

Lawyered Podcast

Bonus Ep. 7 – The Finale ft. Husein Panju

[00:02] HUSEIN: This is Episode Seven of Lawyered Unplugged, the exclusive bonus podcast series for members of the Lawyered Patreon community. I'm Husein Panju. After 10 years and over 100 podcast episodes, this is the final podcast episode of Lawyered.

[00:20] And for this episode, the guest is going to be me. And I am graciously joined by mentor, friend, and fellow lawyer, Fatema Dada, who will be interviewing me for this retrospective look about the show. We're going to be speaking about the origins of the podcast, behind-the-scenes content, our learnings from the show, as well as helpful tips for creators, lawyers, and a whole lot more. It's going to be both a look back and a look ahead, so stick around. This is Lawyered Unplugged.

[Music Break]

[01:03] Hello everybody. Welcome to this final, final episode of the Lawyered podcast. This is technically a bonus episode, part of our Lawyered Unplugged series. So, I appreciate you joining us today for the last time, officially. Just a few things I want to say off the top. First and foremost, I want to say thank you so much to everybody who's been part of this show since the beginning, for the last 10 years and change.

[01:33] Obviously, the patrons of the show who provide a lot of financial support. I want to thank all the listeners from the beginning who have found value in the show and even share this with others, everyone who's been supporting the show in any way, shape or form. All the guests. It's been over 100 guests from all over Canada—appreciate all of your time. There's been students, lawyers, professors who have been reaching out to share feedback and input and even with their networks as well.

[02:04] All of our technical team who provide a lot of the support in terms of making the audio smooth and provide the transcripts and the website help and a lot more. As I keep saying on, I think most episodes that, you know, although I am the face of the voice of the show, there's so much background support that goes in to make the show a success. And I really feel, especially in the last couple of years, this has truly been more of a community driven initiative. It's no small effort. It's been going on for some time and I'm really, extremely grateful for everyone who's been a part of this in any way.

[02:41] Next thing I want to talk about is what's next. Even though the show is wrapping up, I'm not disappearing, which is good or bad news, depending on how well you know me. I'm going to be working on some other different projects, initiatives, including some guest lecturing and I'll be talking about that a bit more in the interview you're about to hear. And so again, I'm not going to be recording new episodes of the show, but I do intend to keep the podcast episode archive live on the website and on the RSS feed and whatever mechanisms that are currently available.

[03:14] So, if you are a late joiner of the show, you know, maybe you're listening to this episode well after this episode is dropped and you want to check out an episode, one of the hundred or so episodes, one of the different topics we've covered, they're going to be available. They're not going anywhere. And of course, you can always reach out to me if you like, and my contact information is pretty easy to find.

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[03:38] The last thing I want to talk about before we get to the interview is just the concept of decluttering the law. Because I said at the very beginning of this episode, 10 years ago, and then more publicly during the crowdfunding campaign launch, and then numerous times, especially during these episodes, that the concept of the show has always been about access to justice or decluttering the law. The law is incredibly complicated, even for the most experienced lawyers, and it only becomes more complicated by the day. There is so much content out there. There's so much complexity out there. There's, as you've heard, dozens of areas of law that range in nuances across the country.

[04:22] And so during the course of the last 10 years, I've done my best to carve out a bit of a niche space to make some of these issues a bit more understandable, a bit more interesting, and hopefully a bit more accessible as well. I recognize this has barely scratched the surface in terms of what is out there and what's needed to make the law truly accessible. This is not a political show, but what I will say is that we're going through a very challenging times right now in terms of the polarized political climate, which resulted in a heightened need for access to justice initiatives, whether that's legal aid services, including pro bono services for those who already exist at the margins of society.

[05:08] We're having a reckoning in terms of need for more diverse voices in our communities across the country, particularly for those who can help power those by being a voice for the voiceless. There are numerous ways that you can help in terms of moving the needle on Access to Justice or A to J. So, if you're a lawyer, regardless of your experience or your industry, what I do want to impart is that I hope that nothing else, you take some time to see what you can do to help enhance the accessibility of justice. I think many would agree this is an ethical obligation for those in our profession. And it's really a tangible way that we can use our resources and the skills that we have to make our country a more equitable space.

[06:01] All right. So, with that, we're going to get to our interview for today. I really hope you're going to enjoy this one in particular, partly because it's going to be me sitting in as the guest for today, which feels very strange because I probably said before I am far more comfortable being the host and controlling the direction of the interview. But since it's the final episode, I really wanted the opportunity to share a bit more about what the show has meant to me personally and provide an insider's view about how the show works, things I've learned from doing the show, and hopefully some tips that listeners can take away for themselves.

[06:34] This interview, like all interviews that we've done on the show, was not scripted, but I've done my best to make it a bit more practical in my responses to provide some takeaways that people can implement or not implement on their own as well. I was especially grateful to have one of my mentors, Fatema Dada, agree to be the host for this episode. Now, if you are one of the few people who does not know who Fatema is, first of all, pause this episode, look her up, because she is truly one of the most outstanding lawyers in our profession. She is, I'd say, at least as well known for her community work as she is for her tactical skills as a lawyer and a leader.

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[07:15] I've learned an incredible amount from her about how to be a better lawyer, and it seemed really fitting to have her on this particular episode to guide this discussion. So, without further ado, here is the final Lawyered Podcast interview featuring myself and today's host, Fatema Dada.

[Music Break]

[07:38] Fatema is currently serving as the Deputy Legal Director within the Ontario government. Previously, she was counsel at the Ontario Human Rights Commission, where her work focused on addressing anti-Black racism in policing. She also worked as a Senior Policy Advisor for the former Attorney General of Ontario and has over a decade of experience in litigation for the province.

[08:00] In addition to her professional work, Fatema is actively involved in community service. She sits on the board of Smile Canada Support Services, an organization supporting children with disabilities, and is a co-founder of the Muslim Legal Support Centre. She's also a board member of Hijabi Ballers, which is an organization supporting Muslim women in sports. And previously, she was involved with Conquer COVID, which was a volunteer initiative that provided PPE and essential resources to frontline workers and communities in need during the pandemic.

[08:30] And up until recently, she also served on the board of the Canadian Muslim Lawyers Association, which she contributed to advancing the interest and representation of Muslim lawyers across Canada. So, Fatema, thanks for being on the show today.

[08:42] FATEMA: Thank you very much, Husein.

[08:43] HUSEIN: Yeah, it's a real honour to have you. As I mentioned, you've been one of the most keen mentors and advisors of mine, I'd say during my career. So, it meant a lot to have you on for the proper finale. So, as I mentioned in the intro for the show, I'm going to be the guest on the show, so I'm going to be handing over the reins to you to ask the questions. But yeah, we're looking forward to the conversation.

[09:08] FATEMA: All right. Well, first of all, I am highly honoured that you asked me to conduct this podcast with you, knowing that I have zero, zero, zero experience in podcasting at all.

[09:24] HUSEIN: That's true, but you have a lot of experience in conversations, which that will be as transferable.

[09:29] FATEMA: That is true, but also putting yourself on the hot seat and allowing me to ask you anything and everything is pretty dangerous, so...

[09:36] HUSEIN: Yes. I may live to regret this, but this is also the final episode, so if it goes badly, we will not be doing it again.

[09:42] FATEMA: I guess you could always edit stuff out if you didn't like what I asked you.

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[09:45] **HUSEIN:** Theoretically, this may be edited.

[09:48] **FATEMA:** Anyway, so thank you very much. I'm really excited. I can't believe what you did with this podcast. Like it is pretty incredible. I was looking it up and taking a look at all of the different individuals you have interviewed over time since, is it 2014 is when you started?

[10:08] **HUSEIN:** That's right. That's right.

[10:09] **FATEMA:** So it's incredible. So why don't you just tell us a little bit about how you decided that you were going to start podcasting?

[10:18] **HUSEIN:** Yeah. Thank you for asking. So, yeah, it didn't really go the way I expected it was going to go. So, I started this podcast just after I finished articling. And at the time I was employed, but I was a bit unsure of what I want to be doing professionally. So, I was taking the advice that a lot of people had given me, which was, you know, try to meet as many lawyers as you can, go on these informational interviews, which was going well. And I got to meet a lot of different people in different careers.

[10:48] And I thought that the information I was getting was valuable, but I didn't think this was really being accessible to a larger audience. That was also the time that podcasts were really like hitting those strides. There was a podcast, Serial, that was very popular. I was consuming a lot of podcasts then as well— had at least 15 in my rotation. And I was actually looking for a podcast that would be about Canadian legal issues.

[11:15] That's the way I consumed a lot of information as well. There's so much changing in the law on a regular basis. And yes, there are these firm blogs and websites which cover some of it, often kind of tailored to their firm's interests. And then the content on these legal databases are not accessible to a large audience as well. And so, I kind of was surprised by the fact that there wasn't already this kind of like open access public resource that would cover kind of general legal issues in the Canadian space. And since I couldn't find one that that modelled either, I decided that I could start one on my own.

[11:58] And then similarly, I also felt that if I was feeling this way, there's probably other people who had a similar need as well and might be able to provide like some sort of a public service. So, I don't really have any background in podcasting before starting this. I just have this idea, I thought it would be helpful for other people. So, I did a lot of research online, a lot of YouTube videos to figure out how does one start a podcast? I had a few friends who were in the audio space. Actually, one of my friends, Ben Swirsky, who provided the music for the show, was very helpful early on to letting me know, "Here's the equipment you need to get, here's the microphones, here's all the technical information."

[12:40] And yeah, so I did a lot of research about how to produce it well enough for consumption. And that included learning how to interview people in a way that's conversational and fun to listen to. I think it helped that I did, as I mentioned, listen to a lot of podcasts even before starting the show. So I had a good sense of what I liked and what I

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did not like. And then in terms of finding guests, that, I also never had done before. I was a very junior lawyer at the time.

I didn't have that many connections either. So, the first couple of guests were actually some close friends of mine, Andrew Monkhouse and Addison Cameron-Huff. And they were very generous in taking a chance of being guests on the show.

[13:29] And then I just started going through my rolodex of lawyers who I thought would be interesting people to be on the show. And fortunately, a lot of them agreed. And again, I feel like the show did develop traction fairly quickly after the first couple episodes. But I do give the first guests a lot of credit for signing up for something and taking a chance on a project that they didn't really know a lot about. And especially the guests who didn't know me very well. Again, this could have easily not gone anywhere. And so, I really give them a lot of respect and thank them especially for being the ones to take the chance on the show earlier on before it got as established as it ended up becoming.

[14:11] And I say this to a lot of people who are starting new projects, that when you look back on your earlier work, sometimes it's hard to listen to or look. It kind of makes you cringe to see what the quality was at the beginning versus the end. But I really am proud of how the show has improved over time. How it's developed and getting more comfortable with interviewing and building rapport with the guests and the audience. Got more and more guests over time and got more comfortable with the technology over time. And I think it's really taken off and provided a lot of value to a lot of people as well.

[14:52] FATEMA: And do you produce and edit everything yourself?

[14:54] HUSEIN: Pretty much, I would say. So really, a lot of people ask, is this like a one-man operation? Like, without flattering myself, I say primarily yes. What I will say is that around year five, when COVID hit, I realized that it was going to be a bit challenging to continue to do it entirely by myself, and that it does take a lot of time to get all this work done, especially at the rate that I was doing that, which was bi-weekly. So, one episode every other week.

[15:26] And at the time, I was kind of balancing a bunch of other initiatives. And the nature of litigation is that when it gets busy, it gets very busy. And it wasn't really practical to schedule the podcast episodes around the hearings and trials that I was doing. And it was difficult to appreciate, but I recognized fairly early on that I was either already burned out or was very closely getting burned out doing this the way that I was. And managing the podcast at that rate was not going to be sustainable.

[16:07] And another thing, and I don't love talking about this, but running a podcast at this level is also financially expensive. There's a lot of costs that people don't appreciate. There's the cost of the website, the hosting fees, the podcast recording platform has a fee as well. There are fees to actually get the show out into distribution. There's the editing software that has subscription fees. There are equipment costs.

[16:43] Even before I started getting formal transcripts, I needed to get raw transcripts in order to be able to properly edit the content to visually see what content goes where. So,

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there's all these costs that may seem insignificant on a small level, but when you're doing a dozen or so episodes a year over several years, it was actually getting to a point where I didn't know if it would be financially sustainable for me to run it, independent of whether I would have the time to dedicate to this project to make it valuable for the people who are listening to it.

[17:20] So I started a crowdfunding campaign to help generate some funds to help make the show more sustainable and accessible. And I mean accessible in every sense of the word. Conventionally on the show, we talk about accessibility in terms of having the content literally understandable for a lay audience or at least junior lawyers who are not specialists in the area that we're speaking about.

[17:46] But also, in the more conventional sense of having transcripts for people who require them and perhaps don't have the time or interest to listen to the full hour or change of the episode. Having transcripts, I think, goes a long way to make the content more wide-reaching for the purpose of the show. And so, a portion of the funds have been deliberately going towards accessibility formats for the show to get it in the, I would say hands, but in the ears or eyes of the people who it's trying to reach. And also, an amount of those funds also go towards general access to justice initiatives. So, there's a few legal clinics to whom we have contributed some funds from the overall collections. Given the show is fundamentally an access to justice initiative.

[18:41] So I use the funds for a few purposes. One is to get transcripts for the episodes. So, I hire someone, Sedonia, who produces these transcripts very regularly. And another thing that I use the funds for is to get some freelance audio support. So, Solomon Krause-Imlach is one of my friends who helps to help with the audio production. I would say I do most of the editing myself in terms of when we record an episode, I'm the one who cuts it down to say, this is the content that should stay and here's what should remain. But he does more of the polishing to make it sound a bit more professional and more digestible for a larger audience.

[19:21] You know, during the first half of the series, sometimes there'd be some weird audio issues that I didn't really know how to fix. You know, there's some weird humming going on in the background. Sometimes the guest's audio is just unusable. Sometimes there's a file format issue I don't know how to fix. Solomon's been a pro at fixing all sorts of these issues that have come during the back half of our series. And I think he's made the show's quality a bit more responsive to what we're going for and more respectful of the audience as well. And that has really made the show more sustainable over the long term.

[19:59] And then the other thing that I've learned from doing the podcast and even doing this crowdfunding campaign is that I'm very, I would say, reluctant to ask for help or have been. I know I like to have a lot more control over the end product and sometimes I just feel guilty asking people for help as well. But just starting that campaign really opened me up to how willing people are to contribute to help out projects that they really believe in. And most visibly, this has been people contributing towards the crowdfunding campaign for whatever duration.

[20:34] Right now, there's a couple dozen of very generous supporters who have been contributing some form of money on a monthly basis that's been going towards making the

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show more polished, more refined, and more importantly, more accessible over the long term. That's a big chunk of people who've been contributing, a bunch of others have also helped in making introductions to people to learn about the show and also be on the show as well. A lot of people have been helping in terms of signal boosting, helping to promote the show on their own channels to get the word out.

[21:11] A lot of people have been very generous in giving me their feedback, whether it's on content and/or technical issues. People jumped on the call to walk through a technical glitch on a short notice. There's been all these people who have kind of been joining me on this journey. And the good thing is, I don't know if it's mutual, but I have kind of felt that this has kind of been a co-production in that, yes, I am like the face and the voice behind the show, but more and more over time, it's felt more like a team effort, which is something that I had not predicted, but I'm very happy that's how it worked out.

[21:52] And all these things taken together have objectively made the show a lot better and a lot more accessible over the long term. And that's something that I frankly only picked up from doing the show, and I felt this is translated into other parts of my life, particularly in my work life and even some of my other projects where I have a leadership role.

[22:13] By virtue of what I've learned from doing this project, I'm now more comfortable sharing the workload and delegating tasks and what could have been a solo project that might have taken a couple of weeks. There are people who have the interest and availability. Now I'm more comfortable reaching out to them and giving them an opportunity to shine and providing them with development opportunities as well.

[22:38] FATEMA: So, I know something you may not know, actually, Hussein, about me is I used to mix music in my younger days because, you know, a little bit just of interest. I thought I was a DJ. DJ Fatty Fat is what I was called.

[22:56] HUSEIN: Were you like burning CDs?

[22:59] FATEMA: So, well, I used to...Like, back in the day, it was with the tape recorder, right?

[23:03] HUSEIN: Oh my goodness!

[23:04] FATEMA: Play, record, play, and then you try and mix that way. And then we got our computers and I downloaded like a DJ app. And so, it actually looks like a turntable on your DJ app and you can mix things. Anyways, long story to tell you, I understand a little bit, a very tiny bit about the complications of doing the editing and putting things together. Can you just tell us a little bit more about that process?

[23:33] HUSEIN: For sure. I'd love to. And this is something that I think a lot of people ask me about, like kind of hardcore fans about the editing process, because it actually is a fair amount of work that a lot of people don't see. I think that it's kind of like electrical work. Generally, if it's done well, people don't notice it. So again, the length of the episodes has

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changed over time. The first half, they're about half an hour long. And then later on, they got about an hour long.

[24:04] And as I'm sure you know, and most listeners know, lawyers love to talk. And so, it was very challenging, especially earlier on when I felt very junior and the lawyers are very senior, that I was very reluctant to cut people off as they're talking. But at the same time, I don't want to publish an episode that's like two hours.

[24:25] FATEMA: Right. I've been trying really hard not to cut you off because I'm worried about your audience, so I'm trying. I'm really trying here.

[24:34] HUSEIN: That's what it's like. What I did initially was I gave them a very large amount of latitude in terms of what the questions were. So, I would give them themes about what we're going to be speaking about. I wouldn't give them exact questions, but then that led to them giving very long-winded answers. And then to edit it down, I would commission a raw copy of the transcript. And then like I was editing an essay or a factum or something, I would mark up and say, this stuff should remain. This stuff should go. This one should go over here. And then I would basically like Frankenstein it together. And what I just described then is pretty close to what I still do right now.

[25:21] But the difference is that back then the raw audio footage was so long. So literally, it could be like over two hours of time. So, it was low key a disaster trying to edit down over two hours of content into maybe half an hour without scrapping some of the important details that people need to know to understand how one topic flows into the other. So, I would not recommend that. And then over time, I kind of developed better questioning techniques, similar to what one would do if they're like becoming a better litigator, to get more refined answers.

[26:06] So again, I wouldn't give them the verbatim questions beforehand, but I kind of developed a system where I would get more concise answers that would reduce the amount of editing on the back end is. And I'd like to feel that it's gotten a bit better and more responsive to what people are listening to. So, I'd say initially, the raw audio would probably be about twice or sometimes three times the length of the actual final product. More recently, it's been closer to 1.5 times, which is a bit more manageable for people to listen to.

[26:46] FATEMA: Right. Incredible. And like for one episode, how many hours would you say would you spend on like sort of refining that to get it to the final product?

[26:55] HUSEIN: It's a good question. So, I would say that on average, I'd say each episode at this point of just my time, it takes about 12 to 15 hours.

[26:09] FATEMA: Wow!

[27:10] HUSEIN: Yeah. Once I've identified the guest. So, identifying the guests is sometimes the hardest part because I'm very stubborn about not repeating topics. So finding the right guests is often the challenge. So, I'm trying to find someone who is knowledgeable in their

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space and also good at speaking in a way that will be understandable to a broad audience, which are not the same thing. And then also be interested in doing the show and available for doing the show. So, which includes some of the pre-production conversation and work, including the research part as well.

[27:49] Once they're actually interested, I go about working with them and seeing if they're actually interested in being on the show. There's a lot of, I wouldn't call it luddites, people who don't know what a podcast is sometimes. So, getting them acquainted with what that is. Then there's the research process. A lot of listeners of the show ask, "Oh, so do you think of the topics of the show?" Absolutely not, or I'd say mostly not.

[27:17] The way it works is once we've kind of decided that we're going to proceed with the guests, I defer to the guests to tell me, okay, you work in this space, you know a lot of people in this space. What would you say are the three hottest topics in this area of law? What are people thinking about in this space? If I would go to a conference about this topic, if I were to run into some lawyers in the lunchroom, what are some things that are queuing them up at night? Things that are both new and also important. So what are some things that I have changed in this area of law that were not there maybe a year ago or so?

[28:59] And then from there, usually ask them to give me a list of four or five, just in case, and then together we'll crop it down to a list of topics that will be kind of responsive to what people are interested in as lay people too. I work with them to identify what the topics will be that will be interesting to people, but then I have to identify, okay, I need to know enough about the topics to ask intelligent questions.

[29:25] And so one thing that I really pride myself on is that I do a lot of deep research in each of the topics. So, if we're talking about a recent Supreme Court Canada case, I want to read that case. I'm going to read the headnotes, go to the case itself. I'm going to read blog articles about it. I want to know as much as I can about that topic so that I have a general sense of where we're going to go in the discussion. And I think of it kind of in the context of a job interview.

[29:53] Unfortunately, I've been a lot of job interviews as the candidate. And unfortunately, there's been times where the interviewer has done no research into me whatsoever. It's clear that they're looking at my resume for the very first time. And I just remember feeling so disrespected and disengaged. And so, in situations like this, try to overcompensate and make sure that I'm very familiar with what the topics are. I think that reflects well in conversation as well, that the guest really feels that I'm invested in the conversation too, and ultimately makes for a better discussion, which I think translates into a more enjoyable experience with the listener as well.

[30:34] That takes numerous hours, especially for areas that I don't know anything about. Then there's developing the questions, doing the recording in a way that makes the guest feel comfortable. Because, again, normally it's just me talking to them, and they're talking to a complete stranger about technical subject matters. And then there's the actual editing down of the content in a digestible way, which takes numerous hours, depending on the raw audio content. And then once I got that done, I compiled the segments into distinct

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audio files. The last couple of years, Solomon's largely been leading the post-production part of the process, once I've identified what sequence I want everything to be in.

[31:26] I do the post-production of recording the intros and the outros to make it seem like it's one coherent conversation. Then there's the publishing on the podcast feeds, and then preparing the website so it has all the content about the case notes, the links to all the cases, the statutes, the guest information, and then promoting the episode on social media. And then more recently, coordinating with the transcriber, the website tech, all that stuff. So, I said this not to pat myself on the back, but just to explain, it is a large amount of work.

[32:11] FATEMA: It sounds like it.

[32:13] HUSEIN: But it's very rewarding.

[32:16] FATEMA: You've interviewed so many people. Tell us, if you can, some of your highlights of whether you want to pick an individual or whether you want to pick a topic, but tell us a little bit of some of the highlights you've experienced.

[32:32] HUSEIN: It's hard to say because there's been so many episodes, such a diversity of guests. I would say one of the highlights is that there was a point, I would say around season two or three, where it shifted from me mostly reaching out to guests to be on the show to more guests then reaching out to me requesting to be on the show. And that was also around the time where I started to get a bit more people reaching out to me just expressing that they've been getting value from the show. So, a fair amount of law students and junior lawyers, even some professors actually reached out, some directly and some on social media, just indicating that they've been sharing this resource with other people and are grateful for the content themselves.

[33:25] And I really took that as a point of pride because podcasting is a very difficult medium to get into and sustain. It's an audio medium, so it's a bit harder to promote. You can post pictures of things on social media or videos that are very eye-catching. I would say as well that podcasting generally can be very lonely. The interviews themselves, there's the social element, you're interacting with someone. But that's, again, a fraction of the time that goes into production is that interview or that collaboration. A lot of it is you're doing your own research quietly on your own and doing the editing on your own as well.

[34:08] And so, the point where people were actually reaching out and saying that they're enjoying it really meant a lot and still means a lot, actually. And obviously, one of the other big highlights is when I started the Patreon crowdfunding campaign, as I think I mentioned earlier on this discussion, it was a, I would say, very stressful time to even have the idea to request this sort of help. And I was so unsure about how it was going to go, whether people would be on board, whether they would thought that it would be a good use of their funds or that I was asking from a good place. And I still remain so incredibly grateful. I remember that week was extremely stressful for other reasons, including that. But that was one of the largest factors.

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[34:53] And the fact that so many, actually, initially primarily friends and family stepped up and wanted to help with this. And amongst other people who maybe who I didn't know, but who had been listening to the show for years to that point, realized that this was something that was important and valuable, not just to me, but for a larger audience as well. There was this larger vision behind it about decluttering the law and using this as a tool to make the legal content accessible.

[35:24] The fact that all these people have and again, many continue have supported the show, means the world to me. And that's been one of the biggest, frankly, surprises and one of the things that I'm most proud of as well. And I feel very grateful to have this very supportive support network who's been helping to carry through this project. It really does mean a lot.

[35:49] One of the other highlights generally is that the show has really opened me up to the diversity of the profession. So, as I know you don't listen to a lot of podcasts yourself, but people who do know will know that the podcast space is not super diverse or known for being super diverse. And so, when I started the show, I knew one of my objectives was also to have a more representative product that looks like what the profession actually is. So, so often the people who get the limelight are these, like, basely lawyers who look a certain way. And I've had my fair share of basely lawyers on the show, nothing against them, but I've also been able to tap into different pockets of the country to try to identify some underrepresented voices.

[36:44] So, I've had guests from, like, northern Vancouver, other places in Montreal, Calgary, pretty much everywhere in the country. And it's really exposed my understanding to not just the geographical diversity and the gender diversity and the racial diversity. And I don't know if this counts as a diversity criteria, but there's also been a fair amount of differences of age and experience on the show. So, it's always very satisfying to get these, like, big fish, big whale on the show. We've had a number of managing partners of big law firms have been on the show, a lot of other, like, household names in the profession.

[37:33] But I really am proud of the fact that we've gotten a lot of junior lawyers, or at least were junior lawyers at the time, who met our criteria of being knowledgeable in the space and being able to articulate complex ideas in simple forms, despite their lack of experience or their relative lack of experience. I won't name all of them because I'm going to miss some of them inevitably. But the fact that they have been on the show and then have gone on to do even bigger and better things is a really exciting thing and one of the hallmarks of the show.

[38:11] In addition to that, I think the show has always done a pretty decent job of highlighting the different types of professions within the legal profession. So, again, a lot of private practice lawyers have been on the show. There's been a lot of government lawyers, similar to yourself, who have been on the show. I've had...I'm trying to think of you right now. So, Susheel Gupta is a lawyer from the federal public sector who was on the show. I've had a bunch of in-house lawyers as well. My friend KJ Chong was on the show. I've had my friend Nick Shkordoff on the show as well. I've had guests from legal clinics. So Shalini Konanur from SALCO was actually on the show. I've had professors like Jonathan Rudin.

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[38:58] Anyways, I won't list all the different areas, but there's been a lot of different types of lawyers who candidly don't always get the same visibility as others. So that's been one of the highlights as well. I'm not so naive to say that the show has been a jumping off point for them, but I'm really excited to see where some lawyers have ended up after being on the show. I think one of the other highlights from the show has been, it's really allowed me to recognize the generosity within the profession. I think you can probably relate to that because you do a lot of things.

[39:40] The more things you do, you kind of have to call in a lot of favors, which is not something that I am used to or really enjoy. And so, I've had so many people who contributed to the show, not just from the crowdfunding campaign, but even before that as well. So many people have been enlisted to provide feedback early on, my wife included. I've had a lot of friends, I won't say who, but a lot of friends have come on last minute when the guest is canceled and they say, "No, I'd love to step in." Actually, you have been, you're doing this right now by volunteering or being voluntary to be on the show. And then there's all the guests themselves.

[40:23] So, I know a lot of the guests who are doing this have business development quotas that this helps to satisfy, which is great. But even then, this is not an easy way to get the hours because this is...I hope that the show asks thoughtful questions that kind of challenge the guests. So that's one aspect of it as well. And again, it's an investment of time as well, whether you're getting the formal credit or not. And I'm really grateful to the audience as well and especially people who have been listening to the show for an ongoing basis, because I take this responsibility really seriously. If they've been listening for a while, they're giving me an hour of their time every other week.

[41:11] I think that I tried my best to deliver that value as well. And I like to think that I developed a pretty good relationship with the audience, especially as time went on, to the extent that a number of them really reached out to provide feedback, sometimes solicited, sometimes unsolicited. But it's really helpful to get this insight about your blind spots, about what things you can be doing better to make the show more valuable to the people who are the consumers of it.

[41:41] FATEMA: Right. So, I don't know if you can answer this for me, but I'm going to ask anyways. Favorite guests, off the top of your head.

[41:51] HUSEIN: That's a good question. It's very hard to pick. There's a lot of them that I really enjoy. I think some of them for different reasons, so I'm not going to say which one is my favorite, but I can tell you one that I was reflecting on that I thought was very memorable. It's an episode I did with Joshua Sealy-Harrington, who is fairly prolific in the legal space. He's an academic and a lawyer, talks a lot about race and legal issues, among other things.

[42:20] And so I was really fortunate to get him on the show in 2020, which, as people know, was a time of real racial reckoning. He's someone who I had not known personally, but had known of for many years, and was really excited for him to jump on the show very

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eagerly to speak about some of the big issues that were going on in that space. We spoke about a case called Lee, about police carding. We spoke about diversity in the profession, including some issues going on at the time and alongside of Ontario. And it was just really nice to have a thoughtful discussion at a time where I think that discussion was really needed.

[43:12] And again, I'm not going to be so naive to say that that podcast changed the racial dynamics within our profession. It definitely changed the way that I thought about race and the way that it operates. And I think that, you know, a lot of the episodes are really compelling and all of them talk about very technical subject matter. But this is one of the episodes that comes to mind where it really felt like the guest was speaking from their heart. And I believe that he was.

[43:29] And when it comes to issues of race, you know, I am a person of colour, shock, I know. But I'm not, wouldn't consider myself, at least at the time, well-versed in speaking about these issues and understanding the theory of, you know, how these dynamics all play together, what critical race theory is, how this impacts issues like policing. So, I actually was a bit unsure about how the discussion would go, but I'm really proud of how that discussion flowed. I learned a lot and I think that a lot of people who listened took a lot away from that discussion as well.

[44:06] So, again, a very timely discussion. It's one that I frequently recommend. Because coincidentally or not, this episode actually got picked up by a bunch of different platforms and I think it was on the SLAW blog as well. And so, it was great to hear what a bunch of other people thought about the episode. That's largely positive. And in fact, there was one, I'm not naming them, but there was one legal department of a government ministry who heard that episode and on the strength of that invited me and another podcaster to do a Lunch and Learn with them to speak about the podcasting space, including what that can do on issues of diversity as well. So that was a really powerful experience that, again, came primarily from that insightful discussion.

[44:49] FATEMA: Okay, another...

[44:58] HUSEIN: My least favourite guest....?

[45:04] FATEMA: The other question that I was going to ask you—and again, you may be able to or may not, but the most sort of surprising episode for you, like something that sort of you didn't think maybe was going to go one way, went another way, like just something that when you finished, you were like, whoa, what just happened? And you can take that as a good or a bad. It's up to you. As

[45:25] HUSEIN: I mentioned, I'm very stubborn about not repeating topics. So, when I started out, the topics were fairly general. I had an episode about criminal law and family law. But then I realized if I'm going to do a lot of them, I have to get more and more niche topics. And there's a lot of lawyers who do very important work, a lot of niche topics. So, a guy named Glenford Jamieson, who does practice primarily about food law. There's another

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lawyer named Sarah Cohen, who has a practice about fertility law, who was also on the show.

[45:57] There's an episode we did with a guy named Josh Marcus, who has a practice of e-sports law. I could go on, but there's all these topics that I think when people hear the episode named, they're like, that's an area of law? That's not something I learned about in law school. And again, I think all the guests who've been on the show have been fantastic. But these are the ones who I think really stand out as being just surprising in that, first of all, I didn't realize this was a formal area that one could specialize in.

And coupled with that, the amount of passion that these niche practitioners, the ones I mentioned and others like them have, is really infectious. And it's been so cool learning about the practices and also how they got into these areas, because oftentimes it's from an area of either personal interest or something happened in their life or their profession that kind of drew them into this area. And it's great to see people who get into a profession, find a particular niche that they love or are passionate about for one reason or another and just run with it.

[47:01] FATEMA: It sounds like you have also perfected the process, which begs the question, why are you stopping now?

[47:14] HUSEIN: That's a very good question. One of the things that I'm trying to get better at is not taking on too many things and on the flip side, knowing when it's time to stop. I feel like the show right now has reached its logical conclusion. By the time this episode is aired, I'll have published a hundred substantive episodes, so a hundred areas of law over 10 years, plus a whole bunch of bonus episodes about more of the practice side of the law and specifically tailored towards accessibility of justice that I really enjoy, too.

[47:52] And I figured that I wanted to wrap it up at a time when I'm still excited about it. I still have the energy to dedicate to it as well and ultimately still enjoying it, which I really am right now. And I can think of a lot of examples of both podcasts and TV shows and other series of media where it's very obvious that the host or the moderator or the showrunner has mentally checked out.

[48:21] And I think it's a real disservice to the audience and the supporters who have been carrying this production alongside them to be checked out and to not give it your all, both from a technical standpoint and from a mental standpoint as well. And I'm really happy about kind of how the podcast space has been developing. So, when I started, again, there weren't any podcasts that were about Canadian legal issues. Now, fortunately, there are a few more that have kind of been filling that space.

[48:59] FATEMA: Do you have any recommendations?

[49:00] HUSEIN: Yeah, there's a couple. One that I really like is Of Counsel, which is a show by Sean Robichaud. I'd say that show is less about substantive legal issues. It's more about the practice of law. So, he gets really great guests to be on the show. There's also a really good one called The Yunusov Question. I don't know him personally, but it's another lawyer

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named PulatYunusov, who asks really insightful questions and has gotten really great guests on his show. A lot of prominent lawyers, we all know, and also a lot of judges as well.

[49:37] FATEMA: And this is Canadian as well?

[49:38] HUSEIN: Yes, these are all Canadian shows.

[49:40] FATEMA: Okay, got it, got it.

[49:42] HUSEIN: So, yeah, that space has been getting a bit more populated. I've learned, especially over the last couple of years, that I'm very good at starting projects, but I have a very difficult time letting them go and knowing when it's time to step away for other things to come along as well. And so that's one thing that I've learned from doing this show in particular, this being one of the projects that I'm most passionate about. And it's also taught me that there is a finite amount of time that I can't do all things for all people.

[50:14] So over time, I've kind of realized that I need to say no to things, not just say yes to more things as well. A good friend of mine kind of gave me this concept about absolute yes. And now going forward, if someone comes to me with an opportunity or a project, or I think of an idea of something that I want to start or join and get involved with, before I actually commit to doing the thing, I usually ask myself, is this like an absolute yes? Is this something that I'm really excited about, that's really going to provide value to myself and also the general public? And am I really the best person to be doing this? And then using that as a guidepost has really helped me to kind of manage as many things as I've been able to.

[51:03] And this is like one of several tactics. And I'm very mindful of the fact that I've been getting a lot of support from friends and family and a lot of close confidants who've helped to shoulder the load throughout the year. And I think I'm at the point right now where I want to start trying to do more different things as well. So, one thing that I mentioned is that I got an opportunity to do a teaching gig with TMU. I think I want to try to do a bit more of that as well, doing some guest lecturing. And I've learned from the show that I enjoy being the host and kind of elucidating information from the guests. But sometimes I feel like I like to be the one sharing the information and organizing information in a way that's interesting for an audience as well.

[51:55] And then the other thing that I'm kind of getting into is I've been doing stand-up comedy on and off for a couple of years. I've been trying to give it a bit more of an earnest effort over the last half year or so. And it's the kind of activity where you need to be getting your reps in fairly regularly. There are some trends for most skills, for like law or podcasting to this.

[52:20] But the thing about stand-up comedy is that it is very audience feedback dependent and that you are doing it live in front of people. And it's very difficult to get good at it quickly because, you know, you need to be in front of a crowd. And for most, you know, starting out comedians, you get these reps at what are called open mics, which are, you know, you go to a show and maybe there's a list where you put your name down or there's a bucket you put your name in.

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[52:53] And then you get called up and you're performing in front of, frankly, a lot of time it's other stand-up comedians or of an audience of some size. But you normally only get like five minutes at most because it's a very large list. So, it's one of the few activities where you are kind of forced to practice within five-minute increments. So you get five minutes a night and then if you can find another one that night, that's fine. It's very challenging to do, from my experience.

[53:24] But you have to wait for another night, sometimes another week to get those reps. It's kind of like you're trying to learn an instrument, like trying to learn how to play the piano or something. Can you imagine if you were trying to learn the piano and could only practice for a total of five minutes per day and then trying to remember what you learned on the previous day so you're making the most of that time.

[53:47] So, it's a very challenging activity. I got a lot of respect from people who've been doing it for even over a year. That does take a lot of dedication and a lot of work as well. That's something that I'm really drawn to. I want to develop as well. And so as much as I've enjoyed the podcast, I learned a lot of value from it as well. I want to kind of reroute that time towards some of these other activities as well. And also, selfishly, or this should not sound selfish, actually, I also just want to carve out some more unstructured time in my calendar outside of work priorities and, you know, obligations that I currently have, where I'm not doing an activity or two and just having a bit more open space to kind of reflect and decompress as well. That's something I'm looking forward to doing in the next couple of years, especially.

[54:42] FATEMA: So, I was going to ask about that at the end of the show, but you bring it up, so we're going to talk about it now. So, you mentioned two things that really, like, piqued my interest twice now. One is the stand-up comedy. And then the second was the comic. So, I don't even know what that is. So A, tell us what that is. And then B, again, how did you get into webcomics and stand of comedy?

[55:09] HUSEIN: Yeah, good question. So, the webcomic is just a comic that someone publishes online. So, I've been drawing this comic... I've been drawing one comic a week for about 11 years. I've always had an interest in comedy as a consumer. And I wanted to give it, like, a proper go as a performer, but given my job as a litigator, I just never felt I had the time, again, to get the reps in to perform regularly.

[55:37] And so, I felt that the comic was a kind of a workaround where I could draw things on my own time and then publish them at my own pace without having to be dependent on other people. And I really identified early on in my career that I wanted to have some sort of a creative outlet. And, you know, episodes always are meant to be tailored towards giving some advice. If you want, I would say that regardless of whether you want to start a side hustle or a side project like a podcast or something, I would say find a creative outlet that suits you. It can be drawing. If you don't want to draw, it can be something else. Just something that keeps you engaged and thoughtful and creative outside of work. Will pay dividends, maybe professionally, likely, but mentally as well, and will play a big role in your mental well-being.

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[56:36] And yeah, I'd say it's sort of taken off as well. You know, doing it with a regular frequency, about six or eight times a year, I go to different comic conventions across Canada and I set up a booth and I sell books and prints and drawings of things that I produce. So, it's very rewarding to have an outlet like that. And again, I'm not recommending that everyone do this exact same thing, but the value of doing a project like this, whether it's a podcast or a comic or something, and putting yourself on a regular schedule will inevitably mean that you will get good very quickly.

[57:20] You know, the first couple iterations may not be great and that's totally fine. But again, knowing that you will be repeating the general format on a regular basis will help you identify the muscle memory that you need to keep the quality up. You'll also be more invested, from my experience, in getting better, knowing that you'll be doing this over the long haul. There's that quote that everyone quotes of Ira Glass about, you know, getting these reps in and ensuring that eventually your tastes will match your quality, which I think is very true. But ultimately, it comes down to knowing that you're in it for the long haul, I think really changes your shift in terms of how you produce content.

[58:10] FATEMA: I did not know this, but at least now, once you retire from lawyering, you have a side gig to keep you afloat. That's fantastic.

[58:24] HUSEIN: The joke I like to tell people is that a lot of people identify as like jack of all trades. I like to say that I'm like a slacker of all trades, but I'm like pretty good at like a lot of different things. So, hopefully one of them sticks.

[58:36] FATEMA: Does either the comedy or the comics, does it have an influence in law? Or does law influence at all?

[58:48] HUSEIN: It's a really good question. I think so, in some respect. And I think both of them are just means of communicating ideas. So, like in a comedy context, and not to get too technical here, but the objective is to make the audience like laugh and be entertained. And so, there's different ways where you can tweak the language and structure of a joke that will make it more or less receptive to an audience.

[59:12] And then the same is true for comics and most other art forms. And so, if you order enough open mics, like live shows, you'll see people workshopping material. And you can actually watch jokes transform week after week to get more close to what it's meant to be received from an audience. I think that law is very similar in many respects. Again, most of my work is as a litigator, but I find that in early in my career, I would be delivering arguments, and they may or may not have hit in the way that I'd intended.

[59:49] But there's an iterative process where if you can work on your material and refine it and try it with different audiences, with colleagues, with different adjudicators, you may find you're getting closer and closer to what you're aiming for. And I think the same is true for written advocacy as well. One other overlap that I've noticed fairly recently is just the concept of pattern recognition.

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[01:00:14] I find that it's becoming a big thing that I've been learning about as I've been studying comedy, in that sometimes there's ways you can engage how an audience is kind of in a flow state. And that they're used to patterns in terms of how stories are told, in terms of how concepts are delivered. There's this rule of three that's very common that you have a joke, you have A is one thing, B is another thing, and then there's a turn, which is the C, and that's kind of where the surprise with the joke occurs.

[1:00:48] I think there's also a lot of patterns within advocacy and within the law generally, in terms of how different types of cases and different types of statutes often follow patterns. And identifying how those patterns work is both helpful in terms of understanding how the law is operating on an individual basis, and identifying broader trends as well. And so, I found that when I'm researching a topic that I know nothing about to that point, and I'm asking questions about it, I'm finding that if I can just defer back to what are the patterns that I've been recognizing in terms of what this new era of law is to me, and seeing how I can link that to other things that I've spoken about or learned about before, that's really helped and been a game changer for me in all these aspects. And that's something, definitely once you do something enough times, you'll kind of develop these kinds of very niche talents, which, if you use them well, can be transferable in other contexts as well.

[1:01:42] FATEMA: Okay, so where can your listeners find your next show?

[1:02:06] HUSEIN: That's a good question. So, this is going to be released in a couple of weeks. I don't know specifically, but if they follow on my Instagram handle, @highcomedicvalue, that's where I post my upcoming shows. Fantastic. Again, if they're interested, I mean, you asked the question, I try intentionally not to cross-pollinate. Some of you are listening for one particular thing, but if they are interested, they can check it out. If not, no obligation.

[1:02:29] FATEMA: No, no, no. Lawyers like to do other things other than lawyering, and we like to laugh once in a while. So, everybody, High Comedic Value on Instagram and on Facebook, follow Mr. Panju and give him a few likes for some of these things that he's doing. That's fantastic.

[1:02:46] HUSEIN: This is a long con that this has been leading to. Ten years of the podcast to just push this comedy.

[1:02:54] FATEMA: Exactly. Going back to the podcast, what is your biggest takeaway that you hope listeners will learn from our conversation today? And even like your podcasting generally over the last number of years?

[1:03:14] HUSEIN: I hope I'm not coming across as so self-indulgent. I think this show is like the greatest thing ever. I don't think it's life-changing. I mean, it's changed my life. I don't think it's necessarily changed other people's lives. What I want to say is that I hope that this show, if nothing else, inspires other people to do projects like this.

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[1:03:30] This has been transformational for me and my career. I don't think I'm going to be a professional podcaster, but it's taught me so much about so many things. Like the concept of the show has always been about what I call decluttering of the law. And I think that there's a lot of engaged people, especially young people, who are trying to find ways to contribute to their profession. And a project like this, I think, goes miles in terms of moving the needle on that.

[1:04:03] So, I've learned a lot from doing this podcast. I think we've spoken about a bunch of those learnings already. It's made me a better lawyer in terms of being able to craft questions in a more refined way. It's also taught me how to develop rapport quicker with people.

[1:04:18] Again, I don't think I was necessarily an introvert before. And most of my friends and my wife will confirm that I am still generally a very awkward person in most situations. But I was not the type to just blatantly approach people and ask them for favors. And this show has forced me to get out of my shell to approach people. So, to be candid, when I fill in the guest roster for the last couple of seasons, has not been terribly difficult. I'd say I have right now about a two-third success rate. So if I ask three people now to be on the show, usually two of them will say yes, largely on the reputation of the show.

[1:05:03] But early on, that was not the case. So I had... This is when I started this project, someone asked me in a condescending way, "Do you think lawyers will actually want to do this?" Both being a guest on the show, and I think broadly, would anyone want to listen to this during their free time? And yeah, initially I got a lot more no's than yeses. But I think by being persistent and putting myself out there, I learned that a lot of people will say no, but a lot of people will also say yes as well. There's a lot of factors at play.

[1:05:37] I'm not so naive to not recognize that there's a lot of privilege at play as well. Some of which I've been the beneficiary of. But a big part of it is also what I would just call gumption. Having the wherewithal to put yourself out there. And a lot more of it comes down to just having a very clear ax and value proposition, believing in both yourself and also what your product is—something that I kind of learned eventually

[1:06:11] And I learned to be very deliberate about how I marketed the show and also myself, recognizing that the show has a brand. And by being the curator, or kind of the leader of this podcast, it's always impacted my own personal brand as well. That's something that I don't think I fully appreciated until kind of well after the show had started. And so what I would say to listeners, that if you want to do a project, whether it's a podcast or a blog or starting a non-profit or something, people will say no a lot of the time. But if you can find the people who would say yes, that will help propel you and the project itself. And keep you motivated and turbaned to keep pushing ahead, even when things get difficult and annoying and sometimes less fun at times.

[1:07:04] And we keep the momentum to keep refining both the product and yourself as well. And I'd say the other thing that I've really learned from this project that I would encourage people to keep in mind is that perfection is a very impossible standard. And I've made so many mistakes from doing this show. Not just at the beginning, but even recently.

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So, initially, I was very concerned about having the show sound like 100% polished, like an NPR show. So much so that I actually tried to edit out any time when someone said, um, or ah, or an awkward pause. Which first took an enormous amount of time. And I also realized, made the show sound very robotic.

[1:07:56] **FATEMA:** I was going to say, you're going to then be editing a lot of what I said today.

[1:08:01] **HUSEIN:** Well, some of me, yes. But yeah, but even for myself as well. And I, I find that some of these, if you call it imperfections, actually add to the authenticity of the end product. Which I was going to say, like, be sloppy. But I'd say not to be so hard on yourself if things aren't going to be a fully polished product. This is going to sound super new age or whatever. But there's this Japanese concept called like wabi-sabi, which says that when there are some minor imperfections in the product, actually makes it come across as more authentic and more likable as well.

[1:08:41] And even independent of that, there's been so many, what felt like big mistakes at the time, but ended up being like relatively minor that took place throughout, especially during the first few seasons, but even some continued as recently as the last couple. So I remember like early on, like, there were some times where I began the recording dates. The time is wrong. I remember this one time I showed up at a lawyer's office and the recording date was not what I had put in my calendar. It was, I guess, not diarized properly.

[1:09:14] So, they teach you, you need to make sure that you confirm the date, logistics from that point forward. I always send calendar invitations to the guests as well. So, we both had to record it on our own respective itineraries. And that's something that I find helpful, generally, not just in podcasting, but scheduling a phone call with someone, you're doing a work project or something. I find sending this calendar invitation is something that I kind of develop for making mistakes like this. I actually did one different recording in person where I realized at the end that the microphones were not even plugged in.

[1:09:53] **FATEMA:** Oh, no.

[1:09:54] **HUSEIN:** And so, we're recording them on like my crummy laptop microphone. And it was embarrassing, but I had like the gumption to ask the lawyer, would you mind doing another recording? When I think I would have been more cagey to do that earlier on in my career. And so it's taught me a lot about how to interact with people, how to be authentic. And I find most people like guys, supporters, patrons, audience members are pretty forgiving, especially if they realize that you are doing this from a good place. And I won't go through all the mistakes I made, but like another time we were doing a recording and I realized that I completely misunderstood what the topic is that we're going to be speaking about.

[1:10:42] I won't say what the episode was, but it was about a very technical area that I knew nothing about. And again, might've flustered me earlier on in my career or something happens to me in my profession later on, but it kind of taught me how to be resilient and kind of run with things as well. So I'd say similarly, people are starting their own projects or

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initiatives to not hold themselves to that impossible standard. Because as you mentioned, like one will hold you back and on the flip side, having an authentic version of yourself will attract people more than it will detract other people.

[1:11:18] FATEMA: Right. And what, I just said, now I'm thinking about my sentences. What advice would you give to someone launching their own initiative?

[1:11:31] HUSEIN: Yeah, absolutely. So one thing I would say is that there's a lot of benefits to doing a project like this. And the most important should be like the public good. Are you doing something that will actually fill a need? So, the first thing I would say would be like, if you're trying to say what to do, like maybe don't do a podcast. It is a lot of work, unless you really enjoy it. But I'd say find an area that you are passionate about, which I know a lot of people would say, but always an area that is not being filled right now. So again, for my thing, there was no podcast about this exact area. So, to say that I would do it.

[1:12:12] I mentioned a lot of things in your bio. I assume a lot of those initiatives weren't there before. So I said, do like a close look at a gap that is not being filled and see if you can do something to help improve that. And it doesn't mean you need to do something that's entirely unique. If there's a blog about one area, but you think you can do it better, go ahead and do it. But make sure that you're providing value at the end of the day.

[1:12:40] And it doesn't need to be anything like game changing, but I'd say just starting something is the most important thing. And that momentum will carry you through. I think as lawyers in particular, I think we often get paralyzed by having to do something, again, that's perfect. But again, just starting to do something will get that entrepreneurial initiative. And from my experience, you can take it as long as it will go. And if that doesn't work out, maybe you can pivot to something else that might be more meaningful. And if you have the self-awareness, you'll also learn a lot about yourself as well along the way.

[1:13:18] What I will say is that, again, you should be doing this for the right reasons. But on the flip side, there are a lot of benefits personally to doing a project like this. So one is that there is a strong personal branding aspect, which is, I hope you'll believe me, there was not the reason I did this, but it's gotten me a fair amount of recognition within the legal community. Another benefit of doing something like this is that it actually forces you to build a network within your community. And listen, I don't need to tell you, the legal profession is challenging.

[1:13:53] Again, I know not everyone who's listening is a lawyer, and a lot of professions are challenging as well. But from my experience, it's a heck of a lot easier to advance and, frankly, survive in your profession. If you can develop a network that you can rely on and reach out to and tap into, that always provides them with the license to do the same as well.

[1:14:17] So again, in this case, the legal community, if I didn't have this show, I don't think I would have been as ambitious in reaching out and meeting all these different people, asking for help, asking for resources. And that itself has been paying off both personally and professionally as well. And I'd say that the last benefit that I'll highlight is that it also gets you to learn about a lot of different things.

Lawyered Podcast

Bonus Ep. 7 – The Finale ft. Husein Panju

[1:14:46] So again, for the show that I'm doing right now, I now have done 100 substantive episodes. I have a very surface-level understanding of 100 different topics that I may not have known otherwise. And if you're doing a project, whether it's in the law space or otherwise, you're going to learn things about yourself and what matters to you. And on the flip side, what does not matter to you, and your strengths, things you can work on. You're going to learn things about your community as well. And you'll learn some technical skills, whether you can do that project or not.

[1:15:22] So I would, projects like these are really meaningful for the community. We need a lot more of these, more than ever. And there's a lot of also personal benefits that people can attain from doing something like that as well.

[1:15:36] FATEMA: Fantastic. Thanks, Husein. You and I have known each other for so long, but I've never sat down with you to talk about podcasting and what you've been doing and so I have learned so much. I'm sure your listeners have learned so much, but I have learned so much about this project that you've been doing that I knew you were always doing, but I didn't really get the full extent of it until today. So thank you. And I'm sure that your listeners have learned a lot today. I think it's fantastic that we got a chance to highlight you and the work that you've been doing. And correct me if I'm wrong, but Lawyer, like it will still be there for folks to listen to.

[1:16:22] HUSEIN: Yes, thank you. Yeah, thanks for mentioning. Yeah, it's still going to remain in posterity, online, on the podcast feeds as well. So, if people are listening now and they realize, oh, I just learned about the show or I missed these episodes, you can always listen back, and I hope that people will. And for most law societies, you can also get your CPD, your professional development credits, at least at the substantive level by listening to the substantive episodes of the show as well.

[1:16:51] FATEMA: Right. No, and I encourage folks to do that because again, just taking a look at the list of individuals that you have been chatting with over the last, I think it's, is it 10 years now? 10 years. There's a lot there. So I really encourage people to take a look at some of those individuals, pick a few and sit down with your coffee or your tea or whatever floats your boat and have a listen because it's quite interesting.

[1:17:24] FATEMA: Husein, like honestly, your dedication, your authenticity and your passion, it's incredible. And the results honestly show, like it's demonstrated by the work that you've done. And you can tell the energy and the heart that you've poured into this work. So, I don't know if I can do this, but on behalf of legal professionals everywhere, thank you very much for putting this together for us. The first and longest running podcast series, over 750 monthly downloads. So again, take a listen and whatever comes next, know that you've made a lasting impact that we will continue to use. But also, I'm really excited about your new initiatives. And I'm really excited for the community to see and follow you on these new initiatives.

[1:18:21] HUSEIN: Thank you so much for saying that and thank you for doing this great interview.

[Music Break]

[1:18:29] All right. And that's going to be a wrap on today's episode of Lawyered and also a wrap on the Lawyered podcast as a whole. I want to thank Fatema Dada for hosting today's finale. You can follow her on her LinkedIn page and check out a number of projects that she's involved with as well. I want to give a shout out as well to our technical team, including Soloman Krause-Imlach, who's been managing a lot of our audio. Ben Swirsky provided the music for the show. And Steve DeMello, who's been providing a bunch of website assistance as well. I also want to give a massive thanks to our very large supportive network of listeners and fans and guests and just general supportive individuals throughout the years.

[1:19:13] I'm especially grateful to the number of patrons who have been providing financial support to the show throughout the years. So, I want to call them out. They include Abbas Kassam, Amal Kalra, Andrew Monkhouse, Brian Osler, Candace Cooper, Carolyn Poutianien, Connor Coles, Donald Bourgeois, Ethan Marx, Flynn Paquin, Hasan Panju, Jacob Roth, Jeff Lang-Weir, Keren Gottfried, Lisa DeMarco, Mohammed Abbas Amarshi, Mark Asfar, Mike Rusek, Michelle Koerssen, Mohamed Moledina, Mohan Pandit, Munawer Chattoo, Peter Chiykowski, Rebecca Finley-Schidlowsky, Riyaz and Batul Panju, Saad Baig, Sajjad and Farhana Kassamali, Samantha Chen, Sohaib Mohammad, Stacey Hushion, Stephen Lockwood, Sujoy Chatterjee, Trevin David, Urooj Zaman, Vasileios Tsianos, and Yovanka McBean.

[1:20:08] And from the bottom of my heart, I want to say thanks to all of you for everything that you've done and are continuing to do to make this show more accessible to more people. Now, we will no longer be publishing new episodes for the show, but we will be keeping the podcast archive open for as long as feasible. So, you can find those on this website, which is www.lawyeredpodcast.com and anywhere else that you can currently find the podcast as well.

[1:20:30] If you want to check out our back catalogue, again, there's over 100 episodes you can check out at your leisure. Of course, I hope you'll feel free to stay in touch with me as well on LinkedIn or wherever else you want to reach me. And again, if you're ever looking for anyone to bounce ideas off of, for an extra ear to listen to, particularly about what we spoke about today, be more than happy to oblige.

[1:20:51] It's been an absolute honor to spend the last decade with all of you on the show and I hope that you've enjoyed this journey as much as I have. And so, for now, I'll just say goodbye, farewell, and for the last time, keep it legal. Thanks, everybody.