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THE **CRIMINAL**  
**DEFENCE BAR**

### MEMBER PROFILE QUESTIONS

#### INTRO :

**Member Name:** Daniel Amar (Ammar Ahmad)

**Year of Call:** 2019

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#### QUESTIONS :

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

I developed an interest in criminal law subject from my college days. My father was a judge back home. He would discuss his criminal law matters with his family members, who were also lawyers. I grew up in such an environment, where I have heard names of different offences, defenses and some other concepts of criminal law. Though I was not very clear about the complications of criminal law, at least, I have an idea of criminal law.

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

Being a new member to the bar, I am still in the learning process. During my articling, I have handled cases like break and enter, assault, sexual assault, uttering threats etc. I liked the case of defending a client, who was charged of sexual assault. The reason, I



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like to deal with this type of offence is because of the concept of “consent”, which is very complex in sexual assault cases, especially for male partners(husbands), from different cultures and religion, who find this concept very hard to understand. The concept of consent, as they understand in their own countries, may not have the same connotation or meaning as it has in Canada. This is all because of social, cultural and religious factors. This concept of consent can only be understood well if you belong to those countries, where implied consent is taken in majority of the cases, and where consent is obtained because of authority or family pressure or duress.

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

Practice of criminal law has a deep impact on my thinking process. It makes me think how and why people commit offences. How different social, psychological and economic factors influence the person who commits offences. In some cases, people who have been charged with offences do not have evil minds. They commit offences because at a particular moment, they make a wrong choice. I believe if, at a school level, children are made aware of the fact of how a criminal record can affect their whole life, this may make them more conscious about their actions.

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

Intoxication defense should not be easily available to those people, who voluntarily consume so much alcohol, that they are unable to appreciate the nature and quality of



the act. They might be lacking the mens rea of that particular offence, but because of policy considerations, this defense should be a very limited defense. If a person voluntarily self induces himself, then he should be considered liable for his acts especially if he departs markedly from the standard of care.

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

The best way to learn criminal law practice is to sit and watch in the criminal courts. How senior defense lawyers argue during show cause hearing, how sentencing is conducted, how aggravating and mitigating factors are picked up from the facts of the case, etc

**6- How do you deal with bad workdays?**

I try to minimize my workload for that day, because if you have a bad workday, then it may affect your other assignments as well for that particular bad day.

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

Zoom court is really helpful in many ways. It saves the time of everyone. It saves judicial resources as well. I believe the Zoom court concept should be expanded as much as possible.



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**8- What's your favorite song?**

I like listening to my cultural songs in Urdu and Hindi.

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

Once I have finished work of the day, I try not to think more about the next day's work. I like to have an organized schedule, where everything is already planned ahead of time. I try to complete every assignment before the time. Whenever I have more stress, I will go for a long drive and listen to my favorite songs.

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

I love to teach and guide newcomers to the law profession. I became a lawyer in Canada through the NCA process. I understand the challenges and limitations of foreign trained lawyers. I provide them with all possible resources to help them in their accreditation process. I am always looking for volunteer guest speakers. If you would like to guide, interact and help the newcomers in this profession and country, please reach out to me directly. All foreign trained lawyers will really appreciate your help. Mentoring and guiding the internationally trained lawyers will also connect you with many new faces.



**11- What would your defense bar colleagues be surprised to learn about you?**

My defense bar colleagues may find it interesting to know that they have a colleague, who is a full-time teacher and at the same time, I have an interest in criminal law practice as well. I almost teach seven days a week, but at the same time, I volunteer for Calgary legal guidance and provide pro bono advise to clients, who have been charged of criminal offences. I do not accept, and I do not provide legal advice to private clients. I may go into actual active law practice, but I have not decided the date yet.