

Living on my own

Listen to Jocelyn talking about her experience of moving out of her family home and living on her own in Hong Kong.

Before listening

Do the preparation task first. Then listen to the audio and do the exercises.

Preparation task

Match the definitions (a–h) with the vocabulary (1–8).

Vocabulary

1. troublesome
2. to bring up
3. maintenance
4. to settle down
5. a landlord
6. to tidy up
7. soaked
8. to strike a balance

Definition

- a. to care for a child until it becomes an adult
- b. to find a way to do multiple things in an acceptable way
- c. to become calmer and easier
- d. causing problems that are annoying
- e. completely wet
- f. an owner of a building who you pay rent to
- g. to put everything in its place
- h. work needed to keep something in good condition

Tasks

Task 1

Put the words and phrases in order to make sentences.

1. live away and custom. do not often from their family Young people for reasons of cost
2. own means For the writer, she is nearer her work. living on her
3. of having financial aspects She has to be responsible an apartment. for all the
4. the owner. apartment is not Finding a good easy, nor is negotiating with

5. washing clothes. cooking she spends on cleaning and she saves on The time

6. enjoying Despite being independent. she is the problems,

Task 2

Complete the sentences with words from the box.

addition	after all	trade-offs
own	out	issue
negotiate	rather	even

- I want to talk about my experience of moving and living on my
- Many people still live with their parents though they have a decent job.
- Many people would save up more money.
- In, I gain personal space and freedom.
- But there are some in living on your own.
- You have to with the landlord about the price, furniture, maintenance, etc.
- Money is the main in living on your own.
- I have to regularly tidy up my apartment and wash my clothes, so it doesn't really save much of my time

Discussion

Do you like the idea of living on your own?

Transcript

I want to talk about my experience of moving out and living on my own. Moving out to live on your own is not very common in Hong Kong. Many people still choose to live with their parents even though they have a decent job and they're already at (*in*) their 30s. Many of them would stay with their parents until they get married. There are several reasons behind – firstly, Hong Kong's rent is expensive. Many people would rather save up more money to purchase an apartment instead of renting one. Secondly, the Chinese traditional value of family is that the parents are the ones who brought you up. When you become an adult, you should also take good care of your parents and you should spend more time to be with them. And of course there are people who are still dependent on their parents for food, clothing, household chores, etc.

When I tell people about the idea of moving out, many people's reaction is like, 'What do your parents say?', because they assume the parents would not like their children to leave them. Well, I don't know if my parents like it, but I can tell you my parents support and respect my decision. They think it is good for me to try and live on my own and then I would know it is the best to stay with my family.

The most important reason for independent living is to save the travelling time to work. It used to take me one hour 15 minutes to travel to work from my previous living place. From my new apartment, it just takes me 30 minutes, so I saved 45 minutes' travelling time. I don't have to get up so early and I save two-third (*two-thirds*) of my travelling cost. It does not only save my time to travel for work, but also from most of the places in Hong Kong. In addition, I gain my personal space and freedom by independent living. I make my own decision (*decisions*) all the time, I do not have to say whether I would go home for dinner, I can invite my friends to come up and stay late.

Of course, there are some trade-offs in living on your own. If you want to rent an apartment, there are lots of preparatory works (*work*) to do. You have to keep visiting the apartments to search for your ideal one. You have to negotiate with the landlord about the price, furniture inclusion, who is responsible for the maintenance of the furniture and equipments (*equipment*). My experience was that after we moved into the apartment, it was not until the kitchen cupboard was soaked with water that we found out there was water leakage (*leak*) in the kitchen sink.

Money is the main issue in living on your own. You have to be responsible for all the expenses, for example the rent, electricity, gas, water, telephone, internet bills, etc. Therefore, you've got to be well prepared and save up for your bills. Although I find my transportation time much shorter, the saved time is spent on other things, such as cooking and some other household chores. I think preparing and cooking the food do occupy a significant portion of my time; therefore, I always try to make simple meals. On the other hand, I have to regularly tidy up my apartment and wash my clothes, so it doesn't really save much of my time after all.

Now everything is settled down, I'm getting used to my new life and I am enjoying it. I feel that moving out makes it easier for me to strike a balance between my work, my social life, my study and my family. It may be troublesome, but it may worth (*be worth it*).

Answers

Preparation task

1. d
2. a
3. h
4. c
5. f
6. g
7. e
8. b

Task 1

1. Young people do not often live away from their family for reasons of cost and custom.
2. For the writer, living on her own means she is nearer her work.
3. She has to be responsible for all the financial aspects of having an apartment.
4. Finding a good apartment is not easy, nor is negotiating with the owner.
5. The time she saves on cooking she spends on cleaning and washing clothes.
6. Despite the problems, she is enjoying being independent.

Task 2

1. out; own
2. even
3. rather
4. addition
5. trade-offs
6. negotiate
7. issue
8. after all