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I'm not unlike many female entrepreneurs, I run my own business (a family law firm that caters mainly to high-net worth individuals and celebrities), I have a family and am the mother of two small children, and my plate is always full with a host of charitable and political causes. I'm also in the middle of writing two books! I am often asked how I do it all! I must confess, I sometimes say: "Something's got to give!"

It isn't that I think it's impossible for someone like me to enjoy so many facets of life, or to be good at each and every one of them, it's just that I think when you have so much going on, some one thing—or more than one thing—is apt to suffer.

Metaphorically speaking, I appear, on an average day, like the classic circus performer who is twirling a half dozen plates simultaneously: Each activity requires precise balance and constant attention in order to keep every facet successfully spinning. So, my first piece of advice to other women—other plate spinners—is to tell them that, yes, occasionally, you may drop a plate. If you do, you need to be able to pick up the plate and if it's shattered put it back together and move on.

My follow up advice to that comment is to tell them to recognize that "having it all" is surely a myth, but you can get close. For example, my schedule demands that I remain actively involved in every aspect of my life and I wouldn't trade any one area for another, nor would I give any one of them up. It's just that I, like other female entrepreneurs, need to go through each day finding ways to outsmart the myth.

I believe that begins with a can-do mindset.

When I tend to forget this core philosophy I start to get back into the plate-spinning pace with a positive affirmation. I usually do this by reading one of my favorite books: "The Little Engine That Could." That may sound downright silly but its message says it all. If you think you can, you can, so long as you cut yourself some slack as you climb those everyday hills—as you throw those plates up in the air each morning!

That may sound good but unrealistic, you may be saying. So what accompanies that can-do mindset? For me it's good organizational skills, key support personnel, support of my family and mastering the relatively new art of multi-

tasking. The three of these combined get me very close to not only having it all, but enjoying it all as well. But I also keep in mind that life isn't perfect—nor am I—and there will be days when one of the areas of my life may play second fiddle. Like most female entrepreneurs I'm driven no matter what area of my life I'm focused on so (I hope) I always deliver in the end. But should I falter, I forgive myself (or at least I try to forgive myself though I'm not always good at that!) If one area is suffering slightly, I vow to do better. It's all I can do. I also remind myself that "having it all" all of the time is a myth!

What are some of my specific secrets? I'll share a few of them. I start by organizing my time productively. I plan each day very carefully the night before. That plan starts with the needs of my family first; my job fits comfortably in between. I don't double-book meetings, I try to have some time between those meetings to return phone calls, otherwise, I return them at the end of the day—even if I'm in my car. I always red-star the days when my children have teacher conferences or performances. This might include a wrestling match for my son or a gymnastics exhibition for my daughter. I may not be able to attend every one of his/her activities, but those I do attend I'm there from start to finish. I have taken my children to court with me, and had them sit in during hearings so they can see what it is I do each day. I find that they enjoy knowing more about my work—it helps them understand exactly what I do when I'm not with them.

I rise early, between 5:45 and 6:25 a.m. to prepare last minute notes for depositions, mediation conferences or trials. I grab a quick breakfast at work (or sometimes when I get my hair done), and wake my son and daughter (unless it's too early for them), spending a few minutes just chatting with them before my terrific nanny takes over. When I get to work, I handle only those items that need my individual attention; I've learned to delegate everything else. I also have personnel to grocery shop for me, run errands, clean the house, wash my car and do other things I simply don't have time for. And, I don't feel the least bit guilty about it! If some weekends I feel like cooking (and I've done so for 70!), I do, but I don't feel like I'm losing out if I don't! I've learned it's okay to have your plate half-full on some days.

HAVING IT ALL: *Myth or Mindset?*

My weekly schedule also allows time for "me" things for I believe the "plate" that often shatters on the floor is the one that gets spun lastly—the one that nurtures the female entrepreneur's personal needs. This includes a workout with a personal trainer one to three times a week, a nail and hair appointment, and if I can fit it in, a facial every four weeks and a massage every other week. If I can't fit the latter two in, I at least fantasize about them, promising myself I'll double up the following month.

I've learned to hire help for just about everything. Nowhere is it written that taking care of one's family means you do every single thing yourself! Also, nowhere is it etched in stone that running your own business means you control every part of it: you hire people who are dependable and who you can trust. And, just because I'm writing two books doesn't mean I have to do that by myself, either. I have found two excellent collaborators who help me flesh out my chapters.

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I've learned that multi-tasking works as well! I can sculpt out a chapter at the hair salon, or handle pressing matters on my cell phone. I can also talk to a distraught client while driving my car. I use some philanthropic and charitable events to schmooze with colleagues and network with would-be ones. There isn't a task I do—with the exception of one-on-one client interaction—where I'm not multi-tasking. This includes straightening the top of my desk when there's more than one person in my office participating in a conference call.

I think every female entrepreneur should accept the fact that having it all—in terms of totality—is not reality, but a myth. I also think she should continue with a firm and decisive mindset (what made her an entrepreneur in the first place), which will pave the way to getting darned close. I also believe she should not think about her whirling plates as half full or half empty, ever, but as a dear friend of mine said recently: "I'm just grateful to have plates that spin!" FEM