

Deborah Deras: Helping Adrenaline Junkies to Kick the Habit

When Deborah Deras was three years old, her parents brought home the best surprise ever—an adorable baby brother. The family’s joy was tempered, however, by the sad reality that the baby had been born with a profound disability. Immediately, their energy and focus shift-

ed to the infant and his needs. A devoted sister, Deborah willingly participated in her brother’s care, adopting a caretaker role that influenced her life into adulthood.

Growing up, Deborah’s parents—her father from Colombia and her mother’s family from Lithuania—instilled in her the traditional values of countless immigrants: education and

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hard work are the keys to the American dream. Never allowed to rest long on her accomplishments, Deborah found each of her achievements met by a challenge to do more.

When she was 19, two tragedies shook Deborah’s world. The divorce of her parents, followed by her brother’s sudden and untimely death at the age of 16, left the family emotionally and spiritually shaken. Though it seemed that her grief would consume her, Deborah’s pain ultimately forced her to take stock of her young life and propelled her into maturity.

Abandoning her business college curriculum, Deborah began studies in counseling, with a desire to make a positive impact on the lives of others. Thus, she began the journey that made her what she is today—a charismatic speaker, trainer, and life coach. She speaks on topics of Motivation, Time Management, Life Balance, Peak Performance and Diversity.

The path wasn’t always smooth, however. Fueled by the internalized parental challenge to work harder, Deborah’s desire to help and please others went into overdrive. In her own words: “I was compelled to be in constant activity. I scheduled every moment of every day from dusk until dawn—I kept taking on more because I couldn’t say “no.” As a perfectionist, I couldn’t delegate anything—I believed that no one else could do it the way it needed to be done. I was burned out, stressed out, and ready to opt out.”

When exhaustion and ill health threatened to stop her in her tracks, Deborah identified her compulsive activity as “adrenaline addiction” She defines an adrenaline addict as “someone who has the compulsion to be in constant activity and is addicted to the burst of energy that adrenaline provides”. Recognizing the costs of such behavior both in her own life and in that of many of her clients Deborah has written, along with her business partner, (and fellow adrenaline addict), Adeley Odunton, their book, *Confessions of an Adrenaline Addict: How to Achieve More with Less Effort*. The book shares the recovery program they developed and strategies to avoid burn out and achieve high-level production with greater ease. Together, Deras and Odunton are the founders and owners of Synergy Unlimited, a professional development company.

In motivational talks based on the book, Deborah captivates audiences with her honesty and openness in confessing the self-destructive behaviors that led to her adrenaline addiction, encouraging them to abandon similar behaviors and make choices to create a successful life. According to Odunton: “Deborah’s extraordinary passion for life energizes everyone she meets. She entertains and inspires, but more importantly, she changes lives.”

Deborah’s presentations, delivered in a high-energy, interactive style, incorporate Salsa dancing, creative exercises, and compelling anecdotes to engage participants and help them assimilate the workshop material for use long after the session ends. In the words of one workshop participant, “Deborah lit a fire under me—and I hope it keeps goi

Contact HM&T Speaker Bureau 281-333-1755 to have Deborah Deras (www.synergyunlimited.net or www.passionatelivingnow.com) at your next event. Deborah was a featured speaker at our recent IAHP Conference in Atlanta, GA.