



Germanakos guest motivational speaker at IFMA/GNY program

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We've all tried to lose a few pounds every once in a while, but this was amazing. IFMA Greater New York members and guests were fascinated by the very personal story told by Bill Germanakos, "The Biggest Loser" and winner of the \$250,000 grand prize of the fourth season of NBC's television program by that name. Bill was the guest motivational speaker at the monthly IFMA/GNY program held at the NBC Universal Studios on April 10.

Germanakos's achievement of losing 164 pounds from his starting weight of 334 is testimony of his ability to motivate himself. It was sheer willpower and dedication to his goal that enabled him to lose an amazing 130 pounds in just 124 days.

Germanakos explained to the group that in college he was a very fit varsity athlete. After getting married, raising a family and running a successful business, he gradually put on weight...and then more weight through late night binging...and a few pounds more over weekend card games and a case of beer. He told the group a defining moment came when he was embarrassed at an amusement park with his daughter where he could not fit on the roller coaster seat and had to leave. Shortly afterwards his doctor advised him that he was not only obese but had serious high blood pressure and was at risk for heart disease. These facts and family consideration (he wanted to live to walk his two daughters down the aisle) were enough motivation to set a goal to get healthy.

Another fascinating aspect to Germanakos's story is that he has a twin brother, Jim, a Long Island police officer who won the \$100,000 first place prize of the eliminated contestants on the same TV show. What a motivated team! Jim lost 51% of his initial weight and Bill lost 49%. Dedication-Motivation-Education is the brothers' mantra, and Germanakos was very inspiring in his speech.

He explained that he was fully determined to win the weight-loss contest from the very beginning, even while he was sleeping in the desert in a tent and even while living in isolation from his family for four months as was the requirement of the TV show. During this time, while the other contestants were sitting around after dinner, resting from a grueling day of exercise, diet, and counseling, Germanakos would go back into the gym for another two to three hours of intense exercise and running. He worked so hard he had to fight off injuries daily by wrapping his knees and ankles in ice packs.

Germanakos and his brother have inspired untold numbers of overweight people through their appearances on Access Hollywood, Entertainment Tonight, The Larry King Live Show, CNN, The Today Show, and The Ellen Degeneres Show, and numerous other venues, including their website www.theweightlosstwins.com.

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