



**“We can all be entrepreneurs in our life “**

## **HELLE NEERGAARD**

Professor of Entrepreneurship and research passion in gender entrepreneurship

She had a little family and started studying with 28 years.

### **1.Tell us more about you and your job?**

I'm a professor and an entrepreneurship in Denmark and I primarily work with female entrepreneurs in my research but I'm also interested in entrepreneurship education, and I also do teach and administration

### **2.How did you get this idea becoming a researcher?**

It wasn't actually fully formed, when I wrote my Bachelor theses and my master thesis to deep very down into a certain topic. And then I was invited from the head of the department to become a teacher, and after I have taught for half a year they asked me if I want do a PhD , I accepted it because I loved to learn and I thought it will be fantastic to be paid for the rest of my life for what you always wanted to do

### **3.Describe yourself in 3 words?**

**Enthusiastic, ambitious, like to meet new people**, because I do care about people because they are important, I don't care about numbers

### **4.How does it work with your husband in the business part or mixed teams**

I don't do a lot of the work in business, I am the mastermind behind the business , and the reason we have a business it's because I knew that my husband it's going to retire quite young because he is quite active and we discussed so much about it, after a time when we changed our house ....we made some decisions that leaded us to something that we were proud to take risks....

### **5.Do you think that all these steps in the business made you that person that you are today and that people need you?**

In purely in terms of business I am as risk adverse as any other women entrepreneur, I say that to my husband as well we will do it with our savings I don't want to take it without any loans, and so far we have it to be able to do that .We are building our business without any money other than we have saved. I didn't set out to be an entrepreneur, in this business I think it's more my husband who's doing the work, I'm doing the planning and the decisions, I designed our logo and everything which is in the website it's probably more me, but he implement's make sure everything it's done

### **6.What leaded you in researches about gender?**

Well it came out from other researches that I did earlier in my carrier and I noticed that there are very few women in the company and I wanted to find out why ,because to me **women are just as intelligent as men** and there are no reason why it should be like this , and then by accident chats got invited in a workshop with 4 female American professors who wanted to investigate the issue of financial capital on women entrepreneurs and they wanted to do this as a global effort so i got involved in that network and I never looked back so that's kind of the starting point of my carrier , but I also think that in some ways I have been very lucky ,because it seems that nobody else is a knish and nobody else in Denmark is really interested so i have been able to create a position for myself as the expert for this so whenever **people ask for somebody to talk about being an entrepreneur, I'm always the one that they find**

### **7.Why do you think there are so few female entrepreneurs and what needs to change**

Woow . That's not an easy question(laughing) , because it's not just one thing because i think there are a lot of things that needs to change , institutionally and structurally but I also think that **women can help themselves by acquiring the knowledge of skills that are necessary to be successful , but the system also has to facilitate this** and I think one of the biggest baryes of this gender equality in all the spices of life is actually around childbirth ,but we also need to listen to the women and to their needs , and to my knowledge this is something initial to start ,nobody talks to the women, they do what they think it is important and necessary for the women but they don't actually do what they need ,we have to become much better at **asking the women in what are the problem and how can we solve them.**

### **8.Are we sometimes our own enemies?**

That may be true for some, but I think that can also be true for someone and I think that people may have a great tendency to be negative towards women ideas rather than men. And **women have a lot of competences that they don't know they have**, example women who has children she becomes an amazing organizer , things around the baby and everything else and she can't do all of that unless she is a good organizer , and that is something that we don't use actively because it's just there and that the way the world works so we don't think that this is actually a competence that we can use elsewhere , but i think that women can become very great managers of companies because of that competence because we do have a lot of balls in the air juggling and everything

### **9.What advices you would give to young entrepreneur females males to be a good entrepreneur?**

**GET A GOOD EDUCATION**, start from that and then make certain that you get as much knowledge for entrepreneurship as you can and this is about both about believing in yourself the self-confidence issues but is also the skills that are needed if you going to run your own business ,many women don't know how to make a budget when they start a business so that's the first goal that you need to learn and that you can learn ,and not to be afraid to make the first sale, it's scary yes ,there are people who will say no but there are also people who will say yes , so **don't let that first No affright you**

### **10.Do you think are there enough networks or anything else that can help them to know more about entrepreneurship?**

I really don't know there are a lot of networks but are they the right ones, what do they offer , and basically a lot of the hops that around world, incubators and what they call coworking and environment and so on they are established again primaries of men, so they are established for men by men and if we women come they will come but women necessary don't feel welcome so I think that there is a case for women only places for environments

**11.And does being an entrepreneur means only being in business or economics?**

Not to me, it doesn't mean that you have to study business you can be an entrepreneur in your own life, and you can do things like an entrepreneur , you can think things of doing them, and I'm forever amazed if my husband finds a problem in reelevating the house or whatever that he is doing and he hasn't got the right toles so he thinks of new ways of doing them ,so i think we can all be ENTREPRENEURIAL in our life and solve those problems and sometimes some solutions also become business but not also always.

**Interview:** Valentina Murati

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