

Race car dreams become acting realities: 5 Cool Things We Learned from Sondra Currie

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Sondra Currie definitely knows the ins and outs of Hollywood. She has worked on more than 110 TV shows, including *NCIS*, *E.R.*, *The Golden Girls* and *Eight is Enough*. She's also starred in many movies, most notably *The Hangover* series, in which she plays the mother of Zach Galifianakis's character.

Beyond her Hollywood career, Sondra actively gives back in the community. She's a member of SHARE, a charity developed to help abused and developmentally disabled, mentally challenged, and children with HIV/AIDS.

Sondra's life experiences give her plenty to share with teens. Here are five things we learned from her in our recent interview.

— **Alexa Graff**, *LSY!* teen reporter, Mount St. Mary Academy

1. Sometimes the unexpected is expected. When faced with the bumps of an acting career – jobs lost, films that never made it – Sondra says that she “always expected things to happen.” It's a confidence that even when things go wrong, something good will come up.

“I am always surprised when something doesn't happen,” says Sondra.

2. Dreams change. When Sondra was younger, she dreamed of becoming a race car driver. She worked hard to pursue it, but ultimately learned it wasn't the way for her to go.

Now, acting is not just a business to Sondra. It's her life. She loves what she does entirely and wouldn't trade it for anything.

“This is always what I wanted,” she says. “This is where I should be.”

3. Nobody hands you a career — not even a famous mom. Sondra's mother, Marie Harmon, was a well-known actress in the 1940s. While Marie taught her daughter many useful life lessons outside the business, she didn't create Hollywood opportunities for Sondra.

“As far as helping me out in the business, she did not,” Sondra says. “I wish she would have picked up the phone (for business reasons) once in a while.”

Sondra says she had to “work her tail off” in order to achieve the results she wanted. Which is not necessarily expected from the daughter of such a well-connected, gifted actress.

4. Don't mistake creativity for lack of business smarts. “Most people think actors are flakes,” Sondra says. “They think Hollywood is a great big party.”

But that's not true. Some of the most disciplined people Sondra knows are actors; they are required to be at the top of their game physically, mentally, and emotionally.

“You have to handle it like a business,” she says. “You are your own commodity.”

5. When you get criticized, consider the source. Instead of constantly letting negative feedback bring her down, Sondra understands that everyone has their own point of view and opinions. So instead of dwelling on it, she simply considers the source.

If it's someone who's not in position to be highly critical, she takes it lightly.

“Sometimes you just have to let it roll off your back,” she says.

However, if the person is someone that Sondra greatly respects, she considers the criticism more closely. Because ultimately, Sondra is seeking to become an overall better person and actress. Feedback helps her do that.



Sondra Currie's advice on handling criticism: Consider the source, and if it's coming from someone whose opinion you value, implement it.