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História

From 'Tatao', 'Uncle Boto' to a great digital influencer

História de: [Gustavo](#)

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Sinopse

A life constituted by class tensions between his maternal family, industrial Spaniards of São Paulo and his paternal history, emerging from the automobile market, after much discipline and savings. The path of university education among young people from the richest families in the city and the humanistic and critical perception about the lives of the underprivileged. The peak of his career and the arrival of the Multiple Sclerosis' diagnosis. The reconstruction of his life with the disease. The establishment of the "Associação de Amigos Múltiplos pela Esclerose."

Tags

- [Multiple Sclerose](#)
- [cyberactivist](#)
- [entrepreneurship](#)
- [class differences](#)

História completa

Gustavo San Martin Elexpe Cardoso was 31 when he told his story. Born in São Paulo and raised in Guarulhos - SP. His story is yet another story of hopes and dreams of a young man who wanted to win in life, earn his own money and make his parents proud. "Tatao", as he was affectionately called by his sisters Pamela and Priscila, is the son of Galmar Marcos Cardoso of a traditional family from the inner state of São Paulo and Maria Tereza San Martín Elexpe Cardoso, a descendant of Spaniards who made their fortune in Brazil after an arduous history of achievements. Gustavo remembers the humble beginnings of his family. His father was born and raised in the rural countryside of São Paulo and very early started working in the fields picking cotton, in 1959. Already grown up, he worked shoeshine and office boy. His maternal grandparents landed in Brazil and four years later their mother was born. Like any other immigrant family, he struggled to find a place to lay roots. This grandmother worked as a maid and in a bar serving coffee, which according to Gustavo, was the most famous café in Vila Prudente, a neighborhood of São Paulo and his grandfather was a mechanic. A few years later his maternal grandparents began to prosper, moved to Guarulhos and set up a small metalworker there. Precisely in this good economic phase Gustavo's parents met. He tells about the details that were told to him about the day his parents first met. Maria Tereza was in her late twenties and was parked at a traffic light when a boy winked at her. Startled, she asked, "Mommy, he winked at me, what do I do now?" Gustavo's grandmother, Isaura, replied: "Ah, blink again." From then on, there was an exchange of numbers and Galmar made his first visit to his future girlfriend's house. He dressed up for the first visit in white clothes and brought his car. It was 1983. The impression was so good that Maria Tereza's father thought Galmar was a doctor, but soon they discovered that he was a car salesman from Vila Maria, a neighborhood in the north of São Paulo. The distrust made the father-in-law no longer agree with the relationship. However, the young boy was gaining some space in the family, but with caveats. He married Maria Tereza in 1985 after her daughter was asked to sign the disinherited term. This was the condition for the marriage and a year later Gustavo was born. Gustavo remembers the Sunday lunches at his grandmother Isaura's house, where there were loud and funny Spanish people. Another good memory comes from driving with his mother, who owned a GTI Goal and together they listened to Barbra Streisand, Tina Turner and Whitney Houston and sing so much that their throats hurt. Another good memory was at his mother's rental store. Far from the city, the countryside was another place of fond memories. His father owned a farm in Piracaia, a small town in the countryside of São Paulo, and he recounts moments of when he used to do something with his father, such as driving a tractor. Two people in his story were remarkable to Gustavo. In an antagonistic way in their profiles, but each one in their own way influenced him a lot. He talks about the admiration he had towards his uncle Zé Luis, his mother's brother. A "guy who knew how to live life"; he was fun, spontaneous and loud. He arrived by helicopter, foreign cars and had good taste. For a long time Gustavo as a teenager looked up to him. On the other hand, class tension was present in the paternal relationship. He remembers a birthday when his father gave him R\$ 60,00 to buy "some pants". And he thought that he would be left with the option of buying pants at Brás with that value. The uncle who boasted consumption and the father who called him to the real life of a non-heir to that wealth. Moreover, his father Galmar showed no affection, was too serious, wasn't loud and carried the motto "men don't cry". Speaking about the routine at home, Gustavo remembers, with regret, that the few moments when he could talk to his father were restricted to the breaks of the television news, the "Jornal Nacional", but only

when authorized. The difficult relationship with father was also linked to the couple's arguments. He remembers some of those occasions when he intervened in defense of his mother, but he was just a child and ended up getting beaten. These were difficult times and contributed to a communication deficit between father and son. At this stage Gustavo said that Maria Tereza decided to seek psychological help for her son. That was just one of the factors that contributed to his father's distance and admiration for his uncle. Gustavo narrates the moment when his admiration began to change positions. He recalls that when his maternal family company, metallurgical company Vaska and Kromma, one of the largest car wheel factories in the country at that time, had some problems, his father had already consolidated his investment in the auto market with Revebras. Within that intricate relationship of family and business, Gustavo began to see his father with different eyes. He found that his uncle Ze Luis, his hero, was flawed, attached to money and rampant consumption, he damaged the family business. As his uncle's image faded, his father's gained a new light. The daughter and son-in-law who renounced their inheritance to get married, were the ones who welcomed their grandmother, a widow when Vaska and Kromma had tax problems. Gustavo's adolescence takes place in the middle of this context of class conflicts. He stresses that the tension experienced at the time was that his mother's family was rich and his father always showed that he should be down to earth. Gustavo even used the helicopter and jet, conquered by the success of the company, but saw his father on the other plate of the scale. He was the father who encouraged his studies at one of the most renowned business schools in São Paulo, FAAP. Gustavo recalls that he socialized with the children of wealthy families in the city, and had no other option if not observing the standard of living of these people, cars, clothes etc. Within his family he was also faced with this disparity. On one side his uncle had a Ferrari, on the other side his father had an Escort. Upon joining the university, his father didn't agree with the Architecture course that wanted to study and encouraged him to study business. He tried to look for something at his maternal grandparents' company while he was in college, but it didn't work out. His father advised him to get experience elsewhere, so he decided to start a business, so he bought a car wash. He found support in a partnership with his mother. He left college and took the risk. Business worked for a while, but Gustavo eventually gave up because he couldn't manage the problems that rose from it. He gave back to his mother the initial investment and in 2009 returned to school until completing the Business course. The university experience among the young children of the city's wealthiest families made him rethink his class status, his experiences with his uncle and father, and his responsible position in the world. It was a time to choose a side of the story, among those struggling to conquer and maintain their properties, as his father did. After graduation, he worked at the Paulista Association of Supermarkets. He had some good experiences until he had the opportunity to work as a manager of the Anhanguera group, a network of schools and colleges. It was a great opportunity to grow within the group. At that moment he was experimenting with the paths of social volunteering. He promoted a vaccination campaign and remembers that he felt very good about leading that. At the peak of professional satisfaction, she began to feel the first symptoms of Multiple Sclerosis. He sought out two ophthalmologists, after one failed his vision, the second appointment the doctor considered several causes, including multiple sclerosis. So far he had a scheduled vacation and a proposal for the position of director of one of the Anhanguera group units. Gustavo went on vacation abroad and lived intensely. Back in Brazil, he was fine and convinced himself that there was no possibility of a disease. But reality knocked on his door at a soccer game when she felt weakness in his left leg. With the persistence of the symptom, the next day reported to his parents and went to the doctor. In 2011 he was diagnosed with Multiple Sclerosis. Gustavo talks about the peak of his professional life, describing the moment as if his life was over, as if he were in a "dark and cold room". At first he thought of keeping it to himself, of carrying the burdens imposed by the disease alone. But he told of a dream, in which he was a child that played with a small truck and placed a larger stone than the toy could handle. With the broken toy he ran to his mother, who said, "Son, you have to put in only what the little truck can handle. You put a very big stone here." The dream served as an escape valve to relieve the initial pressure of the diagnosis. Gustavo uses the dream to resignify his posture. At that moment, the proposal to take over as vice president of Anhanguera College was rejected and chose a sabbatical time in an experience as a monitor at a children's camp. During this time he was called "Uncle Boto" by the children because of his sun-pink cheeks and experienced the feeling of affection and responsibility for others. The period spent there reactivated that sense of satisfaction that he had already experienced when he engaged in social causes. After camp, he left determined that he would engage in social work. The experiences with the disease, the prognosis involving high cost medication, and the experience with the lack of medication led Gustavo to a new route in his life. He discovered the arduous path of bureaucracy to buy medicine or travel with low-temperature medication with Gelox. In addition to prejudice because of the lack of information about the disease. This was all forging an activism, a sense of purpose. Gustavo kept thinking that if he, from a family that could afford the medication, was having trouble buying medicine, what would be of people like his former mother-in-law who has Multiple Sclerosis and for whom he has a strong affection towards. He began to understand that his fight was the fight of others. Complaining about the difficulties about this situation, a friend of the prosecution advises Gustavo to seek a group. Gustavo replies that he tried, but it didn't work out. He was then suggested to organize or set up an association. And so was born "AME- Associação Amigos Múltiplos pela Esclerose", an association to talk about Multiple Sclerosis. But the association was first born of a Facebook profile, where he enlisted friends to post content and information on how to live better in a disease condition like Multiple Sclerosis. He shared his experiences in pursuit of high-cost medication and his experiences with the disease. Social and political mobilization was beginning to take shape virtually. Gustavo currently manages AME with his team and sees meaning in his Business Administration course. He acknowledged that, so far, AME is the biggest project of his life. AME condenses the history of Gustavo, his possibility to rebuild in the world with a disease, to feel that he is building a social and human difference. He recounts the recognition he received from his father, when he was on his way to the airport to receive the award in Washington for the best health platform in the world, in the car, he saw his father posting something on social networks. He was thrilled when reading the word "Pride."