

## Deborah Chenault-Green's Story

Written by Angela Newman

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Deborah Chenault-Green, a native Detroit and President and CEO of Back 2-1 Productions, grew up on the infamous 12<sup>th</sup> Street. For those of you unfamiliar with 12<sup>th</sup> Street, it's a place filled with oppression, a street known for its pimps, prostitutes and addicts making drug and sex deals with no regard to families, kids, business owners or factory workers that surround them.

Growing up in these conditions forced Deborah to be a survivor. When she was three years old her father was taken away in a straight jacket and labeled "paranoid schizophrenic". Her mother was left to care for the children alone which was not an easy task considering she only had an 8<sup>th</sup> grade education. Unfortunately for Deborah from the ages of 5-12 she repeatedly endured sexual abuse. At age 18 she married her high school sweetheart, but her 20 years of marriage was not 'blissful' and she had to literally fight to keep her family together.

In 1993 she could no longer take the stress and anxiety her life encountered everyday. She knew she needed out of this situation so she quit her job and divorced her husband in hopes for a better life; but much to Deborah's dismay it didn't happen that way, at least not immediately. For the next 10 years she lived in an emotional fog, taking both prescription and street drugs. It got so bad that Deborah's routine consisted of waking up in the morning and grabbing a handful of pills washed down with a glass of beer, going back to sleep and waking up to coffee and a joint; not at all the life she dreamed of having when she left her husband. And if that wasn't enough she found out she had Multiple Sclerosis (MS). Then in 2007 she couldn't bear to live this way any longer and turned to God asking for help. She said, "*I was sick and tired of being sick and tired and for the first time, I didn't see pain.*" Deborah soon after found herself writing feverishly for several days in a poetic fashion.

She never had an opportunity to go to college when she was younger so Deborah has set a goal to complete her degree which she is currently working on in the performing arts field. Things have really changed in her life for the best and she stays focused on bringing hope

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and inspiration to others while working as an actress and promoting her book 'Back 2/1: I Invite You Into My Serenity'. She is a self published author but once the book was released the hard work and challenge of promoting it began. *"I think the most significant challenge for me has been in the area of promotion and marketing. If you want to get the word out, you must be diligent in self-promotion via press releases, book signings, Internet marketing, etc. I would advise taking classes if you are unable to afford a P.R. and marketing team."*

Fortunately for Deborah she has had a wonderful support team as she has climbed new ladders in her career and life. But she isn't done climbing her 'pink ladders'. Her goal over the next 5-10 years is to oversee her own publishing company leading to several Oscar winning films and documentaries. To help reach these goals Deborah explains her rituals, *"These span from prayer, meditation, affirmations, vision boards and a strong faith in God. I truly believe that we have the power to speak and also think what we want or don't want into existence. I believe what we concentrate on is what we draw into our lives, good or bad."* Deborah has overcome a lot of adversity in her life and is now on a much better path than in years past and has many goals and aspirations left to accomplish in her lifetime.

When asked what advice she would give to women climbing their career ladder she said, *"I would like to say take it one rung at a time. Don't get discouraged and surround yourself with positive, upbeat, like-minded people, who are going places. Remember a failure is only an opportunity to explore new horizons, to stretch you to your full potential; everything happens for a reason."*

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