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How did you get started out in your career?

In my career in law it was reasonably straightforward for me. I really thought I was always going to be a lawyer, which sounds really sad that I did not explore other options, but I think it was at least partly because when I was in high school, my mother completed her law studies through the Barristers Admissions Boards and through a lot of my childhood I remember her studying and the anxiety of her getting the first edition of the newspapers at 4 o'clock in the morning when the results came out and the happiness when she passed and the distress when she did not, so in Year 7 she finally passed and it struck me as a good thing to do. Although I must say at that time mum said I do not think you should do law darling anyone can do it. Which was you know reassuring coming from your own mother, but I like to talk and I like the types of things that are stereotypical law type things. I enjoyed drama and debating and that type of thing at school which is the kind of quintessential stereotype you have of being a lawyer, perhaps out of To Kill a Mocking Bird rather than what law actually is in practice.

How do you define success and being successful?

Success is often defined by others and it is frequently defined by the signifiers of success as they are perceived by other people. So people will say well X is very successful perhaps they have reached a part of their career they are very happy with, a pinnacle of their career. Perhaps they have a big house or a nice car or they go on lovely holidays and these are the kind of signifiers of success.

Perhaps they are more signifiers of ambition than success and I think I would probably describe success as being more about satisfaction and so if you think about what satisfaction means to you in your life, it might be satisfaction with your personal relationships, with your relationships with your family and with your friends, with your working relationships, with the lawyers and partners and clients that you work with and whether you derive a satisfaction out of those relationships. Satisfaction in achieving a result for a client. I guess I am thinking about work here, but satisfaction in achieving something that you set yourself sometimes in work it is finding a solution to a difficult problem, everyone has their own measures of satisfaction in their personal lives and I think it comes down to

whether you can finish up the day or the week and say, well that was good, that was a satisfying achievement.

Did you or do you have mentors?

I think mentoring is a very important part of anyone's career journey, it has been for me. I certainly have had people in my career from an early stage that I would perceive as mentors for different aspects of your career. I do not think I am one of those people who have had a single mentor from the first day I started and have maintained that similar mentoring relationship and part of that probably is because I have been here for all of my career and so have started off with mentors who were partners and who were people who encouraged me in a particular direction and sometimes I have become their partner, so they are still here and so am I, so that relationship changes.

I think mentoring can sometimes be as simple as having a conversation with someone that helps clarify your thoughts or gives you an opportunity to express sometimes doubt or concern, sometimes celebration of a success. There certainly have been partners in this firm who have encouraged me in my career direction in a way I did not expect it to be and for that I am very grateful and it is a cycle you hope over time that you become a mentor as well.

How do you balance work and life?

I suspect that other people will take objection to that question as I do. I do not like the idea of balancing work and life as if work and life were two separate parts. I do not think they are. I think you have a life and within that life there is a balance and that balance involves a whole lot of things and not just work. Work is part of your life of course it is; it is quite a big part. So is family, so are friends, so are doing the things that you do to get away from work, so are holidays all of those things together form the balance, the rhythm of your life. And sometimes the balance is skewed a little more one way than another. When you are on holiday for example I do not balance work at all because I am on holiday. But when I am at work and when it is very busy, other things do give way. Sometimes a little resentfully, and sometimes a little more philosophically, so it is a moving balance. I am a strong believer in adopting a balance in your life that makes sense to you and finding a way that takes you away from work.

What has worked for you and good advice for someone coming up in their career?

I can tell you what did not work for me and that perhaps is a better way of describing it; perhaps it is more a cautionary tale. I didn't have a very open mind about what a career in law would be. I thought it would be litigation. I thought I would go to the Bar and I thought I would be a Judge, because that seemed to be a bit of a straight line I can understand that. But what I was encouraged to do, partly by circumstance and partly because of some of those mentors I mentioned earlier who encouraged me to do it, was to have an open mind and recognise perhaps where my strengths might lie.

It turns out that I am not a litigator, I am a transactional lawyer and I derive an enormous amount of satisfaction from working as a transaction lawyer. But I really railed against that for a few years. I was my own worst enemy in that regard and I did not accept the opportunities in the same open minded way that I encourage people to do today. And so it turned out that I have had an enormously satisfying career to date being something I never thought I would be. So the best advice I can give is to have an open mind and to make the best use of opportunities when people give them to you. Do not assume particularly as a young lawyer that you actually know everything,

Apart from the Law, what would your dream career be?

Apart from the Law what would my dream career be? There are just so many assumptions built into that question aren't there! Look of course I thought I would be a famous Actor. I certainly have been touched by fame, I went to primary school with Nicole Kidman and I do wonder what she is doing now, I suspect she wonders about me too. The thing that really held me back from acting I think, in a way that perhaps it has not held back Nicole was talent and I think not having that meant that law was a natural substitute career for me.

Who is a women you find inspirational? Why?

Who you find inspirational changes over time. The sorts of people I found inspirational when I was really a child were modern day adventurous women. People like Freya Stark, Amelia Earhart and Aimee Johnson, women who did adventurous things in their lives. Subsequently you grow up and you read biographies of these women and you realise that perhaps they are not as exciting or adventurous or even nice as you thought they were from those childhood dreams, but it nonetheless has been inspirational to me in my life to look at women adventurers and so the people I find inspirational now, tend to be people who have an outlook that is an adventurous outlook. That is they

see trials and tribulations in their lives or in the world as opportunities for adventure and excitement rather than burdens to be born.

And so over my life I have certainly found my mother to be a great inspiration to me and indeed women of my family, my great grandmother who was a pioneer in North West Western Australian, they are pretty close to home so they are a bit hard for other people to relate to I think. But other adventurous women writers, someone like Zora Neale Hurston who is a little known black American Writer from the 1930's and she really changed the way that people think about things and she was part of Roosevelt's writers project and I think that type of activity, that type of challenge that operates as a challenge to others is the type of thing I find inspirational.