

IAA's Person of the Year

Thanks to support from Derek and the SQ Foundation, IAA has reduced the waiting list for diagnosis providing early intensive intervention for many families in Ireland; this maximizes the potential of the child, reduces the dependency on the parents and reduces the overall cost of lifelong care. In December, IAA awarded Derek O'Neill their coveted "Irish Autism Person of the Year Award" for his generosity and time given to the charity over the past number of years.

Where did you grow up?

I was born beside St Patrick's Cathedral in Dublin city centre and moved to Tallaght at age six or seven.

Do you have family?

I have a son and daughter, Gavin and Orla, and a new granddaughter, Alexa. Gavin and Orla have been a great source of help, specifically in the charitable and business elements of my organizations.

How would you describe your profession and how do you help people?

I describe myself as a Transformational Therapist. I help you identify your strengths and weaknesses, to build on your strengths and integrate your weaknesses to bring you into wholeness. We identify the disharmonies that are holding you back so that you can become the powerful creator that you are.

What are your qualifications?

I am a psychotherapist, hypno-analyst, marital arts sensei, founder of Creacon Lodge Retreat Centre in Wexford and CEO of an international wellness company called SQ Worldwide.

Why did you become a psychotherapist?

Starting martial arts at a very young age, I was exposed to Japanese, Korean and Chinese cultures that thought differently about health and well-being than in the West. This motivated me to take psychotherapy training.

Are you a spiritual person?

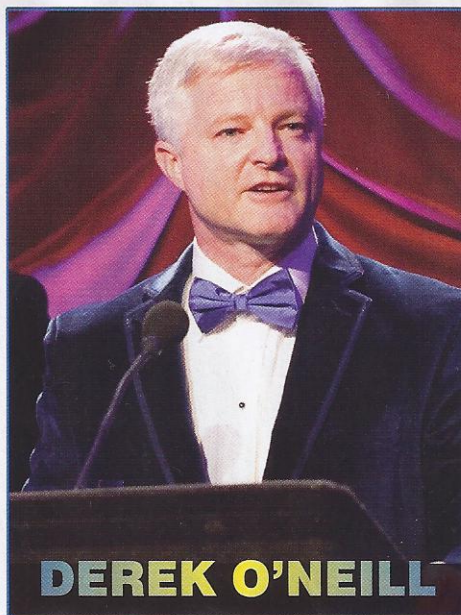
Yes, similar to Carl Gustav Jung, the famous Swiss psychiatrist, I have injected spirituality into the psychological therapies after extensive studies of all the World's major religions.

How do you differ to other lifestyle coaches / psychotherapists?

Unlike other life coaches and therapists, I am very open about my own experiences in life that were also motivating factors in the training I received.

Your clients include some of most powerful and influential people in Hollywood and the world, how does each client's requirements differ?

There is a blueprint in life that every person



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on the planet is made up from, no matter who they are (i.e. we all are attracted to pleasure and averted by pain.) Keeping this in mind, we all have our own unique experience of life and so finding what's needed for each individual is part of the adventure that we share together as therapist and client.

Can you tell us what recent projects you have you been working on?

I have a new radio show, "The Way with Derek O'Neill" where listeners can gain clarity and bring simplicity to their complicated lives. The show is broadcast on Mondays at 5pm GMT on the Variety Channel of VoiceAmerica, the leader in internet radio. I also worked on the Broadway play, 'Spiderman: Turn Off the Dark', to help the cast and crew turn the show around and make it a success; improving the attitudes of those involved in the production, suggesting improvements to the show, and coaching the management behind the scenes. I have worked with actors in the movie 'Transformers 3' and the popular animated series, The Simpsons. It's all go but I enjoy my work.

We know you are prohibited from mentioning any of your client's names, but do you have any interesting stories to tell

us about working with celebrities?

I once had an A-list Hollywood actor who needed my help. I was extremely busy so I agreed to see him in my New York hotel room. Neither of us realized that the session was going to get very deep, very fast. He abreacted (recalled a trauma in his life) and remembering the anger of the situation, began to scream at the top of his voice whilst in hypnosis, causing such confusion that the police were called thinking somebody was being assaulted in the hotel. From then on, I always use offices.

How do you think we as a nation can climb out of the current recession?

One way would be to ensure that our leaders don't repeat the mistakes of the past by demanding that they listen to the people and not take their eye off the ball. Another way would be to begin to look around us for everything positive in our communities, and not focus so much on the negative. Serving others is one of the greatest ways of achieving this.

You dedicate a lot of your time to raising money for the poor of the world and even have set up your own worldwide charity called the SQ Foundation. Tell us more about that?

My late wife Linda and I traveled to India and when we saw people living in devastating conditions, we decided we would do something about it. We started holding workshops and giving all the proceeds after expenses to the charity that we formed, SQ Foundation, which is now operating in India, El Salvador, Bolivia, Scotland, Ireland, Peru, Ethiopia and the USA. We have built schools, orphanages, clinics, brought water, education, nourishment, and more with a message of hope that they have not been forgotten.

I understand you have been awarded multiple awards for your charitable work.

Yes, I was honoured to be named 'Irish Autism Person Of the Year' for 2011, and most recently received a 'Pride Of Eireann' award from Hearts & Minds in Manchester on St. Patrick's Day for 'International Charity of the Year' 2012.

Where can people go to seek your assistance?

Call my retreat centre Creacon Lodge Retreat Centre in New Ross, Wexford or go to www.SQ-Retreats.com.

How can people get in touch with you and your work?

I'm on Twitter and Facebook as DerekOneill101 as well as my newly launched website www.DerekOneill.com which has all information on recent news, my blog and much more. Through the websites SQ-Retreats.com, SQ-Foundation.org, SQ-Wellness.com or call Creacon Lodge at 051 447 666.