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Beyond the Breaking Point

Surviving an Abusive Mother and Getting a Life Abundant



Debra Pauli

By [Adrienne Papp](#)

Life, even under the best of conditions, is often extremely harsh. Even those who live a charmed one suffer their share of pain, disappointment and loss as life takes its toll on even the most privileged among us. As if there was always something to “pay for.”

But imagine what it would be like to start out a life in an atmosphere of total fear, humiliation and hopelessness, to be deprived of the joys of childhood, to be brutalized and taunted from birth and treated as evil by the people who were responsible to love and nurture you — your parents? That was the torture inflicted on [Debra Pauli](#) from birth, a case of parental brutalization so severe that it has been documented as one of the worst child abuse cases in U.S. history, which puzzles the mind even more: an innocent baby is “made to pay” for something that she does not even know about. Instead of unconditional love, she receives unconditional hate.

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“My Mother had no time or tolerance for her daughters, me or my sister Danielle, who was born eleven months after I was in 1962. Both of us were kept isolated in separate small closets as infants and in the basement as toddlers. The meager food we received was placed in a bowl on the stairs, as if we were pets.”

Physical torture was continual and included cigarette burns and the use of pharmaceutical drugs (four doses of valium per day) to keep Debra quiet. “I was fed an assortment of pills beginning when I was about two years old. My mother had convinced a doctor that she needed adult prescription drugs for her stress, which then she used these drugs to keep me sedated,” Debra says.

Debra Pauli lived every day of her childhood being demonized by her mother and was psychologically and physically tortured well into adolescence. Yet through sheer willpower she was able to survive the horrendous abuse. It’s a story that has drawn a lot of national attention, a childhood drama worthy of an uplifting [Lifetime Channel](#) biography. And the best part is that there is no tragic ending. Instead, [Debra Pauli](#) was able to triumph over her nightmares and become recognized as an inspiration and champion for victims everywhere, an author, motivational speaker and role model for us all.

How is this possible? How can someone with such a horrific history become such a guiding light for abused and downtrodden souls everywhere?

Debra’s early life has been published in a series of candid autobiographical books, searing personal memoirs that reveal a life of unspeakably sadistic treatments as a child. Hers was a nightmare that began at birth as Debra was branded [“The Devil’s Daughter”](#) by her paranoid schizophrenic mother.

But that’s all behind her. The most important part of her life is what’s happening now. She has been able to share her survival story and healing process as she has become recognized by the public as a respected and truly extraordinary woman who has the strength that is almost impossible to obtain and yet maintain, especially at her age, and on top of it all, she was able to rely upon this higher calling her entire life! Against all odds, Debra Pauli faced daily torture, along with numerous near death experiences from birth, yet somehow survived to be able to share her message of hope with us all!

“One day I heard a tiny but powerful voice inside me say that things would be all right, a voice telling me that ‘It’s not you, it’s her, your mother” Debra recalls. “If it hadn’t been for that message, I don’t know if I could have survived my crazed mother. Something deep inside me told me that there was something better for me, that my mother’s hatred would not destroy me. My mother could physically and emotionally torment me, but she would NEVER take away my will to survive, but only make it



Debra at Her 50th Birthday

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[January 2011](#)

stronger.”

When she finally gained freedom from her horrendous home life, Debra ran into a new set of problems, getting pregnant in her freshman year of high school. “My first husband was also physically abusive,” Debra says. “In my ninth month of pregnancy, he pushed me out of a moving car. During an argument, he leaned over while driving and opened the passenger door and shoved me out. I rolled down into a ditch while desperately trying to protect the life of my unborn child.”



With an indomitable will to succeed, Debra finally got her GED and, though busy raising four sons and taking care of her family, still found time to pursue a higher education, earning a 3.7 to 4.0 GPA and degrees for Graphic Arts/Word Processing and Psychology/Sociology thru a State University. She was finally on track to a healthier, more productive life. There were still numerous pitfalls to be overcome, however, and, after a divorce from her first husband, Debra was to suffer through two more

December 2010

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September 2010

August 2010

July 2010

June 2010

May 2010

April 2010

March 2010

February 2010

January 2010

December 2009

November 2009

October 2009

September 2009

June 2009

May 2009

April 2009

March 2009

February 2009

disastrous relationships, including a sham marriage to a man who turned out to be a closet homosexual.

Tormented by the memories of daily childhood terror, torture and near-death experiences, Debra began exorcising the demons of her early life in a series of books, including [A Survivor's Closet](#), [And Then There Was Light – My Spiritual Cleansing](#), and [Why We Cry for a Soul Set Free](#). The books are brutally honest accounts of Debra's childhood, and were part of the process of liberating herself from her horrors.

The unlikely ending to this horrific story of torment and abuse is that today Debra has become one of the most sought-after motivational speakers in the country. Through her cathartic presentation of raw passion and brutal honesty, she is a living example of perseverance as the key to survival. Her searing life story is testimony to the incredible amount of courage needed to survive even catastrophic child abuse cases. Triumphant over her imposed demons, instead of escaping into drugs or alcohol, she has become the successful role model who now inspires others to overcome life's harshest realities.



Against all odds, [Debra Pauli](#) is now a highly successful businesswoman, best-selling author and life coach who can teach others, as individuals or in groups, not only how to survive harsh realities, but also how to become successful, decent, passionate and loving humans. Her story is one for the ages, and is now attracting the attention of [Hollywood](#) for development as a feature film or television mini-series.

Through her efforts to honestly expose her life in books, speaking performances and seminars for small, medium and large corporations, [Debra Pauli](#) has become an inspiration to us all, a legend who can show us that, no matter how big our life problems are, we can not only survive, but also make our dreams come true.

Debra Pauli's story gives us hope and courage. Her triumph over horrific adversities is a message that she now shares with people in desperate need of a voice of encouragement or better known as "One Survivor's Voice for Millions of Silent Victims". Through her books, speaking tours and a feature film in the making, we can all be grateful that [Debra Pauli](#) is not only a survivor, but also is able to share a personal message that can make the world a much better place for us all.

About the Author of This Article: [Lady Adrienne Papp](#) is a recognized journalist who has written for many publications including Savoir, [Beverly Hills 90210](#), [Malibu Beach](#), [Santa Monica Sun](#), [The Beverly Hills Times](#), [Brentwood News](#), [Bel-Air View](#), [Celebrity Society](#), [Celeb Staff](#), [It Magazine](#), [Chic Today](#), [LA2DAY](#), [West Side Today](#) among many others. She is the President and CEO of Los Angeles / New York-based publicity company, [Atlantic Publicity](#) and publishing house, [Atlantic Publisher](#). Adrienne writes about world trends, [Quantum Physics](#), entertainment and interviews celebrities, world leaders, inventors, philanthropists and entrepreneurs. She also owns [Atlantic United Films](#) that produces and finances true stories

January 2009

December 2008

November 2008

September 2008

August 2008

July 2008

June 2008

May 2008

April 2008

March 2008

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Martha
Sep 28, 2011, 3:14

This woman is remarkable. I do not know how someone can come out on the other side like this. Plus, she looks like a queen in the photos. Kind of amazing. She should be teaching all these!



Rating: 5.0/5 (1 vote cast)

Rating: +1 (from 1 vote)

Deborah
Sep 28, 2011, 3:29

This woman in truly remarkable. She is beautiful! What is that photo? She seems to be getting crowned? A beauty queen? It is very inspiring that even at her age she can be this much fun and this gorgeous!



Rating: 5.0/5 (1 vote cast)



Rating: **+1** (from 1 vote)

John

Sep 28, 2011, 3:32



Rating: 5.0/5 (1 vote cast)



Rating: **+1** (from 1 vote)

How can she have gone through all this?

Irma

Sep 28, 2011, 3:34



Rating: 5.0/5 (1 vote cast)



Rating: **+1** (from 1 vote)

She is a beauty queen and a queen of survival. Period. We just need to learn from her. She should lecture sooner than later.

GERARD

Oct 9, 2011, 21:05



Rating: 5.0/5 (1 vote cast)



Rating: **+1** (from 1 vote)

I absolutely admire this woman. I wish my partner would be half of who she is! She must be really proud of herself!

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