



# Q&A

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## What initially drew you to a career in M&A?

I didn't grow up with anyone in my family working in this industry, so I only saw glimpses of it on television. But from a young age, my mom says I insisted I wanted to "be in business". I'd squeeze my little feet into the tips of her heels, carry a handbag, and gently coerce my little brother into being my personal driver who would take me to "important meetings", while my cousins played co-workers in our imaginary corporate office. But what's funny is that I always thought I might end up as a writer or storyteller of some sort – and in a way, that's exactly what dealmaking is. M&A is a kind of storytelling; two sides come together with a vision for something that doesn't yet exist. Often, they'll start with only a rough outline, then bring in a team of advisors to help articulate, shape and structure the narrative. After weeks of negotiations, long nights, drafting (and maybe even some near-tears), a deal emerges – a story of two parties choosing to come together, or sometimes parting ways. That creative, collaborative process of building something new out of complexity is what continues to draw me to M&A.

## What's the hardest lesson you've learnt, and how did it shape you?

The hardest lesson I've learnt is accepting that to be at peace in this life, I need to give up the hope that the past could have been different. Working in this industry demands more than we often acknowledge, not just in time and energy, but in personal sacrifice. For a long time, I found myself replaying past decisions, mistakes and missed opportunities, carrying the weight of "what ifs" for far longer than was helpful or healthy. I used to think that if I revisited the past enough, I could somehow redeem it. Letting go of the hope that the past could be changed is slowly liberating me from the "tyranny of the past". It's allowed me to live with more grace (for myself and for those around me) and to be more present, compassionate, and resilient – both professionally and personally.

## What does self-care look like for you, and how do you prevent burnout?

For me, self-care starts with remembering that work is something I do, not who I am. I try hard to make sure that my work doesn't become my identity, and having friends whose careers are completely different from mine helps keep me grounded and reminds me to keep perspective. I see self-care as the hard, but necessary, daily work we do to stay motivated, healthy and whole in a world that makes it difficult to be all these things at once. It's staying connected to friends and family, reading and writing purely

for joy, and making sure the interests that fuel me don't sit on the back burner for too long. Sometimes, it's getting up for boxing on a Saturday morning or playing tennis on a Sunday afternoon – even when staying in to binge a series feels easier. And often, it's simply having the courage to ask for help and speak up when I'm not okay.

## Did you have any mentors or role models? How did they influence your journey?

Yes! I'm a huge advocate for mentorship, and both my life and career are a testament to the power it can have. As I've grown older, though, my view on mentorship and role models has evolved. My focus now is more on building a sustainable network – a community I can tap into, learn from, and do life with. For me, it's about being intentional about the people I surround myself with, and making sure that it's always people who are smarter and kinder than me – people who edify me. The shift towards community-building has helped me to stay grounded and energised, even in high-pressure environments like M&A. It's no longer about finding one person to guide me, but rather creating a circle that challenges and uplifts me – and what a beautiful circle it's becoming. 🍷

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