



### **MEMBER PROFILE QUESTIONS**

#### **INTRO :**

**Member Name :** David Walia

#### **QUESTIONS :**

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

During law school, I enrolled in a course with a clinical component at the Prosecutor's Office, where I worked on Provincial Offences Act (POA) matters. That early exposure to courtroom proceedings and the justice system drew me into criminal law.

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

I enjoy both ends of the spectrum. On one hand, I find satisfaction in quickly resolving minor cases that never should have made it to court—they're a drain on resources for everyone involved. On the other hand, I truly thrive on complex, high-stakes cases. I enjoy the depth of preparation, the strategy, and the intensity. I'm currently on my third murder trial this year, and it's an all-encompassing experience I find deeply fulfilling.



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

When I first started at the Crown and Prosecutor's offices, I believed in the idea of "good guys" and "bad guys." Over time, I've learned that those labels don't apply. There are only good lawyers and bad lawyers—professionalism, competence, and integrity matter far more than moral binaries.

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

The presumption of innocence should be more than just a principle in textbooks. In practice, it often doesn't exist in the way we teach it. I would like to see it more genuinely upheld in real courtrooms.

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

Start early. Do everything. Don't ignore your natural talents. If you're a gifted speaker, lean into courtroom advocacy. If you're more introspective and analytical, explore appellate work. There's a place for every kind of strength in this field.



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

Bad days are just part of life. Good days, bad days—it's all part of the journey. I try to enjoy the good days when they come and not dwell too much on the bad ones. They always pass.

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

Zoom court is great for simple matters like NCDs and bail hearings. That said, I'm a bit old school—I value being physically in court. There's no substitute for building rapport with the judge and courtroom personnel. Being present enhances advocacy.

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

During my first trial, I once asked a question just so the judge would hear the subject matter, knowing it would draw an objection. I even said, in full American TV drama style, "I withdraw the question and we can strike it from the record." That's not something we say in Canada—and I definitely got a few raised eyebrows!

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

Matthew McConaughey's character, Jake Brigance, in *A Time to Kill*. I admire litigators with real courtroom presence and control. I could sit and watch them work all day—they inspire me.



**10- What's your favourite song?**

Eye of the Tiger by Survivor—from the Rocky movies. It gets me fired up every time.

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

I have two young kids, so when I'm home, I'm in full-on dad mode. I get a couple of hours with them before bedtime and I make the most of it—games, silliness, laughter. Work starts again after they're asleep. That time with them helps me reset and decompress.

**12- What is your biggest legal inspiration?**

I want to win a case that everyone says is unwinnable. I'm drawn to the challenge, especially when the stakes are high.

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

I like to lie on the couch, watch movies, and just tune out the world for a bit. A great movie and some solitude—that's gold to me.