

---

# Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

## Roberto Aleman: “Friendship Makes You Stronger”

Roberto Aleman · Tuesday, March 22nd, 2022

### Friendship Makes You Stronger

by Roberto Aleman

I used to believe that social interaction was not a big deal because I had always been a quiet, isolated, and serious person. However, once you explore a world where there is no one else to share the thoughts with or just have a friendly conversation, you feel lonely and abandoned. Sometimes you think you have your family for this, but there are things that can't, or just don't feel comfortable, sharing with them, so you need someone else, friends.

I thoughtlessly isolated myself and became hostile to people. I grew up as an only child in a single-mother family in El Salvador where there was a lot of violence. I became very conscious for anything I did because I was always concerned about being negatively influenced from what was going on out of home. For this reason, I only had two places to be in my childhood, it was either school or home. Most students at my school were a lead to gangsters, so I limited myself from networking with the community. I had a reliable group of friends that I thought was more than enough and that I did not need social interaction with anyone else but my teachers.

As the time was passing, I was growing physically as well as mentally, which means that my thoughts were changing and adjusting themselves to what I had, which was so much isolation from people. I started thinking that I did not need anyone else but my motivation to overcome obstacles and get out of my hometown, where all I could get was a poor education and high rates of violence. As expected, all my friends and I were growing and each of them started leaving our hometown. After all this, what was expected came; I left my hometown.

I moved to the U.S. at the end of 2018 without the ability to speak the language but with so much willingness to mentally grow. I was embarrassed to speak to someone who did not speak the same language, for the simple fact that I was not only very antisocial but also because I did not speak the same language, therefore not making any new networks. I started going to high school and remained that quiet, serious, and isolated boy believing that all I needed was myself to get far. I have gotten far in my education because my resilience and motivation has made me responsible and strict with my own decisions, but it still feels like something is missing.

I have been an online student since COVID-19 arrived. I took classes in person for a year and a

half and then went completely online given the issue of the pandemic. I did most of my high school years virtually and now here I am in college, virtually as well. During this same time, my whole family and I moved to Maryland before I graduated from high school, so it was difficult to handle this time because I continued studying in a school from the Virginia even though I was out of state.

As mentioned before, I grew up being in only two places that made me feel integrated or safe, which are home and school. Being an online student has negatively affected me physiologically because that motivation has decreased because now, I started to see things differently. I started to feel lonely, depressive, and abandoned. I have been in the U.S. for about three years so far, and I still feel new, like I do not know anything or anyone around me. At this point, I started to miss my friends who I used to play soccer with, who I used to go out with and who made me feel like I was part of something.

I go through nights where I think, how did I get to this point where I feel sad and lonely for not having friends to explore the real world with? How did I get to this point where I feel caged at home? How and when did all this happen? I miss having people who I can rely on and say, "let's go out!" just to forget about work or school for a couple of hours. People who hype you up and motivate you to keep going. Those people who are the family you choose in life, your friends. I believe this family is what make your stronger, these people who unconsciously influence in your growth as a person, this I believe.

\*

*(Read all the pieces in [This I Believe](#); featured image from [Wallpaper Cave](#))*

This entry was posted on Tuesday, March 22nd, 2022 at 7:37 am and is filed under [Essay](#)  
You can follow any responses to this entry through the [Comments \(RSS\)](#) feed. You can leave a response, or [trackback](#) from your own site.