

THE COMPANY WE KEEP

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Life isn't about how to survive the storm but how to dance in the rain

Kevin Hall

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WHERE WERE YOU BORN, AND WHERE DO YOU LIVE NOW?

I was born in Bristol, England, moved to London and then to Calgary, Alberta for a two-year secondment. I have now lived in Calgary for the last 42 years.

WHAT DID YOU STUDY AND WHY?

Wanted to be a fighter pilot or an accountant! I am good at math, creativity, logic and reasoning so it seemed like a good fit. Opted to become a Chartered Accountant – a great grounding for business.

FIRST JOB?

Laying fibreglass insulation in attics while working part-time for my father's company during school holidays. It was very hard and dirty work – I knew I had to focus on my education if I didn't want to end up doing this type of work. I also had a part-time job selling menswear at a fashion store in Bristol. It taught me selling skills, how to maximize your income through commissions, the importance of building relationships, effective ways to deal with team politics, and the power of a good suit. My first full-time job was as an articling clerk in a small firm of Chartered Accountants.

FIRST CAR?

1966 white Singer Chamois - powerful 875cc 😊 engine

MY CURRENT CAR...

2006 silver Land Rover LR3, a 1974 mustard yellow V12 E-Type Jaguar XKE roadster and a 1966 maroon Corvette Stingray 427 roadster. Just ordered the new Lexus GX550 Overtrail.

WHAT'S THE BIGGEST SURPRISE ABOUT YOUR JOB?

How much I still love it!

BIGGEST RISK YOU EVER TOOK?

I've taken way too many risks – personally and professionally. Most worked out, some did not. Yet here I am, still alive, no regrets, learnt a lot, enjoying life and still making a positive difference in the lives of others.

WHAT MAKES YOU FEEL BETTER ON A BAD DAY?

Looking at photos and videos of my grandson and new granddaughter – they are always happy and without a care in the world. It's infectious.

MY MOST REDEEMING QUALITY IS...

Altruism

WHAT'S THE THING THAT PEOPLE ARE MOST SURPRISED TO LEARN ABOUT YOU?

I totally dislike paying for parking. You cannot imagine the lengths I will go to avoid it...



I HAVE LEARNED TO COME TO TERMS WITH...

It's more about what I haven't come to terms with... Don't get me started on the blatant economy-killing antics of the Canadian Federal Government which is pulling our country apart. Maybe it has always been this way and I'm just naive but I still like to think I can make a difference..... I will now get off my high horse!

IN THE LAST MONTH, WHAT IS THE MOST INTERESTING CONVERSATION YOU HAVE HAD?

My son telling me that I need to let go of the business to others. However, I still love it and at what point are they ready for a bigger role? It's a common succession dilemma.

LAST (OR MOST LOVED) HOLIDAY?

Montreal (October '23) with my son, daughter-in-law and my new grandson. Didn't want to leave him....

BEST BOOK YOU'VE READ IN THE PAST YEAR?

The Wager: A Tale of Shipwreck, Mutiny and Murder by David Grann. It incorporates my passion for sailing, adventure and overcoming adversity.

YOUR BINGE-WATCH SERIES?

Not something I do. When I do watch TV, I prefer detective or adventure shows. No soaps!

BEST GADGET YOU OWN?

My smartphone. It's an enabler. I can be out in the wilds on an adventure and still be in the office...

HOW DO YOU RELAX AND UNWIND?

I love adventure and action. You won't find me lying on a beach. I ski as often as I can (season pass), love sailing and boating and enjoy backcountry fly-fishing, horse riding and scuba-diving. I'm also a petrolhead and an avid traveller.

CHARITY/ CAUSE CLOSEST TO YOUR HEART?

YouthLink Calgary. I served on their Board for nine years and as Chair for three years. Being able to have a positive impact on children's futures is tremendously rewarding.

I HAVE A COLLECTION OF...

Memories. No sitting in a rocking chair at age 95 wishing I had done this or that.

IN MY FRIDGE YOU WILL ALWAYS FIND...

Fresh fruit, San Pellegrino / Big Rock Brewery Beer.