



## 5 Questions & from Steve Aduabato

For Scott Chesney  
of West Orange,  
motivational  
speaker and  
founder and presi-  
dent of Devotion  
to Motion.



**BEFORE WE TALK ABOUT YOUR WORK AS A MOTIVATIONAL SPEAKER, TELL ME HOW YOU WOUND UP PARALYZED AND IN A WHEELCHAIR AS A TEENAGER?**

I always loved sports—basketball, football, and baseball. But when I was fifteen years old, the morning after a game I woke up with a numb big toe. It was the feeling when your foot falls asleep. Forty-eight hours later, I was paralyzed from my waist down to my toes. I was diagnosed with a very, very rare AVM, an arteriovenous malformation. It was the twelfth documented case in the world at that time. The doctors said I was born with it but could have gone my whole life without anything happening. So there was no injury, no trauma. It was just my time.

**WHAT DO YOU SAY TO THE PEOPLE WHO ARGUE THAT IT TAKES AN EXTRAORDINARY PERSON TO DO EXTRAORDINARY THINGS?**

I believe in life that we're here to give love and to receive love, and if everyone is just showing up and making life that simple, I think we're doing extraordinary things.

**WHAT ROLE HAS SPIRITUALITY AND MEDITATION PLAYED IN YOUR LIFE?**

It is critical. I traveled to India for a 30-day treatment called Ayurveda, which is Indian medicine. And it just intrigued me by all the limitations and all the restrictions that I had. I could only eat breakfast first thing in the morning because they try to reduce the digestive fire in the body. I could only read and write for one hour. I had massages with this oil, which they feel really helps the body to heal. No TV, no stimulation.

**WHEN YOU ARE DELIVERING A MOTIVATIONAL SPEECH, HOW DO YOU GET PEOPLE TO TAKE A CLOSER LOOK AT HOW THEY'RE BALANCING THEIR PROFESSIONAL AND PERSONAL LIVES?**

I ask participants to consider Dr. Phil's line, "Is it working for ya?" And most of the people are just like, "Hey, it's not working. It's not working for me. I'm making great money, but I'm still not happy."

**YOU SAY THAT MANY OF US ARE TOO CONCERNED WITH BEING PRODUCTIVE AND DON'T TAKE THE TIME TO PUT THINGS IN PERSPECTIVE.**

It's *not* being productive that we are uncomfortable with. We are in such a world and it's been so embedded into our psyche growing up—and it's not to put blame on our parents. But in terms of achieving, in terms of producing, it's all good, but it's moving away from the stillness and silence. There's a great quote that says, "The past is history, the future is a mystery, and the moment is the gift of the present." Yet that's where things are created, in the moment. And the only way to get to that moment and really be in awareness is through that stillness and silence. It's like we're put right back in that moment when we experience some kind of health problem. If it's not too major, we keep going on. But if it's major, all of a sudden we're like, "I need to take care of myself." Then you're right back in the moment.

*Steve Aduabato is an Emmy Award-winning anchor for Channel 13/WNET and host of One-on-One with Steve Aduabato on the Comcast Network.*