

Interviewee: Juliana Sgobin De Boni
Interviewer: Nancy Huard Lemerise
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Transcriber: Nancy Huard Lemerise



Abstract:

Juliana Sgobin De Boni was born in Brazil in 1973. In this interview, Juliana discusses her journey to the United States and recounts her experience and emotions of leaving her home, her family, and her friends behind. Her goal is to become more fluent in English. Improving her language skills will be the key to getting a job in the health profession as an audiologist. Juliana is attending English classes at the Notre Dame Educational Bridge Center, Worcester, MA. She currently lives in Shrewsbury, MA with her husband and her youngest son.

NL: What is your full name?

JSD: My name is Juliana Sgobin De Boni. Sgobin is from my father and De Boni is from my husband.

NL: When and where were you born?

JSD: I was born on Aug. 29, 1973 in a small city named Limeira in the southeast of Brazil.

NL: Have you ever been married?

JSD: Yes, I got married once on Feb. 26, 1993.

NL: What is the name of your husband?

JSD: My husband is Marcelo De Boni.

NL: Do you have any children?

JSD: Yes, I have two boys; Bruno and Henrique. Bruno is 23 years old and Henrique is 17 years old.

NL: In Brazil, where did you attend school?

JSD: I attend the school in the city called Bauru and the name of the university was Universidade de Sao Paulo. It is in the Sao Paulo state.

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NL: What was your area of study in school?

JSD: Well, my area is—I used to study in health. My area is speech pathologist and audiologist so I worked with people in the health area.

NL: Did you graduate from the university?

JSD: Yes, I graduate. I studied 4 years.

NL: Did you use this knowledge that you got at the university after you graduated?

JSD: Yes, I did. I worked almost 12 years as an audiologist helping people to hear better and selling hearing aids and I used to work in another place with children.

NL: Do you currently work in this country.

JSD: No, I don't.

NL: Is it difficult to get a job here?

JSD: I don't think so. I think it is easier to get a job here than in Brazil.

NL: What are the challenges of getting a job in the United States for you?

JSD: I think the main challenge is about the language because English is not my first language. My first language is Portuguese. I am still learning the English language, so I think that is the biggest challenge for me.

NL: Do you think it would be possible to find a job in this country using the knowledge that you gained when you were in the university?

JSD: Yes, I think it's possible and if I want I need to study a little bit more here. Maybe two or three years more and I can work in my area.

NL: Perhaps you can tell me a little bit about the country that you came from. What is your native language; what are they famous for?

JSD: My first language is Portuguese. Portuguese from Brazil. So, my country is a beautiful country. I love Brazil, but we have many economic problems and political problems there. Unfortunately.

NL: Why did you leave Brazil? How old were you when you left?

JSD: I left on 2015. I left on February 2015 and I was 41 years old when I left.

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NL: What were the reasons that you and your family, or part of your family left your country?

JSD: My husband was transferred in the company so that was the reason that we came from Brazil on to here.

NL: What company does he work for?

JSD: He works for Kodant in Auburn and it's a big company. They have many, many places in the United States.

NL: Is it a company where he travels all over the world or just in the United States?

JSD: No, all over the world.

NL: How did your family or your friends in your country react when they knew that you were leaving?

JSD: Oh, actually my family was very sad because we are very connected. My friends, they really got sad too but everybody told me, "Oh, it's so nice that you are going to the United States. I would like to go with you." Because they think that everything here is amazing.

NL: OK. How did you prepare for your trip to the United States?

JSD: Oh, I think it was a big deal for me because I had to move all my stuffs from my house to my mother's house and to my mother-in-law's house and we decided to rent our house there.

NL: How did you get here?

JSD: We came in a flight that lasted almost 10 hours.

NL: What was that like?

JSD: It was good. The flight was quiet but I think we, my son and I, we were very sad.

NL: Who came with you when you came into the United States and who did you leave behind?

JSD: Actually, my husband came one month before and I came on February with my son Henrique. He is the youngest one and I left many people behind. All my family, all my husband's family, and the most important, my oldest son.

NL: Do you have brothers and sisters still in Brazil?

JSD: Yes, I do. I have one brother and one sister. Both are younger than me.

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NL: What did you bring with you when you came to the United States and what did you leave behind in Brazil?

JSD: I brought just personal stuffs and some documents and I left almost all in Brazil.

NL: You said you rented your house when you came here.

JSD: Yes, we decided to rent the house and it is still rented.

NL: What was it like when you first arrived in the US? What was your first impression?

JSD: Oh, my goodness. It was crazy. I couldn't imagine so much snow in my life because it was, I think, the worse winter here 2015. And when I saw that, I ask to my husband, "Wow, did you bring me to Alaska?" [Laughs]

NL: What month did you get here?

JSD: February, yes.

NL: What kind of lifestyle changes did you have to make when you came here? Other than buying a pair of boots?

JSD: Yes, I think, first of all we don't have winter like this in Brazil so I wasn't prepared for that winter. So the first that I did was buy many, many clothes and boots and everything for my son and I. We didn't have enough clothes for the winter here and I think many things are different so we still are trying to adjust to many things here.

NL: Have you dropped any customs from your country because you felt like you had to once you were here or do you maintain a lot of the customs that you and your family had?

JSD: I think we maintain everything here. Our customs in Brazil are not so different than the United States.

NL: How were you treated? How were you and your husband and your son treated when you first arrived in the United States? Were people welcoming to you?

JSD: I think in the airport we were treated very well, but we, in the neighborhood, we felt very bad because nobody could see us there. Nobody even looked for us so that was a big deal for us the first time.

NL: When you first came here where did you live? In what city or town?

JSD: Shrewsbury [MA]

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NL: Who has adjusted better in the United States? You or your son or your husband?

JSD: I think at the first moment, I would say my son, because he was very happy and he was doing great in the school, but when we came back to Brazil for vacation, we realized we missed Brazil a lot. I think he lost a little enthusiasm, enthusiasm to live in the United States.

NL: Has your initial impression of the United States changed over time? Or was your first impression...

JSD: Not too much. I cannot generalize, but I think the people here, they are very, they are very cold. I know many Americans that are very, very thoughtful people, but most of the Americans, they don't even look at us. I think they don't like to relate to other people.

NL: It could be a New England thing too, maybe, because some people have said that in this part of the country some people seem to act a little bit more distant than in other parts of the country.

JSD: Yes, that's what I feel.

NL: Have you noticed any differences in what is expected of men versus women? Do you feel like you are being treated the same as your husband or do you see any differences?

JSD: No, I don't see any difference. I think we are very respected here so I cannot complain about it.

NL: Do you have any hobbies? Anything that you are particularly interested in doing?

JSD: I don't have any specific hobby but I like to hear music. I like to study a little bit so that's what I try to do in my free time.

NL: Now you mentioned that language skills are important. Are you working on English now? Are you taking any classes anywhere?

JSD: Yes, I'm working hard because I need to improve. I know that I am improving, but I am not fluent in English, not yet. So I'm attending classes at Notre Dame [Educational Bridge Center, Worcester, MA] and I was attending classes in Worcester State University [Worcester, MA].

NL: Is there anything else that you would like to add about yourself or your family or your culture; your parents, perhaps.

JSD: I think we are very happy people although we are living in another country. We are trying to make friends here because in Brazil we used to have many friends there and we miss that a lot. We like to talk, we like to make bar-b-ques in the weekend, so we are trying to do it here in the

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America. I know it's hard because we don't have many friends and we don't have any family here, but we are trying to be more involved with things in America. And when my family miss us a lot, they can come here whenever they want so I think it is a good thing for us.

NL: Has your family come to visit you here in the United States?

JSD: Yes, they came in the first year, 2015, they came here. My brother came, my parents came and my son, his girlfriend, my nephew, many people came. My mother [in law] and father-in-law they came too. So I think it was good for us and for them. And we can go to Brazil twice a year so that's another thing that I like.

NL: Wonderful. So, Juliana, I thank you so much for your help in this project. It was a pleasure interviewing you and I wish you all the best.

JSD: Oh, thank you. Love you.

NL: Love you too.

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