Q&A

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Personal reflections and integration

Do you believe AI will act as an equaliser that lowers the barriers to entry for women looking to launch their own boutique advisory firms, or will it further consolidate power among the global hyperscale institutions that own the technology?

I don't think it's an either/or situation. AI gives smaller firms the ability to do more with less, which is incredibly powerful. It allows entrepreneurs to access tools and insights that would previously have required a much larger team and budget.

From my own experience, the biggest barrier has never been technology. It's been getting the opportunity to step into the room, contribute, and prove what you're capable of. AI can help you perform at a high level, but someone still needs to give you the chance to perform. That's where I think the real opportunity lies: using technology to amplify talent, while continuing to create pathways for more women to participate, lead and succeed.

The phrase, 'work-life balance' can feel mythical in transactional finance. How do you personally define and manage the integration of a demanding career with your personal life?

To be completely honest, I don't think I've mastered work-life balance, and I'm not sure that I ever will. On the days where it looks like I have it all together, it's usually because of the incredible support system around me. Help at work, help at home, help from my son's school, help from family and friends.

There are only 24 hours in a day, and being a working mother means trying to fit a great many important things into those same 24 hours. The reality is that, most days, something has to take a back seat. I've learned to make peace with that.

My approach is to focus on what's most important in that moment. One day, it might be a critical credit submission or client meeting. Another day, it might be a cake sale at my son's school, or being present for something that matters to him or my nephews and nieces. I try not to chase perfection in every area at once because that's an impossible standard. Instead, I focus on being intentional about where I need to show up most on any given day, and do the best I can with the time I have.

When the deal closes and the adrenaline drops, how do you intentionally disconnect, recharge, and protect your mental well-being?

My answer is probably not the one people expect. When a deal closes and I finally have a moment to breathe, I recharge by watching 'trash TV'.

In a job where the stakes are high and you're constantly analysing, negotiating, problem-solving and making decisions, the last thing I want to do when a deal closes is consume something serious. I have always loved reading, but after a particularly intense period at work, I've found that I need something completely different, something that asks absolutely nothing of me.

I actually got into reality TV during COVID. There was so much uncertainty and sadness around us that I reached a point where I simply couldn't absorb any more heavy information. Watching people navigate entirely inconsequential problems on television became a surprisingly effective form of escapism.

I've learned that disconnecting doesn't have to look impressive to be effective. For me, recharging is less about doing something productive and more about giving my brain permission to switch off for a while. Sometimes that means a good book, but more often than not, it means a couch, a blanket, and a completely mindless TV show that I don't have to think too hard about.

How has your definition of success changed from when you were an ambitious graduate to who you are today?

When I was younger, success looked exactly like the movies told me it should: big deals, a fancy title, a packed diary, and all the outward signs that you'd 'made it'.

Today, I think success is a lot quieter than that. It's having work that challenges and excites me, earning the trust of clients and colleagues, and knowing that I've built a career through consistency and hard work, rather than shortcuts.

It's also recognising that life happens alongside your career. Success isn't just what happens in the boardroom. It's being able to show up for the people you love, maintaining friendships, raising a good human, and still finding joy in the process.

The older I've become, the less interested I am in looking successful, and the more interested I am in feeling fulfilled. For me, that's a much better measure of whether I've done well.

What is a personal passion or hobby you pursue that has absolutely nothing to do with finance, but keeps your perspective sharp?

Running is probably the hobby that has the least to do with finance but does the most for my wellbeing. I'm not particularly fast, and I'll never be the person standing on a podium collecting medals, but I absolutely love it and I'm fiercely committed to it.

Part of the appeal is simply being outdoors. So much of my day is spent behind a laptop, in meetings, on calls, or travelling between commitments that getting outside feels like a reset button.

What keeps me coming back, though, is seeing the progress over time. Running has taught me that improvement doesn't happen overnight. It comes from showing up consistently, even on the days you don't feel like it. There's something incredibly satisfying about looking back and realising that a distance or pace that once felt impossible now feels completely manageable.

It also gives me something that can be surprisingly hard to find as a working mother and banker: uninterrupted time to myself. Some of my best thinking happens on a run. I've solved work problems, made important decisions, and gained perspective on things that felt overwhelming when I first set out. And sometimes I don't think about anything at all, which can be just as valuable.

For me, running isn't really about fitness. It's about creating space. Space to think, to reflect, to reset, and occasionally to remind myself that progress, whether in a career or on a running route, usually comes one step at a time.