

Gillian Mullings

AND THE SECRETS
OF NUBIA

Gillian Mullings is a legal Strategist and Attorney at Law at Naylor & Mullings in Kingston, Jamaica. She has practiced law for 17 years, representing a broad range of clients and handling cases from corporate law to commercial and civil litigation. A thoroughbred professional, Mullings has been described as tenacious and highly knowledgeable in her field. This mother of two is also a successful entrepreneur and owner of “Secrets of Nubia,” a Jamaican skin care line made from authentic Jamaican herbs. Mullings has made a name for herself by combining her knowledge of chemistry and her love for healthy and natural skin care products.

Her Early Years.

Mullings was raised by her grandparents in Black River, St Elizabeth. They lived in the countryside and, as it is in many parts of the world, living out in the country meant farming, caring for the land and tons of work. While there were other industries like mining in the area, the primary occupation for most of the locals was farming. Her grandparents owned a Pimento farm, which is a Jamaican Nutraceutical used in food and also as a healing oil.

Chemistry, Law and The Seeds of Entrepreneurship

Mullings later moved to Kingston, Jamaica to go to elementary and high school. She was a diligent student who was great at Chemistry. She loved science and would set up her little experiments at home. However, according to her, she never really got into exploring chemistry as much until she became a teenager. At that time beauty trends were in vogue, and the need to look beautiful and have great skin was important to Mullings. So, she started making her own scrubs and skin care products from sea salt, coconut oil, cocoa and other household products, and they worked really well.

The years passed by and she went on to study Law at the University of West Indies, got married and had two kids. In her Law practice, she made the decision to go into social activism and ended up handling a lot of cases in relation to social issues; the environment, labor laws, etc. One of these was the Algix vs. Appleton case which involved the Rum-Sugar company at, Appleton, of putting waste from sugarcane production into the river. It was also discovered that other kinds of waste from distilleries, a mixture of molasses and sugar, etc. were also being introduced into the waters in and around the River. These, unfortunately, are alleged to have affected the fish, the fishermen and health and livelihood of the locals in the region.

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She was contacted by people in the community and started investigating these issues. Being someone who has always been

interested in Chemistry, Mullings began to research on the production processes, fermentation, molasses, etc. and realized that the allegations were serious and would continue to impact the community. She mobilized Chemists in the area to do the research and then subsequently filed the lawsuit.

“It was a pressuring lawsuit because we were going against such a huge company,” Mullings recalls. “But we kept on anyway. We assumed that the corporation would be willing to abide by the legal standards and that was part of our initial application to the Jamaican Courts for relief.” Unfortunately, the company resisted that application, the court made an order in favor of Mullings’s client. The company went all the way to the court of appeal trying to set aside the Court’s order. Mullings succeeded anyway.

“However, that was only the beginning of the battle,” she says as they are now seeking compensation for

the many stakeholders involved; the fishermen, the villagers and everyone affected by the waste. “A lot of the people didn’t even know they had rights and that the company couldn’t just do whatever they wanted. It was my job to educate the people, so the company did not get away with any potentially harmful practices.”

Her Entrepreneurial Journey

During this time, Mullings decided to take her dream of starting a cosmetic/skin care business more seriously. She had gone from making the products just for herself



to sharing it with friends, family and anyone who was interested. And the requests kept coming. She realized that she needed to sell the products to make that venture a success, and that was how her cosmetics business started.

She would make both purely cosmetic and also therapeutic products. With time, she began to refine the products using her knowledge of Chemistry and more employing more sophisticated equipment. Today she has a full line of oils including Moringa Magic oil blend and Jamaican Hemp magic blend; African black soap and shea butter. She believes that natural is best and continues to provide high-quality products for her customers who always come back for more. The products have sold out in every pharmacy that has carried them.

Mullings is currently developing more therapeutic products made from authentic Jamaican ingredients that are natural and make you feel and look good. Her raw materials are sustainably sourced so the people they buy from can support themselves. As an activist, she is committed to business practices that are socially, morally and economically ethical in order to serve both her customers and the communities with which she partners.

The business also works with local coconut and cocoa farmers who process the extra virgin coconut oil, an old Jamaican remedy that it great for the skin and always in demand from customers.

She is also currently investigating the use of other nutraceuticals like the Jamaican climbing hemp and particular Jamaican species of Rosemary that grows in drier regions of Jamaica.

“The next step is to expand their products into other markets including the United States,” she says. ||||



ADVICE TO YOUNG WOMEN:

To young women with a dream to be entrepreneurs Mullings says, “There’s nothing wrong with having a full-time job as you prepare and learn more about having your own business. However, when the time comes to jump, you have to be ready because what people call good luck is simply preparation meeting the right opportunity. So, prepare yourself and once you see that opportunity, go for it.”

She also advises young women to stay away from mentalities that center on dependence on others. Plan your life so that you can enjoy the things you want to do based on your dreams and aspirations.

“Be bold. Get out there and let people know what you want. Don’t be afraid of getting a no.”