

APRENDICES 3 - DESGRABACIÓN EN INGLÉS

Patricia Pita

<https://youtu.be/1Wu761mnlPI>

INTRO

Due to being a woman, there are a lot of prejudices that you have to face in this sport.

I remember clearly the first race I ran, I felt I suddenly understood... "I am where I need to be".

When I was a child, I had posters of Gustavo Trelles, of my dad's idols, I didn't have a woman to look up to. And that day I realized that I was that woman for a lot of girls.

PREVIA

Well, I'm still processing it.

There you go, that's what I meant.

The messages from the people were the best of all. When the Dakar ended, it was three in the morning and I swear I couldn't stop reading all the messages, the comments, everything.

How nice.

Hello, hello.

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Welcome.

How are you?

Thanks for coming.

Please, thank you for the invitation.

Welcome.

The show is about sharing experiences, so you're going to be joined by Endira, who's going to be lucky enough to interview you.

Well, I'm proud to be part of the project myself. When they wrote to me, I didn't know it to be honest, so I started watching interviews and I think that it is one of the best ways to reach people, through real stories and real experiences, and to be able to communicate that everything is possible. So, thank you for the space and the opportunity to transmit my message.

We always start with the question of how you define yourself, so think on that...

Good.

And from there later we'll see...

Good, good.

Let's go.

Patricia, take 1. Excuse me, Patricia.

CHARLA

Well, I define myself as a very passionate person. I think it is something that characterized me since I was very little. I am very passionate about sports and my first love was athletics, and I dedicated many years of my childhood and adolescence to it because I have always done everything with a lot of passion.

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I'm also a person who really likes challenges, too. I think that is what has given me the motivation to face a lot of proposals and what prompted me to want to start running and become the first Uruguayan woman to be a rally driver in Uruguay. Because when I started, there was no woman.

Another thing that I feel defines me is being positive. Sometimes my friends tell me I'm ridiculously positive. There is no such term for me, but I do tend to take positivism to an extreme sometimes, and I think it has been one of the tools that helped me to move forward and to achieve my goals and dreams.

Thinking that somehow things will sort themselves out, everything that happens to us throughout our lives, whether in a project, and I am obviously referring to my sports career here, or as a person, in our personal goals. I feel that everything that happens to us, even the bad times, those that cause us sadness or frustration, they are the moments we learn from the most, and finding the way to sort them out.

To say: "This is happening to me for a reason and I'll learn from it, I'll extract a teaching that helps me to be stronger".

Regarding the challenges, I would like to know, early on, when you started all this, how many challenges did you encounter, and how did you manage to march ahead? What was your biggest challenge early on?

Well, rally and motorsport in general, are sports that are historically masculine. And it is one of the few sports in the world in which men and women compete on equal terms. In other words, we do not have gender differentiations. Men and women compete together.

Obviously, when I started, breaking through the barrier of being the first woman, took me a long time, even to begin racing. Since I was little, auto racing has been my dream because my dad is a pilot, and I accompanied him all my life. My mom was with him a lot, and we went to the races, and my old man was my idol. He still is. And I saw how he experienced it with

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such passion, which captivated me a lot. I said that I wanted to race, I wanted to race, and it took me a long time to be able to do it, even having a dad as a pilot and running an auto repair shop.

And well, that was the first barrier, to convince dad to let me run. Because as a pilot and as a man, it was very difficult for him to see his daughter, his baby, the youngest in the house, in that environment. Because, generally, we don't start as girls, as it happens to boy pilots, who have more experience in karting, racing.

I learned racing, and it was very hard because, due to being a woman in this sport, there are already a lot of prejudices that you have to face. And it was even harder because I had no experience. So, obviously, I made mistakes because I was learning, and for me, those beginnings were very difficult because I felt like there were a lot of people judging me.

My mom is my pillar. She educated me in a way that gave me the tools to move forward. Mom is a woman who has worked all her life in an NGO that fights for the rights of women and children around the world. And she raised me with the idea that: "Your gender will never limit your dreams". And that, without a doubt, was the first thing I needed to be able to take the first step and then to be able to continue. I leaned a lot on mom. She always told me that I was going to be able to achieve anything. It didn't matter that I was a woman. And I think that family support is very important. Sometimes we don't have it. As I was telling you, at first, I had to convince my dad. For me, it is very important to find someone to talk to and someone to accompany you. But the most important thing is to learn to believe in yourself, which is not easy either. More so when you're younger. You have a lot of insecurities. Women tend to be more insecure than men, but I think it happens to all of us: insecurities, doubts. And you have to learn to believe in yourself, learn to listen to yourself and the feeling you get inside that tells you: "This is what I love, and this is what makes me happy". You have to bet on it.

I remember clearly my first race. I was 23 years old, I sat in the car, and for the first time in my life, I really felt... It's really hard to explain. I felt I suddenly understood something. "I'm where I need to be". And it took me a long time to be able to be in that place.

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There were also very, very difficult moments in my sports career. So, I went to Argentina to race. To me, it felt like the World Rally. I went to Córdoba. And in my first round, I reached the podium, unbelievably. It was quite a lucky podium actually, but I made it anyway. And I got a sanction for a mishandled bureaucratic procedure in the issuance of sports licenses, so they sanctioned me, and I couldn't race anywhere in the world for six months.

And that was one of the most difficult moments, I think the hardest of my life or of my sports career because it made me fall into a depression. Lots of negative feelings: helplessness, anger, frustration. And I remember that those six months were very dark. I no longer wanted to have anything to do with rallying. I said, "What am I doing here?" I stayed in Córdoba, I got a job...

And mom came one day, always my savior, and she told me: "Well, dear, you have two options. They have put a huge stone in your path, and you can either sit on top of it and cry or go over it."

You decided to go over it, no doubt.

Yes, this was in 2015.

Your mother was so important. I understand because it's the same for me. Mine passed, but is still present. And it's good that you were able to face that obstacle and beat it.

Yes, it was hard. But it's good to tell it because many times we see people who achieve their dreams without knowing everything that is behind it. That we all suffer at some point. But there is something very important that I learned then. For me, it was very difficult. I had gained about 15 kilos, which to me was also a difficult thing because it was something that I hadn't realized was happening to me. And since I was alone in Córdoba

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and my family hadn't had the chance to go, when they went, and they saw me, they couldn't believe it because I was obviously channeling my depression and all these emotions through an eating disorder. I only realized how bad it was because I hadn't realized it then, thanks to a talk with mom.

Well, I felt that they had put an obstacle before me because the same situation for which they penalized me had happened to other pilots, but they had not had the same sanction. And that was what frustrated me the most because I felt that if I had been a man that would not have happened to me, you know? And I was able to transform all those very negative emotions into fuel, speaking in racing terms, fuel and motivation to get ahead. And I started training like crazy, I went out again to get sponsors, and I had an incredible year. I started racing in the Córdoba Rally, it went very well. I went to the Argentine Rally, a very, very nice year, 2016. They highlighted me here in Uruguay as the revelatory pilot abroad, which was for me a very beautiful recognition.

But, especially after what happened to me, I became so focused on proving that I was going to make it and I would earn my credibility in this world, that I didn't realize everything that was happening since I started racing until then, for the simple fact of being a female pilot. And there, in 2017 or 2018, I don't remember very well, I raced in Uruguay again, after a few years, in my city, Maldonado, where there was a rally. And when we finished competing, it was a night race, a crowd of people came closer as they do in towns, and I found a very long line of girls and adolescents who came with a poster that I had been giving away, to ask for my autograph. And I was shocked because I didn't really expect it. Little girls came who looked at me and didn't dare to speak to me, and their mothers told me, "Her dream is to be a pilot." And that day I understood many things that until then I had not been able to see because I was so focused on being able to move on and get out of a lot of sticky situations.

When I was a child, in my room, I had posters of Gustavo Trelles, I had Gustavo Trelles' little car, and I took care of it like crazy. Then I had posters of my dad's idols, of Petter Solberg, with the Subaru. I didn't have a woman to look up to or idolize. And that day I realized that I was that woman for a lot of girls. They are the achievements that, as you keep going, you begin to

absorb, and you realize that they are much more valuable than you thought. Because at the time I wanted to win, obviously, because I am an athlete and we are competitive. And in sports one always wants to improve, to get a result. And then you realize that the results come from another place. And that changed me a lot, because I felt that I had already won.

How do you feel that education influenced you?

What influence did you have, that was good for you, that gave you tools during your whole education, that you feel today were really important to you?

Well, sports. Sports for me is part of education because it taught me a lot, an awful lot. As I was telling you today, my first love was athletics, and I started practicing it from a very young age, around six or seven years old. I dedicated many years and hours of my life to it because I loved it. I loved running. And I trained a lot, and from a very young age I began to compete, both in track and field races and triathlons.

And what do sports teach you? That you lose constantly, that you lose more times than you win. And what else does it give you? That, when you lose in sports, you have the possibility of, and we go back to the same thing, you can make a decision to improve, if you want. And it depends on you.

Obviously, you also learn a lot about teamwork because even in sports that are solitary, such as tennis, and even auto racing, you always have a team and a coach behind you, and you learn to work as a team.

So, to me sports is everything in life. And it gives you health, you learn to be constant, you learn discipline.

What about this conversation do you think should be talked about in a classroom? What do you feel can be worked out in a classroom regarding your experiences?

Well, I think one of the main messages is that professions and sports are genderless. That nothing limits a person's dreams or defines them. People have to be, as I say, free. Free to dream of being what they want to be and free to develop without prejudice.

This applies to a woman who wants to be a pilot, and to a boy who wants to be a ballet dancer. I use these two professions, or sports, as examples because they are very stereotyped and they suffer many prejudices. And I think that, basically, you have to educate the younger generations so that these prejudices no longer exist, and are eradicated from our culture, from our society.

Things can always be achieved. It doesn't matter where you come from, what your background is. You can achieve what you set out to do, always. The strength is internal, in the love that one places in the things they do, and in commitment. When one decides to do something, you have to commit to it.

Here's an example of a racing situation that happened to me in the Dakar. Sand is a surface in which I do not have much experience because I rallied for many years, where you race on dirt, and the stages that were on sand demanded the most concentration and tension from me. And I discovered something. On the technical side, I discovered something about racing that applies to life.

So we came to the part of the dunes where we had to choose. You arrive and, while you are racing, you have to constantly choose different tracks in the dunes, different paths for which to go through these monstrous mountains of sand. And I realized that if at any time I doubted the path I chose, I covered myself in sand. When I doubted, I covered myself in sand. Always. Or something else happened, like falling into a big hole.

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And then I realized that the times when I didn't hesitate and I decided on a path, it didn't matter if it was the most difficult path. Maybe I chose the most difficult path, but if I was determined on that path, I would have no problem. And when that stage ended and I began to think about the things that had happened, I realized that this had been true every day, and if you apply that to life, it's the same.

The important thing is, when you decide to do what you want to do, is to make that decision and commit to that decision. And as we said before, there are always insecurities and doubts, but if you are sure of what you want and you accept that decision, you will find the tools within you to be able to overcome doubts, insecurities, the obstacles on the road, the challenges, the problems.

And I think that this message should be transmitted to children from an early age. It's okay to feel insecure, it's okay to go through failure, and it's okay to lose, but what is needed is to be able to decide and commit to what one wants to be and do in life. So, once you make up your mind, there is nothing that can take you out of there. It's like standing on your feet.