



1  
00:00:00,000 --> 00:00:22,490  
Music.

2  
00:00:22,490 --> 00:00:27,670  
"Oh, gosh, I was in middle school, I think when the bug hit me, and it's like, 'Oh, I want to grow up and be an astronaut."

3  
00:00:27,670 --> 00:00:30,040  
I'm not really sure why, they asked me that in the interview,

4  
00:00:30,040 --> 00:00:33,190  
and I couldn't come up with a concrete, you know, this defining moment.

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00:00:33,190 --> 00:00:39,820  
It's just sort of, I think an evolution of the idea of, exploring, pushing the boundaries of what humans can do.

6  
00:00:39,820 --> 00:00:50,820  
I love math and science, I learned more about engineering as I grew up and that all just sort of coalesced and I realized I wanted to be an astronaut.

7  
00:00:50,820 --> 00:00:55,670  
"Oh, that's a toughie, you know, I've had a long-duration and a short-duration mission, so I've had a lot of time to think about it."

8  
00:00:55,670 --> 00:01:02,850  
But I think still I will always remember the first time I saw the Earth right after we hit MECO,

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00:01:02,850 --> 00:01:06,190  
main engine cut off, on STS-112, my first mission.

10  
00:01:06,190 --> 00:01:10,330  
And I was working on the flight deck and it was my job to open the payload bay doors and

11  
00:01:10,330 --> 00:01:14,120  
I opened the payload bay doors and there was the Earth.

12  
00:01:14,120 --> 00:01:18,300  
And it was funny, because even without thinking, the first words out of my mouth were,

13  
00:01:18,300 --> 00:01:21,380

'Oh my goodness, our atmosphere is so thin.'

14

00:01:21,380 --> 00:01:28,850

So, that first view of the planet and just the instant impression of just how fragile our

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00:01:28,850 --> 00:01:34,270

world is I think will always stay with me. Because, you know, intellectually, you know our atmosphere is thin.

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00:01:34,270 --> 00:01:38,840

You can think about it and think about the circumference of the planet and the height of the atmosphere,

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00:01:38,840 --> 00:01:40,920

but to see it really brings it home.

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00:01:40,920 --> 00:01:49,350

It's like, 'Wow, we have to take care of this place, we have a very fragile planet.'

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00:01:49,350 --> 00:01:52,560

"The biggest challenge, oh gosh, I guess technically,

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00:01:52,560 --> 00:01:58,370

I would say spacewalk training is probably the biggest challenge technically.

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00:01:58,370 --> 00:02:06,640

It requires really good physical conditioning and a lot of endurance and you have to, and a lot of masteries of d

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00:02:06,640 --> 00:02:08,690

So, probably technically the biggest challenge.

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00:02:08,690 --> 00:02:16,110

But I think a lot of people who have jobs like ours is just balancing work and home and things like that.

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00:02:16,110 --> 00:02:19,270

That's a big challenge as well. So, there's different kinds of challenges.

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00:02:19,270 --> 00:02:23,640

But, you know, any kind of job that pulls you away from home a lot or requires lots of hours,

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00:02:23,640 --> 00:02:29,020

and there are many jobs out there that do that require the same kind of attempts to balance.

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00:02:29,020 --> 00:02:35,560

I think that's a challenge for a lot of us who work."

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00:02:35,560 --> 00:02:40,770

"You know what the biggest surprise was? Was actually not anything I encountered flying in space.

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00:02:40,770 --> 00:02:48,440

But it was getting a different idea of what gravity is after I returned to Earth. Because we grow up in gravity.

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00:02:48,440 --> 00:02:51,990

You know, you don't realize that raising your hand like this requires huge amounts of effort.

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00:02:51,990 --> 00:03:00,490

You don't realize that you have this force that is just pulling you to the planet and wants to squish you flat as a

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00:03:00,490 --> 00:03:07,160

And after being out of gravity and freefall for four and a half months on the space station or even 11 days on m

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00:03:07,160 --> 00:03:12,510

as you re-enter Earth's atmosphere and you start to be under the influence of gravity again,

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00:03:12,510 --> 00:03:19,650

you realize just how overarching this force is and how you are working against it every day of your life.