

# Susan Brach

## Swimming with Sharks

Susan Brach is used to dealing with sharks. Though the kind found swimming in some of her favorite dive spots can be intimidating, facing down the two-legged varieties she encounters in her professional life as an attorney doesn't scare her a bit.

Practicing law was something Brach says she always wanted to do. She started a little later than most, though, when at 37 she enrolled in law school at Memphis State. Some years and a few cities later, Brach found her way to the Lowcountry, where she lives with her husband, Mitch.

As an attorney at Carter & Tate in Savannah, and on her Sunday evening TV show, Brach hears case after case where someone "big" has taken advantage of someone "little," and the victim is reaching out to her for help. "The TV show is a great tool to reach people," she said.

Tough topics are de rigeur for the program. Victims have sought advice from Brach and fellow attorney Mike Avery on everything from sexual assault to knife violence. The half-hour show is designed to help everyday people get the legal advice they need. Simply picking up a phone book and calling a lawyer can be intimidating, so the call-in and email segments of the show are popular. "We've gotten a following," Brach said. "The show gives an edge to what you do."

When she's not fielding phone calls seeking legal advice or putting the opposing side through their paces in a courtroom, Brach can be found underwater, floating among colored coral and silvery schools of fish, with camera in hand. The underwater world is a haven for Brach and her entire family – including her husband, son and grandchildren.

"Diving is a big family thing for us," she said.

Brach has taken her love of scuba diving a step further – she typically views the highlights of the watery world through the lens of a camera. "I've begun to dive with the purpose of taking photos," she said.

Just like the courtroom, the undersea world is full of characters of all shapes, sizes and colors – including sharks – which Brach captures on film.

"Angelfish will follow you when you dive," she explained. Grouper also like to snuggle up to, and sometimes startle, divers. Brach laughs about the memory of a sneaky grouper. "It's nature. It's not orchestrated."

"Diving is my hobby. It's a very different world," she said. "You're away from the (every day) world, and it's quiet and peaceful."

– Mary McAuliffe

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