

Fox Rothschild Podcast

Legally EmpowHERed Podcast

Episode 13

Featuring Sahara Pynes and Francesca Grea with Kirsten Jordan

Pynes: Welcome to “Legally EmpowHERed.” I’m your host, Sahara Pynes, and I’m really excited to bring this podcast to you. As an attorney and former business owner myself, I’m passionate about drawing on my own experience and insight to set my female clients up for success.

It’s no coincidence that we kicked off season two of “Legally EmpowHERed” during Women’s History Month. This season, we’ll continue to share the advice I’d give my best friend growing her business, as well as inspirational stories from women entrepreneurs in the thick of things.

For International Women’s Day, my colleague Francesca Grea and I sat down with Kirsten Jordan of Bravo’s “Million Dollar Listing: New York” to hear about her journey in the world of New York real estate and becoming the first female cast member of “Million Dollar Listing: New York” in nine seasons.

Grea: Thank you so much, Sahara. We are so excited to have our client and friend Kirsten Jordan here with us today to share her journey. Kirsten is a real estate broker and avid public speaker and was the first female cast member of Bravo’s “Million Dollar Listing: New York.”

Kirsten has brokered an outstanding half a billion dollars’ worth of sales – that’s billion with a “B.” Pretty incredible. In 2020, she was cast on the Emmy® nominated series and was featured in every episode of season nine. Kirsten is also a mom to three young children and juggles raising a family in addition to a really busy career. We are so excited. Thank you so much for being with us today.

Jordan: Thank you so much for having me. I’m so glad that we were able to pull this together and that the three of us are hosting and talking about such important, interesting issues.

Grea: Congratulations on the incredible growth of your team and your personal brand over the last couple of years. Start by telling us how you got started in real estate.

Jordan: I got into real estate because I had been living in Italy. It was my dream to learn Italian, and when I was living in Italy, I bounced around. I didn’t really have a great work visa. I was able to find my way into sales. I was selling licenses for a design agency that was up in Northern Italy in a town called Bergamo. I was selling these licenses that weren’t very expensive. I was traveling around Eastern Europe, meeting different people. I was 24, and I realized that I just loved sales.

I came back to the U.S. with my tail between my legs, because it was super hard to make it in Europe as an American who didn’t have any sort of papers or work visa. I came home and I decided to get into sales. My stepfather told me, “If you get into sales, you should pick something that is a big-ticket item, so that the commissions are big. Why don’t you get into real estate?”

So, I got my real estate license, and in 2007, I started in real estate in New York city, which was right around the time of the financial crisis. So, it was the perfect time to get in.

Pynes: Not exactly. I don't know how you left Italy and eating all the pasta. What was it like making the decision to leave your former brokerage firm and start your own team?

Jordan: When I was cast on "Million Dollar Listing," I was at Compass. They were not super into TV, but they let me be on the show anyway. What I realized from the beginning of all of the filming and everything that was going on with "Million Dollar Listing," was that I was really spending a lot of effort creating a personal brand. While I was creating that brand, I realized that it was super hard to create it under another team umbrella, and that the effort was probably better if I went to another place.

I had been talking to Elliman for a long time because I was at Elliman at the beginning of my career. For me, it just felt like a no brainer. The funny thing, though, is that still, making these changes are really tough. It was a lot of sleepless nights. I talked to Elliman for over a year while I was making the decision. It was just really hard for me to make that move.

Then the other part of it that was difficult was my first time ever being a team leader. I had to start off from scratch. I had to learn what to do. I had to learn how to make the right hires. I made a lot of mistakes. Long story short, I needed to come to a different place to start my brand and then I learned a lot of other stuff along the way.

Grea: You talked about hires, and I've seen you post on Instagram about when's the right time to hire an assistant. How do you know when it's the right time to scale or hire other employees?

Jordan: I waited too long to hire in the first place. So, for me, I think as soon as you're at a point where you're busy enough to know what your best use of your time is – your highest and best use, the most profitable use of your time – is the right time to start understanding how you can make a hire so that you're able to leverage your time.

If that's something that you continue to wait to do, you get more and more ingrained in doing the stuff that's part of the business that you probably shouldn't be working on, under the parts that aren't your highest and best use. As a real estate agent, it's very different than other industries, because it's up to you to decide when you get an assistant. In other industries, as soon as you make that next jump in income or you get to a certain status, it's automatic that you get someone to help you with the things that aren't the highest and best use of your time.

In our industry, what usually happens is you wait until you make a hire that's one plus one equals three or four, which is a major leverage hire. When I was actually an assistant, the woman I used to work for always used to say that we were a one plus one equals three kind of duo. That's where you're truly complementary in your strengths.

Long story short, I think it's better to hire, part-time, somebody who can help you leverage your time, rather than always pushing and waiting and waiting.

Pynes: Sure. The best part of hiring someone is you don't have to do the stuff that you don't love to do anymore, right?

Jordan: Yes. I had spent so long doing the stuff I didn't like, that I didn't even know if it was that I didn't like it or that I just didn't like the whole industry.

Pynes: No, that makes sense. There's also a time to bring in belts and suspenders, like your legal staff or business advisers, tax advisers, that sort of thing as well. So, when do you make the leap?

Jordan: I think it's super interesting that for me, as soon as I started making hires, I realized that I immediately needed legal. I had the contract with Bravo, which was a really important contract. Francesca worked with me on that. That was super, super important. What I realized right after that was, "Oh, everybody who I hire, somehow I need to make sure that there's compliance between the fact that I have this contract with Bravo, which pretty much is more important than almost any other contract I have, now everything needs to be compliant with that."

So soon as I made my first hire, I realized that I need to have the right kind of employment paperwork. Not to get into the granular, but real estate agents are 1099 independent contractors and there's also these assistants that you have that technically need to be W2, but that's something that you don't really know right now.

Pynes: Thank you, thank you for saying that. I have a whole podcast episode on that, Kirsten.

Jordan: I didn't know any of this. So yes, let's just say I didn't do everything right the first time. I think that getting legal involved early, even though when you're an entrepreneur or a small business owner, it can feel like a heavy lift to get legal involved in your first employment contracts with your first employee or your first 1099 independent contractor. But honestly, if you're building the infrastructure to build or to grow, you need to involve legal as soon as possible. You will get yourself into so much trouble.

Pynes: Sometimes, it's just a matter of understanding the risk. Because as you're growing a business, you might say, "I don't have the money for that," or, "That's not where I'm choosing to put my money right now." But at least know what you don't know, and know what the risks are, so later it doesn't seem so shocking if somebody tells you, "You're not doing it right."

Jordan: You're protecting your future business by having legal involved. Yeah, maybe you don't care about it today, because you feel like you're trying to scrape it together to even hire this first person. But the truth is, it should be built into what you think the cost of the hire is. You need to make sure that you are tight legally.

Pynes: Yes. And what other best piece of advice have you gotten from your mentors over the years?

Jordan: There's the hire slow, fire fast. Literally, there is nothing more important than that, I would say. As soon as there is something that's not right, and you have that first performance improvement meeting, it's not the right fit, I think it's super important to listen to your gut. It's very difficult, I think, especially in today's environment. As soon as you train somebody, you feel like you already put so much time and effort into the hire. So, that's number one.

The other thing that I really make sure that I live by is making sure that the right people are in the right seats. With the real estate industry, it's really tempting to put the wrong people in the wrong seats because of the fact that so many people come to real estate because it's a multi-passionate kind of career. You can come in it from any place. There's no barrier to entry. People just want to be in real estate because it's so sexy and lucrative. So, being really careful about putting the right people on the right seats is something that I focus on every day. We do personality profiling before we even interview people in person. We're super, super careful with making sure that people are going to be the right personality fit, motivational fit, for actual roles.

Then the other funny thing is a piece of advice that I always been really careful about, and I think it's really true: no good deed goes unpunished. That is, doing something just because you think that somehow there's going to be something good that will happen, or... I don't know how to explain it. But, especially in our industry, you can have long relationships with people where you're giving them free real estate advice. A lot of the time, if you're not clear about your intentions and they're not clear about their intentions, you can get into kind of murky waters and waste a lot of time with a client or with a relationship that maybe isn't going in the right direction.

I always find that as something that rings true from my early years of my first boss.

Grea: You've talked about how to make sure you have good fits with other people. You also talked about on the show, you always felt like you were holding back, and somebody could do it better than you. How do you feel like you get past self-doubt? Do you have any good tips?

Jordan: I think the number one way to get through self-doubt is to be prepared for your meetings. What I find is that if you over-prepare, even if you feel like you're an imposter and that they're going to figure out that you're really not all that, at least you're prepared. At least you can have the comfort of being in the meeting and being at least somebody who knows what they're talking about and you did your research.

The other part that I've realized about imposter syndrome is that a lot of the time, if you warm up before an interaction, you can usually leave it feeling the best possible. That's what I've really realized when I'm feeling the most imposter syndrome or the most intimidation going into a scenario: Making sure that I have somebody to talk to before I go into the meeting, or before I go on stage or whatever that looks like, to just get warmed up. Because in the end, there's a reason that we're all where we are right now. It's a long road to get here, so there's a reason that we're here.

Sometimes, it's just important to just get the creative, funny juices flowing, or get yourself warmed up so that you're really able to just focus on being present and being prepared and being the best version of yourself in a meeting and then letting the rest take care of itself.

Pynes: Does that warm-up include before you do an Instagram live or something like that? I just cannot bring myself to do those lives because I always feel like, "Oh, I'm so awkward," and people are out there just dancing and doing their thing. You are so great at it.

Jordan: Oh, thank you. Thank you. I do have a special talent, which is that I am really good at turning on when the camera turns on. I'm good at quick flip, quick switch.

Pynes: Hence the Bravo casting.

So, this year's International Women's Day theme is "Breaking the Bias." Just how did you feel when you found out that you were cast as the very first female cast member of "Million Dollar Listing: New York" Describe that for us. What was the process? How did you feel?

Jordan: The process is really long, actually. It takes months for everything to work out, from the initial moment to a first touch point and then the casting process, and then actually finding out that you're cast on the show. It's actually very similar to the imposter syndrome. Every single thing has a next step so that you cannot fake yourself out. There's always a next. There's always, "Okay, you're going from finding out about it," to, "Hey, maybe a screen test," or, the next, "Oh, I've made some videos of myself that I'm going to send," or those kinds of next steps.

I would say for me, I was the most excited when I even started the casting process. Because for me, the first moment of deciding that I was going to go for the show and actually make it happen and try was a decision that no matter what, I was going to end up on television. So, the second that I started the casting process, I thought, "It doesn't matter if they'd take me. I'm going to be on television" So, it's okay. I actually was like, "Hey if Bravo doesn't take me, Netflix is going to take me. Somebody is going to take me because I was meant to do this." I finally found out why I've been a real estate agent for so long.

When they did actually tell me, it was like a full body experience of being so excited and just feeling like this was going to change my life. But the most exciting part was when I decided that this was something I was actually going to try and do, because I felt that there was nothing that could have stopped me from actually making it happen.

Pynes: At what point did you decide that being on TV was something that you wanted as part of your real estate career?

Jordan: Well, I got a random text from some casting agency that just said, "Are you interested in it? how was your real estate year?"

Pynes: Said no one ever, aspiring actors out there.

Jordan: It was like some weird link. You see this stuff all the time of emails that go out from casting agencies that are casting "Shahs of Sunset," or a new spinoff of people who make income in weird ways. There are all kinds of things like this. So, I got it, but of course I got it, I think, because I was so ready for something like this. In the sense that I was ready to take my career to the next level, and I hadn't figured out how I was going to do that. When I got the text, I actually thought to myself, "They've discovered me. They found me." Which is funny because I'm sure they texted like 100 other people.

Pynes: Group text.

Jordan: "Oh my God. They found me. They've discovered me." Like they realized that this is what I – and I really believed that. I just thought it was a message from the universe.

Grea: How do you feel like we, as women, can help other women entrepreneurs or just the next generation of people coming up?

Jordan: The thing with women helping women is that right now, being a mom, I have a strong point of view as to how we could be helping each other, especially women who are mothers, and then women in general. I can tell you as being a mom, I know best how fellow women can help mothers who are getting back into the workforce or who are in the workforce and struggling with children who are young, and they'd like to see when their children are awake, is really helping with flexible schedules when possible.

I saw a major developer speak the other day and she was talking about how, when her kids were little, she literally worked from home on Fridays. This was before COVID. She would work from her Blackberry and she worked from home. She liked being near her kids, and that was super important to her.

This is something that I haven't embraced enough at all during my kids' upbringing. It's something that... I have a woman on my team, who's my highest-level hire, and she has two kids. When she needs to work from home, when she needs to work from her lounge in her building, when she needs to take doctor's appointments, I don't even think about it. Because in the end, the hardest working people on my team are the mothers, because we're trying to slide it in at different times of the day to get it all done. At the end, we end up working more because we don't shut it off at any time, really. We're working extra. So, I would say supporting women with flexible schedules as needed with the understanding clearly of performance, anyway. You're holding these standards for performance to them regardless, so who cares when they're working if they have a different schedule that they'd like to work?

The other part is letting junior women have a seat at the table. For example, we have an intern right now who has no experience but has jumped in and really worked really hard on the team. She wants to be on the team, and she's graduating and she's getting her real estate license. She doesn't have the experience that we need, but she's somebody who's willing to work really hard. Giving her a seat at the table and saying, "Hey, if you really want to try, this is the job description. We're going to have very specific check-ins so that you can make it happen." She's already proven to us that she's really willing to work really hard, and let's see what happens.

I think that's really important as well, being generous with letting women in to observe. Especially with in-person meetings, which we're going back to. You can have somebody who wants to sit in and learn and see high level. Pull them into a meeting. Let them see what goes on. Otherwise, it can be years for some of these younger folks to get visibility on all the things that we're working on. Especially for young women who are coming in out of college who want to have female mentors or women to look up to, giving them those opportunities is really important.

Pynes: Yes. I think your point about visibility is really well taken. Just making sure that you're giving younger women, or the next generation, opportunity to see and to experience new things.

You mentioned getting back to work and being back in the office, something that all entrepreneurs, whether male or female, have on their minds right now. In real estate, it must be interesting, because you really needed to be in the office – or at least be at the open houses or be in person throughout the whole pandemic – as much as clients would want. Not so much like a traditional office space.

Jordan: Oh yes, we were back right away. We were back June 22, 2020. We were back working with people in person. So, we didn't really have... but I'm thankful for that, to be honest. For me, it was really lovely to spend those couple of months with my kids being back at home, but I was ready to be back in person.

Pynes: You have three kids, so for you, like me, going back to work almost probably felt like a vacation. How do you balance that in your world? We all struggle with the time and the energy and how to make it all happen. So, what does that look like in your household?

Jordan: The calendar is really important. Making sure that there are calendar invites for everything. Making sure that time is blocked out. That's non-negotiable time with the kids. Then, being super present with them. We have little silly ways as a family that we make sure that we spend real time together. My kids do this thing called snuggle, which is where I have to go get into their bed with them when they get into bed at night and lay with each of them for at least five to 10 minutes. One of my daughters, I read to her. The other one just wants to talk. Then my son wants to ask me what my favorite thing is that I did that day.

Honestly, I don't get to spend as much time with my kids as a lot of moms in real estate. I know a lot of moms in real estate are able to come home in between things. I really like to focus when I'm focusing. I come home at the end of the day. Usually, I don't really stop home in the middle of the day, hardly ever. So, for me, I try to focus on making sure that I make quality time.

Then, I'm really being clear about the events that I want to attend and what I want to be able to do with them. And also, be really clear about where my husband needs to step in or where I can't be there. So, I try to just make sure that I'm really clear about what I'm trying to do. Being present when I am with my kids. Then also having some traditions with them that they look forward to. Because kids love routine, and they love these kinds of little... it's small stuff. It's really not big, but you have to do it keep kids happy. You have to stick to those things, and you can't negotiate with the time that you have.

Pynes: That's right. We've got the family fun night where we spin a wheel and each person in the family gets to pick a different movie, or they get to choose dinner or dessert that night. So, there are nights that we allocate as family fun nights for us all to be around. I don't even think, Francesca, you probably knew that.

Grea: I did not. That's so cute though.

Jordan: It's good. It's really important.

Grea: I don't have kids yet, but I see a lot of my friends who are on their first, second, third at this point. I can't even imagine, honestly, the juggling and the balancing that it takes. Going off of that same vein, how do you...and I know you've mentioned this on the show as well, about how you manage your mental state and how that helps you turn every kind of disaster into an opportunity.

What are your tips to managing mental state?

Jordan: I do love meditation and I find that I can do that anywhere. It doesn't mean that it has to be 15 minutes. Sometimes I will sit in a conference room and I will put my feet up and turn off the lights and spend five or six minutes just regulating my breathing. I think that's really important, so I do focus on meditation.

Then the other way that I work on my mental state, which I think I was telling you about the other day is: I feel like food is a drug. A lot of the stuff we put into our bodies are drugs that we don't think about, like caffeine, alcohol, carbs, sugar, all of these substances. So, I'm really careful about what I put into my body. Because I do find that makes a really big difference for my mental state. I do get activity in every day in some form. It doesn't mean that I work out every day. We're thankful in New York City that a lot of the time, you're walking places, so I'll take phone calls while I'm walking, that kind of a thing. I'll just get out and make sure I move my body when I've been in the office a lot during the day. So, I focus on all of these little ways of making sure I'm just keeping my mind and body in top condition.

I do have a life coach that pumps me up and makes me feel good about myself. I have a great business coach. I have people in my life. I have systems in place and an infrastructure to keep myself feeling really positive a lot of the time. Or, at least being able to take things in stride without getting really stuck in, maybe, bad news or something bad that happened.

Pynes: Tell me about your breakfast routine. I want to know what good stuff you ply yourself with in the morning to get you going.

Jordan: It's so hard. Breakfast is the hardest meal. I do a lot of black tea and oat milk. That's my big go-to.

Pynes: Obsessed with oat milk. It is life changing.

Jordan: It is life changing. And then when they tell you there's so many carbs in it and there's all this and they want you to take it away.

Pynes: Oh no, don't tell me that.

Jordan: Don't tell me that. I'm sorry. I feel like I'm so clean everywhere else. If I'm going to have the oat milk and that makes me feel good and it's not dairy, then I feel like I should be allowed to have it.

I do have Chinese herbs every day. Most of the time, twice a day, if I can remember, but at least once a day. I have those on an empty stomach. I have ground chia in water. I have lemon water. I take a bunch of supplements in the morning. There's a lot of different stuff that I take to basically keep it all going. When I don't take it, I kind of notice it. It really helps to have all the different pieces together.

Then there's of course time periods where I don't have anything to try to reset, because you have to be careful. At one point I was probably having too many supplements, so I started to take it back a little bit. Take a step back on the supplements.

Grea: I'm so curious about that junk juice though. Does it taste good?

Jordan: No, it doesn't, but there are capsules. I'm taking the cap right now because I ran out of the packets. The capsules are pretty effective as well and they're really easy to take. I think the juice itself is the most effective, and I find I see a really big difference from it. The capsules, I've been taking those, and it still is really impressive how much it regulates my mood and helps with my skin and helps my hormonal balance and all of that, which is everything.

Pynes: Other than the food and the junk juice and the supplements – I'll need to get all the names of what you're taking – when you are in the middle of a crazy transaction, how do you keep yourself and your team motivated?

Jordan: What I've realized is my team does rely on me a lot for motivation. For me, I rely on myself a lot for motivation as well. It's funny because you don't realize when you have a team, they all do really look up to you. What I do is, I make sure I really keep a very even keel. I really do try to take things as seriously as they need to be taken. Because as you know, I'm not saving lives. I'm just selling real estate. It's important to keep that in check. I'm sure that's the same with your industry. In the end, it's really important to remember what we're really dealing with here, and then deal with it as quickly as possible with a smile.

Grea: One of the partners here who was the founding chair of our group, he always says that. Sometimes I'll get caught up. I'm going, "We have this, and we have this, then this is urgent." And he goes, "We're not saving lives. We're just doing deals. Take a breath." So, it is important to remember that, keeping perspective.

Pynes: I agree. I know that you are really strong in the gratitude practice and thankful for everything that you've been given and blessed with and recognizing that there's other things going on in the world and we can't cure all of them.

Jordan: I think the other part of it is putting blinders on. For what it's worth, I check in on the news about once a day. I just am very careful, because it's always coming at you. There's always so much negativity and so many things going out in the world that are really hard to deal with. But then if you add that on top of the fact that one or two three-year deals are blowing up, and you're trying to figure out what to do for about eight or 10 clients, it's hard to handle that.

Pynes: It's a huge time suck, too.

Jordan: Yes. There's something to be said for the fact that a hundred years ago, we didn't really know about everything that was going on everywhere. Maybe we don't need to all the time.

I think it's important to compartmentalize, because even in our office here, there are TVs everywhere, there's news on everywhere and it's a lot. Especially during COVID, it was a lot to handle. Literally the reinventing of the same thing and how easy it is to get sucked into it. You just have to be very careful.

I think that's across everything. That's social media. That's really being careful of where you're spending that little bit of time you that don't realize you're really spending. Getting stuck standing in front of something and watching it, or being sucked into your phone. All of that can just suck away your time,

and you have to be so careful of what you're putting into your brain, because that's what you're the sum of: All these different little things that you didn't think you were really paying attention to.

Grea: Yes, absolutely. What would you say is one thing that you know now that you wish you would've known when you're starting out?

Jordan: I think the thing I wish I'd known the most and I wish I understood – because I don't know how I could have understood it because I don't think my consciousness was there – is taking a step back and thinking about the why and the how when you're doing things. Being really young, I was 24, 25 when I got into this industry, I didn't have real job experience. I didn't have real life experience. You're dealing with property transactions, and there's a lot of moving parts around that, and you need life experience to understand the why. If I had taken more time and more steps back, instead of just being so quick to the trigger and quick to do things and rushed. Because that's what you're doing when you're in these kinds of jobs. You feel like you're just trying to get everything done and off your plate. Had I been more thoughtful with a lot of the stuff I was working on, I think that would have probably helped my career more in the earlier years. I think I spent a lot of time head down with blinders on – too many blinders – and probably didn't look up and see what else was going on around me that I could have probably found.

Listen, it worked, and I'm fine, and I am in a good place now. But I think that for the young people out there, there are people like me who are too head down, and they're not paying attention. They're just focusing on just whatever they told me to do, getting it done, instead of thinking about the why. Seeing something and saying something. Really, just being more thoughtful. There were a lot of things I saw that I thought were weird and I didn't say anything, or those early years in business where you see things and you think, “They know better than me, I shouldn't say anything.” Then later you realize, “Oh, what I saw was real and other people didn't see it. It's a problem now.” I think that listening to yourself is something I wish somebody had taught myself to do in the beginning.

Pynes: Do you think that maybe you didn't listen to yourself because of your age back then, or because you're a woman or you just didn't know whether it was your place to say something?

Jordan: I think everything. I feel like I had spent a lot of years thinking that everybody around me knew more than me. I think I've said this before. I think this literally was the line in the show. I spent a lot of years thinking other people knew more than me when the truth is, at some point, the playing field gets pretty level, or the knowledge base in this industry at a certain point can be a lot more level. It's all how smart you think you are, at some point, because this is a business where a slight of a hand gives me the differences between selling a \$10 million apartment or a \$20 million apartment or not.

Pynes: What would you say has been one of your hardest transactions, or a lesson that you've learned from something really tricky or difficult over your career?

Jordan: I have this set of brothers who are clients of mine who I've been dealing with for a really long time. I think I've been working with them for maybe 12 years. With me, they've bought five apartments and they've sold one.

They make me insane. We think in completely different ways than each other.

Pynes: I'm sure they're not on the call right now.

Jordan: Listen, I respect them so much though, because they think about things completely differently than I do. There were a couple of times where I think we all thought, "Should we really all be still working together?" I stuck it out, and it was one of the best decisions I've ever made because now I have an infrastructure in place to support them. Part of it was that I didn't have the infrastructure in place to truly support them the way they need to be supported, because they needed more support from an administrative perspective and more support in general, which made me always feel like I was on my heels. I was always the Jack of all trades, as a real estate agent usually is. And now, we did four transactions together this year. They were crucial clients for me in my first year at Elliman. I made this big move, this big change.

Those transactions that I did with them were really important because they put me on the map for this year. That's really important when you do a move, the first year. I moved firms, and some of the bigger transactions you do are really important because the transition itself can be a transition where it's hard to start doing all the business that you were doing before at your previous firm, because the change itself is disruptive.

Pynes: The idea of the long-term clients and being loyal, is that a critical component, are you finding in your business? Or is it really one and done at the multimillion-dollar levels? Enlighten us.

Jordan: If you can hold on for dear life and figure out a way to deal with certain clients, I think it's very important to not let emotion get in the way of doing these transactions.

The truth is, at the highest level, you are going to get some incredible people, and you're going to get some people who you just don't see eye to eye with, but that doesn't mean that they're bad people. Then, of course, there's the whole category of people who are bad people. You should be careful of people who are bad people, and that's a whole other conversation. But there are people who you don't see eye to eye with, and there's nothing wrong with that. It's learning how to deal with those people.

I think early in my career, even with this specific client, I didn't know how to deal with them. I just didn't know, but I did it. I figured it out, and we dealt with each other. Now that I have this infrastructure in place, and people on my team who are actually really good at dealing with these kinds of people, it's been amazing. I've been able to preserve the relationship. Now I can have the good part of the relationship without the other part, which I didn't know how to deal with.

I would say, sticking it out super important. It's really important to figure out how to not be emotional and not throw your hands up in the air and walk away from things. Because a lot of clients bring you more clients in this industry. Clients bring you more clients. Success brings you more success.

Pynes: I feel if you can get through a transaction with your broker and actually still like them. I still like our real estate broker here in LA. It's like a contractor: If you get those referrals and things don't go awry, then it really says a lot about that person and their working relationship.

We have some audience questions. Would you be okay with us ... Fran, you want to do the first one?

Grea: It looks like the first one is: What are your best tips for leadership and managing a team?

Jordan: I think you have to decide if you are good at managing people. If you're not good at managing people...and this is something that takes years, to learn how to manage people. Or, you have it or you don't, and still it still takes years to learn more intricacies around management.

I think it's really important to decide to have somebody who's going to help you manage. I learned that really quickly with my team. My team is amazing. I love them. I love being around them. I think they're awesome. I love working with them, but they need more daily management than I can provide them. There is somebody on my team who helps me with managing the team and making sure people are feeling appreciated, feeling validated, feeling supported, feeling like they can ask questions, making sure that they have somebody who they can talk to when I'm out and about working and doing the real estate part of the business.

Pynes: Okay. The next one is: What advice do you have for women in male-dominated industries?

Jordan: What's interesting about real estate is that, at the high end, it's probably a toss-up as to which gender dominates it at any given time. There are mostly women in residential real estate in general. I think it's more than 50% women in residential real estate. I have found that, for me, the most important thing in dealing with male-dominated situations is I don't really give it a lot of attention that I'm the only woman there or that it's all men. Maybe it's because I have a pretty strong personality. I'm a really high D on the personality profile, which is very direct. So, I really make sure that I don't make a big deal out of it, because I do find that in so many scenarios, we can all get along.

If somebody makes a funny comment, maybe is a sexist comment or something like that, I usually make light of it. I usually just say, "You clearly haven't worked with me before," or something. That's easy to just push it off or not really give it a lot of attention. I find that the more attention I give to that stuff, it doesn't come to anything that's really great. Unless we're talking like something that's actually illegal or Title IX or something like that, but a lot of this stuff is subtle. So, I just deal with this stuff with a lot of humor and a lot of confidence and a lot of pride around being maybe the only woman in certain scenarios and being able to deal with any room.

Grea: Do you feel like you just have a natural confidence? I would say one of my biggest challenges, as I've come through this industry, is figuring out, like you said earlier, how to not take things personally.

Even when I don't feel confident, it's the imposter syndrome you're talking about, how to just act confident and fake it till you make it. Does it just come naturally to you or is it learned?

Jordan: Yes, I would say I'm definitely lucky. There's a certain element that's definitely natural. My daughter has some similar traits, so it must be coming from somewhere. And then, I also am blessed with a goldfish brain. I forget. People can be mean to me, and I completely forget.

Pynes: You're like Dory from "Finding Nemo."

Jordan: It just works. I forget stuff. I forgive really quickly. I don't hold grudges. That's just how I've always been. There's a lot of therapy where we're trying to figure out what happened and why, but,

yeah, it works for me to just move on, and it always has. It's a part of me that is a superpower instead of something that I can change because it does help in business.

Pynes: Yes. Fran you want to do the next one?

Grea: The one that came in is how the show has impacted your business. Can you talk about that?

Jordan: It's so funny. Everybody has this question. The way that it does impact your business immediately is that it helps open doors, but you have to open those doors yourself. There are the occasional referrals that come in from people interested in talking to you because they saw you on the show. They're fascinated by what you're doing. They literally saw you on TV and they want to work with you. But I would say that those are less than a handful.

The rest are people who are more interested in talking to you and already knew you. They already know me, so now they're more interested in talking to me because it's a differentiator. Or, it helps open the door and allows me to get in with certain groups as long as I make the phone call.

Pynes: I know you talked a little bit about the importance of your own personal brand. What advice can you give to people who are starting out in terms of building their personal brand and how to go about it?

Jordan: What I'm finding with my personal brand now ... I started thinking about the brand itself in 2017. Now we're in 2022, so that's five years of giving it actual attention. I think you have to own that it's going to change. Your vision of what you think that your pillars of your brand are should be moveable. There will be clarity that will come. The more content you create and the more you see what resonates out there, the more you'll get clarity around those pillars. Thinking of the brand as pillars is really important. In every branding book, it's like, "Pick your brand pillars."

Then there's also this aspect of making sure that whatever you do is truly genuine. There is no faking it. That's what you learned in reality television. There's really no good reason to fake it. Just be yourself. Unless you're truly an actor or you're really trained in acting, everybody can see it and sniff it out. When you're in acting school – I took two acting classes in college, that's all I ever did – and what they always taught you is that you need to have a true objective at any point in time in the performance. You always have to have your actual objective, whether it's to prove something or to convince somebody or to kill someone or to love someone or to move the boulder to the other side of the room. The truth is that's the same for branding. You should have a purpose. Whatever content you're putting out there, you should have a purpose. Don't be afraid of the fact that things are going to keep changing as you continue to put more content out there. At this point, branding is just content that you're putting out there, and shaping that content to something that is going to resonate with your audience

Grea: Is social media the preferred method these days, or what's your favorite type of marketing?

Jordan: Social media is free, which is great. You can start, and you can experiment, and you can try for free. There's a lot of good reason to start there because you can literally experiment without having to pay for it, unless you want to pay for the production cost of whatever you're putting out there. I think that's a great venue.

Then, of course, the next level is digital marketing and blogs and websites and all of that. Then the rest of it is, I guess, TV. It's literally social, digital and then there's television. Between all of that, there isn't really anything else anymore. There's streaming, which isn't TV, but it is TV.

Pynes: I studied broadcasting in college and I never could I imagine how much content would be created and available over the internet, YouTube and other streaming channels. There is an incredible opportunity for people who are comfortable creating content and getting their brand or message out into the world. Obviously, it takes so much time, which is something that none of us have.

Jordan: But remember, once you get the hang of it, you can do it in no time. That's the key: Making sure that you're not intimidated by the fact that it might take a little bit to warm up. Then, as you learn how to do bite-sized chunks of content, it's something that you can chip away at. Or batch for that matter. Take three hours in an afternoon and have somebody come over. Have outfit changes, make your different little talking points. The content that people want nowadays is getting shorter and shorter.

Pynes: Absolutely.

Jordan: I think I used to be super intimidated by it, and every single time I go to my content, I'm not excited about it. I hate it, but I do it because it's like anything else. It's part of the job now.

Pynes: That's right. Switching gears a little bit: How do your kids feel about seeing you on TV? Do you watch with them?

Jordan: Oh yeah. They love it. Well, the thing is my younger two, they are not big "Million Dollar Listing" fans. They're too young, they're like deep in "Paw Patrol" and "Peppa Pig" and stuff like that.

Then my older daughter, the one who's eight, she's totally into it. She's super proud. She's most likely to be famous, little awards at school. She's ready. She tells people on the bus, "My mommy is on TV. Just wanted to tell you. My mom is on TV."

Pynes: That is so cute. Got to get her a cameo, right?

Jordan: Oh yeah, exactly. I should. I put my kids on a cameo the other day when I was doing one and I was like, "And here's the fam!" Great reviews.

Pynes: So fun.

Grea: We have another audience question. The question is: How have you expanded your business as the industry has changed? For example, real estate in the metaverse?

Jordan: Oh, God. That is an area where I'm sure it's a good idea to get in early because I think that there's something to be said for it. I am more comfortable investing in the stuff that I know, which is my own personal brand, my own team. There are so many areas for me to invest where I know I have more control that right now, I'm not investing in the metaverse.

However, I don't think that means it's a bad idea. I just think it's like anything else, there's limited resources for all of this. I think I'd probably sooner invest in the actual cryptocurrency world myself, just

because at least that's something that I see my banker friends are investing in. I can see that they still believe that has a reason and that it's going to bounce back. Whereas metaverse is a little bit harder for me to say, "Oh, I totally get how that's going to work."

Pynes: Maybe we should be creating the first Kirsten Jordan NFT.

Jordan: Exactly. Exactly.

Pynes: Our partner, Heidi, can take that and run with it. That's her expertise. We've got another podcast episode on that and that would be super fun next project, right?

Jordan: I'm totally up for all of it. I feel like me pixelated or whatever it is, or as a cartoon, my kids would love that, actually.

Pynes: That's so funny.

Another sort of off-topic question, but what are you watching on TV right now, other than Bravo and "Million Dollar Listing?"

Jordan: I'm trying to think of what I'm watching on TV. To be honest, I am preparing for my first keynote speech on March 24 at the Greater Boston Association of Realtors in Boston.

I'm building this business, so I always watched the millionaire listing shows. I always watch "Millionaire Listing L.A." and "Millionaire Listing New York" and I have those playing.

And then, this is really sad. I'm such a mom when I'm doing this. My daughter and I are reading the Harry Potter books together, I'm reading them out loud to her. Then when we finished one, I get to watch a Harry Potter. I never did Harry Potter as a child so, I'm actually really into Harry Potter right now.

I also really believe that everything you need to know in life, you actually could learn from the Harry Potter books. It's so incredible. The wholesome takeaways and the lessons that they have in those Harry Potter books. There are some days when it brings tears to my eyes because I think they do such a good job of teaching life lessons in those books. So, I'm living Harry Potter for the first time right now. That's what I'm focusing on at home.

Pynes: That is awesome. I haven't read them yet either, I just read the first one. My husband did the same thing that you're doing and went through with my middle daughter, who's now 15. She just loved the series and then watched each of the movies as they finished the books. I think that's really cool and that should take you a while.

Jordan: It takes a while. What's really impressive is my eight-year-old went from not really reading these chapter books to the other day, we had 50 pages left in Harry Potter – I'd already finished it and I didn't tell her— and she woke up in the morning by herself and she finished it.

So, that's it. But this is back to basics, because kids are excited about reading real books that then have a real movie that's attached to the real book. This is great stuff.

Pynes: Anytime you can get your kids reading is a real win, with so many distractions in today's world and so many pressures as well.

Are your kids out of masks yet in New York? They should be right?

Jordan: Yes, they are. My daughter had allergies this morning, and I didn't send her in because I just knew that they would send her home. I felt like a really good parent. It was going to be her first day without masks, so I felt badly. She'll be back in tomorrow. But yes, the kids are, except for my four-year-old. They're not ready to pull that yet. Hopefully that will come soon.

Pynes: How does the home/life balance work between you and your husband?

Jordan: Stefano is lucky because of the fact that he is a developer, and he works for himself. He works from home all the time. He has a home office, a real home office. It's not something in the bedroom, it's a real room, a real office that he works from. Then he's out and about in the city a lot of the day. He has a little bit more flexibility with his job because of the fact he has a small team. Whereas for me, I feel the need to be present with my team and be out and about more. He and I tag team.

When it comes to trips, in August he takes the whole month with the kids because he can work from there. I come for a couple of weeks. When I was filming, I didn't even go that one summer because of the fact that he went and stayed with the kids and I stayed here.

So, we tag team, and he's amazing. He takes all three kids by himself on the airplane. It's impressive. Eight-year-old, six-year-old and four-year-old.

Pynes: Not easy, but they're his kids too.

Jordan: Exactly. They're his kids, too. It's more that. It's actually hard for any parent to do it alone. It's hard when I have to do it alone.

Pynes: Yes, I remember my very first solo trip with my oldest daughter. Gosh, I'm going to age myself. She's 17 now. When we moved from New York to California, I somehow thought it would be a good idea to not only fly by ourselves, but fly with landing in LAX at 6 p.m. on a Friday. Gosh, after that long day flying with an infant, we sat on the 405 for two hours to get to our new home. I was literally ready to get back on the plane and go back to New York, Kirsten. I swear, the fact that I'm actually still here all these years later is just incredible. So, I do give props to Stefano for taking all three of them on the flight.

Jordan: Oh yeah. When I was pregnant with Tommy, I flew over with the two girls, because he had to come over earlier. I was pregnant, and I don't sleep on planes. I showed up and I had both girls with me, and he was like, "How'd it go?" And I just sobbed, because that's all you can do. There's no way to describe it. The exhaustion, it can all relate to that. It's a lesson that those are the moments, those are real parenting moments.

Pynes: I think we have time for one more audience question. Fran, you want to jump in?

Grea: Yes. Honestly, speed walking is the question. I think people are fascinated by it. You don't know this about me yet, but when we get together, you're definitely going to have to go slow because I am the slowest walker with the shortest legs.

Jordan: What's crazy about race walking is that I got into it in high school. I think I was a sophomore in high school. What's great about track and field is that they put you in heats. The first time you do something like this, you don't compete against the best. You compete against other people who are in your heat. I think I was in the second heat, which means I wasn't with the top race walkers. Race walking is actually a very small sliver of people. It's not that many people. A lot of the race walkers during the second heat weren't that fast, but I actually had a natural knack for the race walk. So, I was lapping people. I won my first race, and it was a really big beginner's luck moment.

I actually always look back on it and I always use it as an example for people about how there's something about beginner's luck. It happens in real estate sometimes. When you're at the beginning of your career, you'll have a really special moment – in any career – a very special moment where somehow you have a big success early on in your career. I think that sometimes, that helps you with the longevity. It helps you with the motivation to succeed.

For me, it was that way because I did very well on this first race, and I never had any sort of athletic ability at all. It was something that was so cool to me, that I actually was good at it and it actually was going to place so well, that I just immediately threw myself into it. It was super special because I won the states and the nationals, back-to-back, in my senior year. I was a record holder. It was a really big deal for me. It was a kind of a niche event, but still I was an all-American.

Grea: Amazing. This has been so great. Thank you so much for being here. Before we close it out, tell us what's next in the year ahead.

Jordan: Oh, what's next. We have like over \$100 million in our pipeline right now of stuff that's happening.

We're hoping to hit \$200 million in sales this year, which would be really big number for the team. I think it's going to happen.

I'm in the process of writing my first book proposal. It's almost ready to go. They say don't sell it too soon, so stay tuned. Then, honestly, I'm really enjoying the public speaking aspect of things. If I can just continue to push my business along with my team, then I can travel around the country and do one of these public speaking gigs maybe once a month or once every couple of months, that would be really big for me.

Pynes: That sounds amazing. We will be following your adventures both on Bravo as well as on Instagram, as well as through our work together.

Thank you so much, Kirsten, for being with us. We really enjoyed our time today and all of the great advice for women entrepreneurs and people growing their businesses, and growing their careers, as we celebrate Women's History Month together. So important. We really appreciate your insights and your time.



Jordan: Thank you for having me. This was lovely. I cannot thank both of you enough for all you've done for my business, because it's really very special. I know we only touched on it for a minute, but having the right legal team is very paramount in running your business. I can't thank you enough.

Pynes: We're here for you. Thanks Kirsten, and thanks everyone for joining us.

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