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I grew up in Denmark. I had a very safe and playful childhood. I had the freedom to go out into nature and have little adventures. Science is about exploring, being curious and following that curiosity to new discoveries. I can see a connection between my childhood wanderings in nature and my love of science.

A scientist embarks on a journey to discover something they want to find or create, but who knows where the path will take them! Sure, it helps to have a clear idea and some notion of where you are going, but part of the fascination is that you always learn something new and there are so many surprises.

In science, most things don't work. I remember a project I worked on as a postdoc at the NIH. We were looking for these receptors on 'natural killer' cells; I tried one technique for half a year and it didn't work. And then, I tried another technique and it didn't

work. And then a third and fourth... I think it was 3 years until something started to look promising. To do good science, you have to be persistent and maybe a little stubborn.

For me, the most inspiring thing about science is not the end result, it's the process that gives me the most pleasure. Going back to my childhood adventures - you enter the dark forest, look around until your eyes adjust and you can see the hidden treasures; you come to a clearing, where the light pours in, and you find what you have been looking for, or even something better than you'd imagined!