



Mujeres Inspirando Mujeres

Letters

TO OUR

YOUNG LATINAS

2025



Table of Contents

1. **Introduction** – Page 3
2. **Dedication** – Page 4
3. **Chapter 1: Identity – Embracing Our Roots** – Page 5
Mirna González
4. **Chapter 2: Self-Confidence – Believing in Ourselves** – Page 8
Caro Pereira
5. **Chapter 3: Education and Career – Breaking Barriers** – Page 11
Yvette López
6. **Chapter 4: Relationships – Love, Family, and Community** – Page 15
Miroslava Tixi
7. **Chapter 5: Resilience and Growth – Overcoming Fear and Doubt** – Page 19
Graciela Cardoza
8. **Chapter 6: Purpose and Legacy – Leaving a Mark** – Page 22
María Santi
9. **Chapter 7: Freedom and Well-Being – Living Fully** – Page 25
Lourdes Ruan

Mujeres Inspirando Mujeres: Letters to our Young Latinas

Introduction

At twenty, the world felt vast—full of possibilities, yet also filled with uncertainty. As young Latinas in the United States, we learned to navigate between two worlds: our roots and our aspirations, our traditions and our dreams. We were daughters, dreamers, fighters, and pioneers, yet we often found ourselves facing unanswered questions: *Who am I? How do I honor where I come from while pursuing what I want? How do I find my voice in a world that doesn't always see me?*

This book is a reflection of that journey. It is a collection of advice, lessons, and reflections from women who, through different paths, have faced similar challenges. Here, we share what we wish we had heard at twenty—words of encouragement, self-love, and wisdom that would have helped us move forward with more confidence.

Each chapter tells the story of a woman answering a key question about her experience, organized into seven thematic sections: **Identity, Self-Confidence, Education and Career, Relationships, Resilience and Growth, Purpose and Legacy, and Freedom and Well-Being**. Through these pages, we will explore the lessons that have shaped us into who we are today and, most importantly, offer a guiding light to future generations.

To every young Latina holding this book in her hands: *Your story matters. Your voice is powerful. Your journey is unique, but you are never alone.*

With love and solidarity,

Mujeres Inspirando Mujeres (Women Inspiring Women)

To all the young Latinas searching for their place in the world, fighting against doubt, and longing to shine without fear. May these words be a beacon of light on your journey.

Chapter 1: Identity – Embracing our Roots



Mirna González Ludick was born in Mexico City and studied tourism business administration, a field in which she has accumulated over 25 years of experience and continues to excel as a travel agent. Her passion for the arts led her to take theater classes in her hometown, where she participated in renowned productions such as *Jesus Christ Superstar* and *Un Busto al Cuerpo* in Dallas, Texas.

Since settling in the United States in 1995, Mirna has made a lasting impact in various fields. She worked as a photojournalist for the *Star-Telegram* in Fort Worth, Texas, and in 2021, she joined Salem Communications in Dallas as a radio host. That same year, she achieved a new milestone by becoming a certified NLP Coach through the Instituto Renacer, further solidifying her commitment to personal and professional development.

As an independent producer, Mirna creates videos, interviews, and commercials for radio and television. She is also the host of *Mirna Sin Filtros*, interview series where she tackles impactful topics with honesty and depth.

Her dedication and professionalism have made her a well-known figure in the world of media and communication, providing valuable tools to empower her community and contribute to a better world. Most recently, she received recognition from a prestigious national association of journalists and broadcasters, further cementing her legacy as an influential and passionate voice.

Chapter 1: Identity – Embracing our Roots

Mirna González

I wish I had known that, as a Latina, my identity is vast and multifaceted, encompassing a rich blend of cultures, languages, histories, and experiences. **Being Latina means carrying in my heart a vibrant cultural heritage—one that bursts with color, flavor, and rhythm, instantly recognizable no matter where we go in the world.**

From a young age, my life was shaped by the depth of our traditions and the passion for life that defines our people. I grew up surrounded by music, mouthwatering food, and a family that always taught me the power of unity. Over time, I came to understand that being Latina is not just about where you come from—it is an attitude, a source of strength, and a way of moving through the world.

For me, being Latina means embracing and celebrating the following values and traits:

- **A Rich Cultural Heritage:** Latina women carry a culture renowned for its vibrant music, exquisite cuisine, intricate craftsmanship, and deeply rooted traditions. Each of these expressions tells a story—one of resilience, diversity, and an unbreakable connection to our roots.
- **A Passion for Life:** We are known for our energy and enthusiasm, for our ability to find joy and beauty in the simplest moments. Whether it's in family gatherings or the way we tackle life's challenges, we do everything with intensity, love, and an undeniable spark.
- **Resilience and Strength:** History has shown that Latina women have faced countless challenges, yet we continue to rise, demonstrating extraordinary resilience and the ability to forge ahead, no matter the circumstances. We are not easily defeated; we learn, we grow, and we persist with unwavering determination.

What I value and celebrate most about my cultural heritage is the deep connection to family. In many Latin cultures, family is everything—it is where we learn the values of respect, solidarity, and unwavering support. **Our identity is woven into these unbreakable ties that remind us that no matter where life takes us, we are never truly alone.**

My journey has not been without challenges. Living in a country far from my own meant rediscovering and reaffirming my identity despite the distance. I spent nearly 20 years without being able to return to my homeland, and in that time, I learned that my identity is not defined by where I stand, but by the pride I carry within me. In every memory, in every cherished moment, I found countless reasons to embrace who I am—a Latina, a Mexican woman, and deeply proud of it.

Throughout my professional career, from tourism to media, I have found a voice that represents not only my experiences but also those of countless women who, like me, have learned to cherish their history. Through my work in radio, television, and production, I have sought to be a reflection of the **strength, authenticity, and determination** that define us. Today, with every step I take, I honor the generations that came before me and help pave the way for those who will follow.

Chapter 2: Self-Confidence - Believing in Ourselves



Caro Pereira is a journalist, educator, and strategic communication expert with over 15 years of experience in public speaking, sales, and digital marketing. She has impacted more than 7,000 professionals in the United States, helping them craft persuasive speeches and develop effective strategies to strengthen their market influence. Her work with over 75 brands focuses on aligning corporate communications with core principles and values, fostering authentic and meaningful connections with their audiences.

As a Venezuelan passionate about empowering entrepreneurs and professionals, Caro combines her journalistic expertise with a deep understanding of digital marketing to provide comprehensive solutions that enhance both internal and external business communication. Her mission is to guide organizations in conveying their essence, building strong relationships, and standing out in a competitive environment. Caro Pereira is a strategic ally for those looking to expand their influence and reach new levels of success.

Chapter 2: Self-Confidence – Believing in Ourselves

Caro Pereira

Believe in yourself, even when no one else does. You don't need anyone's permission to shine. For a long time, I thought I had to prove something to the world before I could feel worthy, but the truth is, the only permission you need is your own.

You will make mistakes—yes. But every mistake will be a teacher in disguise. Don't cling to other people's fears, their doubts, or their expectations of what you should do. Listen to advice, but don't let external noise drown out your inner voice. Confidence isn't inherited; it is built with every step you take outside your comfort zone.

My journey in communication taught me this firsthand. As a journalist, educator, and expert in strategic communication, I have worked with thousands of professionals across the U.S., helping them develop persuasive speeches and effective communication strategies. I have witnessed how mastering one's voice and building self-assurance can transform lives, and that is the message I share with those around me.

It didn't happen overnight—believe me. I spent years seeking opinions, waiting for validation, and feeling uncertain. But one day, I realized something: **every time I followed my intuition, things turned out well.** And every time I ignored that inner voice out of fear or the need to please others, I regretted it.

I learned to trust myself when I finally chose to truly listen. I distanced myself from the noise, the comparisons, and the unsolicited opinions. I started to notice patterns in my life—moments when I made instinctive decisions that led me to incredible opportunities. So, I decided to test myself: **every time I felt a strong gut feeling, I would follow it.** Of course, sometimes I failed, but even in those failures, I found valuable lessons.

I also stopped seeing doubt as the enemy. **Doubt, from time to time, is normal—even necessary.** But instead of letting it paralyze me, I used it as a filter: if doubt came from fear, I ignored it. If it came from wisdom, I listened.

Throughout my career, I have worked with over 75 brands and helped organizations connect with their audiences through authenticity. My work has never been just about strategies and digital marketing—it has been about helping others find their voice and amplify their influence.

Confidence is like a muscle—the more you exercise it, the stronger it becomes.

And today, whenever I face a decision, I ask myself: **“What would the most confident and successful version of me do?” The answer is always there, inside me. And inside you too. You just need to listen.**

Chapter 3: Education and Career - Breaking Barriers, Choosing Your Own Path



Yvette López is a dynamic leader with expertise in organizational change, leadership development, and process optimization. With over 20 years of experience in program management and operational excellence, she has consistently delivered impactful results by reducing inefficiencies and maximizing resources.

As Chief Empowerment Officer of **Development Culture LLC**, a coaching and consulting firm focused on strategic planning and project design, she drives transformative change and enhances productivity. Fostering a culture of development, she designs innovative programs and tools that help individuals achieve balance, growth, and purpose in their personal and professional lives. Her human-centered approach has been instrumental in promoting continuous learning and the development of process improvement systems and change management strategies.

She is also President of **Dev Culture Inc.**, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization dedicated to educating, uplifting, and empowering minority communities, particularly women, youth, and Latino immigrants. Yvette has spearheaded significant initiatives, including creating the first-ever Hispanic Heritage Festival in Grapevine, Texas—Celebra Grapevine—promoting cultural celebration and community unity.

Her career includes prominent roles in international affairs, such as Director of International Projects at Daytona State College and Liaison Officer for the U.S. Department of Defense at USSOUTHCOM. Additionally, she served as an Advisor to the President of the Dominican Republic for a decade, during which she developed an innovative community college project that has graduated over 30,000 students—transforming lives and expanding access to education.

A Florida Bar member and certified mediator, Yvette holds degrees and certifications in **Criminology, Law, Lean Six Sigma, and Strategic Planning**. Her commitment to innovation and empowerment has left a lasting legacy of growth, opportunities, and meaningful transformation in every community and organization she serves.

Chapter 3: Education and Career - Breaking Barriers, Choosing Your Own Path

Yvette López

If I could sit down with my 20-year-old self, I'd tell her this: **The most important relationship you'll ever have—after the one with your Creator—is the one you have with yourself.** Before chasing a degree or accepting a job because it “sounds impressive,” take the time to know yourself. Understand what excites you, what makes you unique, and how you add value. Success isn't about proving yourself to others; it's about making intentional choices that align with who you are.

When I became an advisor to the President of the Dominican Republic, I entered a world dominated by men with decades of experience. To many, I was just a girl. And I get it—when I see a 20-year-old now, I also recognize how much of their story is still unwritten. But instead of letting that perception define me, I focused on what I could control: demonstrating my value. I didn't try to convince them with words—I let my work speak for itself. I made sure that when I spoke, my words carried weight. Over time, they stopped seeing the young girl and started seeing the talent.

That experience taught me something fundamental: **success isn't about chasing opportunities; it's about choosing spaces where you can thrive.** My ability to see solutions where others only saw obstacles led me to develop a technical education system that has changed the lives of over 30,000 students. But there were times I was sidetracked—drawn in by opportunities that looked prestigious but didn't fulfill me. That's when I learned a hard truth: if you let other people's opinions shape your choices, you'll end up playing a supporting role in someone else's story instead of leading your own.

For years, I tried to fit into spaces where no one looked like me. I thought I had to soften my identity, speak a certain way, act differently—as if who I was at my core wasn't enough. But in every space where I settled, I realized something: **when you try to fit in, you dilute your essence. And when you dilute your essence, you diminish your power.**

Later, when I worked for the U.S. Federal Government, I encountered inefficiencies no one questioned—processes people followed simply because that's how it had always been done. Instead of accepting the status quo, I approached things differently, identified solutions, and, without even realizing it, helped save hundreds of thousands of dollars. Not because I worked harder, but because I thought differently. That's when I understood: **my differences weren't a barrier—they were my competitive advantage.** Being Latina, being a woman, and seeing the world from a unique perspective didn't hold me back; they set me apart.

Most people believe that reaching certain titles will bring fulfillment. But I learned that **growth isn't about the position you hold—it's about how you use your talent, no matter where you are.**

Albert Einstein once said, *“Everybody is a genius. But if you judge a fish by its ability to climb a tree, it will live its whole life believing it is stupid.”* Believe me, I tried climbing several trees. It was frustrating. I felt out of place. My greatest strength wasn't **trying to fit into a mold—it was swimming freely in my own element.**

If I could leave you with just one lesson, it would be this: Know yourself. Don't settle for environments that don't allow you to thrive, no matter how good they look on paper. **Choose spaces where you can grow, contribute, and evolve.** When you stop seeking approval and start honoring your essence, you don't just survive—you shine.

Chapter 4: Relationships – Love, Family, and Community



Miroslava Tixi is a dedicated professional with a multifaceted career, currently working in the legal department of the **Dallas Cowboys**. Born and raised in Ecuador, she moved to the United States at the age of 14, embracing the challenge of learning English as a second language. Her journey is a testament to her determination and resilience, as she became the first in her family to graduate from college, earning her degree from Boston College and continuing her postgraduate studies in the legal field.

Miroslava's entrepreneurial journey began at the age of 24 when she founded a multi-service agency that provided essential support to the community. This agency was a labor of love, offering a safe space for individuals seeking assistance with translations, immigration resources, tax preparation, and college applications. Her commitment to helping others has

always been at the heart of her work.

After a successful 15-year career in FedEx's legal department, she joined the Dallas Cowboys, where she is now in her third season. However, her role with the Cowboys is just one aspect of her diverse career. Miroslava is also the largest **Little Greek Fresh Grill** franchisee, owning five locations in Addison, Coppell, Frisco, Little Elm, and Murphy. For her, serving fresh, healthy food to the community is not just a business—it is a mission she deeply values.

In addition to her professional accomplishments, Miroslava is also a real estate investor, continuously expanding her portfolio. Family is one of her greatest passions, along with staying active at the gym, dancing, and supporting her community. Her favorite words of encouragement to others are: "I don't want you to be like me; I want you to be better than me. If I can do it, you can too." This reflects her unwavering belief in inspiring others to achieve their fullest potential.

Miroslava's story is one of perseverance, passion, and an unyielding commitment to excellence, both in her personal and professional life. She looks forward to connecting with like-minded professionals and exploring opportunities for collaboration and growth. Let's inspire one another to reach greater heights. "Empowering communities, inspiring excellence" is our goal.

Chapter 4: Relationships – Love, Family, and Community

Miroslava Tixi

Love is a deep and powerful feeling that takes on different forms throughout our lives. Family is where we learn to love and be loved, the space where the values that guide our every decision are forged. For me, family is love, and that love extends beyond our relatives, forming the community we build over time. Our village is simply an extension of our family. **We must never forget where we come from or where we are going, and that journey becomes lighter when love is expressed through gestures of support, cooperation, empathy, and example.** As Mother Teresa once said, *"Love begins at home, and it is not how much we do... but how much love we put into every action."*

If I could speak to my 20-year-old self, I would say: Miroslava, Miroslava... life won't be easy, but every experience will be a lesson. Never regret giving your all, never regret loving unconditionally, because that love will open doors you never imagined. But listen closely: don't take life so seriously. You cannot make everyone happy, and you certainly cannot control every situation. Let go of what you cannot change, help where you can, and move forward with a light heart. Don't chase perfection—chase fulfillment. Life is not a checklist to complete; it is a journey to be enjoyed.

And speaking of perfection... **stop idealizing the idea of eternal love and flawless relationships.** Love comes in many forms and durations. Your prince charming won't arrive on a white horse, but he will arrive in the form of your son, and your best lifelong companion will come in the form of your daughter. And by the way, stop fighting with Nacho so much—he will end up being more than just your brother; he will be your best friend. Oh, and one more practical piece of advice... find a better hiding place for your diary. The lock doesn't work, and your cousins are reading everything. Don't say I didn't warn you.

Finding balance between family expectations and my own dreams didn't happen overnight—it took years and many life lessons. I grew up in Ecuador with a conservative mindset, where life was either black or white. I followed every rule, stuck to the manual perfectly: model daughter, ideal wife, devoted mother. But in the process, I lost myself. I became buried under the weight of everyone else's expectations. And when divorce came—something I never planned for—I realized that I had to rebuild myself from the ground up. I learned to let go of what no longer served me, to accept my humanity, and to prioritize self-love. I broke into pieces, and I put myself back together, piece by piece, until I finally understood: **I was already whole.**

Today, I find balance in what truly matters: my children, my family, my career, my well-being. Yes, I have multiple roles—businesswoman, mother, professional—but none of them would mean anything if I wasn't okay within myself. I've learned that the key to balance is not forgetting about me. Faith and peace are my anchors, dance is my therapy, exercise is my sanctuary, and healthy eating is my way of practicing self-love. When I take care of myself, those around me thrive.

Love, family, and community are deeply interconnected. The love we practice at home extends into the community, creating a stronger, more resilient social fabric. **But above all, self-love is the foundation of everything: Take care of yourself, love yourself, because if you live this life well, one will be**

enough. As Mario Benedetti once said, “*Love is a word, a tiny piece of utopia—it is all that and much less, and much more.*” And in that balance—between having much and having little, between giving and receiving, between holding on and letting go—that is where the true fullness of life is found.

Chapter 5: Resilience and Growth – Overcoming Fear and Doubt



Graciela Cardoza is a Mexican immigrant who embarked on a journey filled with uncertainty upon arriving in the United States, never imagining that she would become an extraordinary example of resilience, faith, skill, personal growth, and success.

From her earliest days in this country, she bravely faced language barriers and moved forward step by step, overcoming every challenge with determination and hard work—a journey that ultimately led her to become the distinguished entrepreneur she is today.

As the CEO of **Cardozas Insurance & Income Tax**, Graciela not only built a business from the ground up but also assembled an exceptional team that upholds and promotes the same core values of faith, integrity, gratitude, and honesty. With offices in Dallas, Kaufman, and Terrell, her company stands as a testament to her

commitment and leadership.

With a clear and ambitious vision, her next goal is to become a renowned speaker, inspiring thousands of Hispanics to pursue their dreams and reach their full potential.

Chapter 5: Resilience and Growth – Overcoming Fear and Doubt

Graciela Cardoza

Sometimes, the moment that defines your life arrives disguised as chaos. For me, that defining moment—the one that showed me my true power—was when I decided to start my own business at 27. With only a small amount of savings and no financial support, I bet on myself. Looking back, it might have seemed reckless, but at the time, it was my only option. I didn't want to settle for a job that didn't fulfill me—I wanted to build a future for myself and my son.

I won't lie—fear and doubt walked with me every step of the way. But if I learned anything, it's that determination and faith can move mountains. I faced challenges that would have made anyone consider giving up—from legal threats by former employers to bankruptcy, to nights when I didn't even have a safe home for my child. Going back to a "stable" job, to what was familiar, would have been the easy choice. But I didn't do it. I held onto my dream with everything I had. Because if there's one thing more powerful than fear, it's a woman who knows what she wants and is willing to fight for it.

But how did I face fear and uncertainty when I had no idea what the next step was? I learned that you don't fight fear, and you don't pretend uncertainty doesn't exist. Instead, you make fear your ally. I observed it, studied it—I learned when it appeared, why it showed up, and at what moments it started to fade. **I discovered that fear is not the enemy; the enemy is letting it take control.** So, when fear arrived, instead of letting it paralyze me, I took it by the hand and said, "We're going together, but I'm the one steering the wheel." **The key is not to eliminate fear—it's to walk with it without allowing it to dictate your path.**

During my toughest moments, many words have lifted me up: Perseverance is the key to success. You are strong and capable. But if there is one phrase that has truly anchored me, it is this: *"I'm here with you. I believe in you. You are not alone."* Those words—spoken by my mother, my siblings, my friends, and yes, even by my father, though he is no longer physically here—were my lifeline in the storm. In my darkest moments, they reminded me that no matter how difficult the road was, I never walked alone.

Today, I look back at the woman I used to be—full of doubts, but also full of determination—and I realize that every obstacle, every fall, every night of uncertainty was worth it. Because **resilience isn't just about getting back up after you fall—it's about learning to dance in the rain, laughing in the face of fear, and continuing forward with the certainty that the best is yet to come.**

Chapter 6: Purpose and Legacy – Leaving a Mark



María Santi is a dedicated attorney at **Jackson, Landrith & Kulesz, PC**, where she specializes in providing exceptional legal services in Commercial and Immigration Law. A graduate of Washington University in St. Louis, she holds a Master of Laws (LLM) and also earned a Juris Doctor from the Universidad Autónoma del Estado de México. Her strong academic background, combined with her passion for advocacy, fuels her commitment to delivering personalized legal strategies that provide comprehensive support to her clients throughout the legal process.

Before joining **Jackson, Landrith & Kulesz**, María strengthened her skills by leading various outreach programs and events, gaining invaluable experience in both the public and private sectors. Her dedication to community service is evident

in her active involvement in local legal organizations and her pro bono work, through which she has provided essential legal assistance to those in need.

As an immigrant from Mexico, María is fluent in both Spanish and English, allowing her to connect with a diverse range of clients and communities. Her passion for the law and unwavering commitment to advocating for her clients make her an invaluable asset to her firm and a dedicated defender of their rights. She is committed to providing personalized legal strategies that ensure comprehensive support for her clients throughout the legal process.

Chapter 6: Purpose and Legacy – Leaving a Mark

María Santi

Talking about the meaning of success is like opening a debate with a question that has endless answers. Success is defined by the person who experiences it—by their journey, their values, and the effort they’ve put in to get where they are. There is no single definition of success because it takes shape according to our struggles, our victories, and our unique paths.

Latina women in the United States share more than just a history of resilience and perseverance; we share a commitment to the future. We don’t just break barriers—we open doors for those who come after us. **There isn’t one way to measure success, but there is something we all understand: true success begins when we stop measuring ourselves against outside expectations and start honoring our own journey.**

For me, success is not a destination; it is a state of fulfillment and purpose. It exists in those moments when I pause to help someone else, in the pride of a job well done, in the satisfaction of knowing that I persisted despite the obstacles. **Success is learning to celebrate every step, every effort, every sacrifice—and understanding that our worth is not defined by external standards but by the impact we leave in the world.**

My path was not easy. My accent, my background, my own self-doubt—these were barriers I had to overcome again and again. I enrolled in a university with a translator in my hand. I spent four times more hours studying than a native student would. I took the Texas Bar Exam six times before finally passing in 2024. But here I stand today, knowing that every setback was worth it—because success isn’t measured by how many times you fall, but by how many times you get back up.

If I could leave a message for the next generation of Latina women, it would be this: **persistence is the key.** Never let one setback define your path. **Every fall is a lesson, every mistake an opportunity to learn. We don’t give up—we reinvent ourselves. The goal isn’t perfection; the goal is to keep moving forward, even when everything seems against you.**

Legacy is not just about what we achieve for ourselves—it’s about what we inspire in others. I hope this book serves as a testament that success doesn’t have a single formula, but it does have a common denominator: effort, faith, and determination.

To my younger self, I would say: **Get up. Everything you are going through will make you stronger. Don’t give up. Accept what you cannot change and fight with everything you have for what you can.** Pack your bags without fear—God has already given you the tools to reach your dreams. You will work hard, you will make sacrifices, but it will all be worth it. Your discipline and dedication will take you further than you can imagine. **Take that leap of faith and trust—your future is waiting.**

Chapter 7: Freedom and Well-Being – Living Fully



A Communications Science graduate with a specialization in Social Science Research, Lourdes Ruan is a Mexican entrepreneur with a deeply humanistic and business-oriented spirit. She is the founder of **Visión Empresarial in Mexico** and **Apple Cleaning** in the United States, where she continues to inspire and empower others through her work.

Career in Mexico

- Active participation in various cultural and artistic fields.
- Coordinated contestants for the Señorita México 1992 pageant.
- Academic and professional training highlights:

Industrial Safety Course for Supervisors **at the** Technological Institute and Higher Studies of Monterrey.

Certifications in **Quality Education Systems and Marketing**, as well as **quality programs by Philip Crosby**.

Organizational development in companies based in Monterrey.

Career in the United States

- Participated in programs such as:
 - **Love and Logic Institute, INC.** (Parent Training Program).
 - **Padres Activos de Hoy** through Active Parenting Publishers.

Notable Recognitions

- **Galardón de las Estrellas** (Support for cancer patients).
- **Award of Exceptional Women of Excellence** from the **Women Economic Forum** (2024).
- Certified as a **Holistic Expert**.
- **Leadership Recognition** awarded by **EEH Organization** (2024).
- **Literary Merit Award** from **ANPLC** (2024).
- **International Gold Awards, Medal of Excellence** (Washington D.C., 2024).
- **Business Leadership Recognition**, awarded at the **United States Senate** and the **Organization of American States (OAS)**, with the opportunity to **participate in a program at the White House**.

Academic and Literary Achievements

- **Diploma in Logotherapy, "Humanism and Meaning,"** from Academia Logóforo, certified by the **International Association for Existential Analysis and Logotherapy (V́ctor Frankl Institute).**
- **Author of the literary work "Dolor, Maestro de Vida".**
- **Co-author** of the song **"Tu Despedida, Papá"** and the book **"La Sabiduría"**.
- Featured in international media, including **radio, television, press, and podcasts,** across **Mexico, Germany, the United States (Texas and California), Austria (Vienna), and Spain,** highlighting her book **"Dolor, Maestro de Vida".**

Recent Presentations and Projects

- **Presentation of "Dolor, Maestro de Vida"** at the **Centro Cultural Latino** on **January 18, 2025.**
- The book was complemented by a **brief lecture on the theatrical project "Los Llevamos Dentro,"** exploring its connection to the book.

Chapter 7: Freedom and Well-Being – Living Fully

Lourdes Ruan

Personal well-being and a sense of freedom are essential to living a fulfilling and satisfying life.

However, as an immigrant, prioritizing these aspects has been a constant challenge. Learning to put my well-being first was not easy; it required confronting deep-rooted beliefs, breaking cycles of self-sacrifice, and, most importantly, understanding that self-care is not selfish—it is a vital necessity.

As a child, I grew up in an environment where effort and dedication to others were seen as the ultimate virtues. **Learning to prioritize my well-being without guilt was a process that required unlearning limiting beliefs.** For years, every time I took time for myself, an inner voice told me I was being selfish. But over time, I realized that I couldn't give my best to others if I was depleted. Setting healthy boundaries became an act of self-love, and with every "no" I said to things that no longer served me, I was really saying "yes" to myself.

On this journey of self-discovery, I have found **habits and practices** that have been key to achieving balance in my life:

1. **Regular Exercise:** More than just physical health, movement releases endorphins that make me feel alive and in control of my well-being.
2. **Mindfulness and Meditation:** Learning to be present has allowed me to enjoy each moment without being trapped in the anxiety of the future or the weight of the past.
3. **Meaningful Relationships:** Surrounding myself with people who share my values and genuinely support me has been crucial to my emotional well-being.
4. **Time for Reflection:** Writing in my journal, taking moments of silence to listen to myself, and making space for introspection have been transformative.
5. **Therapy and Personal Growth:** Healing is a continuous process, and committing to my development has allowed me to transform limiting beliefs into expansive, empowering thoughts.

If I could speak to my 20-year-old self, I would say: **“Happiness is not a destination—it is a journey. Do not chase external validation or get attached to specific achievements. Instead, focus on enjoying the present, letting go of what no longer serves you, and surrounding yourself with people who uplift you. True happiness lies in self-awareness, acceptance, and self-love.”**

Over the years, I have come to understand that freedom is not the absence of responsibility—it is **the ability to consciously decide how I want to live my life.** Prioritizing my well-being has allowed me to create a more meaningful and fulfilling existence. It is not about avoiding difficult moments, but about learning to navigate them with resilience and faith.

Ultimately, our well-being shapes the quality of our lives. We will always face setbacks; there is no life without pain or obstacles—but **every wound has a purpose**, even if it is hard to decipher at times. Through life's ups and downs, our attitude makes the difference between true freedom and simply existing.

If you take a close look at the results of your daily life, you will see whether your actions need to change in order to reach the path of abundance you long for. **No matter how deep the wound, your attitude will determine where you go**—and walking hand in hand with God is essential.

Copyright

© 2025 Dev Culture, Inc. All rights reserved.

This book is a collaboration with Mirna González ("Mirna Sin Filtros"), Dev Culture, Inc., and the authors of each chapter. No part of this book may be reproduced, stored, or transmitted in any form or by any means—electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or otherwise—without the prior written permission of the authors. This book was created with the purpose of inspiring and empowering the Latinx community, and each testimony included is the sole property of its respective author. Any unauthorized use of this content is strictly prohibited by law.