



# CARA DELEVINGNE

## BATTLING DEPRESSION

<https://youtu.be/2wf1qE7AC8Y>

### Host:

Good evening, ladies and gentlemen, I don't really need to introduce our next guest Cara Delevingne. She's the face of today. She has more Twitter followers than President Obama. The less I realised today, than her friend, who's in the audience somewhere, Kendall Jenner. And we could go into that later.

And Cara, we're going to go straight in here. It's amazing how somehow you have been one of those faces that encapsulates the time. But I want to go straight back to the beginning because what happened before modelling? How did it all get going? I mean, what was going on with you, for example, when you were 15.

### Cara:

Okay. So, I'm going to go back. But before I do that, I'm just going to give a quick summary of what I want to talk about my main points. So, I had to take my shoes off because I'm bloody scared. What I want to say is through growing up, what I've discovered is that this world is a very vast, a very wonderful and beautiful one. And there are so many things to discover, but the most important journey I think all of us will go through is the journey in ourselves, to find our truth, to find who we are and what makes us happy.

And in our culture, we are told that if we're beautiful, if we're skinny, if we're successful, famous, if we fit in, if everyone loves us, that we'll be happy. But that's not entirely true. And this is what I want to talk about basically. I'm going to start with a poem that I wrote when I wasn't very happy. I actually wrote this a year ago, but again, as if you know depression, it comes back. It's a reoccurring thing that you can't really sort away.

Anyway. Who am I? Who am I trying to be? Not myself. Anyone but myself. Living in a fantasy to bury the reality, making myself the mystery. A strong facade, disguising the misery. Empty but beyond the point of emptiness. Full to the brim of fake confidence. A God that will never be broken because I broke a long time ago. I'm hurting, but don't tell anyone. No one needs to know. Don't show or you've failed. Always okay, always fine, always on show. The show must go on. It will never stop. The show must not go on, but I know it will. I give up, I give up giving up. I am lost. I don't need to be saved; I need to be found. Basically, it's kind of just the same reoccurring thing of, yeah, not knowing who you are and feeling lost.

**Host:**

And that's really in one sense, I think must be why you're incredibly popular because that's the kind of feeling of alienation that a lot of young people have, whether they're a model or not these days.

**Cara:**

Yeah. And I think, again, so yeah, this started when I was about 15 years old, I was in school. I really wanted to do well at school to please my parents, to please my family. I didn't really care that much about school because I knew I was never going to be very good at it. I think I pushed myself so far, got to the point where I had a bit of a mental breakdown.

**Host:**

Were you clever at school or stupid?

**Cara:**

I was one of those people that just like just did enough work. But again...

**Host:**

Lazy.

**Cara:**

Probably. I have very bad learning disabilities though. If you look at my writing, it's not, it's not good. It's probably like a nine-year-old boy, if you know what that looks like. But I was just pushing past. Yeah, so I got to the point where I went a bit mad. I was completely suicidal. Didn't want to live anymore. I thought that I was completely alone. I also realized how lucky I was and what a wonderful family, wonderful friends I had. But that didn't matter. I wanted the world to swallow me up and nothing seemed better to me than death, which is completely insane.

So, I got taken out of school, went to therapy, got put on antidepressants, kind of clawed my way back to some sort of rational thought, which took a while. But basically, I stayed in school until I was 17, where I still was kind of played with this depression. And I was like, I'm done. I need to leave, which to the rather large disagreement from my parents, I was, I did, I left. And I knew I had to do something because otherwise I would just go crazy. So, I started modelling. And I wanted to do it, I wanted to work every day.

**Host:**

Wait a minute. How old were you now? You were 18.

**Cara:**

17.

**Host:**

17.

**Cara:**

So, this was, I left school early, I didn't finish my college, yeah.

**Host:**

And what was modelling like to begin with? Because I mean, you weren't successful for the first year. Were you?

**Cara:**

No.

**Host:**

So, you've had both sides of the modelling coin. In one sense, you've had the incredible success. But actually, what was the life of a working unsuccessful model like?

**Cara:**

I mean, there was, it was, there was elements which were fun. Because it's like this comradery of people not being successful when you can complain about all the people who are rude to you. But it's not, it wasn't nice. You constantly are told that you're not pretty enough and not tall enough and not skinny enough and people are better. And when you're young, you think that means I'm not good enough as a person. Like that means I'm not living up to who I should be and you kind of get battered and bruised a lot, but then you kind of grow a bit of a skin.

**Host:**

What were the agencies like? What was an agency like? Because I always think they're quite macabre things.

**Cara:**

Yeah. I mean, the thing with models is they, you get used. That's the thing. I saw a lot of misuse from photographers, you know, perverse photographers to young girls. A lot of straight photographers only really do this because they want to sleep with young models. You know, bad kind of experiences in that sense. Not by me, but to other poor people, poor girls who don't stand up for themselves because you feel like you should be used because that's what models do.

But then, you know, about a year into it, I was discovered. I did Burberry and then everybody wants you. You know, after so long of being like nobody wants you, suddenly like, oh my God, who's that? I was like, I've met you five times and I'm pretty sure you didn't want me two minutes ago. But cool.

**Host:**

That must've been the most amazing explosion from going, from being not very successful to suddenly because your success really exploded in seconds really after getting Burberry. Didn't it?

**Cara:**

Kind of. But that was also in 2011. It still took a while, but it was still more like in the fashion world, it definitely became a thing. I was finally like in shows. I was like, ooh, this is weird. Yeah. It definitely changed. But after that, it kind of, you know, you pick up pace. You start working. I was working every day. I had no concept of saying no to anyone, ever.

**Host:**

And this is one of the most important show business lessons, actually learning how to say no. Have you learned yet?

**Cara:**

Yes. I think life, you should always experience things, but you should not. You should say no. I mean, it's more about being controlled and not being a puppet is what the most important thing is. And not doing anything out, not doing anything for anyone else apart from yourself. Because after a while, I just started to get sick and I got this horrible thing called Psoriasis.

**Host:**

Oh my god, like Kim Kardashian?

**Cara:**

Like Kim. I know she told me about the breast milk thing, which actually worked.

**Host:**

That is amazing. So, there you are, a beautiful model on the outside. And on the inside, you've got Psoriasis coming up. And how did you deal with it?

**Cara:**

Not very well. It was actually happening at the time when I was doing shows and it was, it wasn't lit like psoriasis where I have a little bit right here. But it was like giant welts all over my body, including my head. It would bleed. And it was horrible. Sorry, gross. And you look at yourself like you're an alien. You're like, I'm so disgusting. It's not good for you, especially at that time. I felt more disconnected from myself than I think I ever had, which I was for a long time, quite disconnected. And as well...

**Host:**

How do you cure something like that? Because its quite...

**Cara:**

Well, my agency were like, because usually you have to take time to fix internal problems, like its the food and stress. And, but you know, they shoved me straight into a doctor who would inject cortisone into each spot, which died then but not really in there, you know, that kind of thing. It's like all those problems I had, I feel like I masked with medicine instead of taking the time to really solve them. But at that time, I really wanted someone to stop me. I wanted someone to go, you need to take a break. You need to look

after yourself. And no one did because I was the one who had it all. Like I was, I had what everyone wanted.

**Host:**

Would you have listened to them, do you think?

**Cara:**

Yes.

**Host:**

You would.

**Cara:**

Yeah, of course I would, if that's what I wanted.

**Host:**

But, at the same time, you had a fabulous life. Because I remember working with you in a Karl Lagerfeld film and you were off to spend the weekend with Rihanna and I was going, oh, Rihanna. So, I mean, there must've been an upside to the whole thing.

**Cara:**

I mean, of course there's an upside. Yeah. There has been a lot of upsides. It was more like the external life, I couldn't be luckier, more blessed. But the internal battles that were going on were just, I also felt like I never deserved any of it, that I was living someone else's dream. This point is just about like being able to show, like having there up, put yourself, and really look inside for what you need. And what happened was I eventually said no. And I eventually took a break to the advice of Kate Moss who kind of picked me up off the floor, passed out, being covered in pain.

**Host:**

What was she doing down on that floor?

**Cara:**

Nothing.

**Host:**

Kidding.

**Cara:**

I know. But yeah, so I said, no, I went, I started writing. Writing was something that really saved my life, again. So, that poem probably came out then. It was like, I would write and I would read what I'd written. And it was like, someone else was talking to me. I was like, what, this is how I feel. It was a very strange experience.

**Host:**

And are you living in Los Angeles now? Or are you going to live here?

**Cara:**

I'm living wherever I'm made to be.

**Host:**

Wherever you want your head.

**Cara:**

I'm filming in Paris for six months next year, which will be fun. Perhaps, it's going to be great. A bit of a slow down.

**Host:**

What are you doing?

**Cara:**

I'm doing a movie called Valerian, which is by wonderful director called Luc Besson who I've always admired entirely.

**Host:**

He's great.

**Cara:**

Yeah. It's just, there's a lot of things I want to do. I always wanted to be a director. I think as well, I have so many girls come up to me and tell me that they want to be models, which is fine. It's not a bad thing. I just think there's so much to do. I just went to a wonderful talk about genetic engineering and neuroscience. And this man who was giving the talk explained, there is like 10,000 kids from the age of 7 to 13, who are doing neuroscience. They do these competitions and wonderful things. And they're doing things in neuroscience, which haven't been, which weren't done by him until he was like 30.

Like how quickly things like that are changing. And, but they're not, there is an awareness brought. It's cool. Stuff like that. Like that sounds way cooler to me than being a model. But like no one really knows about it. And I just think there are just so many things. I always say to girls, just dream bigger, go for President. Just keep going up, astronauts.

**Host:**

Well, you are really young, so you've got tons of time. You can even go back to University, age 30 and study genetics.

**Cara:**

Yeah exactly, I might.

**Host:**

But Cara, thank you very, very much. It's been great, good luck with everything. And it was really fascinating to listen to what you're saying. Thanks a lot.

**Cara:**

I have one other thing to say. That was so, I've never heard a clap stop quicker. I just have a little quote to say, which I made up, which is, be comfortable in your own shoes, which apparently, I'm not, which is really bad. Be comfortable in your own shoes because you're going to be in them for a while. So, that's my last message to everyone.

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