

Inside the Mind Of... Kara Deringer



Kara Deringer's (<http://www.karaderinger.com/>) unique take on business coaching has taught scores of individuals and businesses the essentials of communication, leadership, and emotional intelligence.

Edmonton-based Deringer is an international #1 bestselling author of **Chill: Creating Happiness in Life and Love** and **Chica: Creating Happy, Inspiring and Curious Adventures** (<http://www.karaderinger.com/books/>) (recently released).

With **Chill**, she brings her signature advice for those seeking to untie the mental knots and overcome procrastination. The book is a step by step guide to those who want to master their goal-setting and make powerful decisions.

Chica has among its many messages, how important it is to take risks, seize opportunities, learn from others, invest in your dreams and embrace your challenges.

With a Master's degree in Conflict Analysis and Management, and a B.A. Honors in Political Science, she served as a mediator and facilitator for over a decade, and helped people navigate conflict in community, court, family, and workplace situations.

The majority of her experience has been in working with organizational conflicts – tension within teams, between managers and employees, among co-workers, human resources and union representatives.

She offers business coaching and consulting, to those who want to reach their next goal, but may not know what to do.

As well, Deringer is a part of the Evolutionary Business Council community and founder of the People for People Conference (<http://www.peopleforpeople.ca/>) in Edmonton, Alberta. Over the years, she has instructed communication courses at a number of Canadian universities.

Interview:

DG: You have a Masters degree in Conflict Management. How did you end up becoming a business consultant, author, and speaker?

Deringer: When I was young, I used to listen to Wayne Dyer and Tony Robbins tapes. I just knew that I wanted to make a huge difference on the planet.

Growing up, my parents owned a number of small businesses, so I grew up in an entrepreneurial atmosphere. I experienced the passion and energy my parents had when they were doing what they loved.

After my undergraduate degree, I pursued a M.A. in Conflict Analysis and Management, and specialized in organizational dynamics. Because people spend so much time at work, I wanted to make a real difference in bringing more collaboration, peace, and happiness to workplaces.

After spending about a decade mediating conflict situations, I came to recognize that a lot of the conflict that arises in organizations is rooted in the tension and internal conflict that individuals bring forward.

At this point, all the pieces came together. In my business, I bring together personal development principles with communication and conflict theories into the workplace. I have the training and experience to address systemic organizational issues, and also have the passion and skills to empower people on a personal level.

DG: Do you think there are particular challenges women entrepreneurs face?

Deringer: One general idea that intrigues me about women in leadership and business is that it often appears that society is calling for women to be more direct, unemotional, controlling – more like a man. I think many women mistakenly lose touch with their feminine power in their communication and decision-making. There is definitely a need to be assertive and to know how to negotiate. Women need to stand up for what they believe in, especially social causes. That said, we have ways that we can do this in a kung-fu way – strategic and diplomatic.

I've learned that it's important to understand the light and dark side of both the "masculine" and "feminine" aspects of leadership and business, and to be able to play in all of the spaces. These spaces are situation-dependent, such as the other person, context, circumstances, and so on. Women, like men, need to be able to be emotionally intelligent in all situations.

DG: Are your clients mainly female or male?

Deringer: My messages are generally geared to a female audience, as I talk about creating extraordinary results as a mom, wife/partner, and business woman. From my own experience, and working with many women, I find that we are pulled in a million different directions. We know that our health should be first priority. And certainly our kids are our first priority. But our marriage needs to be the foundation of the family. And our careers require the utmost time and energy – for our personal satisfaction, and also more and more to provide for our families financially.

Many men are also drawn to my programs and books because they identify with the same challenges.

I like to work with women or men who are willing to look deeply into places that they've never looked before. This work doesn't take years of therapy. We simply need to take an authentic look at the hidden reasons why challenges keep re-appearing in business and personal life, because we always find the same flavor of challenge in both realms.

DG: How do you balance your career with being a mom?

Deringer: Most people ask me how I get everything done: being a mom, running a business, writing books, looking after rental properties, and still having time to have fun, work out, go on vacation.

One of my favorite programs is my Powerful Passion and Purpose Program, because we take a deep dive into pinpointing people's *raison d'etre*. I've found that once people get clear on their mission, their productivity and efficiency skyrockets.

My kids understand my passions and purpose. We've had many conversations, talking about what I do when I'm not with them – that I'm out to make a difference in the world to support people in being successful and happy.

If we need to stop at Staples to order my business cards or show a rental property, my kids understand that what we are doing is so that we generate money to do fun things like vacations. I see that one of my roles as a mom is to teach my kids everything I know about business. They learn geography and math at school.

My partner will help me prepare or edit a presentation or piece of writing when we are flying somewhere, at dinner, or hanging out at home. He'll pick up supplies for an event. We are all a team.

DG: What are some common questions that people ask you?

Deringer: People ask me how much time and money to invest on the front end of a business.

Just as Olympic athletes and rock stars invest gazillions of hours in training without an immediate payoff, I do believe that hard work and investment in business on the front end is required to generate success. In any career there are a few that just get lucky. But for the most part, it's diligence and creativity and persistence that wins in the end.



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Dave Gordon is a Toronto-based freelance writer whose work has appeared in more than a hundred publications globally, over the course of twenty years. More about him can be found at DaveGordonWrites.com



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