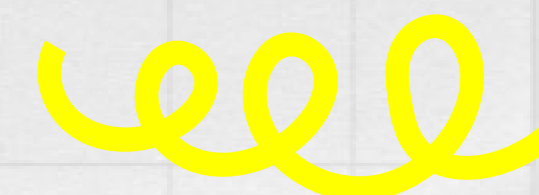




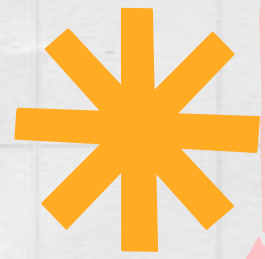
My Grandmother

Carmen Avendaño Otero



My grandmother, born in Vigo on 21 November 1945, is known for her fight against drug trafficking in Galicia and is president and coordinator of the foundation Érguete-Integración. She has 5 children and the third of them is my father.

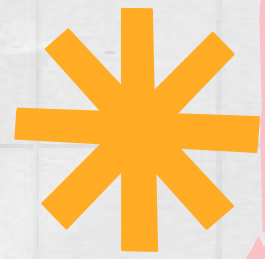




What was it like for you to live through that time?



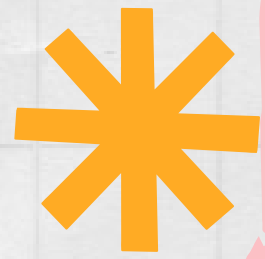
Only those of my generation can really understand this. It was a very hard time when, coinciding with the birth of democracy, we began to see strange behaviour in our children. We were ignorant and tried to justify it, we thought, 'maybe we were repressed'. But drugs were a thing far removed from the United States and the hippies.



I guess it was difficult


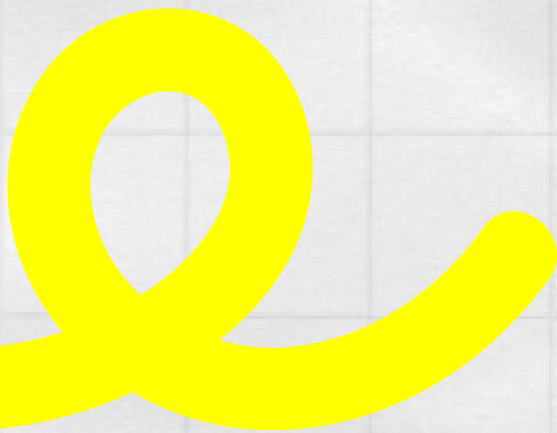
We started from beginning, they even translated books from English for us!

First we had to recover the dignity of our children, who had been labelled as marginal, when they were children of the middle class. Nobody saw the children of the rich because they got high in the chalets. Breaking that image was difficult.



How did it all start?



We needed to talk about what was happening to us and I, who come from the associative world, although I only studied commerce, told other mothers: forget about your specific case, about your child, we have to think about society, why drugs come, who brings them.... Because at that time it was easy to associate tobacco and drugs. And when we were ready, that's when we started to explain what was happening. It wasn't something impulsive.



I guess it was difficult to convince the politicians of that time.



We called for a series of health reforms. There was a tremendous mess, but we worked with a slogan: never to confront those who represented us, unless we were not listened to. Although, at the beginning with the police it wasn't easy, they came from the dictatorship, rights were violated very easily. But we never publicly denounced any state security force, I have always been very rational.






What did grandpa think of all this?



Grandpa has always been very supportive. I have been with him for 46 years and without that support and that of my children I would not have been able to fight.



Have you ever feared for your life?

The narcos always shunned me. Once they even cut the brakes on my car and I spent a whole Easter week without leaving the house with my husband. But I always had people who passed me information, so I left something good behind.



So what is your conclusion?

The pressure has gone down a lot, the problems with my children are not the same. I have that inner peace. What I can't get rid of is this addiction to the people who need it. It is a satisfaction

