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In this article I will be sharing some do's and don'ts for people who are living in the U.S. illegally. I will also be sharing some tips regarding what to do if the Immigration and Custom Enforcement (ICE) agents raid your home unexpectedly.

Please note the suggestions in this article are of general nature. There is always a possibility that your specific situation may require a different way of handling your individual situation. In addition, please understand that the information below is for undocumented aliens **excluding** the ones who have an outstanding order of removal.

I hope the following information proves to be helpful for some of our readers, while I truly hope that none of our readers are ever in the situations discussed below.

Do's and Don'ts for Undocumented Aliens:

Following are some important things to be aware of in case you are an undocumented alien living in the U.S.

- Try your best to stay out of trouble with the law. Whether it is traffic related offence or any other civil or criminal violation, it can result in initiation of deportation/removal proceedings. In many places if arrested, police will hand you over to immigration authorities, in other places while the police may not hand you over to immigration authorities, having any criminal record will make it even harder to get any immigration status.
- In the event you are charged with a crime, make sure your defense attorney that represents you in court is fully aware of your immigration status. Such knowledge will enable your attorney to help you in the best possible way. It would be even better if you have your defense attorney talk to your immigration attorney (if you have one) before you choose to plead.
- If you are undocumented and still working even though you are not authorized, it is always better to keep paying taxes. If you do not have a social security number you can try to get a tax ID and file taxes using that tax ID.
- If you are male and between 18 and 25 years of age, do register yourself with selective service. The selective service does not collect any information on you or give it to any other agency. So do not be afraid. If you have a social security number you can register yourself by getting the application from the post office or by going to the website www.sss.gov .
- Never lie and do not ever claim that you are a U.S. citizen while you are not. If you ever make a false claim to be a U.S. citizen, this could hurt your chances of ever becoming legal. In addition such a lie can deport you even after you become legal.
- Do not be afraid of attorneys. Immigration laws and procedures are complicated. It is important that you talk to an attorney about your situation and get guidance on the available options that you may

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have to become legal in the United States.

- Contrary to popular belief, having a U.S. born child will not help. Your U.S. born child can file for you only when s/he turns 21 and that too if your initial entry in US was with a visa. Your U.S. born child may be helpful in some other ways but we will touch upon that in a different article.

If the Immigration Authorities Come to Your Home:

If you are undocumented, there is always a possibility that the immigration authorities can come to your home. In the event the ICE agents/immigration authorities come to your home **Do Not Open The Door**. You have the right not to.

- You have the right to ask the officers to see the search warrant. If the officers do not show you one, you have the right to not open the door.
- Do not show any documents to the officers unless they show you a search warrant.
- Do not allow the officers to enter your home unless they show you a search warrant. If you allow them, you do lose some of your rights.
- If asked questions, try not to answer any questions. Do not tell them where you were born or how you came to the United States.
- Having an ICE agent knocking at your door can be very intimidating. It is important that you understand that the agents need to follow legal procedures and cannot enter your home unless they have search warrants, so do not think that by not allowing them in without search warrant, you will offend them or anything. You will simply be exercising your legal right.

Again it is best that you have an immigration attorney that can guide you and represent you before immigration authorities whenever necessary. Even if you have not started pursuing your immigration process, or even if currently you do not seem to have an option to straighten your status, it is important that you have an immigration attorney who is well aware of your situation. Have your attorney on your speed dial.

If the Immigration Authorities Arrest/Detain You:

I hope this never happens, but in the event immigration authorities arrest you or if you get detained, understand that you have the right to **Remain Silent**. In addition keep in mind the following:

- Do not answer any questions and request to speak to an attorney. You do not have a right to public defender but you can always call your attorney if you have one, or call your family/friends to hire one for you.
- Do not show any documents to immigration except for the letter from your attorney (if you are carrying one explaining your status).
- It is extremely important not to show any FALSE documents to immigration authorities. You will be digging a deeper and bigger grave for yourself if you do that.
- Do not sign anything.

- Even if the immigration officer tries to coax you into signing the order of voluntary departure, do not sign it. Ask to speak to your attorney and do not sign anything unless your attorney advises you to do so.
- In most cases after the arrest you will be placed in proceedings and you will be given a Notice to Appear (NTA) before the Immigration Court. You can always request the immigration officer to issue you an NTA. You can always request the immigration officer that you need to see the immigration judge. Unless you have an outstanding order of removal, immigration will allow you to go before the immigration judge and seek the appropriate relief if one is available. It is better that you are represented by an experienced immigration attorney when you go before the judge.
- If you are issued an NTA and placed in proceedings, tell the immigration officer that you want your hearing in the Immigration court which is closest to the city where you live in. This is very important in cases when people get arrested while they are traveling and are in a different city/state.

I cannot stress enough that any time such an event occurs you MUST contact an experienced immigration attorney immediately and explain your entire situation. It is equally important that you do not hide any details from your attorney. I have noticed that there are a lot of people that are afraid of talking to immigration attorneys, this psyche needs to be changed. Please understand that the immigration attorney works for you and not the government so there is no need to be afraid of them.

As suggested above in this article even if you are not pursuing any immigration process yet, do meet with an attorney and appraise them about your entire situation. Do have an immigration attorney on your speed dial for any situations mentioned above.

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body from their spiritual identity to a state of perfection is another trail leading to the spiritual pinnacle. As the **Bhagvad Gita** states, "Those who see with eyes of knowledge the difference between the body and the knower of the body, and can also understand the process of liberation from bondage in material nature, attain to the supreme goal."

Bhakti yoga: This path translated literally means *union through devotion*. The person best suited for this path is one who can completely surrender their ego in devotional love. This method is followed by immersing oneself in fostering loving devotion to a personal form of God. This is often a very difficult task for the modern educated individual because it requires giving up your own ego and trusting your personal God completely. However, in the same logic, it is probably the shortest route to spiritual realization. According to **Lord Krishna** in the **Bhagvad Gita**, "Engage your mind always in thinking of Me, become My devotee, offer obeisance to Me and worship Me. Being completely absorbed in Me, surely you will come to Me" and "One can understand Me as I am, as the supreme personality God-head only by devotional service. And when one is in full consciousness of Me by such devotion, he can enter into the kingdom of God."

Raj Yoga: This name translates to the *royal union*. It is the *Yoga of mind-control*. The pursuer of this method uses meditation as a method for calming down their mind to a level of inner silence where their self-awareness disentangles from the material *maya* and spiritual realities are achieved. According to the **Bhagvad Gita**, "When, through the practice of yoga, the mind ceases its restless movements and becomes still, the aspirant realizes the *Atman*." The *Ashtanga Yoga* you read about in the last two months was *Patanjali's* expansion of the original *Raj Yoga* method as described in the **Bhagvad Gita**.

So, as you can see, the **Bhagvad Gita** presents us with four different paths to reach the mountaintop. One can pick their preferred route and wind up at the same destination. The key is to recognize your natural inclination towards one of these and stick relentlessly to your practice. Best of luck as you progress in your journey. Namaste.

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