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TOTAL
MOM SENSE

BEASTS IN
HER BELFRY

PLUS
RIGHT ON
THE MONEY

THE MEASURE OF A MOTHER
NANDANA SEN
ON HER LEGACY



PHOTO CREDIT: Kaniha Chadda-Gupta

KANIKA CHADDA-GUPTA: TOTAL MOM SENSE

*CNN anchor-turned-mompreneur
tackles parenting concerns in her podcast*

MELANIE FOURIE

Kanika Chadda-Gupta has worn many hats in her lifetime. This mom of three (including twins), hosts “[That’s Total Mom Sense](#),” a podcast about parenting concerns. It features interviews with parents, thought leaders and industry experts on a variety of topics. “I believe moms have a built in

sixth sense, our intuition, which I call ‘mom sense,’” says Chadda-Gupta. “It’s our mom sense that steers us on the right path when it comes to our kids. I was thrown into the deep end of motherhood as I had three kids in a year and a half. But I put on my journalist cap and asked the hard questions to make sure I felt supported and equipped to take on my new role efficiently

and effectively. I believe parenting is one problem after the next, so we have to be problem-solvers ... I’ve interviewed prominent industry leaders like Bobbi Brown, Reshma Saujani, and Rebecca Minkoff – who are known for their career success – who shed light on their roles as mothers. Because often times the press completely overlooks this. On my show, they

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get to open up and tell their story in their own words.”

Chadda-Gupta is also a former CNN India anchor who covered “Slumdog Millionaire” at the Oscars and interviewed celebrities like Priyanka Chopra. She is the CEO of [Kronologie Agency](#), a marketing firm focusing on web design and branding. She is also an ardent dancer – in Indian and contemporary dance. We caught up with her via Zoom, where she recounted some experiences.

What was it like growing up in Mumbai, India?

I was born in Mumbai and my parents immigrated to the U.S. when I was two. So I am first-generation Indian and had an incredible childhood. I was only in Mumbai for a few years, but it made a lasting impact on my life.

I was very rooted in my culture; my parents instilled that in me. At the age of five, my mom enrolled me in the India School, which is in Bethesda, Maryland, very close to where I grew up. Every Sunday, I would attend school. It was a full day, from like 9 [a.m.] to about 2 p.m.

I loved visiting Mumbai as a child. There’s no other place in the world that has that level of hospitality. You feel instantly welcome, and you are fed and offered chai, and I just love that it is embedded in our Indian culture. I think we are who we are today, thanks to our mom and Nani.

How was the concept of “That’s Total Mom Sense” birthed?

After I got married in 2013, I had kids in 2017 and 2018. I had three kids in a year and a half. Yes, it’s

possible, but it does throw you for a loop. I had twins in 2017, a boy and a girl; in 2018, I had my youngest son. It was challenging, but I knew I wanted to be a mom and made room for it in my life. As much as I would joke that I was thrown into the deep end of motherhood..., there were times I was just crying from the exhaustion at 3 [a.m.].

I was up at those odd hours nursing, and I would listen to podcasts to stay awake. I listened to a lot of parenting podcasts, and I found quickly that the space was bereft of a show with the three pillars, namely, informative, engaging and inclusive [material]. Many shows I was hearing were just a lot of banter, commiserating about breastfeeding or potty-training. Yes, those are daily challenges parents face. But I felt like if I’m going to dedicate half an



In conversation with Bobbi Brown

hour of my time to listen to a show, I don't want to hear a host and the guests just saying that. I'm a problem solver at heart, and so I wanted to create a show that helps parents, and serves them in a way that they get to solve the problems or challenges they're faced with..., especially during the pandemic.

I know we don't have the time to read 300-page parenting books, so I bring on top psychologists, parenting experts, best-selling authors, speakers and thought leaders. Parents ... get a very well-packaged show with all their answers in half an hour.

How do you juggle your career with family life?

There's no such thing as work-life balance. Balance means a 50/50 split, but I do believe you can create harmony with all the moving parts in our lives... We have to decide our priorities. What are our non-negotiables? How do we want to show up for what matters? In my case, it's leading my team, doing my research, preparing for each podcast interview, and delivering a compelling product with significant reach and engagement for my sponsors.

You began training as a classical Indian dancer at five, and now dance for the Sa Dance Company. Describe your love affair with this art form.

I began dancing when I was five, trained for 15 years, and really enjoyed performing Bollywood and semi-classical dance in college at culture shows. I want to be a better dancer as a mother, because I have so many life experiences to draw from. For me, dance is cathartic. It's a way to express our truest emotions. Whether it's the breakdowns or the breakthroughs, you can convey it all and lay your heart out there on the stage. That's what I find most liberating.

Is there any message you have for other mompreneurs?

Yes, be kind to yourself because the world is so unforgiving. You emanate that kindness and joy and peace to those around you. Your kids imbibe it, too. Celebrate those small victories. Be proud of all you're doing, because when you're a mother, you're responsible for these other beings and their lives, and you're enriching their souls in a way that they feel supported.

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