

WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP

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Joby McKenzie

*Managing Director, Canada
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You worked from home through the pandemic, leading a company while keeping three young children engaged in virtual school and providing caregiving support to your parents. How do you approach situations in which you have to keep many balls in the air?

I'm truly lucky in life. I've had the benefit of balls bouncing my way, with good health for myself and my family, a job that I absolutely adore, a home. And I know I could not make my life work if I didn't have such strong support from my superstar husband. That said, the pandemic added balls I didn't want to have to juggle – being my children's teacher and being the family hairdresser. So, while I love challenges, I'm really looking forward to letting some of those balls roll away.

You represented Canada at international basketball tournaments and your team won a silver medal at the Pan American Games and qualified for the 2000 Olympics. How did those experiences help shape your approach to leadership and motivate people at work?

Basketball has shaped every part of who I am as a mom, as a partner and as a leader. I've coached my

children's basketball teams and I always tell the kids, “We're not out here just learning how to shoot or dribble a ball. We're learning life skills.” Not many people go on to play for their country, but everyone needs to learn to thrive within the diversity of a team.

My team hears me talk a lot about setting goals and winning together, picking each other up after losses, persisting with hard work to overcome challenges, and surrounding ourselves with people who have different strengths. Also, like sports, work has to be fun. I'm well known for my loud laugh – and, luckily, laughing is good exercise!

Life is full of ups and downs, and sports teaches you resilience. My resilience was particularly tested when my youngest son was diagnosed with leukemia at the age of five and underwent daily chemo treatment for three and a half years. My teammates and community rallied around my family, and just last year we came out on the other side. I now have a strong resolve that we must spend our hours on this planet wisely, doing what we love and being around people who make us happy.

How important is mental health support for employees in driving business results, and what initiatives have you put in place at Teladoc to keep your team mentally healthy?

I believe strongly that health starts with mental health, and that to be an engaged, productive, thriving team member, you have to be mentally healthy. As a healthcare company, we focus on offering a helping hand through access to trained professionals and self-service technologies such as internet-based cognitive behavioural therapy (iCBT). Our mission is to empower all people to live their healthiest lives, and we need to start with our employees. So, for example, I brought in external experts to lead a six-week program for people on how to deal with day-to-day issues – from relationships at work and home to eating healthily and exercising. It comes back to being a good teammate: I try to help people be healthy. I rely on my teammates to help me, too.