



MEMBER PROFILE QUESTIONS

INTRO :

Member Name : Samiyyah Ganga

Year of Call : 2020

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QUESTIONS :

1- How did you get into criminal law?

I stumbled into it. I really enjoyed my first-year criminal law class. I also volunteered at CLASP at Osgoode during my first year in the criminal law division. After that, I decided to explore criminal law more and the rest was history.

2- What type of cases do you enjoy defending the most and why?

I enjoy a variety of cases. Especially those with a lot of issues. I find that once I start working a case, I can get into it (and convince myself it's a winner).

3- How did the practice of criminal law change you?

It has made me much more skeptical of everyone and everything. I was already a cynical person so practicing criminal law has just made that worse.

4- If there is one thing only you would like to see change in criminal law, what would it be?

Access to justice for low income accused persons. I think there are far too many people who fall through the cracks because they can't afford a lawyer yet can't get legal aid.

5- What advice would you give to your younger self when you first started practising criminal law?

I'm still in the early years. Ask me that in 5 years.

6- How do you deal with bad work days?

Sometimes I just need to be alone with myself for a while – basically in hibernation mode. Other times, commiserating with other lawyers or just spending time with family and friends does the trick.

7- What do you think of Zoom court?

I think Zoom court is amazing for administrative appearances. It saves so much time. Long gone are the days where you'd have to drive for hours between courthouses across the province for simple remands. However, I do not think it should ever become the norm for trials. Zoom cannot replicate a normal trial. Zoom trials are exhausting – controlling my facial expressions takes a lot of energy. I think there is also a danger in trials where you can't tell what a witness is looking at or who else is in the room. I also don't think the defence should ever be forced into a Zoom trial.

8- Any embarrassing court story you're willing to share?

I like to scrub the truly embarrassing moments from my memory.

9- Who is your role model/inspiration in criminal law?

I've been inspired by all the people I've worked with and learned something from each of them – Faisal Mirza, Frank Addario, Megan Savard, Adam Weisberg etc

10- What's your favourite song?

Hey Ya by OutKast always makes me smile and is tied to some good memories.

11- How do you maintain work life balance and how do you deal with the stress of the job?

It is not always easy to maintain that balance. The first step is to remind myself that there are things outside the job. Having other interests and interacting with people outside of the profession helps. Also, I'd strongly recommend having an office cat.

12- What is your biggest legal inspiration?

Hikes. Watch really bad reality TV. I've also recently discovered that I actually quite like cooking. And I enjoy reading when I get the chance.