

# Aram Mohammed

**Kitchen Co-worker Do More**

## When your dearest wish is to be with your family

On a warm day in July 1998, Aram, his mother, and three siblings arrived in Sweden from Kurdistan. They had been apart from their father and husband for five years. Aram's father left Kurdistan, seeking safety for his family and when he built a foundation in Sweden, he felt safe with the whole family moving there.

Aram started in a Swedish primary school at the age of 15. The main goal then was to learn Swedish so that he could move on to other educations and into work. Very early he knew that he wanted to work with people and in high school he studied to become a hairdresser. He worked with it for two years and but the competition in the market was rough and he lost his job.

He started on a four-week internship in the dishwash at a restaurant, he was happy and thankful to get a second chance for work. One day, Aram was asked to jump in and support in the kitchen. The manager noticed his passion, motivation, and inspiration in the kitchen and offered him full-time employment as a chef. This was the beginning of a new journey in Aram's work life.

After a while, Aram started to think about opening his own restaurant and sharing his love for Middle Eastern cuisine. He knew it would be hard work, but he was willing to take the chance to be able to create a better life for himself.

The restaurant went very well for two years but he started to hit many challenges along the way, and with 17-hour shifts every day he made the decision to close his restaurant to get more life balance.



During this period, he also met the love of his life at a wedding in Sweden. They both felt that they were meant to be. They got married and started to plan their future together but what they didn't know then was that it wasn't going to be an easy journey.

After a year, they were informed that Aram's wife wasn't allowed to stay in the country and she needed to go back to Iraq.

At this time, they had their first child and Aram worked as a head chef within the same business he first started at. Other than working, Aram spent every awakening hour with lawyers to be able to find a solution to keep his family together but without any success.

Arams wife needed to move into an accommodation for refugees waiting for asylum together with their daughter and she was also expecting their second child, a son.

This was the first time their family was torn apart and the only way for Aram to spend some time with his family was to sleep in the car outside the accommodation. He worked, took his family out for some family time, and then went back to his car. He lived like this for four months.

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***I lived and slept in my car for four months***

Finally, they got some good news. Arams wife was allowed to leave the accommodation and apply for a new asylum, while living at home. She gave birth to their second child and waited for a decision to be made.

Both Aram and his wife were confident that everything would go smoothly, and got their hopes up for the future, but in 2023 the asylum was denied, and his wife was picked up at their home and transferred to the airport with their youngest son. This was the second time their family was torn apart.

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***My heart breaks into a thousand pieces every time my daughter asks me when she can see her mother and brother again***

Today, Aram lives in Sweden with their daughter who is now 8 years old, and his wife with their son, 4 years old in Iraq. Every day is a new struggle with lawyers, financial challenges, and the uncertainty of not knowing when they can be together as a family again.

He never loses hope, *“Hope is the last thing that abandons you, if I lose my hope, I lose everything”*. He is strong and keeps it together for his daughter, even if some days are harder than others. That constant feeling of always missing someone can be devastating, but Aram reminds himself that they will be together again one day, it may just take a while.

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When we met Aram for the first time, we met a happy and inspiring person. His love for his family shines in him, but you can never know from looking at him and talking to him about the daily challenges he is facing.

His love for other people is admirable, and together with his experience, we see him as an ambassador for the Do More brand and a valued co-worker in our core team. He is a true Do More Hero!