

DRAGON'S DEN CO-STAR RELEASES NEW BOOK

## Dickinson shares the art of Persuasion

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QMI Agency

Grandmothers always seem to give good advice. Not sure why that is, or how it possibly could hold up, based on the law of averages.

Nonetheless, Arlene Dickinson's grandma had some words of wisdom that the *Dragons' Den* co-star still recalls.

"My grandmother said to me when I was little, 'Arlene, you need to love people, not things,'" Dickinson said.

"So I learned it was about spending your emotional capital on people, not wanting and craving objects. If I have anything, I have a genuine love of life and a genuine love of people."

### New book just released

With this genuine love setting her apart, Dickinson knows all about *Persuasion*. So much so, it's the title of her new book that was released this week (Harper Collins Canada).

But if people read the book, won't everybody know the art

of *Persuasion*? Won't Dickinson be giving up her natural advantage?

"The reality is, you can tell somebody the best idea in the world, but it's all the work that comes after the idea that makes it happen," Dickinson said with a laugh.

Dang. And there we were, hoping for a quick fix.

Of course, TV viewers also can see Dickinson in the new season of *Dragons' Den*, which gets under way Wednesday on CBC. Dickinson admitted with the success of the TV show, as well as her new book and its associated line of *Persuasion* products (wine, chocolate, coffee, skin-care), she has moments where she thinks to herself, "How did I get here?"

And therein lies part of the reason she decided to write the book now.

"I had been approached before but I didn't think I was ready to do one," Dickinson said. "But this year, for a bunch of reasons — mostly because of all the comments we get from

(*Dragons' Den*) viewers, I get a lot of emails and phone calls and letters — I thought, 'Maybe I need to talk a little more about what has taken me here.'

"I'm always asked, 'What does it take to be successful? What's the secret?' But I have made a lot of mistakes, too. It's not a straight path."

### Overcoming challenges

In her early 30s, Dickinson was divorced, had only a high-school diploma, no savings and no idea how to feed her four young children. Today she is the CEO of Venture Communications and, through *Dragons' Den*, one of the country's most famous entrepreneurs.

Dickinson's *Persuasion* is based on the notion that before you can persuade anyone else, you have to persuade yourself of your own potential. However, Dickinson stresses that *Persuasion* — which features plenty of personal anecdotes — is not a self-help book.

"I don't want it to sound like, 'If you just tell yourself it's

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— Arlene Dickinson

going to happen, it's going to happen,' because that's B.S., right?" Dickinson said.

"But we're so busy comparing ourselves to what we think everybody else is doing and not just doing what we need to do. It comes through this whole society where we all feel inferior."

As for *Dragons' Den*, Dickinson believes she essentially is the same person she was when she first started on the show, although maybe she's a little more self-assured now.

"I'm more public about who I am," Dickinson said. "I still crave my privacy, but I'm getting more used to that. In terms of my values, I don't think I'm any different."



Arlene Dickinson returns to TV with *Dragons' Den* on Wednesday. WENN.COM