

That means it doesn't affect a whole lot of people. So basically, I think there's a designation. So if a disease affects fewer than 200,000 people a year then it's called an orphan disease. So it's not like a cardiovascular or cancer that affects like majority of population.

LESLEY

Right. Okay. Interesting. Learning something new all the time. Okay. All right. So I'll let you get back to describing, you said [stutters, laughs].

NOUSHIN

[Laughs]

LESLEY

I'm sorry. I really messed that up. I fe

and for primary, but for secondary, it kind of comes as a result of keeping track of processes for the government, but they're still very large, and you have just the process of extracting and cleaning is somewhat similar to genomics data. So it has been del

I think that's good. And it sounds like your curiosity and interest in nature really kind of got you into your STEM career. So do you think it was a slow or gradual process? Or do you think there was just sort of this one moment where it's like, "No, no, no, I'm going to be a scientist."

NOUSHIN

Oh, yeah, absolutely. It's been very gradual. I never thought that I would become a scientist—

NOUSHIN
Yeah, so s

I hope so. I that's that's what we're aiming for. I really hope so. I'm not trying to be cheeky on that one. I'm just saying that, like, that's hopefully, that's where we are. And if we're not there, then hopefully we get there very soon.

NOUSHIN

Yes, yes.

LESLEY

Were there any resources that you could have taken advantage of, or did take advantage of like, that sort of basically helped reinforce things for you to assimilate? Like, I know, a friend of mine, and I thought this was hilarious. They moved from Iran at 16. And then they basically binge watched all of Star Trek -

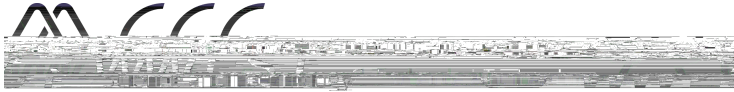
NOUSHIN

Oh, yes, right.

LESLEY

Like, that was 90, I swear that was 80% of their exposure to culture and you know, normal American thing, which I found to be absolutely hilarious and, it's really interesting, I have a lot of friends who are first generation Canadians, Canada is so very lucky that we have such a large number of people who want to come and immigrate here and keep challenging our preconceptions, and making our space richer and our knowledge richer.

NOUSHIN



Right. So, what I really enjoy is, again, this puzzle solving and writing code that is very difficult, actually, for me to like, it's like learning a new language again. So I write in SQL language, and also are trying to learn Python. Yeah, I think it's just, it's just like continuing in the field of science for me, because you're still doing trial and errors. And the only way to learn writing the code is to like, make mistakes and fix the problems. And so that's definitely, so I'm taking that scientific training with me here. And it's really fascinating to see how science doesn't really change. I mean, it does, it doesn't change in form, we can apply to different types of contexts. And that's really my daily work.

LESLEY

Do you feel like having worked through the BC Ministry of Health that there's a real individual impact that you're having, that you find moving or empowering? Like, I mean, obviously, there's a lot of policy work that goes from the science that you're working on?

NOUSHIN

Yeah, absolutely, I think we did, there's definitely a more closer context to the real world, as opposed to a scientist who works you know, in a lab for a long time before they actually get their results published and have it be having impact the human life or society in a way so I do see the results of my work are maybe faster and can have differences, make differences in a faster pace. So writing these codes and making the data, cleaning the data and having some statistics that come out of analyzing them can help decision making. So it's a long process. It's a team work. It's not definitely a personal endeavor, but I am happy to be in that wheel of enabling decision making is my work. So, yeah, definitely.

LESLEY

We are in the time of pandemic, do you find that any of your work has actually impacted, or impacts, I don't know where it goes either way, do you find that your work is impacted by the pandemic? Or in the sense that it's impacting your process? Or is the nature of what you're doing, changing to try and help people with the current situation that we're in?

NOUSHIN

Yeah, I mean, my work has definitely been impacted. So I, we access these databases through remote servers. And so in a way we can do that remotely. So not being able to go to work with the lockdown initially was, so we had to remotely access these databases, and it was definitely slower. And we had to ask for an extension for one of the projects, because it was just like working on your think pad. And, you know, having to do a bit of high computing to get the results. It's just like very, it was very slow. So that was definitely impacted. But I think there is definitely work that has been done, amazing work that the BC CDC or actually Ministry of Health has been partners, where the work has helped inform our decision making and also, you know, like, Dr. Bonnie Henry is working throughout the pandemic with epidemiologists and data scientists, too, for modeling data. And so, that's definitely the impact of the work that can be seen, especially during the pandemic, faster than what we used to.

LESLEY

You mentioned that you're also working as an economist.

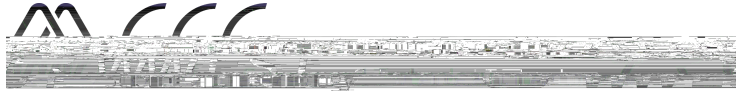
NOUSHIN

Right. Yeah. So I started in the BC Ministry of Health as a science policy data science fellow. And that's when I kind of really trend, yeah, capitalize on my coding skills to use those in the context of the government. And so I started in the BC Ministry of Health in 2019. And there the team that I was indirectly working with was actually looking for a data analyst economist to, or yeah, so I applied and I

ended up in my position. But yeah, it's the,, again, the same concepts, but working with costs of health care. And I'm actually in the pharmace

LESLEY

It's interesting, because, I mean, when you're in school, you really get out of it what you put into it. And I mean, in graduate school, you put a lot of yourself into it, because you're creating something largely for yourself with hopeful impacts outside of yourself. So it's easy to recognize that there's kind of no balance. But I keep thinking about jobs and what people are expected to do for their careers. And, you kh



LESLEY

All right. So these are just, go with your gut. So, who inspires you?

NOUSHIN

I think anyone who is passionate about what they do. Doesn't matter what it is.

LESLEY

Fair enough. Cats or dogs? If you had to have a pet and you could have a pet.

NOUSHIN

Oh man. I would say cat. But it's so hard to choose.

LESLEY

What is your favourite place to visit?

NOUSHIN

I love traveling in general, but I would like to visit Africa, and Kenya specifically, and look at the animals in the nature.

LESLEY

That sounds pretty amazing. Which person dead or alive would you most like to have coffee with?

NOUSHIN

Oh, I would like to have coffee with Marie Curie.

LESLEY

I'm smiling because that is a very common and popular answer. And for good reason.

NOUSHIN

Right? Yeah. [Laughs]

LESLEY

It's like, I'm with you. That would be my choice. I mean, she was amazing.

NOUSHIN

Yeah.

LESLEY

We are very lucky the world had her.

NOUSHIN

Absolutely, yes. And I have so many questions for her.

LESLEY

Me too. And I think as a closing question, it's almost that time. Approximately, how much coffee do you drink in a day?

NOUSHIN

