you do, they'll think you're saving money or you're not earning much as them, you're poor. You don't mention power bills when you go for coffee and...

Speaker 1:

Yeah. So it's a bit of a [crosstalk 00:45:05]-

T:

That's the last thing you... Yeah, if I invite you for a coffee, and then be like, "What's your power bill yesterday? What's your gas bill?" Yeah, it's not a topic you talk about.

Speaker 1:

Yeah, it's quite personal, right?

T:

Yeah.

Speaker 1:

Yep.

T:

And if you got a spike, then they'll say, "Okay, well you've probably grown drugs," or something. Or you do drugs, or, what's going on?

Speaker 1:

So, do you think that's a challenge because if people don't talk about it much, you can't learn from each other about maybe tips or ideas and how you save or how you do things? Is that a barrier do you think?

T:

It's good, but it should come from the top. It should come from the companies that give you the power. Give you a facility you can visually inspect what you've used or what item you've used. If it doesn't come from the top, you can live on a candle and you're still going to pay an average price because they've estimated again.

Speaker 1:

Yeah. And then earlier you mentioned about cooking and Lebanese families doing a lot of cooking. Are there any other traditional cultural practices or things that Lebanese families or your family did that would involve energy use? Other ways of bathing, use of [crosstalk 00:46:23] appliances like cooking stoves, or-

T:

Yeah. Mom used to bake her own bread. Bake her own bread, but that usually take gas bottle.

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

T:

Cooking, it's mostly fried, oil. Electric use. Electric oven.

Speaker 1:

Yeah, right.

T:

So, 90% of your use comes from an electric oven. And gas of course.

Speaker 1:

Yeah. So tell me about the baking bit with the gas bottles, how did that work?

T:

Yeah, those template, like a round a piece of metal.

Speaker 1:

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

T:

Round. And you pull the yeast on there.

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

T:

And then you make it slide on all sides. And the gas underneath, it warms up for you, the hot plate.

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

T:

And you just pick up the bread in one piece. Pick it up, it's round.

Speaker 1:

It's a flatbread, yeah.

T:

Flatbread, but it's round. It's huge.

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

T:

And then you fold it and put it in plastic bags.

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

T:

That's very healthy.

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

T:

But that's just gas.

Speaker 1:

And did your mom used to make that every week? Or [crosstalk 00:47:29] how often did she make it?

T:

Probably twice a week.

Speaker 1:

Twice a week?

T:

Twice a week. [crosstalk 00:47:31] big on bread, though. That's the problem with Lebanese and European, they love their bread.

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

T:

[inaudible 00:47:41].

Speaker 1:

Yeah. That's right. And then, did your mom do that for a long time? Cook that bread? Or when did she stop cooking it?

T:

She stopped doing it about 20 years ago. Yeah about 20 years ago when all the shops started selling bread for \$1, she goes, "It's not worth it." It's not worth getting a gas bottle and-

Speaker 1:

Yeah. Yep. Any other things like that? That you can remember growing up that you used to do as a family?

T:

No, that's... No, that's it. Homemade bread. What else mom done? Apart from using the oven and stove, that's the only thing.

Speaker 1:

Mm-hmm (affirmative). The cooking, yeah. The cooking's a big thing.

T:

You can also do fish of course and gas. Portable gas.

Speaker 1:

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

T:

Portable gas stove.

Speaker 1:

Okay, and then I also wanted to talk to you a little bit about current responsible energy use and what that means. There's obviously a lot of debate now about being energy efficient, impact on the climate and all of that. Is that something that you ever think about? How much energy you're using, not just the cost of it for the bill, but also in terms of the environment and the climate and stuff like that? What would you say about that?

T:

The problem with that, there's no incentive not to use or use appliances to save the environment.

Speaker 1:

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

T:

Because you're getting the same bill every month. They're not charging you any less by using a candle or by not using stuff that's going to hurt the ozone layer or the environment.

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

T:

So, there's no incentive. From the companies.

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

T:

You're getting the same bill. Of course, you want to help out the environment, but they're not giving you any incentive, what's the use?

Speaker 1:

Mm-hmm (affirmative). So, is that something... So, you believe it's important but you're not seeing the benefits, you're not seeing the motivation for you to do it?

T:

No. Unless you spent \$1,000 on solar, they'll give you a credit because you've saved the companies from burning extra fuel. Unless you spend heaps, you get some back.

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

T:

But if you don't spend heaps and you want to help the environment, it's [inaudible 00:50:12] anything from the energy companies. If you don't use the fridge for a week, you've actually saved the environment.

Speaker 1:

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

T:

But where? I'm not getting a gift card, I'm not getting any credits, I'm not getting anything from the company.

Speaker 1:

Mm-hmm (affirmative), yeah.

T:

So when there's nothing coming in, what's the use of turning off the fridge for weeks? Or turning your lights off for weeks? I've saved the environment, but what do I get in return? They're still getting paid.

Speaker 1:

Yeah. [crosstalk 00:50:42]-

T:

On.

Speaker 1:

So, you think that's something that's important if we want to get people to help save the environment, you need to give them something back?

T:

No, you can't live in the dark. Can you afford to live in the dark for six months to help the environment? So, what do you get in return?

Speaker 1:

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

T:

How are you supposed to live while saving the environment? At the moment, we're not helping the environment, the light is on. That's burning fuel. If I turn the light off, we're saving the environment, but what do I get?

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

T:

Extra cup of coffee? Or a reduced bill? If I get a reduced bill for turning that thing off, [inaudible 00:51:30], of course I'll say yes.

Speaker 1:

Yeah. Yeah. Is that been much of a discussion with you and your family about the environment?

T:

No.

Speaker 1:

And saving energy use because of that? Or is it more [crosstalk 00:51:42]?

T:

Yeah, it's like a... No, 20 million people in Australia. If we do our part, and 20 other million people do whatever they want, they're not forced to do this, there's no mandate or compulsory, what's the use? It's like getting a COVID test. They want everyone to get a COVID test. Where? If there's any reward everyone would get tested. When there's no reward, you can't say, "Okay, now everyone get tested." If there's no reward by the government why should I get tested?

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

T:

Why should I take a day off just to keep the government happy to get tested? If I'm not getting a reward, why get tested?

Speaker 1:

Mm-hmm (affirmative), yep.

T:

So, if there's no reward, why should I turn off the fridge for a few weeks to save the environment?

Speaker 1:

Yep.

T:

The government doesn't want to help me unless I've spent thousands in solar and stuff to get rebates.

Speaker 1:

So, what do you think the main challenges are for you using energy. If you're thinking about issues you've got to deal with on this, and you would like to try and-

T:

Well, the environment, it's never... There's no incentive. If that month I've saved \$100, I've saved the environment. If there's nothing coming back as a return, that's a challenge. It's not coming from the top to help you.

Speaker 1:

Mm-hmm (affirmative). Mm-hmm (affirmative).

T:

Not a lot of people can afford to buy... To spend \$12,000 on solar power to get the rebate.

Speaker 1:

Yeah, exactly.

T:

So, it's okay, the environment this... No coal, no this, no nuclear, no [inaudible 00:53:41]. Live in the dark, turn everything off. Stop driving cars. Stop smoking. They keep saying smoking kills, okay well ban the thing. If it's poison, ban it. Simple. But they keep it on to get the money. Same with the power, they keep it running because we need it. If it's to save the environment, turn it off. Provide candles to everyone. Put candles on. Get a big candle in every house. Provide candles to every single room if you want to save the environment.

T:

They can't have it their way. You can't do what they want when they're not providing you any help to do it.

Speaker 1:

Yeah, to make it happen. Would you say your energy use over your life's changed? Life stages, different things you're doing? Or have you always been pretty much the same in how you-

T:

Yeah, pretty much. Pretty much the same because I'm not using anything extra. Yeah, all the same, it hasn't changed. Because I haven't seen anything in return. I haven't seen any savings because that's estimated. It's no use having... Not driving your car or not keeping the TV on. There's no savings, there's no proof that you've saved that much. We're not watching TV for a week or not using the air conditioner for a week, where is the actual saving that I've saved on my next bill?

T:

It doesn't say, "Okay, from the 30th through the 19th you're saving \$10 off your bill because you didn't use the air-con."

Speaker 1:

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

T:

If I can see that, okay, I've done something.

Speaker 1:

What about when you had kids for example. A young family and stuff, did you notice energy use change then? Did it go up or-

T:

Yeah, it's gone up. Of course it's gone up, but what do you do? You can't adjust the... It's like a yo-yo, it goes up and down, up and down. But because I don't have a smart meter, it's all an estimation. So, if you go on holiday's or if you turn everything off, they're still estimating your account from the previous bill. They don't know we're on holiday's. They didn't tell me, "Okay, when you go on holiday's for six months, let us know, we'll give you a base rate."

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

T:

Doesn't say that.

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

T:

Why am I paying same amount of money like every other month when I'm overseas for six months?

Speaker 1:

Yeah, yep. What about when your mom became sick and you're having to care for her more at home. Does that change your energy use? Does that made it go up or [crosstalk 00:56:46] because I think you mentioned the air-con, you might use a bit more.

T:

Yeah. That's gone down a bit because where she's staying now, the room is right next to the window and it's really ventilated. It doesn't need much air-con, there's a small fan in there.

Speaker 1:

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

T:

Doesn't cook anymore, doesn't use the washing machine. We got a carer that uses that once a day.

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

T:

Once a week. Mom used to clean everyday, use that everyday.

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

T:

It's gone down. Oh yeah, it's gone down.

Speaker 1:

So, it's actually gone down even though she's-

T:

It's gone down, yeah.

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

T:

It's gone down.

Speaker 1:

Okay, that's interesting. What about with COVID-19? Last year people were in lockdown, people were stuck at home, obviously people, a lot of people were working from home some of the time or spending more time at home. Do you think COVID-19 has changed your energy use at all?

T:

No. For me, COVID-19 didn't affect me because I'm a necessary worker. A necessary worker from the Council-

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

T:

I still go to work.

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

T:

But, there's no... I can't see anything. I've spoken to a lot of people that work from home before and after COVID, and there's no evidence that that's saved more or used more. The companies then provide their info, they haven't told them, "Okay, yeah you've used more because of COVID and stuff."

Speaker 1:

Yeah. But you were not at home a lot of the time because you're [inaudible 00:58:16] as an essential worker?

T:

Yeah.

Speaker 1:

Yeah. Okay. Okay, last few questions T is just about energy policy in Australia and kind of how that's managed. What do you think and know about Australian energy policy and how well do you think it supports people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds?

T:

I don't think they discriminate. The companies don't know who lives in this house, who lives in that house, are they European? Or Chinese? Or Australian? I don't think that affects the companies. I don't think that... They don't care. I don't think they know who lives what and where, and what house.

T:

But, I know a lot of Europeans, they do their own cooking of course and stuff, they use a bit more.

Speaker 1:

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

T:

But the policy, being an essential refugee for example, "Okay, we should charge you less because you're a refugee," or, "You're Indian, we'll charge you a bit less. Because you cook more hot foods." I don't think that makes a difference. The policy. Same stuff with water. I mean everyone drinks, so a lot of countries... Everyone needs to drink-

Speaker 1:

Needs water, yeah.

T:

Yeah. It's not going to make any difference what color drinks what and how much. So, I don't think the policy makes any difference to the actual race and color.

Speaker 1:

What about... Do you know of any programs out there that you've seen to support people with energy use? Maybe providing some information or some education? Or support? Have you ever seen anything like that?

T:

On TV. I've seen a lot of ads on TV, yeah. Energy use, save this, save that. It's like advertising stuff, but the more they advertise stuff to save, the more they actually use the stuff and it goes up a bit. If they tell you, "Okay, don't use the fridge too much," you think to use a fridge. You probably wasn't intending to use a fridge, but you're using it more because you've seen... You just remembered you got something in the fridge I'm going to use, I'm going to eat.

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

T:

Yeah, the education, it's useless. Absolutely useless. It's like saying, "[inaudible 01:00:39] buy this, you'll save \$10 a month on your power bill." But, in the end, if you can't visually see what you're spending, what's the use?

Speaker 1:

Mm-hmm (affirmative), yeah.

T:

So it's just...

Speaker 1:

So the best... I mean, guess you've mentioned this quite a few times, but if you could tell the government to do one thing, to support people better, is that what you would say? Give people a meter? Give them a way to kind of track?

T:

I mean-

Speaker 1:

What they're using.

T:

Yeah, even if it's in your app. Even if it's on your app, even if what they... Energy usage, if they can track it on your app, on your phone, or provide you with a meter inside your house to see exactly what you've used. You might be out of work next week, so you might be able to use the air-con. At least you know.

Speaker 1:

And if they said they could do that, but you have to pay for the meter, would you say... What would you think of that? If the government said, "You can have a meter to track your use, but you need to pay for it." Like you pay for a fridge, or a television, or something.

T:

Yeah, I mean if they can pay by installment. It depends how much it's going to cost. But, why should you pay for something that's owned by someone... By a company?

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

T:

You're still paying the same amount of money to the company. The only difference, you're seeing what you've used instead of they see what you've used.

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

T:

So why should you pay for something that you're profiting the actual company that's giving you the stuff?

Speaker 1:

Yeah. So you think-

T:

You shouldn't have to pay for that.

Speaker 1:

So, the company should pay for it do you think? Energy companies?

T:

Eventually you're still paying them.

Speaker 1:

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

T:

It's not like you've stopped.

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

T:

The only thing is, it's easier for the environment, to help the environment to see exactly what you've used.

Speaker 1:

Do you think the energy companies want you to know how much you're using?

T:

I don't think they do because otherwise they'll probably lose money. Heaps. They'll end up using money because a lot of people would just say, "I'm not using the air conditioning this week, I can't afford my next bill. I better put a cap on that now."

Speaker 1:

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

T:

And so, yeah, they'll probably end up losing money.

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

T:

But if it's for the environment, it's all one country. It's all one... We should be all in together.

Speaker 1:

So, if you were in charge for a day, you're in government, you're deciding on energy, what would you do to make things better?

T:

I'd invest in that technology so everyone knows exactly what they've used. It's like filling up fuel. You don't fill up fuel and then finding out the price when you get in the cashier. The price is there.

Speaker 1:

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

T:

So, why should I use the air-con if I don't know the price?

Speaker 1:

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

T:

If I know what the current account is, then I'll probably use it.

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

T:

So, they should just invest more money in telling people... Giving their info.

Speaker 1:

Yep, okay.

T:

Use on apps.

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

T:

Why should you pay for something if you got an app?

Speaker 1:

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

T:

There's apps for everything.

Speaker 1:

Yeah, that's right. Okay, that's pretty much everything T. I just... Do you have any other things you'd like to say about energy use or energy use among Lebanese background people? Is there anything else that you can think of that you want to say?

T:

Nothing's changed. A lot of my friends, they're probably more Australian than Lebanese and stuff. But yeah, they use the power, they steady use, they're paying the bill. So they use just like you and me. Of course they're parents probably use a bit more with the cooking stuff, but-

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

T:

Yeah.

Speaker 1:

And what about the cost of energy in Australia, what do you think of it generally? Do you think it's a fair rate? Or do you think it's gone up or down?

T:

That's the problem, you don't know what you're paying. You ring up say, "Okay it's \$1 [inaudible 01:04:48] kilowatts, and thousand watts and walla watts, whatever watts." They don't explain it properly, they're talking... They don't explain it in normal English.

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

T:

They don't explain, "Okay, what's a kilowatt?" A lot of people don't know what's a kilowatts, thousand watts... Their language must change.

Speaker 1:

Change, yeah.

T:

Must change. It's just, who knows what watts, you don't know what's kilowatts, thousand watts, it's just...

Speaker 1:

So, it may-

T:

Stuck in the olden days.

Speaker 1:

Make it simple, easier to understand, better language.

T:

Yeah, yeah, yeah. It's like your phone. I mean, you know exactly how much charge you've got so you can keep talking, so what's wrong with power? Exactly how much money so you can keep using it.

Speaker 1:

How about when you travel and go to other countries, do people ever talk about the cost of energy there versus Australia? To get a comparison? Have you ever spoken to anyone?

T:

No. Yeah, I've spoken to friends that live in Cincinnati.

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

T:

They're a bit cheaper than here.

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

T:

They know exactly what they use. They've got a similar system what we're talking about. They've got a smart meter, convert it into dollars.

Speaker 1:

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

T:

And it goes straight to their phone, they know exactly what they've used. The current account.

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

T:

Very good system over there.

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

T:

And they use a bit, they're a bit less. They've got nuclear, some of the states over there, nuclear power.

Speaker 1:

Yeah. Yeah.

T:

A bit cheaper.

Speaker 1:

Okay. And then lastly, when you think about the energy supplier, do you always have the same company? Or do you ever switch, use different energy companies?

T:

No, all the same. All the same. They always give you texts and stuff, "We'll give you \$10 more, \$10 less." End of the day, they're all the same. You don't save much at all because you don't know, all the info it's hidden. It's [inaudible 01:06:44], they're just estimating things and stuff.

Speaker 1:

So have you had the same power company for a long time?

T:

Yeah, yeah.

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

T:

I used [inaudible 01:06:54] and EnergyAustralia used to be owned by [inaudible 01:06:55].

Speaker 1:

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

T:

It's all EnergyAustralia.

Speaker 1:

Yep, yep.

T:

But yeah, I used to get some discount, but that's gone years ago. Yeah, so EnergyAustralia.

Speaker 1:

Okay. And [crosstalk 01:07:10] what's it like, what do you think of them as a company in your dealings with them?

T:

Like any other company. I mean they're making money, they've got bills to pay, employees to pay, resources. [inaudible 01:07:28] 100%, they're charging me like everyone else. They're not giving me any extra power for free or incentive by saving power. Like a normal... Any other company.

Speaker 1:

Yeah. And do you have much interaction with them? Do you speak to them on the phone or use the services? Or is it just pay the bill-

T:

Yeah [crosstalk 01:07:53]. You can't, you can't argue. Once you ring up, "Why this? Why that?" You can't. They just say, "You're estimated this," or, "You've used that much, you've used that much." But, yeah you can't win.

Speaker 1:

Yeah, yeah.

T:

It's one-way. It's pay this or nothing.

Speaker 1:

Yep. Okay.

T:

Energy companies are pretty hard to deal with.

Speaker 1:

I can bet.

T:

And sometimes you ring up India, you can hardly understand what they're saying and stuff.

Speaker 1:

Mm-hmm (affirmative), mm-hmm (affirmative). Yeah. So, do you think the energy companies could do better with the service? Customer service maybe?

T:

If the customer service... 1000%. It comes down to the technology their using. It's back in 1970's. They can't just keep estimating without providing people a system where... Yeah, it's just a-

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

T:

It won't change.

Speaker 1:

Okay.

T:

Yeah.

Speaker 1:

Okay, well really appreciate your time.

T:

Yeah.

Speaker 1:

Today T.

T:

Thank you.

Speaker 1:

Good stories and ideas that you've shared there, so I'll just stop the recording and then-

Interview day/time: July 2, 2021 & July 16, 2021.

Participant: South Sudanese female.

P:

I give my consent to fully participate and share my information in this research. I verbally give my consent.

Interviewer:

Excellent, thank you.

All right. So we may proceed with the interview then?

P:

Yeah.

Interviewer:

So Morgan, with the participant voucher, how does that work for the [Zoom 00:00:32]? Will that be sent to [P 00:00:37]? Is that how I say your name, sorry?

P:

P.

Interviewer:

P, okay.

Morgan:

So I'll just send that across to you in the next day or two via email. Sometimes it just takes a bit of time to process through the whole system so it'll be sent to you via email, hopefully by the end of the weekend. Maybe Monday, depending on the processes.

P:

Okay, no worries.

Interviewer:

So we might just then get started with the interview, P, if that's [crosstalk 00:01:05].

P:

Yeah.

Interviewer:

I've got my interview questions on the screen, so I'll be referring to them quite a bit but I'll also take some notes if that's okay.

P:

Yeah.

Interviewer:

The interview's being recorded as well. Any notes that I missed out on should be also captured.

P:

Okay, no worries.

Interviewer:

I'm going to start officially. I understand that you have the information sheet so you know how I am. I'm one of the researchers on the team, so I'll be conducting the interview this morning. Thank you for agreeing to take part.

This project focuses on empowering culturally, and linguistically, diverse residents and citizens of Australia regarding their energy consumption. I want to start with the qualitative interview, so it might take about an hour.

P:

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Interviewer:

Let's start with your background. Can I please start with your age, and what year you were born.

P:

I'm 27 at the moment. I'll be turning 28 end of this year. I was born in 1993, November 26.

Interviewer:

What is your position in the family. Are you the oldest, the youngest?

P:

I'm the middle child. Number three out of six children.

Interviewer:

Big Family.

P:

Yeah, big family, but I moved out. I finally recently moved out of home.

Interviewer:

Oh, for the first time?

P:

For the first time in my life, ever.

Interviewer:

Oh!

P:

I moved to Victoria with my Husband and my Daughter.

Interviewer:

Oh, excellent.

P:

Yeah.

Interviewer:

So, prior to that, where were you?

P:

I was living in Sydney for 19 years with my family, my siblings, my mom and dad. I came here 2002, I was eight years old at the time when I came.

Interviewer:

Oh wow.

P:

Yeah.

Interviewer:

In 2002? Wow, okay. I came here in 2002 too, so we have something in common.

P:

Yeah, I cam in November.

Interviewer:

November? Oh okay. I came in [inaudible 00:03:22] 2002.

P:

Yeah, so I came in November 2002.

Interviewer:

Okay great, and then you [crosstalk 00:03:30] for 19 years.

P:

19 years, yup. So I lived first in Fairfield, [Regents Park 00:03:35] and then the remainder of my time in New South Whales. I lived in the west side, Blacktown. Since 2006 until this year, I've lived in the same council area.

Interviewer:

Oh wow, okay.

P:

Yeah.

Interviewer:

So now you've moved to Melbourne.

P:

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Interviewer:

Okay, and you're now married and you have children.

P:

Yeah, one kid daughter.

Interviewer:

Boy or girl?

P:

Girl. She's currently with me, she didn't go to childcare. She's sitting down watching TV to the [inaudible 00:04:11].

Interviewer:

How old is she?

P:

She's turning four this month, actually.

Interviewer:

Okay.

P:

Yeah.

Interviewer:

Excellent. I have a six year old.

P:

They grow so quick. Boy or girl?

Interviewer:

A boy.

P:

Ah.

Interviewer:

Yeah, they do grow so quick. So do you identify with any specific cultural background.

P:

Yeah, I do. So I'm South Sudanese from the Dinka ethnic community.

Interviewer:

South Sudanese.

P:

Yeah, because South Sudanese is a big country with six or four tribes, so I'm from the main dominant one, the Dinka because they have the majority.

Interviewer:

Okay.

P:

And within that Dinka ethnic group, there's more other tribes. In the Dinka ethnic group, I'm from the Rumbek community. Rumbek. R-U-M-B-E-K. Yeah. Rumbek Community.

Interviewer:

Is there a big Rumbek community in Sydney where you lived before, in Blacktown?

P:

Yeah, there was a lot of us there but the majority, they all moved to Melbourne. So now, specifically where I live, there is a lot of them. So a majority of them moved to Melbourne. Yeah, so maybe there are about, including the kids and the families, maybe about a thousand or something so in Sydney or more, I'm not sure. But where I used to live in Blacktown, if I go to the shops in the main street, I will definitely meet a relative.

Interviewer:

It doesn't feel like you're so far away from home, huh?

P:

Yeah, definitely. It's just common, if you're going down to the corner store, or to the bank, or just to go get the main African food, you will definitely meet a relative there.

Interviewer:

Nice.

P:

Yeah.

Interviewer:

That's a good thing, right?

P:

It's a good thing. It's a good thing.

Interviewer:

That's good. That's good. All right. That's good that you have a community.

P:

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Interviewer:

Now that you're in Melbourne, and I supposed you've answered whether or not you're single, married, partnered, you have children... You mentioned that your daughter is four.

P:

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Interviewer:

So she's in preschool?

P:

Childcare.

Interviewer:

Childcare, yeah? Okay.

P:

Yeah, because the system here is different to New South Whales, so she's in childcare at the moment because she won't start school until 2023.

Interviewer:

Ah, okay. So they don't do preschool?

P:

They have this thing called Kindy but because I came a bit late and then because I'm starting work soon in September, a full time job, I need her, basically Monday to Friday, in Childcare.

Interviewer:

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

P:

Yeah.

Interviewer:

That's [inaudible 00:07:08].

P:

Yeah. Well before, in Sydney when I used to work as a disability support worker, I used to live with mom, I could do shift work and I could leave her with mom because of how our culture... It's like this, so she could stay with mom and somebody. Here, because I'm new and I don't know everyone's schedule here, so I have to take her to childcare because my work would be 9-5 Monday to Friday.

Interviewer:

Now, because we're focusing our research on people who live in Sydney, I'm not actually sure how that works now that you're in-

P:

In Victoria?

Interviewer:

Yeah, because some of the questions we're asking are very much focused on life in Sydney. So I do wonder if we'll be able to-

P:

This is like my third week, so I could do it based on... because most of my living experience is in Sydney.

Interviewer:

Yeah, okay.

P:

We can just focus on my experience in Sydney.

Interviewer:

That should work, I think.

P:

Yeah, yeah.

Interviewer:

That should work. Then I'll just pause this for a second to bring Morgan in and just double check that that's going to be okay. Morgan, are you there? Morgan?

Morgan:

Oh hi, sorry, yeah.

Interviewer:

Sorry, with P, she's just moved to Melbourne, like three weeks ago so because our interview was focused on residents in the New South Wales, Sydney area, I wondered if, now that she's just moved to Sydney, should we collect the data based on her experience when she was in Sydney or should we also collect data now that she's in Melbourne based on her Melbourne life?

Morgan:

I think it would likely depend on whether you can make a judgment call about whether your energy practices are different in Sydney or Melbourne. Whether the different weather makes an impact [crosstalk 00:09:17].

Interviewer:

[crosstalk 00:09:17] vastly different climate is in South Wales.

P:

Yeah, in Melbourne, because I just came for three weeks, we have the central heating and you know us, my culture, we don't do cold so the central heating is on a majority of the day. So when I close it for five minutes, I get really cold and I put it back on where in Sydney most the houses from the west side don't have central heating because of the old... So we use the little heater as well as my mom used to do... You know those barbecue coals, those black coals, she would put them on and then we have this... It's probably safety hazard but still. We would use the coal and then she would put it on this metal tray and she would put it in the living room to make it warm so that sometimes we can close the heater so the heater doesn't get the electricity bill up. So she would use coal as a means to make the house warmer.

Interviewer:

So is that here in Sydney, or-

P:

In Sydney, but I do try to practice that in Melbourne to decrease the use of central heating.

Interviewer:

That's interesting because we will explore any kind of cultural practices or [crosstalk 00:10:45] practices that you use as part of your energy practices so maybe we can kind of combine your experience in Sydney and now contrast it with what you're doing in-

P:

Melbourne.

Interviewer:

Yeah. So I'll conduct the interview by asking about your life now.

P:

Okay.

Interviewer:

And then we can refer to Sydney as well and we'll try and unpack where there are any similarities or differences. Morgan is that all right?

Morgan:

Yeah, that sounds good.

Interviewer:

Okay. All right. So let's go back to Melbourne now.

P:

Melbourne.

Interviewer:

Melbourne now. How long have you lived here in this house that you're living in?

P:

For three weeks.

Interviewer:

Melbourne... So three weeks. So you live with your husband?

P:

Yeah.

Interviewer:

And your daughter.

P:

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Interviewer:

Anybody else?

P:

We have a relative that came just for temporary, just to settle in. So there's four of us [inaudible 00:11:51] in a three bedroom house.

Interviewer:

So do you see yourself staying here in Melbourne?

P:

Yeah.

Interviewer:

Okay. Why do you see yourself staying here?

P:

Because I've got a job in my field, in what I studied, so I'll be starting a job soon in September as a local area coordinator for NDIS for this- [crosstalk 00:12:25].

Interviewer:

You mentioned that you worked in disability support back in Sydney.

P:

In Sydney, yeah, as a support worker.

Interviewer:

Okay, and now you've got a job as a local area coordinator.

P:

Yeah.

Interviewer:

That's excellent, well done.

P:

Thank you.

Interviewer:

Prior to moving to Melbourne, who lived with you?

P:

I was in my parents house. My dad, my mom, three of my siblings, and one of my niece, and my daughter.

Interviewer:

Not your husband?

P:

No because we was in Melbourne here. He moved before me.

Interviewer:

Aha!

P:

So he moved right before the Coronavirus pandemic so for us to move was a bit of a struggle because every time we'd want to do it, lockdown. So he would have [inaudible 00:13:27].

Interviewer:

What a hassle, the lockdown is, eh?

P:

I know!

Interviewer:

The virus. No, gosh. So now that you're in Melbourne for the last three weeks, Let's talk about your heating and cooling practices now that you're in this different [inaudible 00:13:48]. Overall would you say you feel more comfortable in this home that you're living in?

P:

Yeah, I'm adapting to it. At first, it was a bit... The weather is completely different to Sydney. It's way colder. You can see the sun but it's windy and cold. I don't go out much because the cold is just too much for me, because in Sydney It was balanced but here it's just windy all the time, it's cold all the time. So I feel safer at home with the heater on, yeah.

Interviewer:

I used to live in Melbourne too so I really, really understand.

P:

Yeah, and you can go out and it's sunny and next thing it's dark and it's raining. So it's very unpredictable weather.

Interviewer:

Very unpredictable. Do you see yourself staying there?

P:

At the moment, yeah.

Interviewer:

Stating the obvious, right?

P:

Yeah.

Speaker 4:

[inaudible 00:14:53].

P:

Mommy's in an interview.

Speaker 4:

Oh...

Interviewer:

No, it's okay, I understand.

P:

Okay. Nithule, Mommy's in an interview, I'll come-

Speaker 4:

[inaudible 00:15:01].

P:

Yup!

Interviewer:

You can talk to her for a second.

P:

Nithule, mommy's in a meeting, okay? Mommy's in a meeting. Hold on, sorry, let me just [inaudible 00:15:15].

Interviewer:

No problem. (Silence).

P:

She want's to sit next to me.

Speaker 4:

[inaudible 00:16:08].

P:

Okay, I'll... Sorry, guys.

Interviewer:

That's okay, please don't apologize. I understand. I'm just lucky my son is with my sister at the moment.

P:

I couldn't take her to childcare because she has a bit of a cold.

Interviewer:

Aww. We'll try and do this quickly because you need to take care of her.

P:

Yes, no worries.

Interviewer:

So, given that you're in Melbourne now and it's different weather altogether, different climate and environment. Would you say that you feel comfortable in the house?

P:

Not really. Not comparing it as Sydney.

Interviewer:

No, okay. You've talked a little bit about it but let's just get a bit deeper as well. Can you tell me about how you heat the house because right now we're in winter, So how do you keep the house warm.

P:

To minimize the uses of the heater and getting your electricity bill go high, because here in Melbourne I feel like you need it on 24/7. When I used to be at my mom's house my mom taught us this culture practice where, you know that coal for the barbecue?

Interviewer:

Yeah.

P:

We'd get the non really gassy one. There's this one you get from the Middle Eastern shops, they're longer. It's not like the little round one, they're longer barbecue charcoal coals and she's take maybe two... So they're about maybe 10 centimeters, or 15 centimeters long. So she'd get two pieces and she has a big metal thing you can cook with outside, as if you were in the village or something. You buy them from the Middle Eastern African stores. She would put the sticks in there after you put it in

the gas stop for it to light up, And then once it light up, you can add more stick and put it in that middle thing and then-

Interviewer:

Do you have an example of it? Do you have it lying around somewhere?

P:

I have the coal but I've got the little metal one where you can put the incense in but let me go get it so I can show you.

Interviewer:

Thank you, that would be great. (Silence).

P:

Hold on. Let me... How do you flip the video? Okay. So I have the little version of this. We made this incense, this special incense, it smells nice. So you burn the coal, this is the coal I was telling you about. The mom has the big... I can send photos if you want, maybe after so you can have a picture of it.

Interviewer:

Oh yeah, great.

P:

So I will burn this in the coal and in the gas top, maybe just only one because I have a small house, and then I'll put the incense and I'll turn off the heater and just leave a bit of small windows because of the air, so you don't wan smoke inhalation. And then it will keep the house warm.

Speaker 4:

Mommy!

P:

If you wanted to decrease your uses of the heater so the bill doesn't go up.

Interviewer:

Aw, she's [inaudible 00:19:38], eh?

P:

Yeah?

Interviewer:

Your daughter.

P:

Oh yeah.

Interviewer:

I feel really bad continuing when she really needs you.

Speaker 4:

Momma stop!

Interviewer:

Do you want us to pause and then come back?

P:

Okay, sure.

Interviewer:

Just, as a mom, I feel bad. I mean, tell me what you think.

P:

She just wanted me to carry her, that's why. But it should be fine.

Interviewer:

Is she fine? Okay.

P:

So you have an idea of what I mean, yes? But in mom's house, this is bigger. So her-
(Silence).

Interviewer:

Oh. I've lost sound.

Morgan:

Oh sorry, you've just gone on mute, there.

P:

Yeah, so mom has a big one because when we have events we cook outside with the pots so she uses that and she puts it in the living room and it's another way to keep the house warm and to decrease the usage of the heater for the electricity bill.

Interviewer:

That's such a fascinating practice.

P:

Yeah.

Interviewer:

Love it.

P:

So majority of us do it.

Interviewer:

And is that from home?

P:

Back home.

Interviewer:

You learned from home.

P:

Yeah.

Speaker 4:

Mommy!

P:

Yeah.

Speaker 4:

[inaudible 00:20:49].

Interviewer:

When you use it does it heat up just the living room area, or does it tend to heat up the whole house, or how does it work?

P:

The living room area.

Interviewer:

Okay, okay.

P:

We usually transfer it everywhere but then because of the fire alarm as well, you have to make sure that there's a bit of a window open and put it next to the window because, like my house, the fire alarm system is too sensitive so that's why I prefer using the small one and I'll put it next to the window and then open the window so a little bit of the air can go out. Or else the fire alarm will go off.

Interviewer:

Has it ever gone off?

P:

Yeah it did, actually, when I put the incense. Can I show you the incense thing?

Interviewer:

Yes, yes!

P:

Okay, let me go get it. (Silence).

Yeah, hello?

Interviewer:

Hey.

P:

Okay, let me just show you, so this is made out of sandalwood. Hold on, let me open it.

Interviewer:

And they're not like those long incense sticks that you buy from the-

P:

No, no, no, no! So this is made out of sandalwood, the stick, and then they cook it with sugar and then they have all these different Middle Eastern and Sudanese perfume they mix it with, and then once this is burnt, you just put a little bit and it makes this really nice smell. Usually they'd do it for when you get married, when you give birth, and every woman has it in her house. It smells nice so add this with the coal, it makes the house warmer and smell nicer.

Interviewer:

Oo, that smells beautiful.

P:

Yeah.

Interviewer:

Where do you buy the incense from? Do you make it or do you buy it?

P:

It comes as natural wood and then you cook it. This one, mom cooked it outside with my auntie. Basically it comes as natural wood stick and then they will add the sugar and they will add all the other perfumes they will buy from the Middle Eastern shop or the Arab shop. They import it, basically. They're very expensive actually. They're very expensive. I think-

Interviewer:

How much would that jar cost you?

P:

That jar, some people might charge it for a hundred?

Interviewer:

Wow...

P:

70? But I have two big ones because my mom bought the sticks. The stick will probably, I think all together with the perfumes and stuff, almost two grand, 2000.

Interviewer:

Whoa, okay.

P:

Yeah, almost 2000 depending on how big you do it. So the wood is sandalwood because it's very expensive. Once you cook it and you buy the perfumes and all the other things that you add on it, that's how it accumulates and when you put it together you have smelling house, nice, and it's warmer.

Interviewer:

[crosstalk 00:24:49]. How often would you do that? Do you use it daily in the winter?

P:

I use it daily in the winter.

Interviewer:

So would you use it over, say, heating then?

P:

I use the heating first. Once it's warm, I'll close it and continue to keep the house warm using that.

Interviewer:

Oh, okay, okay. So you start of using the central heating [crosstalk 00:25:18].

P:

Yeah.

Interviewer:

Okay, so would you then use that all day?

P:

Yeah, some people use it all day. I use it all day and especially after cooking and cleaning, just to purify the air after the smell of cooking and stuff. You just keep adding the sticks to it depending on how long the coal will burn for.

Interviewer:

Burn for. Oh, okay. And does that help you with your bill, then? Reducing your...

P:

A lot better, yeah.

Interviewer:

Yeah?

P:

A lot better, yeah. Because else, if you have the central heating on, your bill will sky rocket.

Interviewer:

Oh, I can imagine.

P:

Yeah, and it's colder here in Melbourne.

Interviewer:

Mm-hmm (affirmative). So you did that here in Sydney as well?

P:

Yeah, we do it in Sydney as well. I learned that from Sydney from mom.

Interviewer:

Okay. And when you have visitors, for example, do you still use this practice or would you-

P:

Yeah! Yeah we still use it because most of the visitors will be from the same community. It's a practice all around the South Sudanese community. It's not only in my ethnic group, but everyone.

Interviewer:

That's wonderful, I love hearing about new heating practices.

P:

Yeah.

Interviewer:

Let's talk about your other appliances that you use. Do you have portable electric heaters as well?

P:

At the moment, not here because we have the central heating all around, where in Sydney, because we don't have central heating, we will have a thing to, I think it was about two, no three... You know those little ones that comes with the air? Three of them and one oil heater.

Interviewer:

Oh, So you had three plus one oil heater, Okay. But now you would tend to rely on the central h-

P:

The central heating and then in my room there's the aircon, only one aircon, so we use the aircon in my room. Because if you use central heating at night and you if you forget, it's very dangerous.

Interviewer:

Yeah, and you can't use that coal thing at night.

P:

No, because what you do is you leave it in the room but you can't be in the room, close all the doors and the windows, and maybe leave it about half an hour so it will keep the room warm and once you want to sleep, you take it out.

Interviewer:

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

P:

And then you have a nice, warm, room.

Interviewer:

Smells good as well.

P:

Yeah.

Interviewer:

When I was asking about your heating practices, you said you'd learned that from your mom.

P:

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Interviewer:

And the community as well, everybody [crosstalk 00:28:07].

P:

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Interviewer:

Is there anything else that you use that has come from practices that you've learned from your community or from your home?

P:

We sometimes use, you know how I said the coal, to cook. If you have a big gathering, or you have a big dinner, instead of using your gas stop and it might be too small... I think I'll have to get mom to send me a photo so I could also send it to you so could a diagram of what we use. We will have that big metal cooker where you can put the coal and cook outside because the cooking will take so long and your gas will be on, or your electricity depending on what kind of gas top you have. And we'll cook outside and we have big, big posts and then we use it.

Sometimes, as well, we'll use... You know those camping portable gas, where you can put? We use that as well, but I don't use that one. I prefer the coal one when I was in mom's house when there's big events, or mom sometimes even uses it at home when it's just only us and she doesn't want to use the gas top because she's used to the coal. She will just cook a small good outside just using the coal.

Interviewer:

Do you do the same now, in Melbourne?

P:

No, no. I don't because I don't have a secure backyard. There's no shed, the houses back in Sydney they have shed. So if you go to most of the South Sudanese community houses, everyone has a shed and it has the big metal thing where they cook with the coal.

Interviewer:

Oh, okay. But there's no [crosstalk 00:29:44].

P:

But I use the gas top to cook.

Interviewer:

Do you have regular get togethers or community events?

P:

Yeah, well before Covid, yeah there would be regular community events. Even just gathering at the house and we cook with big pots as well. So yeah, most people just use the alternative gas stove outside. There's portable gas stoves. Depending on the size, you can get it from the Middle Easter homeware store and just cook outside.

Interviewer:

But since Covid you wouldn't do much of that anymore, right?

P:

No, because of Covid, not much.

Interviewer:

I might just, then, move on to how you cool your house. Because you've just moved to Melbourne so you [crosstalk 00:30:43] so we might have to use your Sydney experience?

P:

Yeah.

Interviewer:

In the summer, when you lived in Sydney, how did you cool your house?

P:

We use fans as well as one aircon in the main living room. What mum would do, we'll have curtains, and then you'd get darker curtains. The darker the curtain, the better, and we'd close all the windows and all the doors, and then we'd let the aircon run maybe an hour and a half, and it would cool the whole house down. And we'd try to cover any sunlight coming in. I noticed, every time in summer, mom will use darker curtains, like these Sudanese darker curtains so it will stop the sun rays coming in, and she would turn on the aircon because sometimes the fans bring hot air and they're not that strong, so she will turn on the aircon and then she also got these little mini aircons where you can put the water and the icepack.

Interviewer:

Okay.

P:

Cooler or something? It's different to fan. She got it from Bunnings.

Interviewer:

Okay.

P:

So she'll constantly add cold water once she closes the aircon after one hour, and then she'll put it in the other living room where everyone watches TV, and the curtains are still closed so by the time it's maybe five to six, when the sun is going down, then maybe we'll open the windows and depending on the air, yeah.

Interviewer:

It sounds like your mom has some really good energy-efficient practices and she [crosstalk 00:32:35] as well! She's in Sydney, right?

P:

Yes, she's in Sydney.

Interviewer:

I wonder if she'd be willing to participate [crosstalk 00:32:45].

P:

I remember when I was still in Sydney, I thought you guys will call me before I left because I had told [Mike 00:00:32:51] I was leaving soon. I wanted to do the interview, then, with my mom because I learned all these things from my mom and it's a practice that we do, not only her, but I think it's a learned thing from our community.

Interviewer:

From your family.

P:

Yeah, exactly. Just how to close the windows, close the blinds, try to reduce sun-rays to come in and turn on the aircon for a bit to cool the whole house down. It does actually work.

Interviewer:

Yeah, it does.

P:

Yeah.

Interviewer:

So she'd leave it for an hour and then that helps to cool the house. Is that something then that all of you then started doing once she set that example. So in the summer would you say that you'll be doing the same thing?

P:

Yeah.

Interviewer:

In Melbourne?

P:

Yeah, I'll close the blinds, and turn on the aircon and leave it for an hour. Once the house is cool and then I'll get the cooler where you can add the ice-pack and the cold water.

Interviewer:

I don't know that I've seen...

P:

I don't know how to name it, I just call.

Interviewer:

[inaudible 00:33:56].

P:

She has one as well in her house, I'm going to tell her to take a photo of it as well.

Interviewer:

Okay. That would be interesting, yeah. I'd like to see that. So apart from that, Are there other appliances that she would use to keep the house cool?

P:

Just the fan.

Interviewer:

Just the fan. Okay. Can you please just remind me again, how many people lived in that house that you lived in with your mom?

P:

At that time...

Interviewer:

Total?

P:

I think maybe seven?

Interviewer:

Seven. And was it a house? How many bedrooms?

P:

It was like a four-bedroom.

Interviewer:

Four-bedroom house. Okay. So it would have taken quite a lot to keep it warm or cool.

P:

Cool, yeah. That's why she has the bigger stuff.

Interviewer:

Yeah. Apart from the fans and the ice thing, I can't remember how to describe it... What would you call that particular-

P:

For the heating?

Interviewer:

No, for the cooling. Where you add the ice in the...

P:

It's because the machine comes with this instructions is to add cold water. It'll have the water thing where you can put cold water in and stuff like that so...

Speaker 4:

Mommy, help me!

P:

I don't know actually how to call it.

Speaker 4:

Mommy!

P:

I mean, how the machine works. Sorry, yeah?

Interviewer:

Yeah okay, no problem. We'll move on from that. So it sounds like apart from the fan and that particular device, those were the two main appliances that are being used.

P:

Yeah.

Interviewer:

And the rest were more behavioral practices like [inaudible 00:35:55]. [crosstalk 00:35:55].

Speaker 4:

Mommy, Help me! Mommy!

Interviewer:

You say they worked very well, they kept [inaudible 00:36:04] cool?

P:

Yeah, they keep the house cool. Hold on, sorry.

Interviewer:

It's okay. If there is another time that suits, if you like, we can reschedule. I don't want to keep your kids away from you.

P:

She just wanted me to open this app for her. I was expecting her to go to childcare, that's why, but because of Covid, runny nose and cold, they can't let her go in.

Interviewer:

Thank you for [crosstalk 00:36:39].

P:

Yeah.

Interviewer:

Appreciate it. Would you say that these were expensive to run, in your opinion, the alternative ways that your mom kept the house cooled.

P:

Were they expensive?

Interviewer:

Yes.

P:

I think it's cheaper.

Interviewer:

Cheaper, yeah.

P:

Cheaper, because I remember with the heating, the coal box? She'll buy the big box for almost 19.50 from the Arab shop, yeah so 19.50 and then when she cooks, when the cooking is finished, if it didn't burn out completely and makes the little thing and is still there, she also preserves it and reuses it again.

Interviewer:

Okay.

P:

So she'll make us use the leftovers to heat up and then add on top of one so it still works. I remember it would stay for about a month or so.

Interviewer:

Wow. She sounds like she [inaudible 00:37:51].

P:

I could talk to her? [crosstalk 00:37:52].

Interviewer:

That would be great!

P:

And then my sister could help translate and stuff like that.

Interviewer:

That would be fantastic. We're looking for more participants so that would be perfect actually.

P:

Yeah, because I thought you can't do in the same household but now because we're not in the same household.

Interviewer:

Yeah, exactly.

P:

Maybe I could talk to her and you guys could do an interview with her with my sister and she can translate because I learned all these practices from her.

Interviewer:

That would be great. That would be [crosstalk 00:38:19].

P:

And then she could show you around the house, especially the backyard where she cooks and uses the coal and you can see all her big pots what I'm talking about and then where she puts it and stuff like that.

Interviewer:

That would be great, I really appreciate that, thank you.

P:

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Interviewer:

All right, so we'll move on to any other appliances that you use currently that you use in your own home now. If you can tell me about major electrical appliances that you have. Do you have any fridge, stove [crosstalk 00:38:53].

P:

We have a fridge, a microwave, and a TV and then just a gas stove oven. We don't have a washing machine because in Melbourne, it's so hard to get the sun where you can just hang your clothes, so we have a local washer dryer but even that, we're not a big fan of having a dryer in the house. Most of my community, anyway, because they like to use the sunlight but then if there's no sun we usually use just the local dryer. We'll wash it with a washing machine and then just use the dryer, just to reduce the electricity use inside the house.

Interviewer:

Ah, What's her name?

P:

[Nithule 00:39:48]

Interviewer:

Aw...

P:

Nithule, yeah. Huh?

Interviewer:

How do I say her name?

P:

Nithule.

Interviewer:

Nithule?

P:

Nithule, yeah. She's name after her grandmother.

Interviewer:

Nithule.

P:

Yeah.

Interviewer:

Aw, she sounds like she needs you.

P:

Yeah...

Interviewer:

Look, it's your call, all right, if you would like to take some time to [inaudible 00:40:19] do the interview.

P:

Yeah, we can just finish because now she's becoming restless. But I hope you got some information anyway.

Interviewer:

It's a start and if we can just [inaudible 00:40:33] again and we can organize another time.

P:

Yeah.

Interviewer:

You know, if you can connect us with your mom, that would be [crosstalk 00:40:42].

P:

Yeah, I will talk to her and then...

Interviewer:

[inaudible 00:40:45] knowledge.

P:

I will talk to her and then I can tell my sister to help translate as well if she has-

Interviewer:

[crosstalk 00:40:50].

P:

[crosstalk 00:40:50]. Thank you so much.

Interviewer:

I hope to talk to you soon.

P:

Okay, well thank you, Morgan.

Morgan:

Thank you, bye.

P:

Okay, bye.

P 16-07-2021 10.30am Interview session 2 of 2

Abigail Badejo:

Just also do this. Backup recording, just in case. All right, let's do this. Now, I'm not sure what you prefer, if we should start all over again, or just pick up where we left off. Do you-

P:

What do you think would be best?

Abigail Badejo:

Yeah. Let me just ask you the questions that I don't already have. And then if there's anything else that [inaudible 00:00:38] we should add, we can go back to that. Is that all right?

P:

Okay.

Abigail Badejo:

Okay, great. So last time we were speaking, you were showing me the traditional... What do you call that thing?

P:

I don't even know what to call it, because my mom... There's a name for it, but I don't even know what the name is, because it just like a... You know those known things that you don't even need to name it?

Abigail Badejo:

Yeah.

P:

So it's the thing you put the coal in.

Abigail Badejo:

I find that really fascinating. And I wanted to ask you, again, just a little bit more about it. So how do you use it? Do you heat up one section of the house, or does it heat up the whole house? How does it actually work?

P:

So you know the little one that I showed you? The little one is a bit small, so where I am. But the one mom has at home, because it's really big, because it's one where you can cook as well with, so that one it heats up the whole area. So I remember mom would put it in the living room at the back, but

then it will heat up the house until it goes to the other living room on the front door. You will see once you interviewed her, because I sent her details, and she agreed that she will participate. Yeah.

Abigail Badejo:

Oh, that's excellent. Thank you.

P:

No worries.

Abigail Badejo:

So that seems like a very natural method, right? Of [inaudible 00:02:08] a lot of energy. Yeah. It doesn't seem to use any electricity. So can I just confirm that it doesn't use any power or energy at all?

P:

No. So the only process maybe that it will use, is if you put it on the gas stove for a bit, for it to light up. Yeah. So maybe you can put two or three, and then maybe you can put it there for five minutes. Sometime my mom doesn't even use it. You know those little white gas lighters you use for barbecue coals. So she would get that from the Arab shop and she would light it using a lighter. And then she would leave it outside where she put those little igniters, it's like little white blocks. So she'll put all the coals together. And then put the little white igniters in. And then she will put it in and basically the fire will start by itself. Then she will let it for an hour or maybe less, 45 minutes, for the coal and the fire to come, if she doesn't want to use the gas stove.

Abigail Badejo:

So she would do that outside?

P:

Outside. Yeah. Outside. Until it ignites, because I remember her telling me once, she gets scared of the coal being left in the gas stove, because sometime if you leave it too long, you forget, it could burn the burners. Yeah. So she will do that outside. So sometimes we don't even use any of the energy resources at home. She'll just put it all outside. And once it all comes together, and then she will just bring it inside.

Abigail Badejo:

Wow. Sounds very energy efficient. So the times that she's used it, and used it on the gas stove, how long would she have used it, put it on the gas stove for?

P:

No more than five minutes. As long as there's some fire ignited in, because she says, I remember she tells me when I do it, she tells me that even if it's one or two coals that have fire on it, and if you take it outside and put it with the coal that doesn't have fire, that fire will attach and it will create bigger fire. So it will all come all together.

Abigail Badejo:

So I'm wondering about this, because it sounds like there's a real opportunity here in terms of learning from this practice, because it sounds very efficient. So tell me, how does that reflect in your bills? So if you use that as a method of heating your house in the winter-

P:

You will have very low electricity bill, so then we don't use the heaters a lot. Because you know those little tiny heaters? They seem very harmful, but open for a very long time. And imagine four bedrooms, two living rooms, and everyone has their own heater to be cool, the electricity will go high. So that's her way of not increasing the electricity bill at home. Because in winter, electricity does go high, because no one likes the cold.

Abigail Badejo:

Yeah. Exactly. So when you lived in Sydney, now that you've moved to Melbourne, you've carried on some of these practices in your own home?

P:

Yeah. So using the coal method, because my house is smaller, so I just used a smaller pan. And in Melbourne here, there's central heating, because it's all the new areas, the West Side, have central heating. So I will alternate.

Abigail Badejo:

So how often would you use central heating versus the coal method?

P:

I think I use the central heating a bit more. Yeah.

Abigail Badejo:

So what would you say in winter, how many hours a day would you use it, for example?

P:

So altogether?

Abigail Badejo:

No, the central heating, how many hours a would you use it in winter, versus how many hours a day would you use the coal method?

P:

I probably would use central heating, in total I would probably use it four hours, but not all together. I would stop and then... Yeah. So if I see the coal running out, I'll add more coal.

Abigail Badejo:

Okay. Okay. So with the coal method, about four hours a day, central heating around the same?

P:

Yeah.

Abigail Badejo:

Okay. Okay. So yeah, adds up to...

P:

So it alternates. Yeah.

Abigail Badejo:

Okay. Okay. So when you receive your bill, I'm really curious to know how, again, how does combining the two methods, your traditional coal method with the central heating method, eight hours of warmth and heat. How does that work out for you when you receive your bill from your energy provider? Does the coal method, again, help to lower your bill compared to if you had used central heating?

P:

Because I haven't received it yet, but I think it will be lower because of the coal system. If I didn't have the core system, I would have the central getting a lot more hours, because it's too cold here in Melbourne, and I'm adjusting to the weather. So I think it would help greatly.

Abigail Badejo:

Okay. So why don't you then use the coal method more, when that method seems to work and it smells divine from what [crosstalk 00:07:37]?

P:

Well, in my household here, my partner, so he doesn't really like the coal method because the smell, so he claims it gives him allergies, and as well because I get scared of my daughter because she's young, she's only three. So my mom, she has that African old school mentality, but I have that safety thing, at the back of my mind is, "Am I being too much?" I'll have that at the back of my mind fear of too much smoke or something for my daughter. So I think that's what worries me to use it. And compared to my mom's house, I feel like my house is a bit smaller. But where my mom's house is bigger, there's open space. So the air will still go in and go out, so the smoke wouldn't [inaudible 00:08:30]. But where compared to mine, I only have one living room, where the dining and the kitchen are all together.

P:

And then I have a hallway to the bedroom, so at the back of my mind, I have that. So I wouldn't cause anything for my daughter's health. But if I had a bigger house, I would definitely use that more. Yeah.

Abigail Badejo:

So, yeah. So it seems that that sort of method needs a big-

P:

A bigger space. Yeah. Because you have to be also cautious of the dangers.

Abigail Badejo:

Okay. And how accessible is that traditional method? And do you think that there's potential for other people outside of the African?

P:

It's very accessible because the coals in all the migrant shops and the Arabs shops, you can get them. And then even those things where you could put the coal, they're very accessible. Not only the Africans, but I know also Middle Eastern uses them as well. Yeah. So they're very accessible. I don't know how others might perceive it, because fire danger like we're taught at school. If I said this to my teacher at school or primary school, they'll be like, "This is..." And then you have to keep in mind,

there's the fire alarm. So my house has a fire alarm and it's very sensitive. So I would put it next to the window and I'll open the window slightly open.

P:

So for us, there's a fear of the Western clashing with us, because of fire dangers, and they will not accept this basically.

Abigail Badejo:

I think you're right. That hazard could be a problem. The times that you lived with your mom and she used it, was there ever any accident or fire hazard?

P:

No.

Abigail Badejo:

Exactly, right?

P:

No, because I feel like everyone has that... I don't know. You just be aware of where it is, and it's put in a place where you'll be careful.

Abigail Badejo:

So in this kind of house that you live, do you rent or own?

P:

Rent.

Abigail Badejo:

Okay. Okay. And just tell me again, there's three of you in the house, right?

P:

Yeah.

Abigail Badejo:

So I'm going to go back to your heating and cooling practices. I just want to confirm, in the winter, in terms of you personally, how do you keep warm? So not just your house. Do you wear, for example, I can see you're wearing a jumper.

P:

I wear 24 7, if I'm not in my PJs, robe, socks. We have socks. And also carpets, because my floor is those tiles. So I have a carpet in the living room, a big one to cover. And then the hallway, because I feel like... Well, that's something my mom or for my culture is, carpet makes the house warmer. And as well, for my daughter, apparently... She got sick for two weeks, now she's battling this cold. So they said, make sure you put enough carpet everywhere, because if she's not wearing socks... My daughter doesn't like wearing socks. So they believe that the floor is cold and then her wearing barefoot, she will get cold. I don't know how that works, but it makes her sick.

P:

So the more you cover the open tiles and put something warm, it keeps you warm as well. I don't know how that works, but that's what the... Yeah.

Abigail Badejo:

General recommendation, isn't it?

P:

Yeah.

Abigail Badejo:

So you like to keep warm. You use carpets and socks and sweaters.

P:

And robe.

Abigail Badejo:

So do you find that how you dress yourself and say your daughter, is that then impact on how much energy you use or... By energy use I mean say your air con, your-

P:

Oh, yeah. We decrease, because my robe is really warm. So if I have it for long, the temperature for my central heating, let's say if I'm using central heating for a bit, the temperature will be lower, because I won't feel as much cold as I would if I didn't have a robe. But if I take my robe, let's say I'm cooking or something, I will put the temperature maybe in the middle because even the cooking itself, using the gas stove, I feel like it warms the thing. Yeah, because I have a smaller open living area, so the temperature does decrease depending on the situation.

Abigail Badejo:

Okay. So what temperature on average would you put your central heating?

P:

26, if I'm wearing a robe. If I'm not wearing a robe and I'm not cooking and I got tired of my robe, I'll put it probably 27 to 28.

Abigail Badejo:

Okay. Excellent. Thank you. That's very interesting. So I want to understand the reverse now. So in the summer, you live in Melbourne now [inaudible 00:13:45] the Melbourne experience of summer. But let's talk about when you were in Sydney. Okay? So how did you keep cool in the summer?

P:

So we had one air con. So I think I did mention that before. So we get darker curtains, close in any sunlight or sun rays. And then mom will turn on the air con, close all the windows, all the blinds. And then close the... Because people will stay outside. No one likes to stay inside the room, because it's really hot. So everyone will stay in both of the living rooms. And then we close all the doors and stuff so the air could circulate around.

Abigail Badejo:

Okay. It's what it's called zoning or something. So [crosstalk 00:14:32] particular sections of the house?

P:

Yeah.

Abigail Badejo:

Okay.

P:

Yeah. So to keep cool. And then the darker curtain and closing the blinds, so the sun ray doesn't come in. And the sunlight, because the sunlight makes it warmer for us. And sometimes the normal fans are not that... They bring out hot air, so mom has the water, little cooler, it's like a mini air con but electrical one where you plug. And you put the ice in the water. So she will use that as well.

Abigail Badejo:

I remember you were saying that.

P:

Yeah, yeah.

Abigail Badejo:

Okay. Okay. So is that something that you plan to use?

P:

In Melbourne I would, but because my space is small, but then our central heating has the cold. But I will see how it goes, because I don't want to overuse the central heating, because for winter to summer there's no break. So I think I might have to close the blinds and keep it darker, and then maybe just invest on a smaller one, like mom has the water cooler with ice.

Abigail Badejo:

Okay. Okay. So you have a plan.

P:

Yeah.

Abigail Badejo:

Can you tell me about any other appliances that you use, that you think consumes a lot of energy? Either in the winter or summer. Things like fans, we've talked about air con, central heating, dishwasher, fridge.

P:

I have a dishwasher, but I've never actually used it. I don't know, maybe because we have this thing where the dishwasher takes more energy than washing with hands. Because we're used to washing hands as well. And I get paranoid if it washed the dishes properly. So if you see my dishwasher, it's brand new, it's not even... Because we're the first tenant, it's brand new like it's never been touched, nothing. So I wash with my hands. We use the microwave because my daughter likes warm milk, and she always has a milk all the time. So I use the microwave a lot. The fridge as well, it's constantly

there. And then I like to drink a lot of tea, is another way to keep myself warm is to drink a lot of hot, so I drink a lot of... Tea, it's a very common cultural practice for us, so making tea all the time.

P:

Even when a guests comes, give them water and tea. But for me, myself personally, I keep myself warm drinking cup of tea.

Abigail Badejo:

[inaudible 00:16:59] kettle a lot. So you would use a kettle a lot.

P:

The kettle a lot, yeah.

Abigail Badejo:

So how often would you say the kettle is used in a day? If you could estimate hours a day, or how much time in a day would you use the kettle?

P:

I also use it while I'm cooking. So for example if I'm cooking my traditional food, and I need hot boiling water, I will always put water in the kettle and just to let it boil. So if I have to add water in my stew or something, so we'll always use it. So I think I use the kettle a lot actually. I don't know, four hours. Yeah.

Abigail Badejo:

Okay. When you cook your traditional food, how much electricity do you think that users?

P:

Mine is the gas stove. So usually it will take me about an hour, or sometimes maybe an hour and a half if I have to make rice or cook... We have this white maize thing that we do, so let's say between an hour to two hours. To prepare food I will be using different, like the kettle, the rice cooker, the gas stove and stuff. So one hour to two hours. So that's what dinner. That's for dinner. So for lunch if I have to cook something, maybe 45 minutes.

Abigail Badejo:

Okay. So the kitchen is really the hot bed of activities, isn't it?

P:

Yeah. Yeah.

Abigail Badejo:

Okay. Okay. And would you do that every day, or how often in a week?

P:

That's every day.

Abigail Badejo:

Every day. Wow.

P:

Yeah. I like to cook fresh meals every day.

Abigail Badejo:

Your husband is very lucky.

P:

Yeah. I like to cook fresh meals everyday, because we're a small family, so I'll cook small portions.

Abigail Badejo:

Okay. All right. So do you get a lot of guests coming to visit, and how does that change your-

P:

Yeah. So at the moment I've got a guest that is temporary staying with us, who came for a visit. So I think I've used the stuff more. Because for us, when you have a guest, you have to be very hospitable, prepare breakfast and all that stuff. So yeah, I think I use it more.

Abigail Badejo:

Okay. That's reasonable. So going back to your appliances. So the ones that you use to keep cool and the ones that you use to keep warm, do they work well?

P:

Yeah.

Abigail Badejo:

Okay.

P:

I find them effective.

Abigail Badejo:

Okay. Are they expensive to run?

P:

The central heating and [inaudible 00:19:50]?

Abigail Badejo:

Yeah. All of the appliances that we've talked about so far. [inaudible 00:19:53] the coal method which [inaudible 00:19:55] very cost-effective, it sounds like. The other appliances in the house. So your kettle, rice cooker, microwave, fridge.

P:

I think it will, because the way I'm running with it everyday cooking, I think it would be a bit high. So I might decrease my central heating system, but then the cooking and using the kettle and stuff. Because it's like I use it a lot, so it might have an effect.

Abigail Badejo:

Okay. So do you also use a dryer washing machine?

P:

No. We go to the... Because here we have six minutes away, we have a local laundry mat. So where you can wash, it's a self laundry mat. So we do laundry twice, or sometimes once a week. So we just go wash them and dry them there.

Abigail Badejo:

So you don't actually do laundry in the house?

P:

No. So just to save thing. Because it will cost us less there, because we do once a week. Yeah?

Abigail Badejo:

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

P:

Let's say once a week. So I think one medium washing machine. So my husband's work clothes, my daughter, we usually mix my clothes with my daughter's clothes. So my husband different. So we use two different washing machine. So he does it. So he told me the medium one is \$6. And the other one is \$8. That's just washing, and it's hot wash. And then the drying, two different things. The drying is \$8. So we spend less than \$50 in laundry once a week. Where if you were to wash it and do it in our house, that will be more, it will reflect more in our bills.

Abigail Badejo:

Okay. Okay. So you said you haven't had your first bill yet, right?

P:

Yeah.

Abigail Badejo:

When will you get your first bill, first of all? When do you-

P:

So before I came, because my husband moved in here before me. So he moved in, let's say end of March. And then because it was only him and he was with AGL. And then he told me the bill was \$39 for electricity. So now that we moved in and we use a lot of other stuff, so now I'm waiting. Because I think it's every three months or something. So now I'm waiting for the next bill. So I think it will be more than that.

Abigail Badejo:

Only \$39?

P:

Yeah.

Abigail Badejo:

How much time?

P:

It's every three months, I think it comes. So because he's never home, because he works six days a week. He leaves early in the morning, and sometimes he will just bring takeaway food and stuff. And he bought most of the appliances maybe, let's say two weeks before I came, like the fridge and the microwave and stuff like that.

Abigail Badejo:

So what does he do for work? You said he's out of home [inaudible 00:23:00].

P:

He works at this Bingo Recycling, so it's like a recycling company. So he works in the... It's like a supervisor. He just monitors the machines and the workers and stuff like that. So he leaves here 5:30 in the morning, so he starts at 6:00. Because of COVID, he finishes at 3:00 now, but before it would be 5:00 in the afternoon, so it's six days a week.

Abigail Badejo:

So COVID didn't really impact him in terms of working from home?

P:

No. But last year he did... Because he lived here before us, he was living with his sister. He did caught corona. Yeah. But he was home for one month, but then because he didn't actually work as the picking part, so you had an iPad and stuff. So he worked from home while he was in the isolation period.

Abigail Badejo:

Is he okay now?

P:

Yeah. He's okay. Yeah.

Abigail Badejo:

Oh, I'm so sorry to hear that.

P:

Because it was actually a lot in Victoria last year.

Abigail Badejo:

I remember. [inaudible 00:24:07] his bill was from energy provider AGL. Do you know how he came to make that decision to go with AGL?

P:

So when he applied for the house, so you choose an option where the real estate just basically does all the connections.

Abigail Badejo:

Right. So it was a-

P:

So he just made it easier for himself. He didn't want to go look out, so he just chose AGL. But if we were in Sydney... In Sydney my mom was with Origin, but the one that she prefers is Energy Australia.

Abigail Badejo:

Okay. So if you were in Sydney, how would you have made that decision?

P:

I would choose energy Australia.

Abigail Badejo:

Okay. Okay. So with the lights in your house, can you tell me what sort of lights do you have? Are they LED lights, or just your normal...

P:

I could show you one, because all of them are like that. Can you see it?

Abigail Badejo:

Yeah, I can see it. Okay.

P:

Yeah. So they're all like that.

Abigail Badejo:

I don't really know what they're called, but-

P:

Me too. It doesn't look like a normal light bulb.

Abigail Badejo:

So all of the lights in the house are like that?

P:

The hallway, the kitchen I think, the kitchen, yeah. And the living room.

Abigail Badejo:

What about things like your TV? Do you watch TV much?

P:

Yeah. We do, because of our daughter. Yeah, yeah. We watch TV a lot. And now we're back in lockdown in Victoria, so TV is a way of entertainment. And then got two iPads. I've got a laptop, my husband got a laptop, and phones between us.

Abigail Badejo:

Yeah. So how many hours a day would you say you spend with the TV on or watching TV, and using your laptop, et cetera?

P:

Okay. So my laptop, not that much, unless if I have to do follow up with emails and writing stuff. Most of the time I could just do it with my phone as well. But the TV, I think the moment we go to the living room, it's on until we go to bed. Do you know what I mean? Even if we're doing other things and stuff like that, it's just naturally on.

Abigail Badejo:

Background noise.

P:

And then unless we are leaving the house or something. Yeah. Currently it's off, because I haven't opened it. My daughter went with my auntie, and I'm just at home by myself.

Abigail Badejo:

Okay. When do you turn off all of your appliances? Do you actually switch them off from the wall as well?

P:

Actually, I used to do it back in mom's house, because mom always has this thing, she thinks you save more energy if you turn off all your power points in the house if you're not using, except for the internet. So she would literally go and closes all the power points, even the ones that are not even planted anything. So slowly, actually last week I slowly tried to do it. So of course the kettle, I will close the microwave. And another microwave. I'll close the kettle, the TV, and then the scented oil ones, and any other ones I will close it. So basically it's the microwave, the fridge, and then our phone charges, because at night we charge to iPad, we charge our phones and stuff like that.

Abigail Badejo:

So what prompted you to start doing that, to start turning them off, switching them off at the wall? Is it because you... I don't want to put words in your mouth. So you tell me what motivated you to start doing that, because you said mom was doing it, but you only started doing it last week. So [crosstalk 00:27:51].

P:

I don't know. I think it's just, it came to me. I think it clicked because I just get... By the end of the day, I'm really tired. And then I have no energy. But I remember one instant I was looking at the... Because I have the Air Wick little scented oil thing, the one you plug. And then I was just looking at it, because it's close to where the backyard is, so I close the blinds. And then something told me, "What happened if you'd leave that thing on. And then what happened if it cause a fire or something?" Then I was like, "Oh, my God. Let me just close the power point, just in case it doesn't ignite something." And then from there, and then I looked at the other appliances, so the kettle, the TV and stuff like that. Yeah.

Abigail Badejo:

So it sounds like safety.

P:

Yeah. I think safety triggered that more.

Abigail Badejo:

Yeah. Okay. That sounds... You mentioned that before you moved to Melbourne, that your husband bought all the appliances, et cetera. Can you maybe help me to answer the question if you know. Do you know what he considered when he was purchasing these appliances? Was it about the energy rating, the cost, the brand? How did he make a decision on-

P:

It's nothing to do with energy at all. I think he did it more with the brand and the quality of the fridge. I think he got this from Harvey Norman. I think he ordered from Harvey Norman. Yeah. This one I think costs about \$800, almost to \$900, including warranty.

Abigail Badejo:

So the fridge?

P:

Yeah. The fridge, yeah. So it wasn't to do with... Energy was not in our mind, we actually never thought of that.

Abigail Badejo:

So then does it have a star rating? And if it does, then that would not have made any difference, really?

P:

I don't think we even focused on that, honestly, to be honest with you. Yeah. As long as it seems like it's good quality and it won't break easily or have a default.

Abigail Badejo:

So how do you determine what is good quality? Is it based on the brand?

P:

The brand and the price? If it's too cheap, then it's not going to last you long. Can you just hold on a second? I wanted to just turn off the heater, because I didn't do the coal thing today in the morning. (silence).

P:

Hello. Sorry. I'm back.

Abigail Badejo:

Thank you. So just going back to your energy use. So do you check online or Googling, whatever, to determine which provider, what's happening in the market? So in terms of energy providers. Do you compare what they're offering? Do you ever think about changing providers? And if you do, do you know where to go to, to compare?

P:

No. I actually never thought of that you can actually do that. So I remember back in Sydney, it's more of like... I remember my mom was with Origin, and then... No, she was with Energy Australia. She

was going good with them. And then a relative or a family friend, she moved to Origin or something. So for them it's like, "Oh, this provider seems a bit cheaper and they know how to cooperate and they could assist with payment plans and whatnot." When she wasn't working. But then something... So mom moved to Origin. And then I remember something had happened, the meter. So they were charging her way over the meter, and then it became an issue where she overpaid them or something like that. And then she went back to Energy Australia.

P:

But what I realized with my community when I was in Sydney, so it's more word of mouth or experiences of other people. But instead of actually doing your own research like you just hold me. I've never crossed my mind to even search, or that was even possible. It's more of word of mouth of experience of a relative or a friend that you know, and how they went with it.

Abigail Badejo:

Right. I mean, you would trust your community.

P:

Yeah, yeah.

Abigail Badejo:

[inaudible 00:32:32]. So I just want to talk quickly again... Well, moving on to how you use energy in your home. Again, thinking about when you use energy, what do you think about? What are some of the considerations? Are you thinking about your energy bill and the costs. You know how you just got up to turn off your air con [inaudible 00:32:57]. What was going through your mind? Was it that you were too hot, or were you thinking about, "It's been on for too long, let me turn it off to minimize my bill." [crosstalk 00:33:07]?

P:

No, it was still hot. It was nothing to do with the... It was just like, "I'm really hot right now." And I [inaudible 00:33:13] for way too long. Yeah. Because I was starting to feel a bit... Yeah, it was a bit hot. Yeah.

Abigail Badejo:

Okay. Okay. So does cost factor in at all in how you use your appliances, how you use your energy?

P:

So to compare with Sydney and Melbourne, when I was in mom's house, mom is more of cost and, it's going to be too high for the bill. Well, when I came to Melbourne, I didn't actually never thought of the bill or the costing. For me, it was just the comfort and just keeping warm and uncomfortable.

Abigail Badejo:

Comfort. Yeah. Comfortable. Okay. Do you talk to your husband? I know your daughter is too small at the moment. [inaudible 00:34:00] questions in the house about energy use?

P:

No actually. We don't actually. It's going to take more... Except for the dishwasher, I think that's the only one for some reason. But my husband, he was the opposite. So he's for using the dishwasher, because he told me he read somewhere that the dishwasher actually, it's more efficient than

washing with your hand. And I did hear that before, but then because of my own anxiety, I want to wash my own stuff. So yeah. He wants to use the dishwasher and he thinks it's more energy. I think that's the only time we talked about energy use. But with other appliance, we never actually... It's going to be too much costly or something.

Abigail Badejo:

Okay. Okay. So with the rooms that you spend the most amount of time, can I just confirm that's the living room?

P:

The living room, yeah.

Abigail Badejo:

Probably as well.

P:

Yeah, yeah.

Abigail Badejo:

Okay. And with the conversation with your husband about the dishwasher, it sounds like you won.

P:

Yeah. I won that.

Abigail Badejo:

Do you think that there's a chance in future that you might be using the dishwasher?

P:

I think I would probably, when I start work, I think I would have to, because I think the time and just to save time as well, and with helping out with the chores will be more convenient. Yeah. Because I was thinking I might have to use it if I were to go to work and stuff.

Abigail Badejo:

Probably. Okay. So just quickly, which do you think consumes the most energy of all of the appliances that we've talked about in your house? On an average day, which one do you think, or ones, do you think consume the most energy? Do you know how to check?

P:

I think it's the fridge, because it's plugged on 24/7.

Abigail Badejo:

Okay.

P:

And it's never turned off. And I don't know how to check the energy of the fridge. Although I could have said central heating, but because we turned it off, it's not on constant, but where the fridge is constantly on and running.

Abigail Badejo:

Okay. Do you know then compared to how you use your energy, how does that compare to how people from your community, your background energy, do you know what their practices are compared to yours? Do you think you're the same or a bit different?

P:

I think probably similar, because I think most of how we do our things are passed on from word of mouth, or someone else's experience. So it's a collective thing. So this practice someone used it and it worked well. And then so now everyone using it, because if more than one is using it, then yeah.

Abigail Badejo:

Okay. I forgot to ask about showers. So do you use hot water?

P:

Hot water. Yeah, of course.

Abigail Badejo:

How long would you spend in the shower in the winter? And then per day, how much time per day would you use the shower for?

P:

So I'll have two showers a day. So one in the morning and one at night. So probably I think in the morning, a bit shorter than at night. So maybe 20 minutes in the morning in the shower, that's excluding washing and brushing outside. And then at nighttime, probably maybe 25 to 30 minutes, just to get that hot, warm water, just to sleep well. For me, the nighttime is more of a relaxing, calming thing. Yeah. That's why I would spend time more longer.

Abigail Badejo:

So do you have a bathtub?

P:

Yeah, bathtub. So every night I give my daughter a bath. And she stays there for a bit.

Abigail Badejo:

So how long would you say she's in the bathtub for?

P:

Probably 45 minutes, because she plays first.

Abigail Badejo:

And that's every day, right?

P:

Every day.

Abigail Badejo:

And your husband as well, would use the shower?

P:

Yeah. I think he spends more than me in the shower. Twice a day as well.

Abigail Badejo:

Okay. Twice a day. So it sounds like the shower gets used a lot.

P:

Yeah, it does.

Abigail Badejo:

[inaudible 00:38:32] system. Okay. All right. And do you know what plan you're on with your energy provider?

P:

What do you mean?

Abigail Badejo:

Do you if you have a particular type of energy... When you sign up with an energy provider, they tend to have different plans to suit your situation. So they might give you an E saver plan, if you pay your bills on time, you get a discount.

P:

Oh, I actually would not know, because my husband is the one that... I never actually asked him. We never actually discussed that. All I know he's just like, "AGL." But I think I'll look in the bill next time.

Abigail Badejo:

Yeah. I think when we come back to you for the video ethnography, we can ask some of those questions again. So in your community, what sort of things do people talk about in terms of energy use?

P:

So during the winter, so the things that people talk a lot about is the overuse of heaters, the small little heaters to keep warm, and how they're scared of rising the bill. But sometimes it's a no choice kind of thing. Yeah. So I think winter people are more scared of higher bills. People complain more about winter bill rising. For example, if we're in a family gathering, like, "Oh my goodness." And it's really cold days. I don't even know what my electricity bill is going to come up.

Abigail Badejo:

That's so true. Okay. So in terms of your traditional practices as well, just going back to that, besides the coal method, are there any other types of practices that you use that involve using energy, like cooking practices that-

P:

My mom, she uses the coal. She cooks outside with the coal. So you know how I told you that it's big enough to even cook for celebrations and stuff? So sometimes, even if there's no celebration or there's no special guests coming, she will just cook outside.

Abigail Badejo:

Okay. Okay. But you don't do that?

P:

No, I don't know. I don't have a veranda thing. But if I had a house with a veranda, I would actually cook outside or get a portable gas stove, because mom also has those portable gas stove where you can just refill from the petrol station, and she can cook outside.

Abigail Badejo:

What value or benefit do you think she gets from cooking that way, from cooking outside? What do you think it means to her?

P:

I think for her as well, it reminds her of how they do it back home. And as well as not using the gas stove as well in the house.

Abigail Badejo:

So it's a connection to the culture in a way?

P:

Yeah. Yeah. I remember one time she was video calling her sister and her mom back in the village, and her sister didn't believe that she cooks outside with the coal, because that's what they do. She's like, "You're in the Western world, you have a gas stove." And then I was actually there. And then I had to show the video and WhatsApp. And then my auntie was like, "Oh my God, you guys actually could cook..." She was shocked that mom was doing that and she's in the Western world and stuff like that.

Abigail Badejo:

That's lovely, to be able to carry on some of those practices.

P:

Yeah. Yeah.

Abigail Badejo:

So when you mentioned that if you had a house you would do that too. So what value will that bring to you as well? Do you think [crosstalk 00:42:15].

P:

It's to keep that cultural practice thing, and as well as also decreasing my use of the gas system. Because even the gas system, I think our water is gas. You know how some people have electrical water? And our one is gas in the amount of time we use water to shower, and how long in the shower and stuff like that.

Abigail Badejo:

Okay. So if you don't really think about your energy use, but you think more about comfort and comfortability. When you say that you do you want to use gas less, how does that work? I'm trying to connect the two.

P:

Yeah. I think it's just because it's just instilled for my mom as well. Because I remember when I was showing her my house through the video. Because it's an open living area. So we have this thing where if you were to have a house, at least have two living rooms. So when you are to cook, I don't know why they don't want if a guest come and the house smell you're cooking or something, I don't know why. I remember her telling me once, "Oh, why can't you get a little gas stove, a portable one and cook outside?" I'm like, "There's no shade thing." And then she was like, "Okay, maybe just get it and use it in the garage." And then I was like, "No, I don't think it's safe." Because also that, "Oh, you don't want your house to smell like cooking."

P:

Or if you have a guest, let's say a random guests come, it's not culturally appropriate for you to cook while the guest is there, and [inaudible 00:44:03] them, and for them to be smelling and seeing you preparing the food kind of thing.

Abigail Badejo:

Okay. Yeah, that is interesting. I just wonder, do you think that by doing that, it helps to reduce the bills that she would receive, right? By using gas, it helps to reduce her energy bill. So do you think that that's a benefit that everybody in the community knows. And if you had that opportunity, you would do it too. If you have the proper-

P:

House, yeah.

Abigail Badejo:

There is that link then between what you do, your energy use, and how it affects the bills that you might receive. So do you think I'm right in terms of it can help to lower your bill?

P:

Yeah. Yeah. Definitely. Even if you don't know it, and you're practicing cultural stuff, just for the sake of culture, I think it will help. I remember most of the houses that I go to with my mom, most of the ladies actually have the... They all have some sort of that coal on the gas portable outside.

Abigail Badejo:

Okay. That's a very important point. Because I'm keen to explore different cultural practices that can help people to reduce their energy bills. So learning from you about the coal [inaudible 00:45:28] and whatnot. That's interesting. It'd be good to speak to your mom too.

P:

Yeah. And once you do the ethnographic interview, then you will see, especially outside. Yeah.

Abigail Badejo:

Yeah. Okay. I'm just going to see if there's any other questions I need to ask you before we run this up. What difference do you think changing your traditional practices will make to your energy use? So do you think that if you don't use your, of course, if you don't use your coal method, you'll probably just only use central heating, et cetera.

P:

Yeah.

Abigail Badejo:

It would make a big difference?

P:

It would definitely make a big difference. Yeah. It would definitely make a big difference.

Abigail Badejo:

Okay. What do you think responsible energy use means to people from your community? And when I say responsible energy use... First of all let me ask you, what do you think I mean by responsible energy use? Does that make sense?

P:

Yeah. Yeah. It makes sense. But I'm just thinking about myself, about how I... I don't even think I would actually... That's something that I would always think about. You know what I mean? It never was something that it crosses my mind.

Abigail Badejo:

Maybe not constantly. But it seems like you do unconsciously thinking about it.

P:

Yeah, yeah. Yeah. I think I'd do it without me knowing, but other than too much carbon dioxide in the air it's bad, and there's greenhouse effect, all that stuff. As sad as it is, I don't think I really think about that. But it's more of to the cost of bills and stuff. You know what I mean? But even with that, like you said, I think it's doing it without me being aware.

Abigail Badejo:

Do you think that holds true for people from your community, or do you think that that's probably just a personal view?

P:

Maybe personally. But at the back of my mind, I feel like it's also with my culture. And maybe the older generation would think about the bill. Yeah. They will think about the bill and just limiting their stuff.

Abigail Badejo:

Did we cover if you had any major challenges that you faced when you think about using high energy consuming appliances? In terms of beyond the fact that, yes, you probably will get a huge bill using it. Were there any other challenges that you think can come from using these high energy consuming appliances?

P:

Financial.

Abigail Badejo:

Financial?

P:

Yeah. For example, if you're not working, let's say. And you're in a household where no one works and you all receive government entitlements. And if your bill comes, let's say \$1,000 and something, and it's overdue, I'm pretty sure according to that income, you might not pay it. So I think the stress of how to pay the bills and stuff like that.

Abigail Badejo:

But in your situation, when you lived with your mom, did you ever have to deal with that?

P:

I remember when she wasn't working and I was still in high school, the bill did actually went high. I remember because I would sometimes help reading the bill and call and make a plan. I remember she went on a plan using her pension that time when she wasn't working, I think pension or some [inaudible 00:49:33] entitlement she was entitled to. Yeah. So the bill it came up, it was winter. So I think it was \$1,200 or something. So it was really high. It was really high. It was very stressful. So I remember I helped her call Energy Australia and make a payment plan with her. Yeah. Because it was electricity and then gas. Gas was a different set of bills.

Abigail Badejo:

Right. So they billed separately?

P:

Yeah. They billed separately my mom's house. So she has gas and she got electricity. And I think the gas was \$500 or something. Yeah.

Abigail Badejo:

When you mentioned that you helped her to understand her bill and then negotiate a payment plans. What was the reason for that? Was there a language barrier?

P:

Language barrier for her, because the terminologies and to understand what's going on, it was like... Yeah. So I would read the bill and then find the customer number. And you know when you call the customer care and then just to follow the prompt and what the computer thing is saying? So yeah. So that whole process. So I will be with her the whole time in the phone. So basically I did most of the speaking, but she has to be there to verify that it was her, and to get the consent for me to speak on her behalf.

Abigail Badejo:

Okay. So if you were to weigh in on why there is that barrier to understanding the bill, when you read the bill yourself or when you would look at the bill yourself, did you yourself have any issues with understanding the way that the bills were structured, and what the bill was communicating, in terms of your usage?

P:

Honestly, the only thing I understand from our electricity bill and gas bills, is how much it is, and when it's due. You know how the bill from them breaks down the energy usage, [inaudible 00:51:46], it's a lot of jargon. Even though it's plain English and I could read what they're saying, but for me to comprehend it, it's like I could read it out loud, every word. But to comprehend how energy is used and all this... Yeah. I remember even there was one elderly woman that she lives by herself in those government complex unit. So she was with Origin, and then her bill, did you not, her

bill every three month comes \$1,000 and something. And she's only one person in an apartment, [inaudible 00:52:22]. So she went to a migrant resource center and they helped her pay \$500, but she went with payment plans.

P:

And then it happened for so long. So when she got really tired of it... And then I remember her and my mom were speaking, and then mom was like, "Oh yeah, my daughter called Energy Australia and she helped me do this payment plan." So she's like, "Okay. If you finish uni one day early, can you just come and read? And let's call Origin Australia." Yeah, it's called Origin Australia, or something like that. So when I went to her house and I called and then we were with the customer number for the customer care. And then I was explaining it to them like, "Listen, she's only one person. She lives in a two bedroom apartment. She doesn't even use much. How does her bill comes 1,200? We're I live in a four-bedroom house with my mom." So it was like, "Okay."

P:

Then that person that day is like, "Okay, doesn't seem right." So it's like, "Okay, can you go downstairs to the apartment complex and check the meter?" That's where for the first time I actually understood the meter thing and the system outside. And then she's telling me, "Okay, her meter sign should be this, this, this." And then I was like, "No, it's not. It's this, this, this." And it's like, "Oh my God, her meter is way too high." Then her meter should be that. And then they realized it's their fault. So she ended up getting credited back all those money that she'd been paying.

Abigail Badejo:

But it was only because you intervened, right?

P:

Yeah. Yeah. Because even for me, I was even shocked because I didn't even know that's how every house or something, the meter has to be a certain way. So she ended up getting credit. They didn't pay her back the money, but she didn't have to pay her bills for a long time, because she had been paying over her credit. So it got credited to her account. Because then they realized it's their fault, the meter was way too high than what it should be.

Abigail Badejo:

It's funny that you say that, because the same thing happened to me. [inaudible 00:54:19]. I'm actually wondering how many people experience and know that it's possible that your provider can overcharge you do? So to that end I want to ask you, do you know if AGL, your energy provider, how they actually estimate your bill? Do they do an estimate of your meter readings, and then they're followed up with an actual meter reading? Or how do they determine how much you actually use?

P:

Honestly, I don't even know, because I actually never asked my husband about this thing. I don't even think about it. It's like all I know is that's the energy provider, but how it works and how they charge us, I actually never [crosstalk 00:55:10] took the time to actually think of how AGL works.

Abigail Badejo:

Okay. Because I think that's how people end up getting over-billed.

P:

Over charged. Yeah.

Abigail Badejo:

Yeah. Because some of the providers just do an estimate of what they bill you every cycle. Then only once a quarter or a particular point in time, they do the actual testing.

P:

Yeah. But I don't know. I don't want to speak on behalf of my community, but I feel like if even me, if I'm not even thinking about that, then maybe majority of my community don't even think about that and they don't even know. I think most of our community don't even know how the energy system or how our providers work. I don't want to generalize, but I feel like... Yeah. Because if I don't even take time to be like, "How does this work?" Yeah. Because I could read the bill, I could read that's plain English, but to comprehend what that thing is saying to me, it's a bit... Yeah.

Abigail Badejo:

So what do you think from your perspective and on behalf of your community, if you can, think on their behalf, what do you think should be done to improve the energy providers language, in terms of comprehension for their customers? How can we improve the way that they communicate about your bill?

P:

I think they need maybe a culturally appropriate... I don't know. There's the wider Australian community or society or whatever, but then they need to keep in mind there's also different people in the wider Australia that are migrants, and don't even know... Let's say coming from Africa, people are used to generators. You know what I mean? And you pay for your generator, they don't know that you pay for your bills for the electricity and stuff like that. So if there was some sort of a culturally appropriate information session for newly arrivals, or for migrants to understand how energy works and for families to understand how energy works. And to know exactly what provider will be best for your financial situation as well. It will be really beneficial.

Abigail Badejo:

Yeah. Because there is something like that, there's a comparison market place where you can see what providers are offering. I don't have the link, but there is something that, but I don't think it's well known. And I think that's a problem as well. People need to be more aware of options and be able to tailor which option is suitable. Okay. What do you know or think about Australian energy policy or laws for migrants, for example?

P:

[crosstalk 00:58:11].

Abigail Badejo:

In terms of energy use, how do you feel about it? Do you feel supported, empowered?

P:

I didn't even know there was laws, honestly. Like I said, I don't even know that that was in place.

Abigail Badejo:

There are policies that protects the energy market, the dynamics of customers and providers. Yeah. I just wanted to know, do you know? Or are you aware-

P:

I don't know, actually I wasn't aware of that.

Abigail Badejo:

In terms of the energy market and your providers, do you feel supported to make good decisions about your energy use, in terms of the information you receive from the government for your provider?

P:

I don't know. I remember when I was helping mom with the Energy Australia when her bill went up. So we had a nice customer person that was doing the payment plan. And then she gave us a few tips, and I remember she did send an email on how to reduce your energy use. And she did confirm one of mom's one already, closing the power points and stuff like that. And if you're using it, if you're not charging, unplug and stuff like that. So she did send an email to my email, I remember, on how to-

Abigail Badejo:

[crosstalk 00:59:35]. I missed the-

P:

It was Energy Australia.

Abigail Badejo:

Energy Australia. Okay. [inaudible 00:59:40]?

P:

Huh?

Abigail Badejo:

Sent the email after your phone call?

P:

After. Yeah, after.

Abigail Badejo:

And did you find that useful? Did she find that-

P:

It was useful and just explained to mom things that she might have missed and what to do, and stuff like that. So it was follow this for three months, and to see how it affects your energy use and stuff like that.

Abigail Badejo:

And did your mom understand?

P:

Yeah. So I would read and I would explain it to her.

Abigail Badejo:

Okay. So was she able to follow-

P:

Yeah. She followed it. Yeah. So I think the next bill was reduced a bit.

Abigail Badejo:

Okay. Okay. So beyond that, you don't know of any programs that perhaps are available to support migrants regarding any-

P:

No. No.

Abigail Badejo:

Okay if you could tell the government just one thing about energy use amongst migrants, particularly your community, what would you say?

P:

I think just if you have information, to make information more known and accessible. So they don't have to wait to get a large bill that they can't afford, for them to end up knowing this information before, so prevented before. Even if they liaise with migrant resource centers, because every council has a migrant resource center, and are connected with community associations. So just for them, if they can't reach the people directly, they use services like migrant resource centers, community organizations associations, to get your information aware.

Abigail Badejo:

That's a very good suggestion. If you could ask the government or anyone else to do something to help migrants to manage their domestic energy use, what would it be? It sounds a bit similar to what I-

P:

Yeah, so do information sessions. And as well, this information sessions to be language appropriate. If you're going to do an information session on energy and you're going to have a speaker that speaks just English, and then you come to a room full of people that don't understand terminologies of energy use in English, it will still not be as ineffective because they might've missed important parts. So have information sessions where are made in that specific language, so there's no language barrier. Because I think language plays an effect in understanding a lot of things, and how things operate.

Abigail Badejo:

Yes, absolutely. So remove the language barrier?

P:

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Abigail Badejo:

And the last question. Do you have any other things that you'd like to say about your own energy use, or energy use among your community or migrants, in general?

P:

I think there's a lot of things I don't think we think about a lot, like the meters and comparing the different things. And yeah. So I think we just don't know a lot of the law. I'm not sure if there's even laws and stuff like that. So I think there's a few things that we're unaware of that could help us more than just using our cultural practices to reduce our energy use.

Abigail Badejo:

Okay. So beyond cultural practices. Okay. That brings us to the end of the interview. Thank you very much. All right. I'll round this up. Is there anything else that you would like to add? Anything else that you'd like to say, that we-

P:

No. No. I think I've said a lot. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. I think that's pretty much everything.

Abigail Badejo:

Thank you so much for your time. [crosstalk 01:03:46]. And we'll be in touch soon for the next round. I'm sure Morgan will contact you as well about the voucher, et cetera.

P:

Okay. No worries. So this is the first interview or the second one?

Abigail Badejo:

This is the first one, we'll do a video ethnography, the second one. Then we'll potentially have a third stage where we co-design solutions that can draw from cultural practices and other ideas that have emerged from interviewing and talking to everybody. So [inaudible 01:04:20] if you are available. We hope you will be.

P:

All right. No worries. Okay. Thank you so much.

Abigail Badejo:

All right. You take care. Bye-bye.

Interview day/time: July 4, 2021.

Participant: Syrian male.

Speaker 1:

Excellent. Thank you very much, N thank you so much for your time this morning, I really appreciate it, especially because it's Sunday morning and you probably want to be in bed right now.

N:

Okay, okay.

Speaker 1:

So thank you very much for your time.

N:

Okay.

Speaker 1:

So you have agreed to take part in this research, okay so it focuses on empowering people who are culturally and linguistically diverse, groups, residence of Australia. We want to find out about your energy consumption, okay.

N:

Energy very expensive in Australia.

Speaker 1:

Yes I would love to hear your thoughts on your experience and your energy use. So I'm going to start with your background, okay so can we start with your age please and what year you were born?

N:

My age? I was born 1960.

Speaker 1:

1960.

N:

Yes around 60 years now. Over 60.

Speaker 1:

Excellent, and so what is your position in the family? Are you the oldest, youngest or?

N:

My position in my family?

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

N:

I am the father of my sons and the husband of my wife.

Speaker 1:

Okay.

N:

That's my position.

Speaker 1:

So do you have brothers and sisters? Are you older than or younger than?

N:

My family?

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

N:

I have two brothers but they had died and I have two sisters, one sister here in Tasmania and the second sister in [inaudible 00:01:56]. And my sister in Tasmania, two months ago she stayed here with me.

Speaker 1:

Oh okay.

N:

Yes beside me in Liverpool, yes.

Speaker 1:

Oh lovely okay.

N:

Yes, she stayed in Tasmania four years then she came here and lived with me. Good for me.

Speaker 1:

Just a holiday? Or to live with you?[crosstalk 00:02:25]

N:

Will stay, will stay forever yes, because so cold in Hobart, you know Hobart?

Speaker 1:

Yes it's very cold I know. Very cold.

N:

The weather here is better, the weather in Sydney is better.

Speaker 1:

Yeah I agree.

N:

Okay.

Speaker 1:

So you mentioned earlier you're from Syria?

N:

Yes.

Speaker 1:

So do you identify with a specific cultural background?

N:

My certificate? I have got a Civil Engineer. Bachelor of Civil Engineer, before Civil Engineer my wife and I and my two sons civil engineer.

Speaker 1:

Oh that's your...

N:

The same university in [inaudible 00:03:15]

Speaker 1:

Okay.

N:

But my sons speak English very well and have a good computer skills, so they work here as civil engineer as well but my wife and I work as baker here because we don't know English and no computer skills. You know 50 years ago just calculator.

Speaker 1:

Yes, things are a bit different now.

N:

But we don't like to stay at home, so start working. Anything is better than stay at home. To improve our language, to share people, we like people, speak with people, it's good for us.

Speaker 1:

It is...

N:

No worries. Yes we work full time.

Speaker 1:

Oh wow okay. That's great, so when you say that you're married, so you have a wife and you have how many children?

N:

We have two sons.

Speaker 1:

Two sons, okay.

N:

Two sons, they're 28 and 31.

Speaker 1:

And they live with you?

N:

Yes we know our culture. With us two, until marriage. Yes.

Speaker 1:

That's right. Okay that's great. So there's four of you in the house then?

N:

Yes four. Four people in the house.

Speaker 1:

Excellent...excellent, so how long have you lived in this house that you live in, in Sydney?

N:

We have arrived three years ago, exactly three years and three months.

Speaker 1:

Three years and three months okay.

N:

The same house because very good house, five bedroom and big area, very big background, it's good house for us. One room for office and one room for gym and three bedrooms yes.

Speaker 1:

Oh sounds very nice.

N:

Yes, very good.

Speaker 1:

So you see yourself staying in this house [inaudible 00:05:27]?

N:

Yes until my sons will get a house. Very expensive but we hope that. Yes.

Speaker 1:

Yeah, so and... so besides you and your wife and your two sons, you also now have your sister living with you?

N:

No, my sister live in Sydney but not with me. Another house, another house in Liverpool. I live in Bass Hill, she lives in Liverpool.

Speaker 1:

Oh okay.

N:

Liverpool but I live in Bass Hill. Bass Hill.

Speaker 1:

Bass Hill, okay.

N:

Around 14 minutes by car, not far.

Speaker 1:

Okay. Thank you.

N:

You're welcome.

Speaker 1:

All right, so has anybody else shared the house with you over the last several years besides your family? So besides your two sons and your wife, have you lived with anybody else in the last several years, in this house?

N:

In my house, just four people live.

Speaker 1:

Okay great.

N:

Yes. But my sister and her husband live another house, small flats, my sister, not house.

Speaker 1:

Okay.

N:

But I live in house. Yes.

Speaker 1:

Yes house is nice.

N:

Easy for my car, for my sons cars because it's easy yes.

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

N:

Very big, yes.

Speaker 1:

Sounds good. So now we going to move on to heating and cooling practices. So I want to understand how you heat and cool your house over winter and over the summer. So first we going to start with your heating practices, okay?

N:

Yeah.

Speaker 1:

So, would you say you feel comfortable in this home?

N:

I'm very comfortable because I have two fridges, I have one washing machine, very good washing machine, and there is central heating air condition here. Cold and warm and I have three small heaters and a very big TV, so I am so comfortable here but it's... I pay so much for electricity bills because no gas here.

Speaker 1:

Oh okay.

N:

No gas, just electricity. So I pay around 400 to 800 every three months.

Speaker 1:

Between 400 and 800?

N:

Between 400 and 800 every three months, the average is 600.

Speaker 1:

Wow.

N:

Yes.

Speaker 1:

Okay.

N:

Yes but no gas.

Speaker 1:

What is that compared to, say your friends or your neighbors in the area? Do you... is it the same? Is it on par? Or do you think you're a bit higher?

N:

I think I am higher than my friends, I don't know why because I use electricity here little bit much than others.

Speaker 1:

Mm-hmm (affirmative)

N:

Yes because we have many things, especially central heating, air condition, yes.

Speaker 1:

Do you talk to your friends and community about your energy use? Do you compare your bills?

N:

I told the company of electricity and they gave me discount around the 10% maybe. 10% discount.

Speaker 1:

Okay.

N:

But okay it's good because we are all working now so not problem for us.

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

N:

If we are [inaudible 00:09:46] it's problem but now it's easy.

Speaker 1:

So you don't...[crosstalk 00:09:52]

N:

Because around 200 per month, so 200 per month for everyone around 50 dollars, it's easy for us because we work. If we don't work it's so hard.

Speaker 1:

Yes I can imagine, it would be.

N:

Yes.

Speaker 1:

Okay so I'm going to ask you about how you heat the house in winter and you talked a little bit about that already with your central heating and the fact that you have small heaters. Is this house easy to keep warm with the appliances that you have currently?

N:

In winter easy to get warm but in summer not easy to get cold, I don't know why. Little bit cold but in winter, very good... very good warm. When we turn on the central heating or [crosstalk 00:10:50] we turn heat in the morning and the evenings yes.

Speaker 1:

Okay so you also have small heater you said. So if you use the central heating, do you still use the small heaters as well?

N:

Sometimes for 10 minutes, for 15 minutes, it's easy and [inaudible 00:11:10] but other times we use just the central one.

Speaker 1:

Are there any challenges or issues you have with using the central heating or keeping the warm?

N:

The central heating is good but when my sons or I or my wife take shower it's... we use the small heater.

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

N:

At bathroom because central there. Okay.

Speaker 1:

Okay [crosstalk 00:11:42]

N:

We are also comfortable because everything here in Sydney... easy we can take anything online, we can buy anything, everything easy, not like our country. Just my son order anything online, come at home and easy everything. I am so happy here, I am so happy in Australia yes.

Speaker 1:

When you came to Australia, was that three and a half years ago or was that... did you come a while before that?

N:

I came around three years ago with my family.

Speaker 1:

Okay.

N:

It's first time. I live [inaudible 00:12:28] from [inaudible 00:12:29] to Lebanon, you know Lebanon?

Speaker 1:

Yes.

N:

Beirut, my sons finished the Master in Civil Engineer at American University so their language is very good because American University, then they... we came here and start working yes.

Speaker 1:

Okay, that's great.

N:

Yes.

Speaker 1:

So he's working... your son's working as a civil engineer here?

N:

Yes. When we came after two or three months, start working as civil engineer yes.

Speaker 1:

That's great.

N:

No problem with the language, no problem with the computer skills, special engineering programs.

Speaker 1:

Excellent.

N:

Yes.

Speaker 1:

So I'm going to go back to them, all the appliances that you have in your house. So are there other appliances that you use to keep your house warm, in the winter? So besides your electric heaters, the small ones that you have and your central heating, do you have anything else that you use?

N:

No, washing machine everyday. Everyday washing machine, I don't know why, my sons everyday. Because they work outside so, everyday washing machine, we use washing machine everyday and I tell my wife to turn on after 11 but she doesn't. I don't know why. Everyday, washing machine everyday and special we clean the plates every two hours. We use glass plates so...

Speaker 1:

The dishwasher?

N:

Yes. It takes electricity yes.

Speaker 1:

But everything runs well?

N:

Yes everything runs well and if there any problem we call the owner of the home and she send anyone to fix it directly. Easy here. Every time electricity. In [inaudible 00:15:07] electricity come just four hours per day and no water sometimes, no fuel, no... but here everything. We have three cars now, my car and my sons have two cars so we are very comfortable.

Speaker 1:

That's excellent, I'm very... [crosstalk 00:15:33]

N:

Yes.

Speaker 1:

So there must be... well I guess because you both work right, so even though it's expensive it's okay, it's affordable for you?

N:

Yes it's expensive because in my country it's easy not like here, but here two things are very expensive, the electricity and the dentist. Dentist very expensive, I just fixed little bit, I pay the 10000 and my wife paid 10000, so we work to give money to the dentist. Very expensive, in my country two, three, 400, here 10000, 12000, I don't know why.

Speaker 1:

Yeah I think it's...[crosstalk 00:16:30]

N:

And the government doesn't help the dentist yes.

Speaker 1:

If you have private health insurance it does help to lower the [crosstalk 00:16:39]

N:

Yes, we don't have. Yes.

Speaker 1:

That's all right, we'll move on to learning more about your cooling practices at home. So do you have any... haven you brought in any traditional practices or cultural practices from home that you use in Sydney now to cool your home or to heat your home? Is there anything that you brought from your culture maybe?

N:

Did you mean my friends?

Speaker 1:

No I mean you, your culture. Do you have any practices, any heating practices that you have brought from Syria and you're now using here in Sydney, in Australia, now that you've moved here?

N:

Yes I know. Do you want to meet another families from Syria here?

Speaker 1:

Yeah sure, I mean if you have access to them that would be good. But I'm trying to ask you personally, if you have any practices from Syria about heating your home or cooling your home that you brought to Australia? Anything that you... any part of your culture that you brought to Australia, in terms of heating your home or cooling your home.

N:

No I don't know more information but my friends have the gas, so they didn't pay like me. They don't pay like, they pay little bit less from me, around 400, 300 but sometimes I pay 800. It's so expensive yes.

Speaker 1:

Yes it is. All right so can you tell about how you cool your home in the summer? So in the summer time, how do you keep your home cool?

N:

I just use the... we have the fan on the every room. Fan every room, so it's easy and sometimes if so warm we turn on the central heating yes. Every room we have a fan, it's good but if so warm turn on the central heating and all the house, yes.

Speaker 1:

Oh that's great.

N:

Yes.

Speaker 1:

Okay so can you tell me about anything else that you use in your home that we haven't really talked about? So you had dishwasher, TV, heater, fan...

N:

Yes there's TV and we charge everything, our mobiles, we charge the laptop, the computer. We have two computers so everything by electricity, everything especially we watch TV everyday...

Speaker 1:

Yeah how many hours a day would you watch TV?

N:

Around two hours at the evening, in the evening two hours before we sleep, yes. One hour in English programs, one hour in arabic. [crosstalk 00:20:04] yes I watch the news in my country, something like that yes.

Speaker 1:

Yeah great.

N:

Okay.

Speaker 1:

So in the appliances that you have at home, say for example your fridge and your dishwasher. Do you look at things like the energy star ratings, the cost or the brand at the time of purchase or when you buy it? Do you look at the energy rating? Your fridge for example. Does it have an energy rating on it?

N:

Energy rating on my freezer?

Speaker 1:

Yeah the energy star rating, do you know when you have your fridge...[crosstalk 00:20:47]

N:

Four stars, five star...

Speaker 1:

Yes like that.

N:

Can I check now?

Speaker 1:

Yes of course.

N:

One minute. Good morning. Good morning.

Speaker 3:

Good morning.

N:

The first one... hi, how are you? The first one four and five stars. The energy rating.

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

N:

And the second one three stars.

Speaker 1:

Ah okay great. When you were... can you remember when you purchased the fridge? The two fridges, can you remember when you bought them?

N:

Three years.

Speaker 1:

So when you were buying them, what was the reason you bought them? Did the energy star rating make a difference in your decision to buy them? Did you consider the star rating when you were going to buy it?

N:

No.

Speaker 1:

No? What about the brand? What was the it... the reason? Was it the cost? Or was it the brand? What made you choose the particular fridge that you bought?

Speaker 4:

Cost.

N:

Both of them, especially the cost yes.

Speaker 1:

Cost okay, right. Does that make sense, do you understand me?

N:

Yeah little bit, sorry for my language but I try to understand yes.[crosstalk 00:22:31]

Speaker 1:

I'm trying to understand what helps you to make your decision to buy your fridges and other appliances that you have. So did you consider the energy star rating, did you consider maybe the brand or was it because someone told you buy that brand or was it the cost? Was cheaper than other ones around? I'm trying to understand what made you buy that particular brand that you bought.

N:

We didn't buy it when we start here, the government help the refugee so they send the one for us and the other one from the church.

Speaker 1:

Ah okay.

N:

Because when we arrive we don't have the money.

Speaker 1:

Yeah, that make sense. Okay great. That's what I wanted to know. Thank you.

N:

Yes, and the others were here but we buy the TV because we send us the small TV, we changed after one year.

Speaker 1:

That's good, so you got a much bigger TV now?

N:

Yes it's necessary. Yes.

Speaker 1:

And when you bought the TV, what did you look at when you were buying it? Was it the cost of the TV or...?

N:

It's a good TV and large and just we look for discount.[crosstalk 00:23:56] We take it discount but it's good yes. I think TV didn't take, doesn't take electricity. Little bit yes. Yes.

Speaker 1:

Okay thank you so much. Now we move on to the next set of questions.

N:

Okay.

Speaker 1:

Let's learn about how energy is used in your home. So how you use energy. So, which things do you think use the most energy in your house?

N:

I think the heater water. The heater water all the time. When take showers, when cleaning the plates, the anything. It's all the time the heater water. You the heater water?

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

N:

Yes. It takes very much electricity. And after that the central heating.

Speaker 1:

Central heating yeah okay.

N:

But the heater water for we four people take shower everyday so and the washing machine there all take hot water.

Speaker 1:

Oh okay.

N:

Yes this takes so much electricity.

Speaker 1:

Yeah so when you use these things, what do you consider when you use some of these things? So when you're using the hot water for example, what do you think about? Do you think about comfort? Do you think about the cost? Do you think about the environment? Do you think about being a responsible consumer? What thoughts come to your head when you use...

N:

When we use the hot water?

Speaker 1:

Yeah for example.

N:

We think about our comfort. Yes because in [inaudible 00:25:57] so cold and we didn't have hot water, so here very comfortable and it's very important to us. Everyday we all take shower, we all clean everything, clean our clothes all and clean the... our glasses, everything so the hot water is very important to us and we think just about the comfortable yes.

Speaker 1:

That's good thank you.

N:

Yes.

Speaker 1:

So do you talk about energy use among your family? Your children and your wife, everybody living in the house. Do you talk much about your energy use? And how you all use energy?

N:

First time when I was [inaudible 00:26:51] at the first three months, four months, we talk about that but after that when we work, all work it's easy for us 800, 600 we don't take care now because we all full time and we get money so we don't talk about that. Just when I walk in the house just am I turn off little bit the lights but that the people know. Because if no one in the room, I turn off. Not necessary to turn on everything.

Speaker 1:

You speak about turning off lights when no one's using it.

N:

Yes especially the father. The other people know.

Speaker 1:

It's always true.

N:

When my son turn off, I smile. I feel happy.

Speaker 1:

Oh so which room or rooms do you spend most of your time in? So you say you work? All of you work right? So do you spend much time at home, in the house?

N:

Sometimes my sons work at home.

Speaker 1:

Okay.

N:

Yeah, at the office. So they turn on the central heating and computer and laptop sometimes because special Corona cases, Corona times they work at home. But my wife and I working at the bakers... bakery so we can't work at home but we use electricity in the evenings when we come back everyday, we have dinner together and everything, shower and heating and every... and the TV. So at the evening we spend the so much electricity. From six o'clock to 10 o'clock.

Speaker 1:

Six to 10.

N:

Because all the family together yes and sometimes my friends come, not now, now we can't because Corona. My friends... I have many friends from Syria, from Lebanon yes. So our culture we eat together barbecues, something like that. And my sister every two days she come to visit me and I go to visit her so we use the... from six to 10 very so much. But the other times no. Other time yes.

Speaker 1:

Okay, so then on an average day from 6-10 pm that's all?

N:

Yes.

Speaker 1:

Okay and you say you... so you hang out all around the living area, your living room yeah?

N:

Yes.

Speaker 1:

Are there any other rooms maybe that you spend you time...[crosstalk 00:30:06]

N:

The kitchen all the time, the kitchen because hot water in the kitchen and we have the for sandwich, this heater for sandwich we have one.

Speaker 1:

A sandwich press?

N:

Yes around half an hour everyday and the microwave, we have microwave and we have two oven, one high oven and one down low oven. So we turn on everyday for our dinner so in the kitchen or... and the second the hot water, heater water all the time. Work all the time. Those two in the evening spend more electricity. The kitchen and the every appliance in the kitchen and the hot water. Those yes.

Speaker 1:

Okay.

N:

And washing machine every night. Every night put our clothes, as baker and all yes.

Speaker 1:

Yes.

N:

My sons go in the sites everyday is same. And they went to gym, after gym they put their clothes. So washing machine everyday.

Speaker 1:

Quite a lot of energy used huh?

N:

Yes.

Speaker 1:

What about you personally, do you think that... what do you think about how much energy you use? Do you think it's a lot? A little? About average? What do you think?

N:

I think as four people we spend little bit more than other family but because we... I said to you because we work, it's not problem and if anyone work, he needs more because he will cleaning his clothes, anything and he need to more comfortable at home so we spend little bit more but we don't care just we need comfortable and health.

Speaker 1:

Yes.

N:

The health it's so important for us. Anyone if sick, oh it's a problem here. The doctors, especially private doctors take more so the heater is so important. The warm is so important for us, the electricity gave us more health, more comfortable. So not problem with money. Not problem with money, we don't take any problem.

Speaker 1:

Okay that's good. So when you compare, when you say you use a little bit more maybe compared to your friends or the other people in your community, you're okay with that? And why do you think you use more? Is it because of the work you do or?

N:

Yes because we have more things. We have two fridge not one. Washing machine, washing plates, we have more computers, laptops, other things maybe another house we didn't use all those. And sometimes we have more visitors... more visitors so we use the oven three, four, five hours some days, yes six hours some days because in... we like our culture food so put anything two hours then another thing, we use the little bit more but we don't take care because we need the comfortable. Yes.

Speaker 1:

Okay.

N:

We feel happy when you spend electricity yes.

Speaker 1:

It's important, happiness is very important, comfort is important.

N:

Yes.

Speaker 1:

So now I'm going to ask you about your knowledge about your energy consumption so, I'm going to ask you, how much energy do you think a fridge uses? Do you think it uses a lot? A little? How would you describe how much energy a fridge uses?

N:

How much energy fridge?

Speaker 1:

Mm-hmm (affirmative)

N:

Fridge, we have two fridges so we spend energy... I think fridge not more like the central heating and the hot water but we spend two fridge we have. We can't one fridge because we have more vegetables, more fruit everyday, more meat, so I can't depend to one fridge. I have two.

Speaker 1:

Okay and what about lighting?

N:

Lighting, the lighting in my house I can change it from low to up, low to up, it's good idea. And we the almost two rooms, three rooms light, almost yes.

Speaker 1:

Yeah so you think you use a lot more than average?

N:

No, I think not more. We use for the lights good expense not like other things. Yes. We because almost we stay on one room or two rooms, not on all the rooms. Yes.

Speaker 1:

Okay and TV as well...

N:

TV at more two or three hours per day, good yes, good spending.

Speaker 1:

Okay, you think that's a little, or a lot or average?

N:

I think little. Little, average yes.

Speaker 1:

What about music or sound systems?

N:

Music, just my sons sometimes but they always hear music on their mobile.

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

N:

Yes not another things yes.

Speaker 1:

And I know you mentioned dishwasher before, do you use it a lot?

N:

Which one?

Speaker 1:

Dishwasher.

N:

Yes, lot, everyday because I don't know when finished something we need another, I don't know why because we cook lot, other people maybe use carton plates or carton glass, we use everything not carton. Yes glasses.

Speaker 1:

Yeah okay. So, when you cook a lot... sometimes you say you like to eat your cultural foods...

N:

Yes.

Speaker 1:

Sometimes spend six hours oven, cooking, how often do you have people come around and you cook your traditional foods and your food from your culture? Is it regularly?

N:

Did you mean they come to us every month? Or every...

Speaker 1:

Yeah. Does it happen[inaudible 00:37:54] often?

N:

One per week. We... there is a visitor to us, one per week. One time. Not all the time, especially at weekends.

Speaker 1:

Weekends oh okay. So on weekends does your use of your appliances increase? So your oven...

N:

Yes.

Speaker 1:

And things like that...

N:

Especially oven yes.

Speaker 1:

Okay, so how about a dryer? You have a wife right? You dry your hair too, your sons... do you use that?

N:

Dry hair?

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

N:

My sons little bit and my wife but every two days, one time every two days, three days, not everyday yes.

Speaker 1:

What about clothes dryer as well? Not just hair dryer but clothes dryer as well, do you use a clothes dryer?

N:

No.

Speaker 1:

No? Okay.

N:

No just the washing machine and after washing machine we put the clothes outside and hang it yes. We like sun yes.

Speaker 1:

I agree.

N:

At the sun.

Speaker 1:

So is there any other energy appliance, any other appliance in your house that we haven't mentioned?

N:

We don't... just those [inaudible 00:39:28] we have to.

Speaker 1:

Do you use it everyday?

N:

Around everyday, every two days one yes.

Speaker 1:

Okay.

N:

And not more we have. Normal like any family yes.

Speaker 1:

Okay, so now we move on to a new set of questions. I'm going to ask you questions about energy use among people from your cultural background. So other Syrian people.

N:

Mm-hmm (affirmative)

Speaker 1:

So do you talk much about energy use with people from your cultural background? With other Syrians living in Australia?

N:

Sometime we talk about that but not almost because we talk about the news in my country, about the war in my country. Not about the something like that.[crosstalk 00:40:36] and we as Syrian people, we talk about food, all the time. [crosstalk 00:40:42] what you cooked, what he cooked. Something like that not about electricity. But when we came firstly, three years ago we talk about that little bit more to take idea, how much we will spend. They talk around 400 per every three months but we spend more than 400.

Speaker 1:

Mm-hmm (affirmative) yeah because you have more things right?

N:

Yes. And a big house. Very big house.

Speaker 1:

Yes.

N:

And every big house, they spend more.

Speaker 1:

Yes of course, yeah okay. That's good, thank you.

N:

Okay.

Speaker 1:

Among people from your cultural background, other Syrians, can you tell me about any traditional or cultural practices that you are aware of, that you know of, that involves using energy? So are there particular, say cooking practices or bathing rituals or use of any specific traditional appliances that you can tell me about?

N:

About our food? About our cultural food?

Speaker 1:

Yeah any kind of... I want to understand and I tried to ask you before, but if you have any traditional practices that you are aware of that involves using energy? So any Syrian practices like cooking practices that involve using energy or any specific appliances that you would use in Syria that you now use here too?

N:

I didn't understand your question perfectly but I think we in... my friends they take care of electricity like that. Sometimes they washing clothes after 11 night. And sometimes they use hot water to wash the plates not the machine, little bit hot water and washing all the plate. So they try to spend little bit less electricity, but in my house nothing like that. We spend everything because we don't take care, just take care I told that about comfortable, about health and about happy. We need to be happy after the war in my country. So everything easy, we like people, we like to meet people in our house and don't take care for electricity, we care just for everyone be happy. Yes.

Speaker 1:

Okay so when you cook, what sort of food do you cook? Do you cook Syrian food?

N:

Yes especial we like beef.

Speaker 1:

Beef.

N:

And beef takes sometimes two or three hours in the oven.

Speaker 1:

So do you prepare...

N:

Because big pieces of beef, it's delicious and we like it so we put everything in the oven, two hours, yesterday we put three hours after that very delicious, because our dinner is like our lunch. After we work the family all together so not dinner, it's lunch because we have breakfast work. But when the family together it's the main meal for us so we cook the beef. We like beef so much yes.

Speaker 1:

Yeah and...

N:

Do you like beef?

Speaker 1:

I love beef, yes.

N:

In our culture, don't like pork, but we care, we eat everything. But the first one beef. The first one beef yes and the second one chicken.

Speaker 1:

Mm-hmm (affirmative)

N:

Best chicken yes.

Speaker 1:

How often do you make beef and chicken in your home?

N:

Beef, two or three times every week, one time fish, especial salmon, my sons like salmon every week one time, it's healthy and two or three times chicken. Yes all things it takes time and everyday we cook vegetables, like pumpkin and something and potato, sweet potato and normal potato and it takes time on the oven yes. [crosstalk 00:45:53] Everyday we cook vegetables with the meat.

Speaker 1:

How long does it take to make that?

N:

Yes.

Speaker 1:

How long does it take to make these vegetable in the oven? And...

N:

The vegetables takes not more around one hour. One hour all the vegetables but the meat takes two hours.

Speaker 1:

So everyday maybe you cook in the kitchen three hours?

N:

Yes sometimes we cook for two days not for one day yes. Because the next day when we arrive tired, it's ready. Just put it 10 minutes or five minutes or sometimes on microwave and we have start dinner.

Speaker 1:

Lovely, and so you use Syrian recipes?

N:

Yes, Syrian recipe and because in Aleppo, the kitchen in Aleppo lots in Aleppo because Turkish kitchen, Armenian, there is 20 nations in Aleppo, so the kitchen is not arabic, it's multi-culture like here.

Speaker 1:

Yes, that's very interesting. I didn't know that.

N:

Yes.

Speaker 1:

All right so, I'm going to ask you some questions now about responsible energy use okay so you can tell me what this means for you. So what do think responsible energy use means to people from

your cultural background, living in Australia? So, when I say responsible energy use, what does that mean to you?

N:

Responsible energy?

Speaker 1:

Mm-hmm (affirmative) energy...

N:

What does it mean? Responsible?

Speaker 1:

That means...

N:

The government or?

Speaker 1:

No how you use energy. What does that mean to you? So when I say responsible energy use, as in how well or how careful you are about your energy use. What does that mean to you and to people from your background? When I'm talking to you I understand, for you because you work you don't care so much about how it costs right?

N:

Yes.

Speaker 1:

Comfort, it means comfort for you? So what do you think it means for other people from your background?

N:

Other people they take care very much because they depends on Centrelink and Centrelink pay to us everyone, 500 every two weeks so they can't pay, they can't spend like me and they take care very much, they... every time we visit my friends sometimes we... they didn't turn on the condition, because they can't...

Speaker 1:

Yes.

N:

And they use the a carton glass to it rubbish, they don't need to use hot water, little bit hot water when it necessary for shower.

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

N:

But in our house we don't take care because we don't take care about money but the other people in our culture depends on Centrelink, it's so hard to them to spend more electricity. Because then 600 per every three months, it's so expensive. So expensive for them. Yes.

Speaker 1:

It sounds like you're more fortunate, or you're better off than some of the other people from your community? Because everybody in your household works. But that's not typical is it?

N:

What?

Speaker 1:

It sounds like you're more fortunate, because everybody in your household works right? So you can afford to... you can afford your electricity bill, you can afford to use...

N:

Ah yes the electricity bill it's suitable for working people, not suitable for unworking people.

Speaker 1:

Mm-hmm (affirmative)

N:

It's very expensive for unworking people but it's suitable for us because when anyone work full time in Australia it's easy to spend to transport, easy to spend to car, easy... little bit hard to spend to teeth but other things it's easy. But anyone doesn't work it's so hard. My friends waiting government to fix their teeth, maybe two years waiting two years for one teeth. Yes because lot people and the government can't give all money for all people yes.

Speaker 1:

So you will continue to work for a while?

N:

Yes the work for us, for my family, it the life. We like working if we can. If we have health to work forever. If we don't [inaudible 00:51:37] okay maybe after three years I will get a pension, pensioner like this but now I can. I just now 60.

Speaker 1:

[inaudible 00:51:50]

N:

In Australia, I see people 80 years and work, yes I like that.

Speaker 1:

Yes because you're young and healthy, doesn't it work?

N:

Yes, I also working is very important and I think very boring to me to stay at home, my friends from our culture, they stay at home and watch TV and drink coffee. Not good, not good that. That not good. And they didn't improve their language, didn't meeting any people, no not good that.

Speaker 1:

Yeah. I agree.

N:

Thank you.

Speaker 1:

So you told me little bit about it before but maybe just tell me a bit again. So how would you say your energy use has changed since you've lived in Australia now for over three years? So how has it changed from your life in Aleppo to here now?

N:

Yeah.

Speaker 1:

How has it changed?

N:

First when I pay first bill, it's problem. What is this? 600? In Syria 600 dollars for six years. So after that I feel comfortable because I am so happy with my family, everything easy here, all the lights or I can take shower everyday not my in my country. So like this and when I especially when my sons and my wife and I work, I felt so comfortable. It's good for anyone because electricity is very important for every house. Just the first bill, what surprise? What is this 600? Yes so expensive but after that [crosstalk 00:54:07] yes easy and we have to take care everyone because not good to spend more than normal so when I talk with my family, please turn on this, please it's not necessary, turn on the condition because we will go to bed so it's necessary. Not for money, it's not good to... not good for anything, why we turn on if we didn't don't need why?

Speaker 1:

Use it yeah.

N:

So I talk with them every time and we try to spend less, we try to spend less all time.

Speaker 1:

Okay, thank you. Would you that your energy use has also changed sine the COVID-19 pandemic?

N:

Yes little bit more, little bit more because my sons most time working at home.

Speaker 1:

Mm-hmm (affirmative)

N:

So they turn on everything and especially in the office, we have office here, they turn on the central heater, they turn on the computer and 10 hours work at home as civil engineers.

Speaker 1:

Of course. So when you on average about 600, that's how much you pay for your electricity bill, in during the COVID pandemic, did that then increase to 800 or is it more than 800?

N:

Maximum 800, 850 maximum. And minimum 400. Minimum 400 maybe sometimes the weather is very good so no cold, no warm, 400. If cold, very cold or very hot we spend around 700, 800 every three months.

Speaker 1:

Mm-hmm (affirmative)

N:

Every three months, so the average 600. The average is 600.

Speaker 1:

So is your bill higher in the summer or in the winter?

N:

I think in the winter little bit more than summer, little bit more because we turn on everyday, everyday so cold. But in the summer not everyday because sometimes little bit good weather.

Speaker 1:

Mm-hmm (affirmative)

N:

Yes, especially in the morning and at night.

Speaker 1:

Yeah. Okay all right. Now we going to move on to the last set of questions okay.

N:

[inaudible 00:56:44]

Speaker 1:

Thank you so much. I want to ask for your views on Australian energy policy okay. So what do you know and think about Australian energy policy for people like us from different cultural backgrounds? So do you know of any Australian energy policy for people of culturally and linguistically diverse groups? So for Syrians or immigrants?

N:

Did you mean how they think about the electricity bills? People?

Speaker 1:

What do you know? What do you think about Australian energy policy?

N:

Policy? What means policy?

Speaker 1:

So like laws and regulations about energy.

N:

About energy... I don't know any information about that.

Speaker 1:

No, okay. Well do you feel supported or empowered by the Australian energy laws then? Do you feel like you are, knowledgeable, you are supported, you have all the information that you need to make decisions about your electricity use and your bills?

N:

I think the owner can change the electricity system in the house.

Speaker 1:

Mm-hmm (affirmative)

N:

Maybe some owners put something over the house and get power from the sun.

Speaker 1:

Okay so...

N:

This... I like that because why you spend more money for electricity, why? We can change this for another things, but not me because I just rent the house.

Speaker 1:

Mm-hmm (affirmative)

N:

The owner, we can change the system of the electricity and maybe the government will help him.

Speaker 1:

Mm-hmm (affirmative)- so you think there should be more flexibility, there should be more options, choices?

N:

Yes, in my country there is... I put in, in the roof, I put sun power. I don't have the word here.

Speaker 1:

Solar...

N:

So the sun heat every water in my house. But here everything electricity, why? We can change that. We can change that and we can useful from the sun. Yes.

Speaker 1:

I think you mean solar? Solar energy?

N:

Yes. I like that but maybe if I will buy a new house I will put this one, not everything in electricity.

Speaker 1:

Yes.

N:

Yes.

Speaker 1:

Okay, so that's a good idea. I like solar as well.

N:

Yes.

Speaker 1:

What do you think about or do you know of any programs that are around to support you, your community, immigrants with the energy use? Do you know of any programs currently?

N:

To help us?

Speaker 1:

Mm-hmm (affirmative)

N:

For the bills?

Speaker 1:

Yeah with energy use yeah.

N:

I heard some people here help refugee for the bills but I didn't know what, who that and sometimes the church help the people for paying the bills sometimes. But because we are work here so we didn't need anyone but maybe the government can help the people here especially who get money from Centrelink, it's so hard to them.

Speaker 1:

Yes.

N:

Well I think the government help, I think the government help maybe 100 per week or 50, 100 per week for that thing.

Speaker 1:

You don't really know for sure? Okay. If you could tell the government one thing about energy use among your community for example, what would it be? To help your community, if you could tell the government one thing about energy use? What would it be?

N:

I suppose, just to take care every house, take care for to use less electricity and we have to look another solution to spend little electricity in Sydney or in Australia.

Speaker 1:

Mm-hmm (affirmative)

N:

We have to look at another systems yes.

Speaker 1:

Other systems. Do you have examples of other systems apart from solar that you told me about? Any other examples of alternative systems that we can look into?

N:

Maybe we can use gas sometimes it's little bit less expense for electricity but we don't have gas here in my house. So everything electricity, maybe sometimes gas it's good for cooking. Yes.

Speaker 1:

And final question, is there anything else that you'd like to say about your own energy use or about your community and the energy use, is there anything else that you want to add to this interview, that you want to say?

N:

I told you everything, I will thank you for this meeting, I'm so happy and I hope to see you [crosstalk 01:03:13] and thank you for everything you told me and I hope everyone to take care, to spend good spending in everything. In fuel, in electricity, if you want to help the government we have to do everything together and we do everything perfectly.

Speaker 1:

Well thank you so much N. You mentioned that you might have other participants who might be interested in doing this interview as well. If you can refer them to us, that will be great. [inaudible 01:03:57] That would be great, if you can refer them.

N:

Yes I can.

Speaker 1:

Only if it's possible, no pressure okay?

N:

Okay.

Speaker 1:

Only if they're interested. Yes and yeah if there's anything else that you think about after this interview that you want to share, you can also send me, send Morgan an email, she'll pass it on... yeah.

N:

Okay.

Speaker 1:

To me... thanks so much for your time. We'll be in touch again with the second stage of the interview.

N:

Okay maybe my wife [inaudible 01:04:32] will help me.

Speaker 1:

Great, yes. That would work perfectly.

N:

Sorry for today, she is at work today yes.

Speaker 1:

No it's perfect, you did very well. I'm very happy...

N:

Okay.

Speaker 1:

[inaudible 01:04:49]

N:

Nice to meet you, thank you so much goodbye.

Speaker 1:

Thank you bye. Thank you N, bye bye.

N:

Goodbye.

Interview day/time: August 18, 2021.

Participant: South Sudanese male.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Okay, so we are now recording.

D:

Okay.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Thank you very much for making the time.

D:

You're welcome.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

All right. So I received your consent form. Thank you very much for that. And also, you would have received the participant information sheet...

D:

Yes, I did that there.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Of the project. So thank you for agreeing to take part in this project. I've got an interview guide that I'll refer to from time to time as we discuss, but I may explore questions that's not included in the guide just based on whatever you tell me that comes up that I find interesting and worth exploring. Thank you very much for your time. So it should take roughly about an hour but we may go a little bit less or a little bit over. But you tell me if you're running out of time and we can try and wrap it up.

D:

No. That's all right.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Great. Thank you so much. All right. So D, this interview is looking at how we can empower migrant communities, so people from culturally and linguistically diverse communities, regarding their energy consumption. So I might ask you if you have it handy with you to have your bill ready, if you have maybe your energy bill, either your electricity bill or gas bill, just because there's a couple of questions I'd also like to ask about it, just to understand your comprehension of your bill and your relationship with the energy provider.

D:

Yeah.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

So then, when you have that handy, let me know, and then we'll just start with your background if that's okay.

D:

Oh, okay. I got it all here, so that's good.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Excellent. That's great. Perfect. All right. So can I start with your age please? What year were you born in?

D:

36 and D Apat.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

I'm also going to record it on my iPhone just because I want to make sure that we cover all our bases in case the Zoom recording doesn't work. All right, let's go back again. So your background. What year were you born in, D?

D:

1984.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Oh, we're almost the same age. Great. Which month?

D:

Huh?

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Which month?

D:

April.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

I'm October. Great. So what's your position in the family in terms of your... If you have any siblings, are you the oldest, youngest? Where's your position?

D:

I'm the second last.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Second last. Okay.

D:

And I'm the only one here in Australia.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

The only one here in Australia?

D:

Yeah.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Oh, wow. Oh, that must be lonely.

D:

Yeah. But has been a couple of years now, so...

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

So you're used to it.

D:

I used to be in South Sudan and so we live apart for a long time overall scattered because of war. So I've been on my own for a long time.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Australia's home now.

D:

It is.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Okay. So you are Sudanese, you say. So in terms of the specific cultural background that you identify with, should we just say a Sudanese?

D:

South Sudanese and then Dinka. Because South Sudan is also diverse, it's 64 tribes. Yeah. So I'm one of those 64, Dinka.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

How do I spell that? D-I-N-G-A?

D:

[inaudible 00:03:57]. D-I-N-K-A.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Oh, D-I-N-K-A.

D:

Dinka.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Can I ask you if you are single married or...

D:

Married.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Married.

D:

Yeah, with one child

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

One child. How old?

D:

He's going to be three soon. Named [inaudible 00:04:25].

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

A boy?

D:

A girl.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

A girl?

D:

Yeah. He's October like you.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Oh, lovely. Which day in October?

D:

He's on the 19th of October.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Oh, lovely. I'm 27th. All right. So you have one child, so she's in a daycare or?

D:

Yeah, he was going to childcare but because of COVID, she's not going now.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

And your wife?

D:

My wife, who was also attending [TAFE 00:05:00] because they arrive this year or last year.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Oh, okay.

D:

In November, overseas.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Right.

D:

So she was attending TAFE, but the course has been postponed now until October.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Okay.

D:

Due to COVID.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

When did you arrive?

D:

Hmm?

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

When did you arrive?

D:

Me? Oh, long time ago? Maybe before you. 2005.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Oh, wow. Okay, 2005. So have you always lived in Sydney?

D:

Yeah, except one year. I went, I lived in Perth for a year.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Lived in Perth for a year.

D:

Yeah. So I was doing my post-grad there. So I stayed there for one year. Then I came back after I finished it.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

What was your post-grad in?

D:

Psychology.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Oh, wow. And so do you practice?

D:

No. So I'm working on health promotion.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Health promotion.

D:

So that was post-graduate diploma in psychology, not masters.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Oh, okay.

D:

And psychology, the higher you go, the more you become competitive.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Yes. But there's never been a better time to become a psychologist because there's so much demand now for mental health practitioners. So it's a good time.

D:

I tried to get into clinical side for a couple of years, but it's so competitive, I couldn't get in.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Oh, wow.

D:

But then I thought, so I'm now doing my social work masters qualifying. That way I can still do counselings and other [crosstalk 00:06:35] support.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Yes. That's good.

D:

And at least I'll practice, I will register. But with psychology, I cannot register, unless I've done my masters or unless I've done what they call four plus two, which is you do placement for two years. I tried that and I worked in correction as a recognized sort of placement [inaudible 00:07:02] hundred percent psychology. But because I did my high school overseas, there were issues of me to register. Then, there was another big blow. Then I quit. I said, "No." I'm quitting psychology now for some time.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Yeah. They do make it a little bit... The barrier to entry is a bit high, isn't it?

D:

Yeah.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

It makes it hard. Anyway, we'll move on to living arrangement. So can you please tell me, where do you live in Sydney and how long have you lived there?

D:

Oh my goodness. I live in Western Sydney until when I came. [inaudible 00:07:50], except that one year when I went to Perth. But of course, [inaudible 00:07:56] I move a couple of [inaudible 00:07:58] or LGA [inaudible 00:08:03].

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

But generally around...

D:

Western Sydney. Yeah.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Okay. Do you rent or own?

D:

I rent.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

And how long have you lived in this house that you rent?

D:

It's one and a half year now.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

One and a half years. So you live with your wife?

D:

Yeah.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

And daughter?

D:

Yeah.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Do you see yourself staying in this house?

D:

First of all, yeah, because I'm sick of moving.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

I know. It's such a hassle, isn't it?

D:

So maybe another... Dependent with the landlord. I don't know what they decide, it means moving out, no, there's no point. I will move out whenever I maybe would take out mortgage. So when I'm settled in, then I can move out from there. But at the moment, I think I'll be here longer. Another two years or so.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Okay. So you enjoy living in Sydney and enjoy living in the house?

D:

Sure.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Is it a unit or an apartment or a house?

D:

It's a complex. The way they do... Where do you live?

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

I live in a house. I live in Brisbane, actually.

D:

Brisbane. Okay. It's a bit different. The way Brisbane is more... Not more like Sydney, the way they designed, but Melbourne is somehow like Sydney. So it's like a complex. They put all the complex building, like the townhouses, like environment around there is something. Those complex the way they try to make it maximize the use of the space.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Ah, right.

D:

So there's a couple of other units, but it's a townhouse by itself.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Okay. Okay. So it's a complex of townhouses.

D:

Yeah. Yeah.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Okay. All right. How many bedrooms is it?

D:

It's a three bedroom.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Okay. Three bed. So you have three people living in the house total?

D:

Yeah.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Okay. All right. Thank you for your background information. So now we'll move on to your heating and cooling practices. So what I really want to understand is your habits around how you cool yourself in the summer and how you heat yourself in the winter. So not just your home, but also yourself personally, and also your household. What your wife does, how your baby as well, all the ways that you consume energy within the house, over the course of the year in terms of different seasons. So summer, winter just because Australia, we don't really have the four seasons as much. So let's just focus on cold and... In the home. Okay. So let's start with your heating practices. So let's talk about winter because it's winter right now. So overall, would you say you feel comfortable in this home?

D:

Yes. At the moment I am, but when I first came, because there was no split system installed, there was no AC, so the first year when I came it was almost in summer, that was in April, it was really hot. And then in winter it was good because I enjoy winter. So then I did not think about putting on AC at that time. But now, when my family came in summer of last year, and then I asked the landlord and they said, "Look, we're not going to install one. But if you want, you can install it on your own cost. And when you move, you make sure that you take it out with you. No excuse. You leave the area the way you found it."

And then I look at myself, I said, "Okay, so if I'm going to live here for, let's say, three to five years, and then it would be ideal for me to install it." Because the thing would cost me 1500 to 1900 bucks to put it in. So I decided to install the AC split system. So that make it more... How do I call it? More ownership. At least I see the value living in here and [inaudible 00:12:38] something and that helped me in terms of cooling and heating.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

So is it reverse cycle?

D:

Yeah, it is. It's those usual thing that you buy in a supermarket. So I'm using that one now. So during winter you reverse cycle, so it's hot and then summer cold.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

So right now in winter, how often would you turn it on?

D:

With the family it's a different thing. The family with the baby, so whenever they are home, it's on. But what they told me last time, they said, "Look, if you want to turn it on, you better do it early in the morning and that way it will get warmer." Because it's a bit slow to warm up. And this one here, it's a new split system whereby it could stop. Like summer, it stopped to cool itself, dependent on the kind of regenerate heat or cooling.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

So it's got its own inbuilt timing?

D:

Yeah, timing. Yeah. And then they show me how to use that timing thing.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

So who actually gave you that advice? Who showed you through how to use it properly?

D:

The person that installed it. I think I bought it through [Harvey Norman 00:14:03]. And then Harvey Norman organized a technician to come and install it. I think I had to pay them as well. It was a different cost from that. They charged me \$600 while the system, \$1,200. So it was \$1,800 and something.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Wow. So the landlord provided no...

D:

No. Just approval.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Nothing at all.

D:

And the funny thing, when I move out, I have to take it out.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Wow.

D:

Which is another thing about it now because I don't know that when.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

So I guess it will there for now.

D:

Two years, three years [crosstalk 00:14:38].

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

It's worth investment. So when the family is around, you generally turn it on, you said. So how many hours would that be generally in a day during winter?

D:

I think during winter now, could maybe more than four or five hours, whenever they are home. It's a lot about now because no one is going to work, no one is going to school. I'm working from home. They're not going anywhere. So whenever they're at home, in the morning, they turn it on and then this time, they go out for the sun because it's sunny, and when they come back later on, maybe later on in the evening, then they turn it on again. But during daytime, at least then it's off. And when

were are cooking as well, because it's like an open kitchen place, open kitchen, and then the heat from the cooking thing as well will generate hot. So then, the system would be off at that time.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Okay. Okay. Use kitchen. So when you're in the house, when you don't turn on the air con what kind of clothing do you wear to keep yourselves warm? Do you wear jumpers, do you wear socks?

D:

Yeah. We wear jumpers, we wear thing like this one, like what I'm wearing now to keep your feet warm.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Oh, nice. Warm, fuzzy slippers.

D:

Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. So those, we have them all of us. We have all the winter [inaudible 00:16:19].

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Yes.

D:

My daughter, myself and wife and a lot of jumpers as well. So those warmer and the ones that make you warm. So we wear that during daytime.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

What are your heating cooling systems? So you've talked about your reverse cycle air con. Do you have a hot water system as well?

D:

Hot water, yes. We have gas.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Gas. Okay.

D:

But I'm not sure whether... I think we're using gas for cooking and heating as well.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Shower?

D:

Yeah, shower. I'm not sure, but I assume, because we never got off of hot water.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Oh, what? You don't have hot water?

D:

No, no, no. We never go out, we never run out of hot water. If you're using electricity, I think, that time if you take a longer shower, it may finish.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

That's true.

D:

But with gas, because it's constantly heating, then it take less time to heat.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

So how long would you spend in the shower roughly each of you in the house?

D:

Personally, I'm longer, maybe two to three minutes.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Oh, that's not long at all. Good. That's very good. And what about your wife?

D:

[crosstalk 00:17:49] five sometimes because I'm the longest one.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Okay. What about your wife maybe?

D:

I think my wife might be three minute and I might be three to five.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Okay. So you're very good with your hot water usage. Okay. So generally, is the house easy to keep warm using the reverse cycle air con and also heat from the kitchen? Do you have other appliances maybe that you use to keep the house warm?

D:

Yeah. There's like a small heater I normally use for my daughter. So because it's a townhouse, so all the rooms are upstairs. So the AC doesn't come out up here. Of course, You can feel it heat up, but not in all the rooms. So then we use a very small one, before she goes to bed, we put it on for another, maybe 20 minute, half an hour to warm the room. But then, later on, we turn it off and then we take it back with us. So we are doing that. That tiny thing that make noise.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Yeah. The fan heaters.

D:

Yeah. Yeah.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

[inaudible 00:19:04]. Okay. So is that the only one that you have?

D:

Yeah, that's the only thing. And there's another one as well, bigger one. It's another heating system, those portable one, 240 kilowatt. No, 2,400 kilowatt, that heating system. So my wife normally use it whenever that she doesn't want to turn that on, the AC. It's a quick hit and run, it warm up straightway. So if you want a quick one, you turn it on, and then while the longer system is operating.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

So it's not a fan heater.

D:

No. No. It's not a fan. It's that one you could see the heat.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Oh, the one that glows, like it...

D:

Yeah. Yeah. Yeah.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

I know those ones. Okay.

D:

I forgot the name.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

I think I know those ones. So how long would you turn that on as well?

D:

For me, I never turn it on. My wife does. And I told her, because it consumes a lot of energy as well. And then the gas, that thing that emitted loud, there's no way that it more purify. They emit a gas and the [inaudible 00:20:26] who is in the room, is not healthy. So I don't like that.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

So, sorry. Did you say there was a dehumidifier?

D:

No, no, no. Not. But this normal one, which is not a portable one, it's not a quality one. It's [inaudible 00:20:48] I think so it's not ideal for indoor.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Right. Okay. Okay.

D:

If there's no good ventilation, then it's not good for your health.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

So are they expensive to run then, in your opinion?

D:

The small one?

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

All of the appliances that you have. So you have the fan heater, you have the other heater and then the reverse cycle. Do you find them expensive to run all of them together or individually? Do you have any challenges with using them? [crosstalk 00:21:30].

D:

I will this year what happen, because last year, because my wife was not here with my daughter, in the winter they were here, so I was not using any. But even that one, because if I go to gym, factories and then come back, I'm warm. So I don't need any. And I enjoy cold so winter is my-

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

[crosstalk 00:21:53] for a African to be cold.

D:

Winter is my season.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Wow. Is it cold in Sudan?

D:

No. But I grew up in Uganda. Weather in Northern Uganda is quite good, next to Congo, that area. And then, because it's all equator part that way. So it's quite cold, but I think the way my metabolism is built, I guess.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

You like the cold.

D:

Yeah.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

All right. Maybe talk me through the difference then in terms of before your wife came, your family changed and when you were living by yourself, has there been a significant change in your expenses and your [crosstalk 00:22:45]?

D:

Yes. Especially water.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Especially?

D:

Our last water bill, last time was three time what we had before my wife came here.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Oh. Three times more?

D:

Yes. Three or four time. Because I think the whole year I pay under \$200.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

What?.

D:

And then, last quarter we pay \$235 for one quarter.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Wow.

D:

So that was a massive jump.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Yes. How did you manage the jump? So how did you feel about it?

D:

So I knew because there were two things, cooking. Cooking become more frequent and then washing as well. So washing baby clothes. Before, I could remember, I washed once a fortnight. But now, nearly every week. And my machine is, I think per wash is 127 liter per wash.

PART 1 OF 4 ENDS [00:24:04]

D:

27 liters. That works. Yeah. And I don't think I've considered this last time when I bought it. I should have, maybe looked at something that just under a 100 liters, I would. Yeah.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

I'll ask those questions in a minute, because I'm actually interested in, I guess, your motivation or the influences for your purchases. So when you purchase your appliances, what do you look at?

D:

Okay.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

So I'll get to that in a minute. [crosstalk 00:24:33] I don't want to skip these questions, but thank you. I'll get to that in a second. So when you, who you have, so I'm just looking through my list of questions. Yeah. All of the appliances that we talked about, so you noticed a significant jump in your bills and-

D:

Water bill.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Yeah, in your water bill. Yeah. What about in your electricity bill?

D:

No. That one does not make changes because it is cooking.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

D:

And so in Endometry when my wife is not here, I cook. I don't enjoy fast food.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Okay.

D:

So cooking, of course it increased a little bit because of a quantity of-

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

D:

And frequency of cooking, but I cannot see might different with the bills. It's all the same. And this bill- so last bill, last quarter was all the same. There was no might different, but again, this one, they did not go and do it because of COVID. So they're not sending someone, they told me that they're going to estimate based on my last year bill.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Yeah.

D:

And my last year bill was I think by that time they were not here.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Okay.

D:

Yeah. So let me look at the bill that they were here and then compare.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Okay, sure.

D:

So Feb to April, they were here and then last year, February. Yeah. So it's a bit less. Last year from Feb to April was around \$300.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

D:

No, around 100. No, no. So, April to July last year were 330.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

D:

For electricity.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

D:

Electricity.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Yeah.

D:

And then this year, which is April to July. They're going to estimate based on that.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Okay.

D:

Yeah. But now online here, what they're showing me is 164. That's [crosstalk 00:26:42] why they go make that consumes because online, they put day by day, they put increased, which is based on estimate. But later on, they're going to calculate and then they'll put the line ventral sort of thing. Yeah. So we'll jam, but I think it will be within the same range.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Okay.

D:

Yeah. It's 100 and something now, for three months from April to 29th yesterday.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

D:

Yeah.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

129. Okay.

D:

Yeah.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

You don't expect any shock, right? When you get your bill?

D:

No, because I also see it online that how it's going as well.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Okay. So do you have an app or like just-

D:

Yes. I have online apps.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Online. So you monitor it quite frequently.

D:

Yeah. Yeah.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Who is your provider? Who's your energy provider?

D:

It's AGL.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

AGL.

D:

Yeah. And the same with gas bill as well.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

D:

It's within the same range.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Yeah. How did you decide who to go with, with your energy provider?

D:

That's a good question. What I realized they are all the same.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Yeah?

D:

I move a lot.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

D:

Although when they tell you they are all the same, because the provider and the suppliers. So you can change provider, but supply is the same.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Yes.

D:

So that means it makes no difference-

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

D:

When you move, it's just maybe like how they communicate with you and their way of doing things.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

D:

Yeah. But it still provider the one that the center to do the meter reading to supply you. It's the same people. No. The one that provides electricity in the same. Because let's say, if they talk about Endeavour energy Endeavour so over pile a lot of payment here in Wilson city. Let's say suddenly you move, you'll still be supplied by Endeavour. And then you have ADL as your-

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

D:

Like your mentor, in all sort of things assaulting people that give you that the electricity. And so when you change AGL,

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

D:

You will never, again, Endeavour.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Right.

D:

They move from sort of Savelle and is still under Endeavor unless you move out of Wilson city. Then it might be maybe different supplier.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Yeah. So you said maybe the communication might be different. How do you feel about AGL's communication with you?

D:

I think so far is okay. And I had issues with a couple of them. I had issues with them before AGL and then I had issues with Energy Australia-

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

D:

And Oregon, because when they tell you an estimate-

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

D:

They make a double.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Yeah.

D:

Or more than half.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Yeah.

D:

Then my question to them over there, I said, why don't you base it on my last bills?

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

D:

If you want to estimate you better make it a bit little.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Yeah.

D:

Or the same was my last one.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Yeah.

D:

When you estimate you double it, I will not accept it. That's where the issue come in. And then I ask them, why are you not sending somebody? You employ people to come and read my meter.

And then if you're not sending people, then it means that you guys did not employ people, which is not good.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Yeah.

D:

So then become argument that we argue always. So until we settled with any year, it was AGL.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

D:

I sent them to our report, them to ombudsman.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Oh did you?

D:

Yeah.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Wow.

D:

I think two time. And I won the case.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Wow.

D:

And when you report them to ombudsman-

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

D:

They couldn't listen to you, they come to you. They said, look, let's see a way we can settle it.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Oh okay.

D:

Then from there we will do compromise and then we will settle it. Yeah. So I had my issues with AGL until we get to know each other, we settle.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Okay. [crosstalk 00:30:37] So that they send someone to come and read your meter?

D:

Yeah.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Okay.

D:

But like, now they're not going to do it. They sent me text message that "we're not going to do it because of COVID".

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

COVID, yeah.

D:

But we're going to do estimate based on your last year, which is good. Cause I know now whatever bill I have, will be based on my last consumption?

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

D:

And that mean it might be higher or it might be lower. So at least I know beforehand.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Yeah.

D:

Yeah.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

So then what happens if once they are able to come and read your meter, your bill actually is-

D:

It'll jump.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Jumped because it's difficult-

D:

If we'll underestimate

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Mm-hmm (affirmative) What if it was underestimated? Yeah.

D:

Yeah.

At least I know. I'll not be panicking at that time-

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

D:

Because I know what they're going to do whenever time, whenever COVID is over in the future. So those types of reading from April and then, so we'll just put them together. Then they divided whatever month it is and then they will determine. Yeah.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Okay. That sounds good. What about in terms of language, would you say you have any difficulties or challenges with the way that they communicate the language barrier perhaps? I mean, you're highly educated. So I don't imagine that you do, but I'm just wondering from the other interviews that we've had, it appears that sometimes there are people experienced challenges with actually understanding the bill because it's sometimes a bit too complex, but tell me how you feel about the overall communication in terms of the language that they use.

D:

So I think for me it's, language is not an issue-

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

D:

And understanding all the bill, billing [inaudible 00:32:36]-

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

D:

Is not an issue. Based on my research or-

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Yeah.

D:

When you're in problem something you sort of recite.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Yeah.

D:

No more battle for you make the case.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

D:

When I had issues with them, I research then I know how much they charge per line and all sorts of things. So regardless you use your energy or you use your gas, there's a fee attached to it-

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Yeah.

D:

For them to bring that line to your place? They charge you.

And that one is something that you sort of knowledgeable-

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

D:

So yet in terms of getting understanding the bill, I had no issues with it. And always when I look at my bill, I look at the...with the... interpret hereby is it accurately?

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

D:

Or based on estimate? So I go there, look at it, compare my last routine, numbers, digits, with my last one. And then minus and then calculate. I use those ones until I look at, okay, this is how much are they charging me because of this unit I've used.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Okay.

D:

Yeah. So yeah. I'm all right with that.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Yeah. It sounds like you're more like their conscious energy consumers. So you're very aware of your usage, you're aware of your bills and you communicate with your provider. So you sound like you are empowered already as a energy consumer.

D:

Yeah, that's kind of, and I think that it's comes with my many years working in the industry.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Yeah.

D:

There's a couple of positions that I support a lot of clients.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Okay.

D:

Consumers, their energy providers.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

D:

Yeah. And so in term of communication with all the energy or most of them is about cultural rules. There's a Cultural assumptions' sort of thing or stereotyped that the way they will treat you-

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

It's all based on your knowledge with them.

D:

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

If they knew that you know what you're talking about, they'll treat you the way they will not treat you another person that is totally blank.

D:

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

And it become an issue with most of them. Yeah. Because I cannot call some other provider that if someone, they not even tell them that this was based on estimate, they just kept telling them, it's yours, it's your consumption.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Mm-hmm (affirmative)

D:

Don't pay, go and talk to so-and-so to help you. If you have an issue with the financials, that sort of thing.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

D:

But the person was complaining about this is massive bills per month.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Yeah.

D:

Yeah. And when I look at the thing and then it was based on an estimate, then that's when I argue now from on behalf of that client that look, these were based on an estimate bill. You better tell them, we did not send someone to inspect your bill. So we're not sure that this is your actual usage or is over estimated. You better communicate that to them. Then they can back up now, they'll say okay. Okay. Yeah. Yeah.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

D:

It was not actual reading. It was based on ease or help from something of last time.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

So when you said you worked in industry and you supported clients with talking to their providers, was this a position, a paid position or was it something you did as a favor for friends or for people that you knew? Like what, what was the capacity in what capacity did you intervene or assist other people?

D:

Was part of, not exactly a part of my role, but I was a kit worker supporting newly arrived migrant. So it was about two years ago from 2012 to 2013. And in that position, what you do, you support them with any issue that they come up with? So there's no, it's all about issues upsets on that. So it could be advocacy, could be either through the schools, court advocacy, other personal issues that you can name all.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Okay.

D:

So and then in the energy providers were like, nearly half of that time.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Oh wow.

D:

People complain.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

D:

And the same with some other deal, the contract like telephone contract that people sign, they don't understand what they're signing for. A bit like those TV renting thing,

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Yes.

D:

It was like when they, asked clients rent TV, someone rent TV for about two years and the amount was still the same.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Yeah.

D:

It'll never go down. And then take double the TV unit.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Yeah, that's right.

D:

So yeah, there was a lot of issues.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

D:

Yeah.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

So you got to really arm yourself with knowledge of the industry practices. So you're able to then apply to your own life. Okay.

D:

Yep. Exactly.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

So you said you did that for a year?

D:

That was about three years.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Three years? Okay. Through, where? Is it through a settlement organization?

D:

Yeah. Yeah. So what a program that was called as SPG assessments service grant something SPG, the assessment is no SGP. Settlement grant; p what was it, program.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Settlement program. Okay.

D:

No settlement grant program. And it will through Anglicare. So Anglicare got panels, those panels, the name of the funding is called the Settlement Grant Program.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Through Anglicare?

D:

Yeah. So supporting them when they arrive, probably use some migraine.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

That's great. Wow. That's really good to know.

D:

Yes.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

All right. So I'm going to ask about the other purchases that you have in your house so that we can move on to the next set of questions. So we talked a reverse cycle, air con heaters. What about your other appliances? You've got a washing machine?

D:

Yeah.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

You've got, do you have dishwasher?

D:

No.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Do you have a dishwasher? No?

D:

No.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Clothes dryer?

D:

No.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Okay. What about-

D:

There's one off the street? We use that sometime during winter, so we get cloths there, we dry them.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Okay. Okay. Laundromat.

What about things like hairdryer, straightener, fridge?

D:

Yeah we have fridge yeah.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Mm-hmm (affirmative) Okay.

D:

And my wife got one resent hairdryer, one.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Okay.

D:

Yeah.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

One hairdryer. Would she use it every day or?

D:

No. You know Africans have plenty hair.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

I know.

D:

I think she uses it once.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Okay. So can you remember when you purchased these appliances? So going back to you were starting to tell me your reasons, purchasing them. So what was, what were the reasons for choosing the type of appliance that you did? So we can say, let's go with your example of the Harvey Norman reverse cycle, right?

D:

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

So you needed to get it because your landlord wouldn't install it himself or pay for it. But in terms of actually choosing the brand that you went with, the products that you did go with, did you consider things like the energy star ratings and the cost-

D:

Yeah.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

And reputation?

D:

Yeah.

So in terms of, let's say in terms of my AC.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

D:

So I look at the star rating thing.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

D:

As well, that factor that it can automatically turn itself off.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

D:

Or sometimes.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

D:

Which is over like a billion things hey told me and I believe in them because they told me too a couple of different brands. And until I met my decision based on that brand, and then before I went online and double check and read through, and looked at the reviews and although all they're not true, but that's how people complaint and put in their prediction either for the product or disagreement with the product. Yeah. So I look at them as well, and then later on, I decided based on energy consumption of that, on that product.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Okay.

D:

Yeah. Is Mitsubishi electric; they call it Electric Mitsubishi is closed system.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Electric...

D:

Yeah electric system. Display system Mitsubishi. And then for my washing machine. So I look at the star rating for energy.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

D:

It was more convenient for energy usage. And then I think got three and a half star for water. And then I went for bigger size as well, 13 kilos,

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

D:

Which I shouldn't have because 13 kilos it had to go, although there's this like Japanese model.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

D:

And we definitely monitor this all good with energy consumption. That's what I realized.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Okay.

D:

A lot of their things as well even with their TV,

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Okay.

D:

Like a secret thing in between five and six, most of them. So the energy star wars was good, so it was convenient, but it was water that now I realize that it's also important.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

D:

But there were a couple of other machine around from eight to seven, per liters per wash, up to 100 or 107, but mine is 127.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Okay.

D:

Per wash.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Per wash?

D:

Yeah liters. So that's massive.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

It is.

So when you were looking at reviews online, did you go to which particular sources of information did you look at? For example, do you know if energy made easy dot go. Do you know?

D:

Um mm no, but there's another one that most of what I did, I do go to; there's another one I forgot. I used it recently. It's called something that review dot com dot Au.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Okay.

D:

Yeah product review or something like that dot com and then, but mostly I go through the same website, let's say I'm looking for a product from Harvey Norman.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

D:

And then I look at that and then look people that bought it there-

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Okay.

D:

And then see what they say. And it cogon.com. And then I use it and LD, it's most of them that sell all these things.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

D:

And the same with Bing Lee, I look at those products and I got bought my fridge at Good Guy. And I don't think I look at the rating at the energy rating at that time. Yeah. Energy rating was good-

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

D:

But it was on sale. So I look at the dollar value then.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Yeah.

D:

Yeah, but it's good its energy consumption also was not so bad. I cannot remember exactly how many stars-

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Yeah.

D:

But it was also good.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Okay. That's good.

D:

Yeah.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

All right. Thank you. So yeah, we talked about your heating practices. Now, what about cooling practices in terms of, summer, summer time. How do you cool yourself in the summer? How do you cool your home? What appliances do you use in the summertime?

D:

Yeah. At the moment, because we had, we've got, a display system-

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

D:

So we, we use it and, but it still, its downstairs. So upstairs there's like a small one. It's like a table, a pan that sometime I use, like it, I hang it on my daughter bed.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Okay.

D:

When it's a little hot.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Like a little pan?

D:

Then we can, it's more like, like my size, like this it's so small.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Yeah, okay. Right.

D:

They called like a table pan.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Yeah. And does it plug into a wall?

D:

Yeah plug it on the wall using the USB then pug the USB, that sort of thing.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

So is that the only one you have or do you have other fans as well?

D:

Yeah we have one bigger one.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

D:

Like that's normal one. It's designed like this.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Is a standing one?

D:

Yeah a standing one, but it rotates like 300 and something degree it rotates. So that one would move it up.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Okay.

D:

Yeah. That was the first one I got when I did not install the other one.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Okay.

D:

Yeah. Plus they sold well, and we, we have like windows, like a full size glass, that big size.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Mm-hmm (affirmative)

D:

But there's an advantage in a winter because of heating because of that big glass. When he opened the blind. So the sun come in and then it's a bit warm, but in summer we have to close the blind and then you close the windows in the morning. You don't open them if like a hot day. So you look at tomorrow, forecast. If the forecast is hot, then in the morning I don't open them. And then that way it helped to keep it a bit cold. Yeah. I think that the only thing we you use, those is, it's more one cooling system. Now we had like a split system is good. So we hardly use the other one. So we use the small one upstairs when the spray, where my daughter is coming to pick.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

So with this split system, then how, how many hours in the summer would you turn it on?

D:

That one is less. Could be maybe like three, four hours. So whenever the Illumina is cool and then it's off now, but what that person told her last time, he said, look, you better have it on. Then if you turn off and on again, I told him, so for it to start up, it takes a lot of energy. But because of the buildings, you, if you leave it on it automatically attendance up all

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Time. Yeah. Okay. So you usually leave it to turn itself off.

D:

Yeah. And then that one, you said like the time I think.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Yeah. Okay. So do you find it more.

PART 2 OF 4 ENDS [00:48:04]

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Do you find it more expensive in the summer or winter in terms of the devices that appliances that you use to keep cool versus keeping warm?

D:

I think summer it's a bit less compared to winter as a family now. But personally for me, winter is less because before I had no one here, I hardly use anything to the winter. [crosstalk 00:48:40] But now with the baby and someone else here so it's become too expensive for us.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Just a general question. How did you learn about the heating and cooling practices that you use in your home?

D:

I think I learned through the hard way. Well, remember when I mentioned to you about all the move that I did with all the providers, but it comes through the hard way. When something was not going okay for me. And then I had to [inaudible 00:49:17] and before I make complaint, so you have to look into your case to make sure that you are building a good case, but there were a time I turned off all the thing, everything, except my fridge. Then I look at the meter because one time, they told me that, look, if this was a fault somewhere and I came up with one of the clients that when I knew it a client of mine, when I used to work with the [anglecare 00:49:49] so a client of mine had a hot water system was leaking underground.

So her energy, electricity was always off in a [inaudible 00:50:06] and then there were only 3 of them at home. So when she came to me, I look at the thing. I said, no, something's wrong here. How many are you? Three or five? And then I said, no. So one, when I call the energy provider, then I read the case. I meant it a big deal until they send somebody to inspect, they discovered the first time they came, nothing. And then I said, no, no, they have to be something because there's no way. So then what they told me, they said, okay, close everything. So then we turn off everything in the room. And then her thing was still running, her meter was running. So hot water was hitting and because it was leaking. So it was like constantly hitting, hitting, hitting it.

And until I told him that, I said, okay, that might be something wrong. So they send someone to inspect and then they realized there was underground leaking. So they fix that and then they wipe out all the debt and then now they have a new one. So when I learned that that was about 2012. And then whenever I'm not happy with the bills, I see that it's out of my normal rate. So what I do, I turn off all the appliances and then look at my running thing. If it still keep running. And then I know that something is wrong.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Sorry, sorry. I was going to ask, when you turn off everything, how do you then see what's still running? Like, how do you measure it? Is it through the online account?

D:

No. Not through the online, on the physical meter. [crosstalk 00:52:03] But now in where I live, I don't have access to the meter, the all in one room, they put them into one room, they lock it. So I had no access, but that doesn't mean that if I want to ask for access I can ask for it, but things I know more now, but in other places, like I had been, we used to have access to all my meters when you turned off everything, except your TV, because TV consumption is very low. It will never get anything like that. But if you leave everything on, then your TV, everything will be running much faster then you will never realize what is the difference. So you turn off everything. There's no other thing open, except your TV. Anybody want to turn off your TV at that time, you turn off and then come back and

check. Will take you maybe one or two minutes to see. And then it has to stop working. Completely, never move in. And then, I mean, there's no other concern.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

So when you turn off everything, this is not, not talking about when you are going to counter the provider in terms of their billing, but this is more like your own practices. Do you, when you turn off your appliances, do you turn everything off from the wall?

D:

Everything.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

So every day?

D:

Yeah, going to bed, it was like, I have to check everything.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

How many TVs do you have?

D:

One.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Where is it?

D:

Its in the lounge room.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

How many hours would you say its on a day?

D:

On the TV? Not for me except just other program for me, it could be during the news headline. And maybe around six or six 30 if any, or if I'm watching a movie, but because I'm too busy now so I hardly get time to watch TV, but my wife does.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

So roughly in your household, if you were to put a number on how many hours the TV's on. What would you say?

D:

Now, with my daughter, my wife, I could say is nearly eight hours that you talking about a day. Now, lockdown, nothing we are doing. Me, working from home and I'm doing other thing on the weekend. So I don't have time.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

So I want to talk about quickly again, how energy is consumed in your home. Just to give me an idea of what things you think about and consider when you use energy. So we've talked about this before, the cost is important, but also does comfort matter to you? What are some of the key things that you think about when you use energy in your home? Not when you purchase your appliances, but when you actually use energy, cause you seem quite energy conscious. So what are the things that you think about and consider when you use energy?

D:

I think as you, as you mentioned, that comfort is one. And I think that comfort is based on the brand or let's say not the brand, but the quality of that product. So if you're going for a quality one, you know it will take you some years and then, and that mean the quality as well, the consumption of energy will be less compared to a non quality one. So those are the things that I also consider. So I look at the quality of the product and how long I want to use it. So those are the things, but now knowing the water tends to, let's say, if I go back again, I look for washing machine. Also consider what our usage.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

So that starts to become an issue.

D:

My focus on energy usage, compare to what I use is also another thing.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

So is being a responsible consumer important to you then?

D:

It is.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Environmentally responsible. Okay. So is there much discussion about energy use among people in your household? So do you and your wife talk about being conscious of your energy use? Do you talk about turning off the lights to save money on your billing costs? Do you discuss much about energy use?

D:

Yeah. At the moment we're talking, I talking to her like how much little I know about energy usage the and where you live, you leave anything on, even on the wall. So as long as it's on, I don't know, that's my impression is still using energy as long as it is on at that switch. So, and then there's no point of you leaving it on, so we're quite conscious of that now, but having like a two and a half years old, she's running around turning on everything. So that's why if I'm going to bed at home, or whenever that I go to some more time, I just look at the things that I own and then I just turn them off and from lights and everything. She is now able to reach all the switch and turn on the light.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

So what rooms do you spend most of your time in? So with lockdown now, you say you're working from home. Your work is at home or daughter's at home. So because you have to work from home, which room do you spend most of your time in? What appliances do you use?

D:

There's one room upstairs and I use my laptop. So that's a lot of use, only tool I have now. Laptop is the only tool, is the only device I use for work. And then plus we have mobile as well and my own personal mobile. I have to.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

And how many hours a day would you use it?

D:

I work nine to five. Sometimes it could be early and sometime I do weekend.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

So how do you keep that room warm right now in the winter, if you're working, Michael does not reach upstairs.

D:

This is another good one as well is to add, facing the sun and that big glass. So the sun hit is enough for it to keep warm, but it's a room ideal for winter. Not good for summer.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

So in the summer time...Have you had to work from home in the summertime?

D:

No. Last year. Yeah. I think last year we work from home from June. From May until December. But December last year there was no one. So my wife was like, yeah my daughter. So I was bounced chest most of the time.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

So how much energy do you think you that you consume personally? Do you think it's a lot? A little? About average?

D:

I think average, all of it. You mean as a family?

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

As a family, but also you personally.

D:

No. I think for someone I use less energy. Because with my laptop. So if you target, it could take me between six hours or eight hours to come back to, unless I'm using video, Zoom, all sort of thing. So when I charge it, fully charge, I just plug it off and then move around with all the other thing [inaudible 01:01:21] go to the sun and get vitamin D in the morning and then when it become hotter and then I just come back in and so with work, I use less energy so I can charge mine maybe twice a day, depending. And again, it's come back to that concept for energy consciousness.

So when I went on and bought this one last time, I looked at how my energy it used. And by that time it was like the best contest I went from that MacBook Pro and by that I won't get in six hours to eight hours now they got some of the Mac books that up to 18 hours. So if I go again and I just doing the 13, so if I go back again, now I will still go for MacBook because of those 18 hours, we can charge it once and then you spend the whole day.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

On the 18 hours. [inaudible 01:02:19] So I'm just going to wrap up your usage here. What do you think about how much energy that people from your cultural background use, in Australia? Do you think it's a lot? A little? Average?, Can you speak, for people, other Sudanese, south Sudanese people or the community in terms of their energy use and energy consumption?

D:

I think this, it depend on a family. So there's some of the family who are energy conscious. And there're some families that don't even understand what it is. Like they don't know the difference between an estimate, a bill that was estimated or actual really. They cannot differentiate that. The energy provider cannot tell them. They cannot know. So it could be because of in [inaudible 01:03:25] because of the level of the indication. So it, it depends. So there's a family that are more energy conscious, and there are family that are not yet there.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

So is there a particular... So you know how to check your usage on your appliances? So in terms of knowledge, about your energy consumption, you know, how much the fridge uses?

D:

No. What, what I normally like because I bought that fridge last time. Not because of energy usage, it was because I was on sale, but the other one, when I was trying to buy a TV online the last time. So there was another TV was Aldi. It was cheaper compared like 80". So it was cheaper, it was like \$1,200. Well, 99. So it was cheaper compared to other TVs, but it was [inaudible 01:04:34] kilos it was too heavy. And then I've looked at the, the weight was too heavy. So who's going to carry it every time you want to move a TV. It's kind of like an outlet for me or the family. And then the energy for some. Was it on a thing?. Well, some were four stars, something like that then I said no. So it was a new product now.

So I'm looking at the energy consumption and he'll tell you how might pay a year. Let's say five point something per year, 400 or something it'll work per year. You can use. So you look at how my per yearly use that constantly on because TV is something that is always on, except when you're not using. And then you turn it off. Which I do on the wall. Not only. So I turned it off using the remote and then again on the wall.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Very good energy consumer. All right. So do you know how much... Tell me about your lighting? What type of lights do you have in your house? Is it...

D:

Energy conserving.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Energy lighting? Flora

D:

Less energy. I had bought by getting some of them when I came here.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Yeah. So you don't have a dishwasher?

D:

No. No Dishwasher. No Dryer.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

What about toasters? Microwaves? Food processors? Blenders?

D:

A Microwave, yeah. We have a [sandwich?] maker. No Toaster.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

So you generally know how much energy they use?

D:

So it was microwave, but I think it's, I had that for years now. It's old one. I don't even know how much it's used, but you a good brand is the brand called Chef. And I assume the brand is good. Yeah. So, and we use gas for cooking. But I don't know how much energy they use.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

That's okay. Do you have a plan, a payment plan of sorts or rewards loyalty program with your energy provider? So if you pay your bill on time, for example, they give you a discount. Is there a particular energy plan that they put you on?

D:

Yeah, they put me on some plan last time when I rejoined them. Now, when I moved. Cause you know the one that keep you so [crosstalk 01:07:26] the plan, but now that plan was for one year. So I'm not sure. I think I better call them again and check on whether, but yes, I do have that early payment plan, this kind of thing. But I got paid on time then its a discount.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

All right. Well we'll just try to wrap up because I can see that we're over an hour. Thank you for your patience. I just want to ask you, how do you feel about your bill relative to your energy use? Do you think it's fair? Do you think it's reasonable? Do you think it's too high? Keeping in mind, the issues with estimates versus accurate reading, et cetera, but do you think relative to your energy use, how do you feel?

D:

I think for my gas and energy and electricity, no, no complaint. So I think they are relative to my usage, except my water, because my water was like a massive, 150 [foreign language 01:08:28] 180 from the previous one. And so I called them and ask them, can you tell me why? Is there anything you know about it? Because I have no access to it. I said, look, it's just that actually mine? Did I use it. But I know exactly is because, I told my wife what happened. So my wife said we are cooking and we are washing you before, when not here, we are not washing enough. And I can see that's a valid one. So now I know. So what we did around that? We try to minimize out washing. So we make sure that we wash a full load, not like half load.

So then you have to wait until we have a full load, but then we'll see what happened in that quarter. That can go. And the same with washing dishes as well. He has put had the we have a two basket sort of thing. So she put water in one side and then she tried to wash them and then she put clean water here. Like she tried to do that. So to minimize the running water while you, you washing

up plates sort of thing. Now we're trying to be more water conscious as well and see if that will make a difference on our own.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

You're the first one who's talked about being water conscious as well, in addition to energy conscious. That's interesting.

D:

Because that's a highway from like 281 the whole year, to 235 per month. That's it. It's a massive thing so that mean within one year I'll be paying a thousand dollars for water. Meanwhile, I used to pay a 200 per year.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Yeah. It's a lot. It's a big chunk.

D:

It's a bit massive.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Okay. So I just want to ask you about energy use among people from your cultural background. Do you know, first of all, are you active in your community? Do you have a community that you're a member of that you're part of?

D:

Yes. I'm active.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

So is there discussion about energy use among your people in your community?

D:

So to be honest, that's something that I never will talk to. Because with people. I know that the bills are high when they told me, when you have something that you will need, you're complaining, something that you don't know how happened. So you thought of as your called now, what is that? So what I always tell them is that, can you get whether this is E an estimate or a actual reading. So if you know that if it's your actual reading and then you have to do something about it, you got to look at your energy consumption. You have to look how you use your energy. If it is an estimate. Then you have to call your provider to send you the actual reading so that you know, that different. That what I always tell them.

And then I tell them that concept, if you have access to your meter, close off everything, turning off the TV, washing machine, a micro, turn them off and leave your fridge on. Cause there might be something important in fridge and then go on and look at the thing for one minute, see how it's moving. If the problem is here client's saying like, you know how it.

PART 3 OF 4 ENDS [01:12:04]

D:

It deploys your clients and like... Look at those red button thing, numbers... Look at how frequent they move in order for them to become gray one. They add on to the next one. If you see them

moving fast, then you know that there's something wrong [crosstalk 01:12:20] close, you turn off everything. So I always tell them that.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

So you seem to be the educator of sorts in your community about energy use?

D:

Yeah. People that I've come across, people that are close to me. No one like strangers. Oh yeah, all people that I work with [inaudible 01:12:39]. So when you come across some [inaudible 01:12:45] the other issues, you look at the person as holistic, do you understand? And then you look at another way, how do they do their live, and also [inaudible 01:12:54]. One thing could be affecting other things. That's in time off my counseling skills. So you look at them all as texting.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

[inaudible 01:13:02].

D:

[inaudible 01:13:02]

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

So, can you tell me about any traditional cultural practices that you are aware of among people from your cultural background, that involve using energy? So in terms of cooking, you mentioned a lot of cooking that you do even yourself. Are there any traditional practices that you do that involve using energy? Like, do you cook different things, and does that take up a lot [crosstalk 01:13:30]?

D:

I think maybe cooking, because I think a lot of my close circle from my community, most of them, they cook that I compared to either take away food. And so that mean cooking itself tend to consume high energy depending. And then also the lens of cooking, as well as failure to me, I overcooked in. [inaudible 01:13:58] If I go for a steak, I allow them well that well-cooked, because I don't like halfway-cooking. So in my consumption of energy, because of cooking is longer, [inaudible 01:14:15] the time. And I think that could be like my part of cultural practice personally, as a person, as D, [inaudible 01:14:29] be their [inaudible 01:14:31] and other [inaudible 01:14:32] of this community or member. I'm not sure.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Do you have any traditional foods that you cook that might also require a lot of time and energy?

D:

Personally not, but I think that they do, but there's nothing that could take longer. But for me, if I'm cooking meat I have to cook it longer, I'll do well-cooked. So, compared to another person that wanted not well done, then that mean they can cook a short time, in less time.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

So how many meals a day would you cook? How many meals a day do you think?

D:

I think for us, maybe once a day.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Once a day?

D:

Or sometime one, two days, depending on how many meals we cook, we cook two. Then that could last for another day.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Do you entertain people? Do you have get-togethers at your house that would require a lot of cooking?

D:

Yeah. Before call it yes. Sometime. And that could be another part of cultural practice to people I know. Like, in a get-together and cooking for somebody if, let's say, somebody says sign a well-off sort of thing, you have to support them, so you cook for them as well. You will be cooking for your family, you cooking for your family.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Do you perform any traditional cultural practices that involve using energy in your own home?

D:

No, I don't. I'm sort of a mixture, from different culture.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

What do you think responsible energy use mean to people from your cultural background? Would they say they're similar to you in terms of being energy-conscious? Or would you say not really? Is it a priority then?

D:

It's hard to know, but based on my knowledge, I don't think there's anyone I've come across who's more conscious like me.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Would you attribute that to your education? And your experience?

D:

I think it's part of a personalities because I'm a bit of the [inaudible 01:17:17] in a sense, and I think that also kick in, in term of everything I do, if [inaudible 01:17:24] knowledge and time.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

What does responsible energy use mean to you? I think you've probably demonstrated that throughout the interview in terms of your practices, but in your own words, what does responsible energy use mean to you?

D:

It's not about what responsible energy use it for me, but it's just being responsible for everything that's around you, making sure you're using something for the [inaudible 01:18:01]. So for energy,

you use it because you need it for energy. So whenever you don't use it, there's no way for you have to keep [inaudible 01:18:11]. So that's the way I look at it. So whenever I went away, TV is on dependent on; if I'm not using it, it has to be off. And that applied to everything that you don't have to have something in the culture. And [inaudible 01:18:30] the thing that I have, I don't have to have something that I'm not using. Like, I cannot keep something that I'm not using that is also occupying my space more than two years, unless it's something critical that I want to come back or sort of [inaudible 01:18:46] to me.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

That's a very good philosophy. What are some of the main challenges you face when thinking about using energy? Like in terms of how you feel using high energy consuming appliances?

D:

Some of the, what?

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Challenges, the main challenges that you've faced.

D:

I think it was, of course, always in term of your high consumption of energy, the [inaudible 01:19:20] is a dollar value thing. The higher you use your energy, then the higher you're going to pay, the higher your bill will turn out to be. And then the beauty, like I remember when I had, there was another place we used to live in. So we had like a split system. That's when I came across this one [inaudible 01:19:46] other time, because people were coming for a place on, you know, I forgot where he got the data. Winter, it was on; summer, it was on, but it said my energy consumption was less. So that means that his brake system was really a good energy consumption. And then I thought, okay, that's a good brand. So in the future, I will look for it.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Well, that's very good. Okay. So the experience helped you to make future decisions. That's great. Would you say your energy use has changed as you've lived in Australia for longer?

D:

Yes.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Yeah. For better or for worse?

D:

I think for better. And I remember back in Uganda, we had issues as well. There was with the water, because we were also renting in Uganda, in Kampala, and you can build a big tank to keep water. And then our time was overflowing, and then we would report to the landlord. She was not responding well, and then our bills for water for one month, what was it that one month? Or like the whole-year bill? All that money on something you're [inaudible 01:21:01], at that time in 2009 [inaudible 01:21:04]. And then, and I was still young at that time, who was in my, and why the move, I went to the headquarters and I thought, what happened? So they had to send somebody to that and they look at it. I knew it was overflowing, but I don't know why I was still being silly. And so I said to you, what is overflowing? That's why, so you need to talk to your landlord. And then, you have [inaudible 01:21:36] have to cover these bills, but it's because of this overflowing thing. So, that one,

I went and talked to the landlord, and then she was able to fix it and pay the rest of the bills for us, because it was like a mass of bills for one kind of port who were [inaudible 01:21:57]. We had nothing. We were able to pay our rent, but we cannot pay the whole bill. I think that's where my consciousness kick in.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

[inaudible 01:22:07]

Would you say, then, that your energy use has also changed since COVID significantly or just marginally? Because I know you work from home now, so probably use more?

D:

Yeah. Yeah, working from home, I use more energy, but not in the [inaudible 01:22:35]. Let's say my parents were not here. Then that mean if I'm not home, no one is using anything. But now when they're here, even though I'm not home, he'll be using energy. So, me being here at five from my computer, that's it. The only time I use it. I tell you my phone. So, you can enter just well, but it's not that much. Yeah, the way I think of. Cause as I said, when it's fully charged, I just bring it off, and then do maybe a couple of hours with no charging, [inaudible 01:23:13] charge it.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Alright, so, move on to the very last set of questions, and that's to get your views on Australian energy policy. So what do you know and think about Australian energy policy for people of migrant backgrounds like us? What do you think and know that this energy policy.

D:

I'm not going to talk about what I know so far, but it's how they handle issues like, the way they treated people that was less knowledgeable about energy consumption, always knowledgeable about the policy, a lot of consumer, right? When I put it that way, it's not the same way in the country, somebody in Northern, Southern, or a sense of that, because of the knowledge about this thing, and the same with the deal that they [inaudible 01:24:10], and I'm talking because of my own experience as a caseworker supporting people [inaudible 01:24:19]. So a lot of times I cannot correct all these issues. People [inaudible 01:24:22] were not advised of the content of the contract [inaudible 01:24:28], especially the other contract, let's say for telephone contracts and in your contracts, TB contracts.

And so, my assumption is, they don't [inaudible 01:24:43] my time [inaudible 01:24:45] to tell them, this is what is going to happen. This is what you're expecting, what they know, they have no knowledge about that. So they take advantage of them, most providers. And the same when they make a complaint. So when somebody realized that the person on the other end, they realize the accent or the way that it's pointed thing would be different the way they respond to you and I. [inaudible 01:25:17] When I jumped into their call and tell them, "Look, this is what this person is talking about. You, as a provider, have all kinds of litigation to do this." And I feel that he did not do it. And under also consumer whatever, the customer or consumer has arrived to [inaudible 01:25:38]. So you could respond to them in a nice way. Then from there, you go on, they're nice, and dialogue. So I feel that there has to be a lot of education on that to educate a lot of providers by the communication with the [inaudible 01:25:57] communities.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Okay, so for you personally, then, do you feel supported and empowered?

D:

Yeah. This one, I'm all right, because I thought I know my right as a consumer, but other people that don't know their right, and they have no energy to complain. They don't even know what, whether there's something called [inaudible 01:26:27]. So, they just pay whatever that is. And so what they don't want to do, they do the arrangement, [inaudible 01:26:35], they just pay that fee.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

So, what do you think in terms of, well, maybe we'll leave that for the next round of interviews, because we want to talk about how can we co-design better communication between providers and [inaudible 01:27:00] consumers, but that'll be for the next round. I'll just move on to the next set of questions here. Do you know about any programs to support [inaudible 01:27:09] consumers with their energy use?

D:

I don't know any [inaudible 01:27:18] program. But what I do know is a lot of [inaudible 01:27:22] consumers, so people that are eligible for that migrant who support what you've answered, go to migrant resource centers and ask for help. And people like me then, when I used to work for [inaudible 01:27:37] care. So you go to them, if you're not sure about your bill. Most of the time, the thing that people came to us at that time, [inaudible 01:27:45] with all of our bills, energy bills, [inaudible 01:27:51] bills, or some other, like telephone contract insurance, contract bills, or all other bills. And when you look into them in detail, there were some issues of, like deceptive sort of thing, why we're not aware of what they were talking about.

Of course, you may not get that. And most of them argue that they were poorly informed the way, and when you ask them, did he use interpreter? No, he or she came with somebody who, that person, you may have realized that that was like a shock. So then someone to ease off her child was with them. And then the child was used as an interpreter. And then you said, no, that's not logical. Or if you want to, you notice, you may be contacted by another four patient interpreters. But if you use [inaudible 01:28:43] an adult as a friend, it's not good as well. There's nothing that tell her that you feel like that same, there might be the same people that it doesn't mean if someone is speaking English, they want to attend your [inaudible 01:28:56]. No, they may as [inaudible 01:28:58] well, but don't understand. Yeah, they're not right. And so there's a lot of those things.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

If you could tell the government one thing about energy use amongst called residents and citizens, what would it be?

D:

I think there has to be a support from [inaudible 01:29:28] the whole set. I need to do the kinetic energy because there's a lot of complaining, which is good, but it has to be [inaudible 01:29:39] that I bring the wrong thing on all of them. Some other providers that are not doing the good thing to customers. And then it does some of the [inaudible 01:29:51] then people should be able to know, of course there's a good system, like [inaudible 01:29:55]. I use them personally, and then other people use them, but they're good. But the cost of funding issue, I don't think they are more than enough to cater for everyone in the US as well. Let's say like that because I live in the US as well to cater for the needs of everyone causes a lot of complaints.

So, my first thing is to be more [inaudible 01:30:20] than my second one, some funding for people that are making it tough because is that families like a single mom, if they're going to be [inaudible 01:30:33], let's say during winter time. If they get a bit of a father in view, it will tell you that one other one here to pay it off. So there has to be some support around that or funding to support old people.

And I know there's what they call energy supplement, full-time pattern like for a single or a non-working parent. But I don't think that's enough for them.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Who provides the energy supplement?

D:

It does depend on human service. We can send them links.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

So, if you could ask the government or anyone else to do something to help calls, citizens and residents manage their domestic use, what would it be? So in terms of, besides funding and energy supplement or other sort of support or grasp, but in terms of actually managing the energy use, what do you think can be done to help?

D:

As I said, my thinking was around for relation to make it that the sector will be [inaudible 01:31:59], maybe the other thing from a consumer perspective is that, if there's a way to provide education to consumers so that they know what I know now, to think about [inaudible 01:32:11], that you know when to turn it well, what to use, and when to use it. So, and then also when to go, if you need help.

So, those kinds of things. So if people are empowered, then at least they can of speak up for themselves.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

What do you think or know about global warming and its connection to CO2?

D:

That's a hard topic.

So, yes, I do believe of global warming. I do agree because of the industrialization thing, and especially with the pollution thing. I do agree that, and I do believe if there's a way to reduce it, yes, I'll be in for it.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Okay, great. So final last question: Do you have any other things that you'd like to say about your own energy use, or about energy use amongst [inaudible 01:33:27] consumers in Australia?

D:

So I think I mentioned what I know so far.

You suggest the [inaudible 01:33:39], you ask, it's just empowerment and education. So to empower people-of-color consumers, to educate them, to know about your right. So that they become advocate for themselves.

And suppose to know when and how to use the energy, because that's crucial, and that will give them knowledge about it. If you go out and buy something, and then you know what you're buying. Sometimes it's challenging because you go for a quality thing. We use less energy because then it comes with higher costs as well. There's another red test around that. So, but at least people know.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

And who do you think should be providing that education?

D:

Well, that's a difficult thing. I think anyone in contact with [inaudible 01:34:40] consumers. So let's say being a migrant resource centers and being non-for-profit providers, being in schools. So anyone in context with them, anyone engaging with them, whatever capacity you engage with [inaudible 01:34:58] consumer. So it could be part of your engagement with them.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Thank you very much, D. This has been such a great interview in terms of the wealth of insights you've given me, and knowledge I've actually gained from your experience as well, so thank you very much. Morgan will be in touch, and she will send you the vouchers and also organize the next round of interviews.

D:

Thank you.

Foluke Abigail Badejo:

Thank you so much. Enjoy your day.

D:

You too. Bye-bye, have a good one.

PART 4 OF 4 ENDS [01:35:38]

INTERVIEW 2

Interview day/time: JUNE 3, 2021.

Participant: Vietnamese male.

Speaker 1:

Okay, cool. So it's Thursday the 3rd of June in 2021, and I'm with S. It's about quarter to 3:00 in the afternoon. And S's going to show me around his home. Tell me about how you use energy. So can you start by showing me what you think are the most important energy use practices you perform in this house? What are the big things that come to mind?

Speaker 2:

It really depends. I generally get home and then pretty much the first thing is I switch on the TV.

Speaker 1:

Okay. Can you show me that then?

Speaker 2:

Yeah, it's over there.

Speaker 1:

What stat is that?

Speaker 2:

I used to leave it on. I used to leave the power part of it on, but now I'm being a little bit conscious by turning it off every time on the TV.

Speaker 1:

Right. So you turn it off at the wall.

Speaker 2:

Yeah. Turning it off at the wall.

Speaker 1:

And you've got that behind there.

Speaker 2:

Yeah, behind there.

Speaker 1:

Is there ever any times you think, "Oh, it's kind of awkward getting round there, and I can't be-"

Speaker 2:

Sometimes I forget.

Speaker 1:

... "I can't be bothered."

Speaker 2:

Sometimes I actually forget and just leave the TV on, leave the TV point part of it on.

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

Speaker 2:

So like now, I'm leaving it on. But I'm still getting a bit more conscious of it, turning it on and off now, but sometimes I do leave it on.

Speaker 1:

Okay.

Speaker 2:

So it's just a habit.

Speaker 1:

And seeing that you've changed that, you're more turning it off now, what caused that? Why did you decide to start doing that?

Speaker 2:

I think I was a bit more conscious of maybe just how much I was using the TV or leaving it on. Even though it may be a little bit of power, but I just thought... maybe just a habit, or just a feeling where I was like, "Yeah, maybe you are using power if you're leaving it on."

Speaker 1:

So it wasn't like you got a big bill one time and thought, "Ooh, that TV, I better switch it off," or anything? It was just...

Speaker 2:

Oh, I have had bill shock before, so I wouldn't say that was a major consideration, but I would say it would probably be a contributing factor towards it, a little bit of bill shock.

Speaker 1:

Yeah. Right. So you just thought, "I'll try a few different things to see"?

Speaker 2:

Yeah. Like most of things that you'll notice, I do turn them off.

Speaker 1:

All right. Cool. And what else have you got there? Have you got anything else? I see some games. Have you got a PlayStation?

Speaker 2:

Yeah, a PlayStation. Yeah.

Speaker 1:

So what's the goal with that? How often are you on that? Are you any good at it?

Speaker 2:

Depends how hard core online you want me to play games. Maybe minimum once, maybe could be five times a week, really.

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

Speaker 2:

Not more. Yeah, it could be quite hard core playing video games and all that stuff.

Speaker 1:

And what's the goal? Do you just play yourself or do you play people online?

Speaker 2:

Yeah, both. Right. Okay. And if you're having a video game PlayStation sesh, how long would you go on it for?

Speaker 1:

At least minimum one, if not a few hours.

Speaker 2:

Yeah. Yeah. So you just kind of get into it, a zone?

Speaker 1:

Yeah, absolutely. Yeah, yeah.

Speaker 2:

All right. Cool.

Speaker 1:

Okay, so TV, PlayStation. That's obviously something you use quite a bit. Yeah, what else? What other...

Speaker 2:

Probably, even though I have turned it off, I generally turn it on, the switch thing for the air con, but I don't use it a lot during this time, but during the summer it does get quite hot out here, so I generally put the air con on, but not as much in the winter for the air.

Speaker 1:

Right. So that's a reverse cycle one, is it?

Speaker 2:

Yeah.

Speaker 1:

Yeah. Even today, it's wet, it's raining, it's a little bit cold, you wouldn't use it?

Speaker 2:

Rarely.

Speaker 1:

So it has to be pretty cold to get you to put it on.

Speaker 2:

Yeah. Pretty cold, yeah.

Speaker 1:

What do you do then if you don't use that? Would you just wear an extra layer of clothes?

Speaker 2:

Yeah, extra layer of clothes, or I've got blankets behind you, so just to keep me warm.

Speaker 1:

All right. Cool. And then you said it gets hot in here in the summer, yeah?

Speaker 2:

Absolutely.

Speaker 1:

So do you use it quite a lot then?

Speaker 2:

Yeah, more in the summer.

Speaker 1:

Right. Okay. Okay. And what about the billing for that? Do you think it's expensive or cheap to use?

Speaker 2:

Based on the kilojoules I would assume probably it is expensive to use, so I think it's more [inaudible 00:04:17].

Speaker 1:

Is that something you look at then? You look at the kilojoules that things use and all that?

Speaker 2:

Not specifically for the air con, but I don't think my bill has that, but I would just use maybe a general gauge of how much kilojoules I would use during this time, so yeah.

Speaker 1:

And did you get that put in yourself or was that with the flat when you got it?

Speaker 2:

With the flat. Yeah.

Speaker 1:

Okay, cool. And what about the features, like what kind of things has it got in it?

Speaker 2:

It's got pretty much really everything that you can think of, reverses cycling and heat, cold, pretty much really everything it's got.

Speaker 1:

Okay. So there's that, but you don't use it much at this time. Anything else you would plug in or use in the winter, if it's cold?

Speaker 2:

Winter, when it's cold, probably...

Speaker 1:

Is it only that, or...

Speaker 2:

Probably only that, yeah.

Speaker 1:

Yeah. You don't have any heaters or other things.

Speaker 2:

No, no, no.

Speaker 1:

No.

Speaker 2:

I used to, but not anymore.

Speaker 1:

Cool. What else? What else would you say you use quite a bit of energy on?

Speaker 2:

Well, if I was talking about cooking, the microwave. You can see it's off, but I generally turn it on every time I'm doing the cooking as well.

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

Speaker 2:

The fridge. Definitely the fridge is always on.

Speaker 1:

Yeah, of course. Is that something you use a lot? Do you cook at home a lot and put a lot of stuff in the fridge, and you use stuff? Yeah.

Speaker 2:

Yeah, yeah. Mix of more that and then more using the...

Speaker 1:

Oh, the hob? Yeah, the hob.

Speaker 2:

All that as well, and the oven, so it's a good mix of it as well.

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

Speaker 2:

I did the dishes yesterday, so that's generally on as well.

Speaker 1:

Yeah. Do you find you have to use that every day, the dishwasher?

Speaker 2:

I wouldn't say every day, maybe once or twice per week.

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

Speaker 2:

I'm very conscious that I used to do... My cycle used to be two hours and 20 minutes, so it used to be that, and then I just changed it to one hour.

Speaker 1:

So, see that? I noticed when you turned that on it goes straight to 2:20. Is that the automatic setting?

Speaker 2:

Correct. Yeah.

Speaker 1:

So you need to change it to get it at a lower setting?

Speaker 2:

Correct. Yeah.

Speaker 1:

That's interesting that it's set like that, eh?

Speaker 2:

Yeah. Yeah, my partner told me off, "Why are you doing it two hours and 20 minutes?" She was quite conscious of how much maybe electricity or how much water was being used, so [inaudible 00:06:37] cycle, so I pretty much changed it to one hour.

Speaker 1:

Mine seems to be on every day, and it's normally my wife that's the one that has all the dishes that we've got, so I was like, "Why are we always using this every night?"

Speaker 2:

So the fridge, the kettle every morning for coffee. That as well.

Speaker 1:

Okay.

Speaker 2:

So that's, like I said... You can see, I'm quite conscious of...

Speaker 1:

Yeah, I see you've got that turned off as well.

Speaker 2:

I don't... Turned off as well.

Speaker 1:

And then what about the cooking here? Is this gas that you've got?

Speaker 2:

Gas, yeah, gas. Gas, but [inaudible 00:07:09] top as well, so wouldn't use that as well, so that's quite popular when it comes to cooking and all that stuff. Obviously, I'm not going to cook anything now, but yeah, I would generally use probably more that one to cook.

Speaker 1:

Yeah, what sort of stuff do you cook? And what do you use to cook on?

Speaker 2:

Pans and bowls and all that stuff. They're generally down the bottom. They're all down there. Yeah, just cook stir fries or noodles.

Speaker 1:

Are there any special tools or devices you use to cook? I know I spoke to some other people that certain special pans or special cooking devices or whatever. Is it all pretty standard?

Speaker 2:

Not really. Pretty standard. Pretty much from scratch. Yeah, I'm just trying to remember. Is it Tefal? But that's just a brand of pan that has the [inaudible 00:08:04], but that's really the only special thing. But yeah, not really.

Speaker 1:

And what about the oven? Do you use that at all?

Speaker 2:

Yeah. Yeah, I would definitely use it quite regularly. Yeah. It does get a workout.

Speaker 1:

Can you show me how you...

Speaker 2:

Absolutely.

Speaker 1:

Maybe switch it on and show me what settings you normally use.

Speaker 2:

So as you can see, I'm quite conscious of turning things on and off.

Speaker 1:

So you've even got that off at the wall.

Speaker 2:

Yeah. Yeah. So you can see, the air con and all oven, obviously the lights and the power are definitely on as well. But yeah, definitely...

Speaker 1:

So those two you keep off, the oven and the air con, and they only come on when you're using them?

Speaker 2:

Yeah, yeah.

Speaker 1:

All right. Cool.

Speaker 2:

I might at least... Depending what I'm having, probably putting this on at least half an hour per day.

Speaker 1:

Yeah. What sort of things do you cook in there?

Speaker 2:

Meats or whatever frozen stuff I've got as well.

Speaker 1:

Yeah. Do you prefer that, say, oven-cooked, to say, using the microwave or whatever?

Speaker 2:

Yeah.

Speaker 1:

So would you say you use the oven more than the microwave to cook stuff?

Speaker 2:

I'd probably say yeah, more.

Speaker 1:

Yeah. And what is it? Is it just the taste, or why?

Speaker 2:

Better cooking.

Speaker 1:

Yeah, okay.

Speaker 2:

Better cooking, better taste. Yeah.

Speaker 1:

Yeah, cool. All right. So that's kitchen and cooking stuff.

Speaker 2:

Yep.

Speaker 1:

Anything else that you use a lot.

Speaker 2:

I'm recharging my two phones as we speak.

Speaker 1:

Yep. Okay. So how often would you charge your phone?

Speaker 2:

Oh, easily at least once or twice a day.

Speaker 1:

Do you use your phone a lot? You happen to use it a lot?

Speaker 2:

Yeah. Yeah, yeah, I use it a lot.

Speaker 1:

And you find that you have to charge it quite a lot to keep it full of juice?

Speaker 2:

Yeah. I use it a fair bit, so yeah.

Speaker 1:

Yeah. Have you got any other devices?

Speaker 2:

Where's my toaster? Toaster. Rarely. Sort of connect that, and then obviously use that in the morning as well.

Speaker 1:

What about, have you got iPads or laptops?

Speaker 2:

Yeah, yeah. All my laptops and my iPads, and they're quite regularly used.

Speaker 1:

Yeah. So would you say, in terms of what's plugged in and using energy, would you say that it's those devices that are used the most, in terms of switched on and plugged in?

Speaker 2:

Yeah, this one definitely more, because laptop, I recharge it for a good hour, so it gives me maybe five, six hours of battery life.

Speaker 1:

Oh wow, yeah. That's good.

Speaker 2:

I would recharge it again, so it's...

Speaker 1:

Is it quite a new laptop?

Speaker 2:

Yeah, yeah, yeah. I actually just got it repaired. Yeah, it's been a year old. And then I was thinking I connect via internet, my NBN, on and off as well.

Speaker 1:

All right. Cool. What about laundry?

Speaker 2:

Yep, I'm about to show you that. So, laundry, I did a load last week.

Speaker 1:

So you've got a front load... a top loader.

Speaker 2:

Yeah. A dryer.

Speaker 1:

And then a dryer. And did these come with the house, or did you get them?

Speaker 2:

I bought that.

Speaker 1:

You bought.

Speaker 2:

And that was a good... That's a Samsung. Sorry, I do have a light. Where's my light? Oh.

Speaker 1:

And what were you thinking when you bought the Samsung? What was your consideration for getting it?

Speaker 2:

Maybe a bigger load.

Speaker 1:

Yeah. Because that looks bigger than the front ones, doesn't it?

Speaker 2:

Yeah, yeah. It's quite huge.

Speaker 1:

So you prefer to do one big, big load, rather than do more regular?

Speaker 2:

Yeah. I did one last week, and that was a big load. Yeah, so maybe once, sometimes twice a week.

Speaker 1:

And what kind of settings do you have it on?

Speaker 2:

I'll get one. I'm generally in between. I'm sort of more... At least three average for water level. I always tend to go quite cold.

Speaker 1:

Right. Why is that? What makes you decide about the water level and then the temperature?

Speaker 2:

It's a good question. I actually don't know, but I sort of picture cold water, maybe, personally, is just better to wash. And maybe if you use hot water it's a little bit more electricity as well. But I think maybe cold water is just better to wash everything. I don't know why, but I just...

Speaker 1:

Yeah. Did you get that from family?

Speaker 2:

My family, yeah.

Speaker 1:

Family did that as well?

Speaker 2:

Family always do cold water, so I just follow that process as well.

Speaker 1:

Cool.

Speaker 2:

I tend to do all them, wash, rinse, spin. Really, sometimes, depending on what I have, I do like to have the quick one for the [inaudible 00:12:45], but I can customize that as well.

Speaker 1:

And what does that mean, fuzzy?

Speaker 2:

Fuzzy, like the material.

Speaker 1:

Oh, right, fuzzy material.

Speaker 2:

But generally a quick one. Delicates are a bit more, but you can customize as well, but I'm sort of more of a quick [inaudible 00:13:00].

Speaker 1:

So again, you know how you have the dishwasher, it was set to longer setting, what was it like when you used this? Did you have to set it to a shorter setting?

Speaker 2:

No, no, no. This one, you just really press.

Speaker 1:

But you normally keep it to the quick one, which you can run for less time.

Speaker 2:

Yeah.

Speaker 1:

And do you find that does the job?

Speaker 2:

Yeah.

Speaker 1:

It gets stuff clean?

Speaker 2:

Yeah, it's quite good.

Speaker 1:

All right. Cool.

Speaker 2:

And I definitely use the dryer.

Speaker 1:

So can you show me that? How do you use that? Do you use that for every...

Speaker 2:

That goes for... Sorry. That's, at the moment, 40 minutes.

Speaker 1:

40 minutes.

Speaker 2:

Yeah.

Speaker 1:

And then you've got different settings, low and high, so what do you have it on?

Speaker 2:

Hot. High.

Speaker 1:

High. What happens when it's low? Does it not dry that well?

Speaker 2:

Correct. Yeah.

Speaker 1:

All right. Cool. And how often do you use that? Do you dry every wash with the dryer?

Speaker 2:

Especially now with winter, yeah, I would say definitely yeah, once or twice a week.

Speaker 1:

Have you got anywhere you can dry in summer?

Speaker 2:

Yes. Yeah. I've got a clothesline.

Speaker 1:

Yeah, yeah. All right.

Speaker 2:

Yeah, I definitely have a clothesline outside.

Speaker 1:

Good. Good.

Speaker 2:

But I tend to still use that more at summertime. I don't know why. But maybe because it's warmer and [inaudible 00:14:23] maybe summertime, but now, it's definitely more dry and all that stuff too.

Speaker 1:

Okay. Cool. Is there anything else that you've not shown me that you think...

Speaker 2:

Shower. Is that power?

Speaker 1:

How do you get hot water? Where does that come from? Have you got a boiler or have you got a hot water system anywhere?

Speaker 2:

There is a hot water system, but I think it's outside, but that connects to all the units.

Speaker 1:

So it's a shared one?

Speaker 2:

Yeah.

Speaker 1:

Yeah, yeah, yeah. And then do you need to pay them a share of the cost for the electricity for that? Is that separate to...

Speaker 2:

For the water?

Speaker 1:

Yeah, for the hot water.

Speaker 2:

For the hot water, yes, but electricity is our home.

Speaker 1:

Yeah, yeah, yeah. Okay. Right.

Speaker 2:

Then in the bedroom. Laptops.

Speaker 1:

Yeah. So how many laptops you got?

Speaker 2:

One.

Speaker 1:

One.

Speaker 2:

I used to have two. I've been using a massage gun recently, so I've been doing that. I have to turn on the NDN, so that goes on for pretty much all day really.

Speaker 1:

So you keep that off when you're out as well?

Speaker 2:

Yeah.

Speaker 1:

So you're pretty good at keeping things switched off.

Speaker 2:

I'm quite [inaudible 00:15:33] and quite noticing the habit of that too.

Speaker 1:

And how are you finding switching these kind of things off all the time now?

Speaker 2:

I'm on it, yes.

Speaker 1:

Has it made a difference to your costs?

Speaker 2:

Slightly. Yeah. I'd say, yeah, definitely slightly.

Speaker 1:

Okay cool. And then I know that in your first interview you mentioned this kind of cultural practice about people leaving lights and TVs and stuff on when they're out.

Speaker 2:

Yeah. Not here, but I think my mum's place, every single time she goes somewhere, especially in the night, she leaves the lights on, she leaves the TV on for attention purposes, but she's not conscious of the electricity and all that stuff, so doesn't really care. But that's more of an Asian thing, where they leave the lights on, so making it visible attention-wise, leave the TV on, leave the radio on sometimes back in the day, so yeah.

Speaker 1:

Yeah. Just to make it sound like someone's at home.

Speaker 2:

Correct.

Speaker 1:

Yeah. And then, I guess, did you feel you don't need to do that when you moved here?

Speaker 2:

Yeah, yeah, definitely.

Speaker 1:

You feel safer, or...

Speaker 2:

Yeah, definitely safer.

Speaker 1:

All right. Cool. Are there any other practices you think that are unique to your cultural background that you do, in terms of energy-wise, or is it mostly just kind of what-

Speaker 2:

It's a bit hard, but I'm thinking in this situation... What else?

Speaker 1:

I know some people have mentioned too, they might cook outside or they might cook with stoves.

Speaker 2:

Yeah, my parents have the cooking stove and they have that outside. They used to cook all that stuff. That's definitely yes.

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

Speaker 2:

Yeah, that's probably a common practice, where they have their portable stoves and they have it outside the [inaudible 00:17:16], cooking the barbecues and all that, cooking all that stuff.

Speaker 1:

Yeah, yeah. Cool, cool. So is that pretty much it? That's the main things?

Speaker 2:

Just trying to think. They always leave the front lights on. They have those security camera things, those [Arlo 00:17:29] things now. They leave that on as well.

Speaker 1:

Do you have anything like that here, like an alarm or a security thing or anything, in this flat, or...

Speaker 2:

No.

Speaker 1:

I mean, I guess for these common units, they've got security.

Speaker 2:

They're quite secure, yeah.

Speaker 1:

They're quite secure, yeah.

Speaker 2:

Quite secure.

Speaker 1:

It's a lot different to a house, right?

Speaker 2:

Yeah, yeah.

Speaker 1:

Yeah, yeah. All right. Cool.

Speaker 2:

But generally, traditional, like I say, security, they always leave the front light. Definitely always, my parents always leave the front light on. Always, no matter what day or time. They always leave it on.

And that's a cultural thing too. I don't know why. They just leave it on. And the portable thing outside. Cooking is also different.

Speaker 1:

What would you say is the biggest challenges for you using energy in this house? Are there any things that are difficult for you to manage, or you think would be easier with better support or better information or whatever?

Speaker 2:

I personally would like to obviously know how much of my usage of the electricity I use, per item. I personally don't know.

Speaker 1:

You don't know.

Speaker 2:

I'm just very conscious of, like I said, maybe every little thing does count, like especially fridge. Like I said, I will leave the TV on, microwave and all that stuff. I used to. I used to have a big habit of leaving things on, but now I'm sort of very conscious, maybe because maybe the bills I've been getting are more normal. And like I said, the dishwasher. So I don't know if that answers the question, but...

Speaker 1:

So has your bills been going up lately? Recently?

Speaker 2:

Slightly, yeah.

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

Speaker 2:

Especially wintertime. Yeah.

Speaker 1:

And then what was I going to say? Do you have a meter in this house? Can you even see what energy you're using?

Speaker 2:

No.

Speaker 1:

Is there no meter or nothing for you to track it?

Speaker 2:

There is, but I think that's more the person... That's opened when they check the electricity, but I don't know.

Speaker 1:

Right. Right. So it's not like you can check it every week or check it and track it against the bill.

Speaker 2:

No.

Speaker 1:

Have you even seen it? Have you ever seen your electricity meter?

Speaker 2:

It's just outside there, but apparently they need a key to open it.

Speaker 1:

Right. So each owner of the unit, they can't actually see their own-

Speaker 2:

Correct.

Speaker 1:

Oh, right.

Speaker 2:

But the ratings are actual when I get the bills.

Speaker 1:

Right. Okay. Okay. That would help you then, if you could track that somehow? I guess, see what-

Speaker 2:

If I look at the numbers, I wouldn't know how to read the meter readings and all that stuff, so maybe that's more for education things as well.

Speaker 1:

Yeah. Sort of being able to interpret what it means.

Speaker 2:

Yeah.

Speaker 1:

Okay cool. Anything else that you want to mention about... that we haven't talked about that you think is important in terms of your energy?

Speaker 2:

No, not really. Just trying to think. No, I don't think so.

Speaker 1:

Okay. Cool.

Interview day/time: JUNE 3, 2021.

Participant: Lebanese male.

Interviewer:

I'm with T. It's Thursday the 3rd of June, and it's about 05:00 PM. T's going to just show us a little bit around the house, tell me how he uses in the energy in the home. So, T, can you just tell me a little bit about what you think important energy use practices are? Can you show me what sort of stuff do you do here?

T:

Well, obviously, it's the kitchen, so it's all about food. We're Lebanese background, and Lebanese bread. That's what we use to eat just about all the foods, breakfast, lunch, and dinner. Usually I get the loaf, get the cheese out of the fridge, put some cheese on the loaf, and... Using my gas stove, see? And get the lighter and light it up. So I'm cooking a Lebanese loaf of bread.

Interviewer:

Yeah. Okay. Is that the traditional way to make it, on the gas hob, or a gas stove?

T:

Yeah, you could eat it without heating the bread, but because it's probably two or three days old, we always heat it up and it tastes better. And it stays much fresher once you heat it up. Lot of things we do. Also I'll do a lot of soup. So, we've got soup as well to go with the bread.

Interviewer:

Good for the winter as well, yeah.

T:

Yeah. For the winter.

Interviewer:

Colder.

T:

Turn off the heat. That's it. And-

Interviewer:

And with the bread, do you normally buy it, or do you ever make it, or used to make it?

T:

Well, we used to. Mom used to make it. She used to make in the large sizes of loaf in the backyard, she used to make it, but its a lot cheaper to buy. That's about a A\$1.50 from the bakery.

Interviewer:

Yeah. How do you make it yourself? If she was making it herself,

T:

Oh, she-

Interviewer:

Is there a special way to prepare it, or cook it however?

T:

Yeah, there's a special round oven. We sold it now. It works on portable gas. You'd turn it on, and it's like a round plate above, and just pour the yeast on there it just flattens itself because it's round, and once it's hard, just tip it over. So it's easy, just pour the yeast, and it'll flatten out itself.

Interviewer:

So did you used to have that out the back or-

T:

Yeah, we used to have it down the back. Mum used to do it about once a week, and I loved it. It's always fresh, so you know it's home-made, and you know there's no preservatives that's in there, and it's freshly made. It doesn't take long to make.

Interviewer:

Would you ever get one of the ovens back again and start making it?

T:

Probably not. No. It's time consuming, you've got to clean it up, and stuff. No, it's much cheaper to buy a bag of bread. A\$1.50.

Interviewer:

But that was something you grew up with, right? As like that home-

T:

Yeah, grew up with. Yeah, yeah, yeah. All homemade stuff. Homemade cooked meals. Mom used to grow parsley on this side of the house. Over the backyard, used to grow parsley, and onions, and all sorts of veggies in that corner.

Interviewer:

Was it always like stone, or brick out there-

T:

Yeah.

Interviewer:

Or did you have a garden?

T:

It was a bit wider. My dad made it a bit narrower, and mom used to grow all sorts of veggies in there. Tomatoes, and parsley, and stuff, to go into the European salads, and stuff that she used to cook.

Interviewer:

So cooking with the stove, how often do you use that? Are you using that every day or so?

T:

Every day. Yep, yep. Every day we use the stove. There's a griddle here we can grill on. I think that needs cleaning. Someone has used it. Then you use it, you grill-up. [Wasting 00:03:42] an oven. There's an oven here for chicken, roast.

Interviewer:

Chicken roast. What stuff do you cook in the grill?

T:

Where? Sorry-

Interviewer:

In the grill part. What would you cook in that?

T:

Oh, in the grill? In the griller, you can if you condone it, grill it if you don't want to use the top stove, you can grill that. It's a griller, and it's like an old pizza. It's cool, I like that.

Interviewer:

So you can have the Lebanese bread different ways, right? You can make it like a pizza. You can make it like more of a sandwich bread. Yeah.

T:

Yeah, Lebanese bread you can make it into a pizza. You can make it into a kebab, roll it into a kebab, put it in the toaster, or you can chop it up and have it with soup. Just have it in the soup there.

Interviewer:

Drop it in, yeah.

T:

Drop it in, have it with soup. Kebabs, see I love kebabs. I make kebabs all the time, once a week, not too much. So, yeah. Lebanese bread. That's why I usually buy brown bread, whole milk.

Interviewer:

Yeah. So it's a bit-

T:

It's a bit better for-

Interviewer:

A lot healthier.

T:

Digestion, and stuff.

Interviewer:

Yeah, cool. Anything else that you use a lot in the kitchen?

T:

Toaster here. We got the toaster, we got the microwave we use.

Interviewer:

Oh, wow. Look at that.

T:

Microwave.

Interviewer:

Look at that microwave. That's quite fancy with all these. Can you tell me about how you use all these kind of different buttons, and codes.

T:

Yeah, I'll tell you all about them. If you're cooking roast, you just press whatever you're cooking, and there are the minutes here, you can press the minutes. It doesn't work if the door's open, but it's simple, just whatever you got here. Press "Fish", "Chicken", "Seafood", press the minutes. Doesn't actually work 100%, it's been here for a while. I don't know how Debbie used it. I don't usually like cook meals in microwaves.

Interviewer:

So you don't use it often?

T:

No, not much. Only if I'm buying from Woolies, they got their chilled meals-

Interviewer:

The [Donalds 00:05:41], yeah-

T:

On special. Usually I buy them, chuck it in there, or defrosting meat. So here we got a toaster, we got a sandwich-maker up here. Little appliances I use often-

Interviewer:

How often do you get that-

T:

I use that almost everyday. I use it to make a kebab. Roll it up in a kebab, put it in there just like the kebab shops.

Interviewer:

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

T:

So, yeah. That's perfect for the kebabs. Cup of coffee, we got the kettle here, we use. That comes in handy of course.

Interviewer:

Do you drink quite a lot of hot drinks like coffee, and stuff?

T:

Oh yeah. Coffee, tea. Coffee and tea, that's every morning, have a cuppa.

Interviewer:

Yeah. Cool. And then do you have a dishwasher, or do you-

T:

Washing machine's in the back yard. I have a dishwasher in the backyard.

Interviewer:

Yeah, yeah. Sure, yeah. Show. And this is where your mum used to plant the-

T:

Yeah, my mum used to plant all the-

Interviewer:

Used to plant stuff in here.

T:

Veggies in here-

Interviewer:

Veggies, yeah.

T:

Parsley and-

Interviewer:

Got you.

T:

All sorts of veggies.

Interviewer:

Oh, wow. You got a big out-house as well. Look at this.

T:

That used to be a garage.

Interviewer:

Garage.

T:

There used to be a [inaudible 00:07:01] pillar. Dad used to work in here, he used to use a lot of appliances, and his shoemaking machines.

Interviewer:

Yeah. Workshop. He kind of had his business but working from here.

T:

Yeah, he had a business here going for may years.

Interviewer:

Yeah, cool.

T:

This is the washing machine, we don't have a dishwasher, but it does the job. Average eight kilo, nine kilo, I think. Five and a half kilo washing machine.

Interviewer:

And then how do you set that? What would-

T:

Oh, setting-

Interviewer:

What settings do you use to use it, and all that?

T:

Oh, just the normal setting, the regular wash. You can tell if it's more than five kilos. If it's more than five kilos, you just put it on "Maxi-wash", but if it's regular, under five, usually I use cold water.

Interviewer:

Cold water? Why is that? Why would you have cold water?

T:

Well, a lot of stuff that I wear, they're not like wool, they're not like heavy duty stuff. It's easy to wash. And plus, of course, it's cheaper.

Interviewer:

Cheaper.

T:

It's cheaper, yeah.

Interviewer:

And then what about the water level? What-

T:

Well, water level is automatic as soon it reaches a certain mark by itself. I don't know where but-

Interviewer:

And then-

T:

It's a-

Interviewer:

That button there, its the end, I think. Is it? The left, it says.

T:

Which one?

Interviewer:

The one on top. It says "High", "Low"-

T:

Yeah, water level, yeah. "High", "Low", "Maxi" that's all the way. Max.

Interviewer:

So you normally keep it on "High".

T:

I usually keep it on "Low" and "High" depending on how many kilos' in there. Turn these.

Interviewer:

And you have a dryer, or do-

T:

We don't have a dryer, no. We used to, not anymore. We used to have a dryer.

Interviewer:

Where was that? Was that in here?

T:

That was in here. That was based just here. No over here, sorry. That was here, and that was just there.

Interviewer:

So why did you get rid of the dryer? Can you remember why?

T:

It's always sunny here. There's always sun around. Dad just never liked dryers for some reason. He'd grown up living in the country without dryers. For 20 years, you can't wash. So if you can't wash, you can't dry. No use drying. This isn't like the actual clothes coming out of the dryer.

Interviewer:

Coming out of the dryer. So it's better using nature.

T:

Yeah. It's not the food coming out of the microwave. A lot of people don't like food coming out of the microwave, but the oven. But if you go to a restaurant, you don't know where it's coming out.

Interviewer:

Yeah. Exactly. All right, so that's the laundry.

T:

That's the laundry. We have a-

Interviewer:

And then how often do you use that?

T:

At the moment, mom, and the carer, probably twice a week.

Interviewer:

Twice a week.

T:

Twice a week, yeah.

Interviewer:

So it's not-

T:

When mom was healthy, we used to use it about four, five times a week.

Interviewer:

Yeah, right.

T:

Yeah. Had three or four kids here.

Interviewer:

Yeah. But now it's just the two of you most of the time, it's less.

T:

Yeah.

Interviewer:

Cool.

T:

Have a toilet in here. That's the spare toilet.

Interviewer:

So that's the kitchen, and the laundry. Anything else? Other things that you use-

T:

Lights.

Interviewer:

At home a lot?

T:

[inaudible 00:10:15]

Interviewer:

Have you got TV, music, devices.

T:

Oh, yeah. Yeah, yeah, yeah. It's in here. It's hardly a lot of... In here. In here. With the [inaudible 00:10:39]. With the power, cordless. That's a good trick. It's always on charge.

Interviewer:

Yeah. Cordless phone.

T:

That's our TV for watching everyone's news-

Interviewer:

It's a nice big TV. Good TV.

T:

Yeah. You want a big TV. I'll bring the radio down, its cordless.

TV audio:

"Credit when you purchase selected products from these participating brands. Collect all seven MasterChef cookware pieces."

TV audio:

"That's the way to cook like a MasterChef."

TV audio:

"Free MasterChef cookware from Coles."

T:

This is the radio I use. We don't have one that's set on the wall. That's just a-

Interviewer:

Oh, look at that Makita-

T:

Cordless. Makita cordless. Its got a battery, we charge it.

Interviewer:

Looks quite tough. It looks like a kind of-

T:

Yeah, yeah. This one's the-

Interviewer:

Looks like pearl tone style.

T:

Yeah. It's made from the Tradesman.

Interviewer:

Tradesman, yeah.

T:

It's got a charger in here. So you just take it out and charge it. The charge will last for 80 hours.

Interviewer:

Oh yeah.

T:

Yeah.

Interviewer:

So-

T:

It doesn't-

Interviewer:

How often are you charging that to keep it going? Do you use it everyday?

T:

Yeah, yeah. Once a week. This lasts almost 7 hours.

Interviewer:

Wow. Its pretty good. Yeah.

T:

Yeah, once a week. That's actually worth more than the radio.

Interviewer:

Yeah. They get you the batteries over the cost is, isn't it?

T:

Yeah. You buy that brand new, its about A\$200. Charger and battery, A\$380.

Interviewer:

That's where they get you. And then I notice you got a air-conditioner up the ceiling.

T:

Yeah. [crosstalk 00:12:12]

Interviewer:

Is that just cooling, or is that a heater as well?

T:

No. It does both. It cools and heats. We've had that for about probably 25 years.

Interviewer:

Do you use it much?

T:

We use it in Summer. Yeah. Yeah, in Summer we use it.

Interviewer:

Does it get hot in here in Summer?

T:

Yeah, it does. It does, yeah.

Interviewer:

Yeah. And would you normally just go and use that first if you're hot on a Summer's day? Or would you try and cool down other ways?

T:

Usually we try to close all the windows and have natural cooling inside the house, but if it's really, really hot, close to 40 (Celsius), obviously you're still going to work but you turn on the air-conditioning.

Interviewer:

What about as a heater? Do you ever use it for heating?

T:

Heater? I have, only a few times. We do have a gas heater there, we use. So that's a much more economy, the gas heater.

Interviewer:

So you use a gas heater more?

T:

We use a gas heater a fair bit at times, quite a few times. And in-

Interviewer:

So it's gas, but you got to plug it in?

T:

Yeah, you got to plug it in because its got a motor.

Interviewer:

Right.

T:

Its got a motor for the fan. So its got a fan in here.

Interviewer:

Ahh. (affirmative)

T:

So first you put it on, and then you can set the electric fan to dispense all the heat all in the house.

Interviewer:

And where does the gas go in this? It got a gas bottle the back?

T:

Yeah, nah. Its got a [inaudible 00:13:35] crown gas.

Interviewer:

Ah! All right.

T:

So that's the gas of the street. The council gas. So the house does have council gas. We don't have a bottle.

Interviewer:

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

T:

So there are the settings. That's the fan settings.

Interviewer:

Cool. And is it just because you think that's cheaper? Or is it more comfortable? Does it feel nicer?

T:

Its much, much nicer. Much more cheaper than power, and it heats the whole house within minutes.

Interviewer:

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

T:

I mean that air-con isn't bad. It does heat the house, but only a certain area of the house. It doesn't heat up as much as that. You can leave that on all day, and you can walk in, then it's like an oven.

Interviewer:

Oh yeah. Yeah, yeah. It's kind of instant heat. What else about? Do you have phones or computers, or things like that? Are you-

T:

Computers? I don't have a computer here. As far as we use, all are here. 24 volt chargers, over in the power point.

Interviewer:

What about mobile phone? Do you-

T:

Mobile phones? I'll just charge it on the normal power output. I've got a charger like a socket. Just a normal charger. I do use the radio, it's got a charger that charges my phone as well.

Interviewer:

Oh, does it?

T:

Yeah-

Interviewer:

Wow.

T:

We've got a USB and a Samsung charger.

Interviewer:

Yeah. So you keep it going through that?

Interviewer:

And then what about water? Have you got a hot water system? How does that work?

T:

Yeah, water. We got gas. Gas hot water. That's the gas system here.

Interviewer:

Right.

T:

We take over for many years since we bought the house with it. It's still going, runs on gas. Very, very economical without much maintenance woes. Doesn't need maintenance.

Interviewer:

And what do you do? Do you have showers, baths? How often?

T:

Oh, oh. Let's see the showers. We don't have a bath up. We got a shower.

Interviewer:

Shower.

T:

I'll go show you the shower.

Interviewer:

Yeah, yeah. Cool.

T:

It's a three bedroom house, and you lights everywhere. This light doesn't work. This one does. So this is the shower. Hot water-

Interviewer:

And do you use that a lot? Or would you, say, shower a few times like a couple more than once a day? And do you have long showers, or short showers?

T:

Once a day. Short showers. Yeah, I have short showers. I don't like staying in the shower for too long, probably up to 10 minutes.

Interviewer:

Yeah. People are different. Some want the long ones, some want the short ones.

T:

Yeah, some are on and on and on. Nah, me I can have a shower for an hour. We got heaps of hot water. Hot water tank lasts for so long. Nah, yeah, 10 minutes, or so.

T:

This is my room. This is where I charge all my phones. There's the charger there. So I use that to charge my phones, and where there's outputs. I don't have a computer in this room, or in this house.

Interviewer:

Yeah. So are those kind of the main things? Is there anything else that you haven't shown me that you use energy on?

T:

They were the main things with energy. We got gas, water. Energy, we got the lights on, we got the... what are they called again?

Interviewer:

Big light. Kind of chandelier thing.

T:

The efficient light globes.

Interviewer:

Oh, so you've got the-

T:

We've got the energy efficient light globes.

Interviewer:

Did you get them as part of that? Did they come out and do it for you, or did you just buy them?

T:

No. I bought them-

Interviewer:

You bought them.

T:

I bought them from the shop. I bought them from Bunny's.

Interviewer:

Yeah.

T:

Yeah. The whole mechanism came with the incandescent lights which are so bad on power.

Interviewer:

Yeah. Yeah, yeah. So when did you do that? When did you switch them all?

T:

Oh, I've done that about four years ago, I think. Four or five years ago, I went to Bunny's.

Interviewer:

Do you know what's the difference? Do you think it makes a difference to the costs?

T:

That's the problem, you can't tell. They'll tell you at Bunny's, "Oh yeah, yeah. Buy this, buy that", but I don't know the difference. Energy companies, they don't tell you the difference between what you've done in the past, what you've done in the future. It's hard to tell.

Interviewer:

Yeah. I was going to ask you about challenges and using energy. What's the biggest things that you've got to kind of deal with in using energy in this house?

T:

The biggest thing is probably the air-con, and the TV. The TV chews a lot of power because its and old TV. But, then again, when you get the bill every month, every fortnight, every quarter, you don't know how much you've used. They might tell you if you used so much, but they don't tell you on what. It's not itemized.

Interviewer:

Yeah. You might've mentioned that the last time about a monitor. You don't have a monitor for it.

T:

It's not a monitor. It's not itemized. If there's a monitor on each item on the TV, or the microwave like a GPS tracker of all the power that I've used, converted into dollars, then you can tell when the bill comes in. Its got the tag on there, "Oh no. That TV's chewed A\$16."

Interviewer:

Yeah. So you know-

T:

You know. But no one knows.

Interviewer:

Do you have a meter in the house so you can see?

T:

The meter? Yeah, its in the front. The meter-

Interviewer:

Is it?

T:

Yeah. Need the light. This meter is old. So I'm afraid that's about probably 30 years.

Interviewer:

Oh, yeah. Up there.

T:

It's been updated in fuses. We got new fuses on there.

Interviewer:

And is that meter accurate. Do you have a look at it and check what the meter readings are? Or-

T:

No, I mean... No, I haven't. That's the problem. You don't know if its correct. They come in here and take readings of the water meter, and the power meter. But you don't know if its faulty, or not. You don't know if they've taken the right reading.

Interviewer:

So do you always get actual readings for your bill, or do you get estimates?

T:

Estimates, and sometimes I get readings on an extra bill. As long as we pay for how much we've used. But you don't know on what items have come off. They usually phone. And then if it's true, they check it properly [inaudible 00:20:21], or if they estimate it, you don't know.

Interviewer:

So, what would help you, in this house, to use your energy better, and be more efficient here?

T:

If they keep me updated with an app, or something where they can have a meter that works through an app. Instead of going up there and checking.

Interviewer:

Up there. Oh, yeah. It's hard luck to see it, isn't it?

T:

Yeah, just check on the app. If you had that information on your app, you know exactly how much you've used for this quarter, and for the following quarter.

Interviewer:

Yeah.

T:

That'd be ideal.

Interviewer:

That would be helpful.

T:

Would be a mobile help, on mobile.

Interviewer:

So is that the one thing? If you could recommend one thing, would that be it then? Having a kind of meter?

T:

Having everything mobile. Having everything on your phone. So if you're renting a house for example, and you get a notification on your app, then you can tell your tenant, "Listen, you've used a lot more this year, this quarter than last quarter. Is there any issues?" He even must be growing something in his backyard or something. You don't know, or he must be sub-letting his room.

Interviewer:

Yeah.

T:

It's good if they keep you updated on what's happening.

Interviewer:

Yeah, cool. Yeah, I think you mentioned-