



### MEMBER PROFILE QUESTIONS

#### INTRO :

**Member Name :** Jennifer Penman

**Year of Call :** 1998

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#### QUESTIONS :

##### **1- How did you get into criminal law?**

My father and grandfather were both lawyers so I suppose it's no surprise I followed in their footsteps. I used to walk around with the meat tenderizer banging it on the tables, as though it was a gavel, saying « where were you on the night of ? » « Guilty ! Not guilty ». I was confusing judges, lawyers etc., but it was clear I was destined to be in a courtroom.

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

I now defend a lot of serious cases, but I definitely enjoy any case no matter the seriousness with an interesting legal issue.

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

I have had my eyes opened to the diversity of experiences and situations that can arise. I'm definitely no longer naive.

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

More money for legal aid. There needs to be an even playing field for the defence.

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

Lots. 1. Take care of yourself mentally and physically. A criminal law career is a marathon, not a sprint and it's tough. 2. Reputation matters. You can only lose it once. 3. Be patient, clients will come.

**6- How do you deal with bad work days?**

Yoga and wine.

**7- What do you think of Zoom court?**

It definitely has its advantages from an efficiency point of view, particularly for us defence counsel. It was also necessary for a while particularly for accused in custody who needed to have their matters adjudicated, rather than spend even longer in custody. I far prefer being in person for trials though. The solemnity and formality of an actual courtroom simply can't be replicated over zoom.

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

I was sitting in court on a multi co-accused case listening to wiretaps. My client was talking about me and referring to me as a pitbull. I realize it could have been a lot worse...

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

Atticus Finch from To Kill a Mockingbird.

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

Always making sure my family is a priority whether it be dinner together every night or making sure they know I'm there for them. When things get tough, I hug them a little harder.

**11- What do you do outside of the law?**

Tons of reading, exercise, spending time at our cottage, and travelling.

**12- What would your defence bar colleagues be surprised to learn about you?**

I'm obsessed with hummingbirds.