I grew up in Belgrade, Yugoslavia, where I didn't know prejudice of any kind. I was shocked when I discovered the concept even existed. There was no pressure to be or not be something. I felt free to develop my mind. No one told me that physics wasn't right for a woman. It was not an unusual choice for a woman to make. Math was intriguing to me, but only if it was employed in something like physics. I was most attracted to its applied side. Otherwise, I felt it would have been an exercise in futility.

What physics answers is how everything works, not why nature works. God will answer that. But if you understand nature you can apply your knowledge to making many useful things. Physical principles provide the key. All are based on physical principles.

Good physics research requires a lot of supporting activities—a good machine shop, secretarial service. Everybody has to do their job so I can do mine. Every good result is due to our shared efforts. But pure research requires dedication. It brings you tremendous happiness. You understand something that you, or somebody else, has never understood before.

Physics often stays within its own community. That's not enough. Physics must be transferred in some way to the wider community. It's important to persuade the general public of the value of physics. I've tried to introduce a new idea or discover something that no one has ever seen before.