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## Jasmine Daya | Canada | Pursue Your Passion!!

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I started my career as a new lawyer with an unexpected young child and a divorce soon after. My monthly expenses were more than I earned but I was determined to succeed. The night I left my husband at the time, I lay in bed with my 9-month-old son. As he slept peacefully beside me, I looked at him and through tears whispered that we would never be in this situation again. That night with my son forever changed me. In that moment my motivation soared and has never diminished. Fast-forward a few years and I now own my personal injury law firm. I also own a portfolio of real estate and have a property management company. I recently published *Law Girl's Bump in the Road*, a chick lit novel that is based on my life but fictionalized for entertainment purposes. I also recently launched JD in the Kitchen which is a website that shares recipes and tips to balance a career with family meals and I have an Indian cookbook series being released later this year. I remarried and now have three children. I want my children to learn that with effort, they too can realize their dreams. There is no better feeling than accomplishing your goals and achieving personal success. It's obviously made better by having cuddles with my kids at the end of a long day

**What ignited the spark in you to start a new business venture or to make significant changes in an existing business? How did the idea for your business come about?**

My parents are entrepreneurs. I went to business school before law school. It's very common to this day for my father and I to discuss real estate, stocks, currency trading and business ventures at the dinner table or really anywhere, even when we're on a beach vacation somewhere. I sincerely enjoy new projects and I'm constantly thinking of new ideas to embark upon. I get up in the morning excited about what opportunities the day will present and which ones I will choose to pursue. Buying out my law firm was a natural progression in my life. I had been an articling student, associate and named partner at the same firm when my superior retired. I either needed to buy out my practice or move on and work as an associate for another law firm. Initially, I was concerned about taking on liability but it needed to be done so I made it happen and never looked back. After the firm takeover, my novel *Law Girl's Bump in the Road* was published and I finished my first Indian cookbook which will be published later this year. With those ventures, came new ideas such as my Indian spice line and other things that will soon come to fruition. Over the recent years, I also acquired real estate in various parts of Ontario. I enjoy being the type of landlord that everyone desires. I ensure that my tenants are taken care of and can always reach me or those that work for me if they need anything.

**What were the biggest initial hurdles to building your business and how did you overcome them?**

I now have several businesses and the biggest hurdle I have is that some meet me and assume I'm just some clueless young girl. Lenders in particular scrutinize me and stare at me for longer than they should trying to figure me out. They ask me for paper work and I provide it to them. They look at the numbers and look at me and I can see the look of disbelief. Then they ask me for more. Anyone that has experienced that look, can tell you that it's not a figment of my imagination. I overcome this hurdle by bombarding them with more and more information to demonstrate that yes, I have a brain and I'm proud to say that I use it and use it well. Clearly they didn't learn not to judge a book by its cover!

**Did you ever deal with contention from your family and friends concerning your entrepreneurial pursuits?**

**How did you handle it? What would you do differently in hindsight?**

There are times that my husband wishes that I was able to "shut off" but he sees how happy my business ventures make me and I think he has come to terms with my life. We have a few rules, like no cell phones at the dinner table unless it is absolutely crucial. Given my numerous evening meetings, he likes to be informed about where I am but I think that's a very reasonable request.

My friends think I am crazy to always be taking on new projects but I think they are entertained by it all.

**What would you say was the single most influential factor in your business success?**

Time. You need time to brainstorm ideas, research, market, network and sell. There truly aren't enough hours in a day to accomplish your to do list so you need to prioritize. Don't expect success without effort and effort takes time.

**What do you know today that you wish you would have known when you first got started as an entrepreneur?**

I wish I knew that stress is a daily norm as an entrepreneur so I wouldn't have been waiting for it to end at some point and instead learned sooner how to manage it. I need to pay the rent and payroll, bring in more business, train my lawyers, guide my staff, close deals, grow and build, among other things. I thought that the business would stabilize. I have finally accepted that while the business may be stable, as an entrepreneur you will inevitably seek and embark upon new opportunities which means more stress!

**What advice would you give to an upcoming young and old entrepreneur locally and internationally?**

Pursue your passion. If you don't love what you are doing then you will likely fail. If you love what you are doing then it's not work and instead a way of life.

