



Success Begins With Saying Yes

Ellen Rohr and [Debra Poneman](#)

Ellen: Hi, it's Ellen Rohr, the plumber's wife turned business makeover expert, which is appropriate because this is another episode of Business Makeover 2014. It's our opportunity to get here and now and present and to consider new ways of thinking, commit to new action to make 2014 your best year yet.

That's why I created this program. I'm ready for a quantum leap. The year 2014 lies ahead of us a fresh blank canvas, and I'm going to make the most of it. How about you? In order to think new thoughts and commit to new action, it helps to talk to people, to consider new ideas, to let new philosophies wash through you and see what kind of resonating impact they have.

I couldn't pick a better person for Business Makeover 2014 than Debra Poneman, who has been through some pretty amazing changes herself. I met Debra online. I've listened to her programs and she's become one of my friends unbeknownst to her, and that's how it works in this wonderful online world that we have.

Then she was also recommended by another one of our experts, Robin Palmer, who said call Debra because she's going to want to be part of this program. I was kind of star struck but I called her anyway and she said yes, so I'm super excited that Debra is going to be here. The name of our program today is Success Begins with Saying Yes. Yes is one of my favorite words.

I'm going to share a little bit about Debra before I bring her on the line, but I'm going to wait and let her tell you most of her story because that's the best way to do this. For almost 40 years, which is impossible because she looks like she's 32, Debra has been passionately involved in teaching cutting edge spiritual and secular programs that dramatically change lives.

At 19, Debra became a teacher of transcendental meditation and spent 10 years studying with some of the world's greatest spiritual masters. I'm going to let you share that. I'm not even going to read the rest of that because that's too interesting. In 1981, she was a pioneer in the personal growth movement. She founded Yes to Success Seminar, the company committed to offering crucial knowledge for creating thriving businesses and happy successful lives. Debra, welcome to the program. I'm so glad you're here today.

Debra: I was just laughing through that whole dialog. First when you said we met online, it sounded like it was some dating service.

Ellen: I posted a picture and when we met I looked 20 years older. Sorry. It's funny how that works. You do get to know people and what an honor it is for me to visit with you now. We have up to an hour together, I'm excited and we're going to share some thoughts.

I want to hear all about your story. You've had lots of success by very traditional metrics, the big corporate clients you've worked with – McDonnell Douglas, Mattel Toys and Xerox. You've had all

sorts of success but you've also had some amazing personal spiritual transformations throughout your life. You know that the theme of this Business Makeover event is all about these pivotal moments where you say wait a minute, am I on the right track, am I going in the direction of what I want, do I need to do a 180 here, do I need to stop altogether and start something brand new?

I know that you've had many moments like that in your life, so why don't you just start with your story. Let's hear about where you came from and I'll interrupt just to shake things up now and then. Fair enough?

Debra: That is so fair. Here's my story. I was born a – no I won't start there. I'll actually repeat what you said. I started meditating when I was 18, and when I was 19, I became a teacher of transcendental meditation. For the next decade I taught meditation to over 1,000 people. I also went on to study at the feet of some of the greatest spiritual masters in the world. You'll find this really hard to believe. I would go on meditation retreats sometimes for six months at a time, where I would meditate between eight and 10 hours a day. I know that's hard to believe.

Ellen: That's crazy. I am a huge believer and a novice practitioner of meditation, but with my shiny object, I find it challenging sometimes to clear my mind for seconds or moments at a time.

Debra: Well, it depends on the technique. There are a few techniques out there like transcendental meditation and like the art of meditation taught through the art of living foundation, where you don't have to clear your mind because when you are taught the technique – they use a mantra meditation – and when you're taught to so a bi-qualified teacher, the mind spontaneously settles down and you spontaneously gain this very deep state of restful alertness. The mind is at rest and yet it's alert at the same time, so you don't have to push thoughts out.

Believe me, I am the most ADD person on the planet – seriously – and I still meditate for 20 minutes twice a day and never miss. I mean maybe once in a blue moon I'll miss, but it is what keeps me grounded. It is what keeps me anchored. It is what keeps me sane.

That's why I became a teacher of meditation and that's why I still teach meditation. To this day I still teach a couple meditation courses a year because I really believe that it's the basis. It's just like if you don't have rest, you're not going to be effective. This scientifically has been proven to be the most profound rest that you can have, deeper than sleep in terms of the breath, settling down and all of the different scientific parameters that they measure – skin resistance, brainwaves.

You're even at a deeper state than deep sleep, and that's why you get rid of a lot of stress during meditation and it's really the basis to successful activity and clear thinking. I could talk for an hour on that but maybe we'll do another show on that.

Ellen: I'm pretty interested. As a commercial for the benefits, you give off such a joie de vivre. You're fun and it's easy to make you laugh. I really love your energy. We even had a couple technical difficulties and you just rolled with it. You don't seem to me like someone who is deeply stressed or wound tight at all, and it's really nice to be in your energy.

Debra: Likewise Ellen.

Ellen: Thank you. I knew we would get along swimmingly. Let's talk about meditation and how it applies to your story because you chose not to meditate for 10 hours a day.

What happened with that? Why aren't you still doing that?

Debra: Here's my story. For the decade of the 1970's – now you'll know how old I am – I really committed to going on these long meditation retreats. This will also blow your mind. Sometimes even for weeks or a month at a time, I would be in complete silence where we would just not speak and just completely be in word.

Now I can't do it for four minutes let alone four weeks, but that's another story and a different time of my life. For 10 years, I really committed my life to that but then when I started noticing that the big 30 was on the horizon, I thought I should probably get a real job and I should probably have things like health insurance, car insurance and maybe even a car to insure and things that grown-ups have.

So, I left the meditation community that I was living. I didn't think about what I was passionate about. I didn't think about what I loved to do. All I thought was I needed to make money so that I could have those things that grown-ups have, and then I could come back and I could start teaching meditation again.

I went to L.A. because that's where I thought the money was. I was living in a meditation community in Iowa. When I went to L.A., I got a job as an account executive for a financial company and even though I was a dismal failure and I couldn't have been more ill-suited for that – and this is one reason why I really am happy all the time because I know that everything's perfect even though it doesn't appear perfect on the surface because we live in a benevolent universe.

There's a benevolent Creator that wants the best for us, so even there's a seeming obstacle, it's there for our growth and it's there for our benefit. If we could have gratitude for it at the moment that it's occurring even though it seems like the end of the world and just have gratitude, that is what loosens the grip of the tentacles of horribleness.

When we had those technical difficulties, I just have gratitude for it. There's a saying from *Acts of Consciousness*. What is good about this that I'm not getting? What is great about this that I'm not getting? What's perfect about this that I'm not seeing? You don't have to answer the questions but later on you always see the perfection in it.

Anyway, back to my story. I was selling investments. I was a dismal failure and one night somebody invited me to a seminar. This was in 1981 and somebody was giving a seminar on what turned out to be the Law of Attraction. That was like 32 years ago.

I'm sitting in the seminar and I'm blown away because the person who's leading the seminar is saying that we are vibrational beings and whatever our vibration is, like a tuning fork, we will attract that into our lives. We're vibrating doom and gloom and I'm never going to get out of debt and I'm never going to find the love of my life. You're putting out that energy and it is going to attract – like attracts like.

There are so many other rich things. He said that the quickest way to become wealthy and successful is to help others become wealthy and successful, and you could do that by mentoring people and by supporting people's endeavors, but you could also do it just by your thought, by wishing other people success and prosperity.

With everything that this man was saying, every cell in my body started vibration and I knew at that moment that that was why I came to L.A. in the first place and that what I was going to do for the rest of my life was teach these energetic concepts. So, I started studying.

Ellen: Let me interrupt for a second just to point this out. I didn't have the words for it, but I've always known that things like goose bumps and a visceral reaction to something was a good indicator. I loved it when I just felt tingling all over, that there was a feeling, an energy about it.

I work with a lot of plumbing, heating, cooling and electrical contractors. I work with people who are very much into laws of physics and those concepts, and sometimes to embrace the energetic world can be stretch. Not for everybody but for some. I think that those feelings are already there, that gut feeling, that awareness that something that feels bad or feels wrong is worth paying attention to. I just wanted to underline the point you were making about that. You felt it when the reason was a visceral thing.

Debra: Yes, and I'm so glad that you did stop me, because that is something that probably shouldn't be glossed over. You call them goose bumps. I call them Gods bumps. That's the God of your understanding, if it's Jesus or Moses or Krishna – one God or a tree or a rock or whatever. I'm not going to tell you what to believe in but when something is right you just feel that vibration, those God bumps.

Some people get that energy at their spine. In Sanskrit it's called Kundalini. Listen to your physiology. When your physiology tightens, you know there might be danger. When your physiology is alive in that moment, follow that because that's a message from God saying there's something good there, I'm giving you these God bumps. I'll tell you what I did because this is about making life changes. After I went to that seminar, I went home and I did what any intelligent person would do. I quit my job the next morning.

Ellen: Perfect.

Debra: I have to say not everybody's in a position to do that, and if you're not in a position to do that when you those god bumps and you know what you want to do with your life, don't sit there complaining – I can't do it, I have to support my family. There are realities but you could still take at least one step closer to your goal every day.

I had the luxury of being able to quit my job because I could live on almost nothing. I had done it for many years, so it wasn't new to me. I have enough. My husband made enough that we could live and survive. Like you said, you study the great masters. You study where the knowledge is. I started studying people like Napoleon Hill, Wallace Wattles, Emmet Fox, Florence Shinn and Catherine Ponder – all of these people who had written books and taught the energetics of manifestation.

What is so interesting about it is that – there is, you know, nothing new under the sun. These people have been teaching the Law of Attraction for decades and for centuries. As I said, I quit my job.

Ellen: Let me add to that too. I was just thinking about the blessings you don't see it. You were living lean enough that you had the freedom to quit your job. It's another way of looking at being really thin, broke, that you really don't have so much to lose if you quit your job, if you're not that far ahead financially anyway, there's a freedom in that, isn't there?

Debra: There is. As Bob Dylan says, "when you got nothing, you got nothing to lose."

Ellen: That's so far to fall. So, you started to study the masters.

Debra: Right but here's the thing. After about four months, I had put together the most kickass seminar on how to create success. This is where most people fall down. I did three things:

- An idea comes to you because it wants to be manifested through you.

I believe that the Creator gives us the ideas that the Creator needs manifested on the planet at that time in creation. That's why one person has the idea to start a gluten-free bakery, another person has an idea to start a seminar on success and another person has an idea to open a plumbing contracting company or whatever it is.

That idea comes to you because you're supposed to manifest it, but you have to take the steps towards that manifestation because the Creator can't come down and put on an apron, start kneading dough in a gluten-free bakery and put up the sign. So, the Creator whispers into our ear what needs to be manifested in creation in order for the creation to continue and to thrive and to expand and grow.

When I had that idea to start a seminar company, I had a million and one reasons why it would work. I was 28 years old. I had a degree in the Science of Creative Intelligence from Maharishi International University. I had no business experience, I was completely broke, I drove a beat-up Chevy Bel Air that my aunt had left to me 10 years ago before she died, and I'm going to teach success seminars?

Here's the thing. The idea came to me and I knew that it came to be because I was supposed to manifest it, and I couldn't wait until I thought I was ready. That's the biggest mistake that people make. They wait until they think they're ready, when their kids are out of school, when you get the divorce, when you get married, when you have the money, when you get the degree.

Ellen: This is when being smart is not an advantage. The farther you are the farther out you can see on the chess board – if this happens and if this happens – and you work your way right out of it. There's a great quote by Robert Jarvik, who was the developer of the first artificial heart. He said, "Leaders are visionaries with no concept of the odds against them."

Debra: That is so beautiful.

Ellen: Isn't that fantastic? When you're smart you're going to screw this up. If you're listening and you're a smart cookie, we want you to just chill a minute here. So, there were a million reasons why it couldn't work and you only think of those because you're smart enough to look down at the chess board. It does seem odd that you of all people would be inspired to start a business like this.

Number one is you get the idea. I think on the heels of that idea is going to be the resistance or the fear or something. Now are we into number two?

Debra: So, the idea comes to you because it wants to be manifested through you. Number two is:

- Don't wait until you think you're ready because you're never going to think you're ready.

We live in a relative creation. There are always going to be loose ends. There is never going to be a time on this Earth that everything is tied up in a neat little package with a perfect little bow. Loose ends and all, you've got to take a step from which there is no turning back if you really want to manifest your dreams.

Ellen: That's lovely. Steps from which there is no turning back.

Debra: Do you want to know what I did?

Ellen: What?

Debra: I'm going to leave you in suspense for a second and I'm going to tell you something else. Another principle of success that I believe is:

- Don't tell everybody what you're going to do until you have made significant progress towards doing it.

This is for several reasons:

→ What is sacred must be kept secret.

Same root – sacred and secret – and your cherished ideas, your vision is sacred. I'm not worried about people stealing. That's not a worry because there's an infinite number of people who could start success seminar companies, but the discouragement committee will show up and tell you all of the reasons why your idea will not work. Am I right?

Ellen: The discouragement committee. That's the thing. It's not just one. It will start escalating. Then your mother tells your sister and now they're all on the phone.

Debra: That's exactly who it's led by – your mother-in-law, your husband, your spouse. Come on, there are so many people giving telesummits. Ellen, how could you think that you're going to give a telesummit? Oh come on, those are last year's deal.

Ellen: It's a scam, who makes money and blah, blah, blah. There's a balance, I think with someone who would maintain the sacredness of it.

Debra: You've got to be careful though.

Ellen: Would you wait until you just take that no turning back step at least?

Debra: Here's the thing. Sometimes we have a really good idea and we tell somebody right away and we haven't taken any steps towards it. What happens is when it's a tiny little sprout someone will just stomp on it. Just wait until it's at least a strong plant.

Ellen: Put a little bark on it.

Debra: Yes a little bit of bark on that thing. What is secret must be kept secret? Here's another reason why we don't tell. There's another great quote. "Those who talk don't do; those who do don't talk. They just do it." It's like letting the steam out of the kettle.

How many of your listeners have told about 20 people about the book you're going to write? How many of you have told at least 20 people about the business you're going to start or the seminar you're going to give – or you fill in the blank – and you haven't done it yet because every time you tell somebody, you're letting the steam out of the kettle. If you don't tell anybody, you're keeping that steam inside and it's got to burst forth in the manifestation of that book, that seminar or that business or whatever you want to manifest.

Ellen: I love this. Good job.

Debra: If you have to tell somebody because you need some investment or you need an idea or you need a partner, that's okay but still manifest it, get some business plan written out, take some

steps in that direction and then when you're so unshakable that even the discouragement committee isn't going to dissuade you, then you can ask for that partnership or that investment or whatever it is. What is the step that I took from which there is no turning back? I put up posters.

Ellen: You are just a tiger. You put up posters.

Debra: In 1981 there was no Internet. What I did is I rented a room at the Santa Monica Public Library and I made posters. My name was Debra Olson at the time. It said Debra Olson to give seminar on how to live a successful life, or something like that. I went around putting up posters and at that moment I had to tell my friends, and sure enough the discouragement committee showed up but I already had the posters up.

Ellen: The posters were up.

Debra: They told me how nobody was going to believe a crazy idea about how your mind creates your reality.

Ellen: This is awesome. I love that that big no turning back step was putting up the posters. Whatever it is for you, it's the one where now you have to go give that seminar. Someone is going to show up or could show up, so now you've put yourself out there, so, one is the idea and two is the step from which there's turning back.

What's number three?

Debra: Also, what is sacred should be kept secret. Don't wait until you think you're ready.

Ellen: So we have more than three. We can just call them bullet points. Keep going.

Debra: Basically, when I went to give my evening seminar at the Santa Monica Public Library, even though the discouragement committee told me nobody would believe a crazy, idea like your thoughts create your reality, there was standing room only and that was the beginning of Yes to Success.

In the next three years, my seminar was taught in 12 cities in the U.S. and in seven countries on four continents. Again, this was pre-Internet. This was word of mouth, snail mail and telephone calls, so it was pretty phenomenal that it spread across the globe within three years.

I had the first infomercial in the history of infomercials to offer self-improvement products. That's when I hit corporate clients at a time when women were not hired as corporate trainers. Again, this was in the early 1980's. McDonnell Douglas, Xerox, Mattel Toys were all my clients because I did it right. I acted on my idea when it came to me. I took the step from which there is no turning back. It wasn't like it was all smooth sailing. There were times when I wondered if I was doing the right thing, but you just feel the pain and you do the hard thing because on the other side of the hard thing is where all of the grace lies.

When you do that thing which is the hardest thing for you – to speak up at the meeting, to ask your boss for a raise, to tell somebody what you really need, to ask for what you want whatever it is, that really hard thing that you think you're going to die if you do it – when you do it, on the other side is where all of the success lies.

Ellen: Let's pause here for a moment because I've got this philosophy and I think this is going to land with you. If I did spend all day every day meditating, I do believe that I could think of an

apple and manifest an apple, just right there in my hand. I believe that is possible to do, and yet I wonder if I would miss the journey of finding the apple.

Isn't that the point that there is this space between what we want and what we have now so that we can go on adventures? We're missing the deliciousness of this particular life.

Debra: Not only that but it's what you came here for. I mean if you're going to have all the apples handed to you on a silver platter, you wouldn't have been incarnated in a human form.

Ellen: We wouldn't be right here and now. I totally get that there just the joy of it. Another thing – and this is maybe a different angle to make this point – but I remember when I was President of Benjamin Franklin, the punctual plumber, this important job. I was the busiest person on the planet and then I decided that I was going to leave this organization. I took some time and we found a restructuring of the word chart and the company was going to be just fine without me, which is a nice thing. I'm proud of the fact that I didn't leave anybody in the lurch and we made this nice transition, but the day that I was no longer the President, nobody called me.

Not one person called me, which was very interesting. It's kind of nice to be solving problems. That's a blessing. It's a gift to be the person that's called. When you think if I only had a day when nobody called, I've had that day and it wasn't what I thought it would be.

Debra: That is so beautiful. I love how you stated that because when there are obstacles and there are problems, they might as well have a sign on them that says this is what you incarnated for, this is what you came here for. The truth is that you chose every single obstacle, every single problem, every struggle and every difficult person. You manifested that for your own growth.

This is why you're here and you have every resource to solve that problem, to deal with that person. There's a concept in Kabbalah called Tikkun and it means repair. In Kabbalah, their philosophy is that we are all incarnated, that we have certain Tikkuns, certain things that we didn't get right in our last lifetime and we're having another chance in this lifetime.

Why is it that one person has physical maladies and somebody else is fine? Another person has great health but they just have struggled with money. Why is it that somebody else has no problem with money but they've had five husbands?

Ellen: Oprah, with her weight, isn't that fascinating?

Debra: Yes, exactly because that is what she came here to for. Again, one of the other things as I said early on is if you vibrate on the level of this is so horrible or this is a tragedy, it will be a tragedy. But if you vibrate at the level of this is a gift, it will be a gift. What we tend to do is run away from our Tikkuns.

That same person, that same husband shows up in a different body and then we get rid of him, and then we get another one and it's the same person in a different body, and we get another boyfriend or boss. It's because we haven't completed what we needed to learn with the one boss, so we just have to manifest the other boss in the other body.

Ellen: Let's underline that for a minute because this happens with my clients. In fact, it happened with a client recently. If there is a family member or a person on the team that you think is really where a lot of this energy is, that person needs to go. So, that person goes and then someone who didn't heretofore demonstrate any of those characteristics all of the sudden has them.

It's amazing how that happens. You see that. Like if Jerry was the problem and then Jerry is gone and now it's Suzie. This is when you can say okay it's time for me to embrace this gift, this adventure, because it's just going to keep coming back.

Debra: Not only that but it keeps accelerating. I once interviewed somebody and they said it so beautifully. They said the first time it's a little tap on your shoulder, the next time it's a little shake and the next time it's going to feel like you're being hit by a 2 x 4.

Ellen: It does escalate, doesn't it?

Debra: And it's more and more challenging every time.

Ellen: Let me ask you this. You're a pretty involved person. You've had all this spiritual training and you then did a course of study where you learned from different people, as well as your meditation experiences. Tell us about a time when in spite of all that, you still struck denial, didn't want to see it or didn't want it to apply to you.

Do you have an experience like that?

Debra: I have one that is the quintessential experience like that. Just to end of my story about my business, I had my company in seven countries on four continents and all these corporate clients, and I was about to have my own daytime TV talk show. I had a major producer in Hollywood and I had a major publisher in New York about to sign a contract for my *Yes to Success* book, and I gave it all up cold turkey.

Ellen: Wow, what happened?

Debra: You can breathe, everybody, because nothing tragic befell me. Actually what happened was my daughter was born. I don't know why but it just always gets me. I took one look at her and I thought new passion. The thing is that what I taught was you have to follow your heart.

Ellen: You're making me cry. It's so wonderful. I mean I don't mind crying.

Debra: Yes, and I don't mind crying either because that little bugger is 25 years old now and she's the light of my life. This doesn't mean that everybody should stay home and be a mom at home, but I just looked at her and I thought I teach people to be authentic, I teach people to follow their heart, I teach people that the only true path to success is if you move from your mind to your heart.

Instead of thinking, thinking, thinking; feel, feel, feel because the mind judges. The mind analyzes, the mind sees what's wrong and the mind sees what's not going to work, and the heart only feels and loves and sees what's right and unifies. I also believe that people have authenticity meters. If I was going around the country giving seminars when my heart was home with my baby, my authenticity would have been way over in the negative range, so I just gave it all up.

Ellen: **Did you have a conflicted dialog? Were there moments where you thought is it my fear of success, couldn't I do both? Did you have this back and forth with yourself or were you really absolutely clear?**

Debra: That is so crazy that you should ask me that because most people just accept that I had that moment of I want to be home with my baby. The truth is that I didn't want to leave her to go to the bathroom, let alone leave her to take a trip to New York and L.A. No way.

Years later a friend of mine said to me, you know there's another reason why you gave up your career. I said really? She said yes, absolutely. She said you were afraid. I said what was I afraid of? She said you were afraid of success and you were afraid of failure. Then we talked about it and I realized she was absolutely right.

Think about this. What a great story I could tell now – at the height of my career, I was about to have my TV show, I was about to have my book published – but the truth is that I was very insecure. I was a little Debbie Halperin – one of my other names and I've had several – from Skokie, Illinois. Here I was playing like I was some kind of big girl in a big girl's world, going on all these TV shows and sharing with the people of the world how to be successful.

It could have all come crashing down at any moment. There was always that possibility. The truth is that I probably was afraid of the possibility of failing and also the possibility of really great success because both of them were unknowns. So, it was kind of really convenient that my baby was born at just the right time that I could exit stage right, and now I have this great story to tell for the rest of my life about how I gave it up at the height of my success.

Ellen: You seem to have sat with that a while and are okay with that too.

Debra: Yes, I am but there was this one moment that I do want to share with you. By the way, the one thing I learned is that there is no such thing as failure. You've got to follow this. Failure only happens when we think that what other people think about us is important.

Ellen: We look at it as a failure because we're measuring ourselves by what someone else's yardstick might be.

Debra: Failure is whose eyes? What is failure? You might do something wrong, so you pick yourself up and you do it again. You blow it and you pick yourself back up. What's failure? Those are just all life lessons, but we think we're a failure if we worry about what other people think about us. That's what failure is. There is no such thing. It does not exist. The only things that exist are life lessons and failure is just worrying about what others think.

Just think about what we could accomplish if we didn't care what other people thought about us. We're like millions. We run our lives based on what we think other people are thinking about us, and the truth is we have no idea what they're thinking about us. Yet we twist ourselves into all kinds of pretzels because we are so afraid of what other people think about us.

Ellen: I'm going to do a little press forward here because I have a 28-year-old and you have a 25-year-old. What's kind of cool about being a parent is that the job ends. I don't have to hump dinner together every night now and neither do you. We have some energy that we turned towards our children that now is available to us again.

Tell me what is happening now with you? How are you using that energy?

Debra: It's interesting that you should say that. I'll tell you one other interesting story. I have a 25-year-old daughter and my 22-year-old son, so I did stay home and I was a mom at home for 21 years. I mean I did things but basically I was there. I wasn't that much of a cook but I was there for my kids. They were my top priority. I always said if anybody wanted to know where I was, I was at Chuck E. Cheese.

Ellen: Excellent.

Debra: I said when my son graduates from high school, that's when I would go back and start speaking again. I remember my dear friend Janet Attwood, who is the New York Times bestselling author of *The Passion Test*, whose house I'm broadcasting this from right this moment. She's one of my very best friends.

Anyway one day said to me, Debbie you've got to start speaking again. The world needs your message and it's timely now. It was 18 years ago. Really, you have to stop pretending that your kids still need you. I thought about that for a second and I said I have no idea if my kids ever really needed me. I have no idea. They might have been better off being raised by...

Ellen: Wolves.

Debra: A nanny. I mean wonderful people who either their grandparents (or wolves), aunties or nannies. You never know. Were they better off because I was there? I don't know. There's no way of knowing if it's true. When she said that I have to stop pretending that they still need me, I said the truth is that I have no idea if they need me, but I know it's really hard because I need them. Don't get me crying again.

Ellen: I hear you.

Debra: One I love you so much mommy, you're the best mommy in the whole world is worth more than 1,000 standing ovations, so it's hard to give that up.

Ellen: It is. It is the right way of things for them to grow up. That is the cycle too, and I just know from recent experience. When my kid went away to college, I cried every day and I told them I will call you every day, and I have since then. I said you don't have to pick up but I'm going to call you every day.

I get it but there is also this gift of the energy that we use to nurture those children is not at the same level anymore and we get to do some other things. I know that Success Begins With Saying Yes, which is now where you are with your message. Since then you've had a really significant health crisis too. We have 15 minutes left. I'm just letting you gauge because we could talk all night.

What stories do you want to share? What points would you like to make with the time that we left together because I could probably keep you going here? Given that parameter, what would you like to share?

Debra: There are so many different things. One of the things that I want to tell you is that when I was teaching Yes to Success, I helped people become millionaires. I helped people to become billionaires. There are so many New York Times bestselling authors who attribute their success to having taken my seminar. I could talk all night about this.

Again, I'm so grateful that I was in the right place at the right time and that they became my students and then they went on and created these amazing lives for themselves, but in the last few years it's become increasingly obvious to more and more people across the world that the way that we've been measuring success based on accumulation. Even though accomplishment it's not intrinsically bad, it's definitely not bringing anyone happiness for fulfillment.

What I'm teaching now is something that I call the new success. I began looking at the world and where it's gotten us as individuals and as a society where success is measured by external factors and it's not a pretty sight. I mean our financial system is broken, our ecosystem is headed towards devastation, people are less happy than they've ever been before.

What I did is actually, like you, I decided to interview people and study what it is that would really allow people to feel true and lasting success and happiness. I don't have time to go into everything that I found, but there is a recurring theme. It's not about money, it's not about fame and it's not about possessions but it's about freedom, it's about service and most of all it's about connection.

What I've discovered is what people want most is they want to feel that they've made a difference in the world and that their life mattered, and they also want to be connected to a higher power, to that higher voice speaking to them, and they want to be deeply connected to other human beings. This is just coming to me. You asked what I want to share in the last few minutes. This isn't what I usually share but I have some really clear guidance right at this moment, so I'm going to go with it.

That is, I really believe that the true secret to success – I don't know if you know who Dr. Brené Brown is but she's a scholar and a researcher. She wrote a book called *The Gifts of Imperfection*. For 10 years she researched topics, most notably vulnerability and courage and authenticity. What she discovered is that the greatest human fear is not snakes or heights or public speaking or even death, but the fear of not having deep connections with other human beings. People don't know how to deeply connect.

She further discovered that in order for real connection to take place, you have to allow yourself to be vulnerable. You have to be able to say I'm scared, I don't know if I did the right thing, I need you, I blew it, will you forgive me?

It's terrifying but if you want to be happy and if you want to have a strong sense of belonging on this planet, you have to have the courage – and it's the greatest courage – the courage to be vulnerable, to be imperfect. Her research showed that if you can let go of who you think you should be in order to be who you really are and do things like saying I love you to someone, even if you're not sure they're going to say I love you back, when there are no guarantees.

If you can ask people for help or support or sex or whatever, even if you are not sure what the answer is going to be – we are so afraid to do that so instead what we do is we numb ourselves with food, with drugs, with alcohol, with making sure that we look good or making sure we have that corner office or making sure we have the beautiful wife or the perfect kids, but that's exactly how we keep happiness away. It's only by embracing our vulnerability that we can know real success.

Ellen: These things aren't at odds with each other. It is an and proposition, that we could have those things as well as, but we don't want to sacrifice the real spirit of success for those other items that really will not deliver what we think they will. So often with my clients they work towards a goal with the hope that if they hit that goal a blue light is going to start flashing and now they can be happy.

Debra: Right. What does happen when they hit that goal? They feel happy for a couple of minutes and then they realize they have to set another goal.

Ellen: This is my experience. If I set the intention not for the having of it but for the adventure of it, for the joy of it because it would be a story to tell or something in this creative life that we have – you set the goals. Louise Hay says this too. Detach to the outcome. Wayne Dyer says that.

Oh it's Deepak. Detach to the outcome. Set it and then embrace the adventure. It is inevitable that you'll have it but you don't want to sacrifice your being Mr. Happiness in the pursuit of that line in the sand that's somewhere out in the future. That's the paradox of it, right?

Debra: There are two things. One thing that I've always said in my Yes to Success seminar – and I know others say this – is that success is a journey. It's not a destination. You are successful the minute you pick something great to do. You pick a worthy goal and you start working towards it.

Ellen: You have that great idea.

Debra: Yes.

Ellen: You're inspired by that idea.

Debra: Right, and then when you reach that goal, then it's kind of usually a disappointment. You know my friend Marci Shimoff is the number one New York Times bestselling author of *Love For No Reason* and *Happy For No Reason*. She sold 15 million *Chicken Soup* books. By the way, she was one of my students in the early 1980's. She actually was my secretary. She took my seminar and asked if she could work for me, and she left graduate school in order to be my secretary.

Ellen: Wow that is a great story. How funny.

Debra: She's one of the most successful women speakers of all time. She tells the story about how when she had a couple books on the New York Times bestseller list. I think *Chicken Soup for the Woman's Soul* was number one and she was giving a big talk in Chicago. She signed over 5,000 autographs. She had to have a hand massager person next to her to massage her hand because she was signing autographs for hours.

She was at the pinnacle of success, what everybody wants, and she went upstairs after signing all of these books to her Presidential Suite in the nicest hotel in Chicago, and she lay down on her bed and she wept because she felt so empty inside because she realized that wasn't what it was about.

She thought that's what it was going to be about and it wasn't, and that's when she went on her search to figure out what is real happiness? That's when she wrote her book *Happy For No Reason*. It really is about human connection and the only way you're going to be deeply connected is to let yourself be vulnerable.

Ellen: I've dropped this moment of foreshadowing here about you almost died. You were sick enough that you almost died. Now that's going to shake a person up. Tell me what that was like for you.

Debra: It was an amazing experience and it just happened not that long ago. It was just a few months ago. I won't give you all of the gory details that led up to it. I'm a natural kind of girl, I'm not big on Western medicine and I've always been that way, but I was really sick. It was Saturday morning and I really was sicker than I'd ever been, so I called a healer friend of mine and I said I think I'm in really bad shape. I didn't say it like that. I could hardly even whisper.

He said okay I will help you. He said I'll send you energy but you have to promise me that you're going to listen to me, and I said okay what? He said call 911 immediately. When the paramedics got there, they asked me what hospital I wanted to go to and I whispered Evanston. They commiserated a little and they decided they didn't have enough time. They couldn't get me there because I'd be dead and it was only nine minutes away.

So, they brought me to the hospital that was like three minutes away around the corner, and my blood pressure was like 67 over 20-something. When it goes under 70, usually you're a goner. It was called an acute sepsis. I had two types of bacteria in my blood. Usually one does you in and if you look it up on the Internet you'll see that people don't usually survive. I said God probably didn't want me in Heaven yet.

Anyway they brought me into the emergency room. Dying doesn't bother me. It would just be another great adventure, but I was lying there and I had this experience and it was so powerful. If people who are listening don't remember anything else that I said this last hour, remember this. I was lying there and I realized that when my eyes were closed and my eyes were open, I could still see what was going on in the emergency room with these beautiful souls rushing around trying to save my life, and I saw three things.

1. Everything is perfect.

Every mistake that happens is all guided by light that's actually guiding every movement. There's a light that's orchestrating everything on the planet. Even when something looks like a mistake or like somebody drops an IV bag, it's perfect because if that wouldn't have happened then the next thing wouldn't have happened that ended up saving my life because somebody saw a monitor and they wouldn't have seen me. I just saw how everything was so finely orchestrated by the Creator that there are no mistakes in the universe.

2. Nobody on the planet is more important than anybody else.

Sometimes we think the doctor with the M.D. and the Ph.D. is more important than the orderly who has to take two buses to get to the emergency room to hold the tray, but I saw the reality and that was the light that was coming from the hearts of those people who were serving with just pure surrender and pure desire to just serve, that light was brighter than the light that was coming from a heart that was more mechanical.

People who have those positions where they're just serving and maybe they're only making minimum wage, you should honor yourselves and know how important you are to the universe because you are equally as important as anybody who has three doctorates and an M.S., and maybe even more. I saw that on an energetic level. It is absolutely true. It's not a theory. I saw the reality.

3. A nurse went over to my husband and put her hand on his shoulder and said don't worry she's going to be fine.

There was no reason for her to have said that at that moment, but I saw this light come out of her mouth when she said don't worry, she's going to be fine. I saw this light. The only way I can describe it is it was like my little pony. It was like these pink kind of sparkly things.

Ellen: I love that.

Debra: I'm telling you, having a daughter, My Little Pony. I saw that light like a rainbow, kind of pink shimmer come on my body when she said don't worry she's going to be fine, and it made me fine. It strengthened me. In Yes to Success, I've always taught the power of our word. Our word is our wand. Our word is magic. We have everything we need to create a glorious life for ourselves. We don't have to go outside ourselves.

We have every tool and our most powerful tools are our words and our thoughts. When she said that, I saw it strengthen me. Then when the doctor came in, he saw that my blood pressure hadn't

moved and very gruffly he said, get that blood pressure up or we are going to lose her. When he said that, I saw the energy come out of his mouth as a kind of grey muddy color, and it went into my physiology and it weakened me.

I remember thinking that if everybody in the room would just turn and say she's going to be fine, I knew I could have gotten up and jogged over to the gym and lifted weights because I saw the power of our words and our thoughts. Absolutely it's the greatest gift.

Ellen: This is a fantastic story. I love this.

Debra: I think that's why I had that whole experience, why I got sick, why I ended up in the emergency room. It's not just a theory. The power of our words I saw.

Ellen: Let me show you how this works. Here's a demonstration of that.

Debra: Now we know when we say I'm never going to get out of debt, I'm never going to find my soul mate, my kid is never going to get off of drugs – you are creating that situation. You are keeping your child on drugs.

Ellen: Time out. Stop it.

Debra: Just cancel it and then say I believe in miracles and I know a miracle is going to happen for my kid.

Ellen: At first it feels a little awkward but then it becomes a discipline, a practice.

Debra: Exactly.

Ellen: With other people, do you time them out? How do you create that? Sometimes people think I'm being terrible and I'm not being very supportive or validating. Do you know what I mean? I don't like it.

Debra: This is what I do, when I see somebody doing that. I'll never at the moment say you know you're creating that reality, but what I'll do later in a quiet moment, I'll say I've got to share with you an experience that I had and I think maybe you might want to hear this. Then I'll share about the power of our words to create reality. Then I said we can make a game of it.

Marci Shimoff who's so successful – she took Yes to Success a million times and she says still one of the most important concepts that she learned is cancel. Whatever you say, you can always cancel it and then replace it with what you do want to happen.

Ellen: That is a perfect move. Let's talk about the Yes to Success program. Just that one piece – I realized as you said it. I don't have to make someone wrong. I don't have to be aggressive about it. I could soften the approach and the word cancel is just delightful. I could practice it myself more and more often.

Debra: And then replace it with a positive statement of what you do want to happen.

Ellen: That's kind of the springboard, right? Now we know what we don't want. Let's go to what we do want.

Let's find out about the Yes to Success program because we've got wrap things up. I left it up to you to come up with something fabulous and you do, so let's hear about it.

Debra: Just so you know if you really want to have your mind blown, you mentioned Deepak Chopra. He also took my seminar many times in the early 1980's.

Ellen: I love him. I love you. You are fantastic. Thank you for playing with me today. If Debra is resonating with you like she is with me, you can click on the link right there on your screen – BusinessMakeover2014.com/Poneman. That's how you get there. Tell us what we'll find once we click through.

Debra: Basically creating success is a formula. You don't have to figure it out for yourself. For \$97, let me just give it to you. It worked for Deepak, it worked for Marci Shimoff, it worked for Janet Attwood and it worked for the tens of thousands of other people who have used the principles that I teach in Yes to Success. It doesn't have to be complicated. You do have everything that you need inside.

What I show you is how to use what you have inside to channel it to create all the success and all of the wealth and the prosperity – inner and outer – and happiness. There are eight modules. The first module is called Achieving To Success is Easier Than You Think, and it's a lot about... By the way, a lot of the concepts are from my original Yes to Success that I formulated 30 years ago because these principles are timeless.

Ellen: Because it's timeless.

Debra: Yes, absolutely timeless but I also have redone the tapes. I've added some of my new concept as well. I just want everybody to know that. I teach simple and effective ways to harness the power of your mind. I teach you a system of goal setting so that you do set your goals, but then

I also teach you a way – and you mentioned this earlier – to let go and a way to balance the intention of what you want with letting the universe give you what might be even better for you. It's a trick. I teach you how to do it. I also teach very, very practical tools of how to organize your time and space. I believe that success cannot flow through disorder. Success cannot flow through clutter. I teach people simple ways of organizing their space and organizing their time.

I also teach very specific techniques of prosperity so that unexpected, miraculous occurrences will just open up in your life, real miracles where prosperity will flood in. It's not that difficult. You just need to know how to do it. By the way, this program is 100% money-back guaranteed if you don't start experiencing miracles in the arena of success, prosperity and happiness.

Ellen: I'm going to interrupt a second. This is just me because I figured something out that I'm going to make a statement about. Debra, the way we're setting up the programs for the upsells for the speakers, I'm not doing 100% money-back guarantees.

Debra: I want this to resonate with you or don't buy it because it's going to make my life complicated to do the math.

Ellen: That's my party line on that. This is \$97. This is where you take the step that there's no turning back. If you buy it, just do it. That's what I'm going to say. Don't buy it.

Debra: Absolutely.

Ellen: It's \$97. Okay. We always have a money-back guarantee for everything we do. However, for this summit I'm telling you it's too complicated to do it. That's my executive decision on this,

and it does make it become one of those things. If you buy it, do it. Listen to it. Change your life. Allow it. Go ahead.

Debra: The thing is when there is a money-back guarantee, then there's always that out.

Ellen: Yes, it was really housekeeping for me on this thing because I don't mind giving people a money-back guarantee. It's easy for me but it's not perhaps the best thing for you dear listener. For the ease of the housekeeping, that's just the decision we made. I'm sorry to interrupt. Go ahead.

Debra: I also have a module on how to create vibrant health. Here's another thing. Your body is your temple. When I used to teach this in the 1980's, I used to teach people how to create a successful image. I told them to have a nice brief case, an expensive watch and a good haircut. Do you know what people look for now? Vibrant good health, radiance, authenticity. Those are the success-ories of this decade. I teach people simple ways to create vibrant good health.

A lot of us are really frustrated because we feel like there's so much going on in the world and we want to contribute to the welfare of the world, and we're frustrated because we can't or we don't know how. I teach people exactly how they have the power to change the world by just switching up what they're doing right now. Just do it a little different. A few tweaks and you will know that you are contributing to the world in the most massive way, and that you yourself have the power to create world peace.

Besides all of those modules, I have three different bonuses. They're three live presentations that I gave. Do you want me to say what the three are?

Ellen: We're right at about an hour. The interviews are all about 45 minutes to an hour because some people listen at lunch, so I want to wrap it up. You're going to get all the details on the page.

How would you like to wrap it up for us today? This is an awesome package.

Debra: First of all, I want to say from my heart please say Yes to Success. This package is my life's work and I promise you it will change your life. I promise you, promise you, promise you. That's what I want for you. I want you to be happy and successful.

The last thing that I'll say is that not all of us can go out and be on the cover of Time Magazine but as Mother Teresa said, we can all do small things with great love. What I always say to people is if you really want to contribute to the world – and I know that the people who listen to these calls do – all you have to do is ask yourself at the end of the day did I contribute to people's lives today? Did I lighten someone's burden? Did I do something that's going to contribute in a way that even outlasts me?

To make our lives a real success, we just need to ask ourselves what have I done for another and what have I done for the world that made it a better place because I existed in it.

Ellen: I feel like you've done that with me tonight. I'm so happy that we had this chance to talk to each other. I'm so glad that we've got this recording that we can share. Thank you so much. Namaste.

Debra: Namaste. You are the bomb. You are the best.

Ellen: You're the bomb. You are.

Debra: That's good where I come from – the bomb.

Ellen: I'm going to play the sexy outro music.