

Settling down in your new life

Stories will vary according to reasons for leaving Ireland and whether people came to join relatives or friends or to prearranged jobs or accommodation. Nonetheless they invariably experienced homesickness, culture shock and insecurity. At the same time for many there was a degree of freedom and perhaps some money which they hadn't had in Ireland.

For those who had experienced abuse it was a relief although they were still lonely and frightened

Some useful questions to trigger discussion

Where did you come to when you first left Ireland?

Did you have somewhere to live?

If not, what was it like finding accommodation?

If a job was not prearranged how did you go about finding work?

What struck you as strange during your first few weeks/months?

How did you communicate with home?

Who were your friends? What new friends did you make?

What did you do in your spare time?

Where did you go to socialise?

What could/ did you do that you couldn't do at home?

Where /when did you meet your husband/wife?

When did you begin thinking you might not return home in the near future?

At that stage when did you think you would return to Ireland?

Is it still something you dream about?

