

# Stephen Baldwin:

## How NBC's All-Star Celebrity Apprentice Influenced My Life

BY AVA ROOSEVELT



PHOTO COURTESY NBC

Ironically, as I am about to conduct this interview with Stephen Baldwin – the controversial, provocative television and film actor and staunch conservative Christian – I became the last to learn about the huge impact All-Star Celebrity Apprentice has made on its participants, but also on its audiences. It is without a doubt a brilliant show, masterfully engaging social media while bringing back many fan favorites to compete, head-to-head in the name of their designated charities, while simultaneously promoting a host of different brands. The show's extraordinary ratings and its worldwide popularity have touched the hearts and the pocketbooks of the most admired celebrities. It has also catapulted Donald Trump and his children into the TV reality game show's Hall of Fame for six consecutive seasons.

The way I see it, there are no losers on the show. I am certain the previous winners, being Piers Morgan or Joan Rivers, who ended up with their own TV shows and multimillion-dollar contracts, may defer. But being there trumps the alternative and learning how to cope with defeat is paramount and often rewarded generously, as it is in real life.

"I feel exactly the same way," said Baldwin. "There are no losers on that show when you're standing next to Donald Trump. It was a good run. I learned a lot and was with, mostly, celebrity friends on the show."

### THE MOTIVATION FOR APPEARING ON APPRENTICE

Winning \$250,000 for his mother's charity, The Carol M. Baldwin Breast Cancer Research Fund, was a predominant reason why Baldwin agreed to participate on the show. "Mr. Trump has created a terrific vehicle for people to learn about and contribute to charities. You agree to go on Celebrity Apprentice with eyes wide open; it truly is a reality show. Things unfold with no script and in ways you can't necessarily plan for or expect."

Obviously, Baldwin was very keen on winning this past season. Was it for career reasons? Or would making a difference in other people's lives be reason enough?

"It certainly has made a difference in my life! This is my second time on the show and, as you'd expect, each time you learn more and more. You make a difference in other people's lives by winning money for the charity, having Mr. Trump be a teacher about business, and, of course, entertaining the millions who tune in. I was keen to win and incredibly disappointed when I was let go," Baldwin said.

"Two of the lessons I learned were about trust and strategy. More than people might expect, 'The Apprentice' is a mirror of real life. In the movie business and the entertainment world in general,



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you have to be on your toes, to say the least. It's more than just looking for opportunities or projects that suit you. It has a lot to do with knowing others. There is no greater laboratory for this, in my mind, than All-Star Celebrity Apprentice."

### IN THE HEAT OF THE MOMENT

The show is a monument to Donald Trump's marketing and PR genius. Unpredictable confrontation and emotional outbursts keep viewers on the edge of their seats and tuning in season after season. Baldwin was irate when Trump fired him – again. He responded by saying, "My advice to the remaining contestants is: Be like Mr. Trump. Be willing to absolutely disregard your morals and your character in order to be successful."

Did Baldwin regret saying that? Was it yet another publicity stunt? Will he ever be invited back? I asked Baldwin what affected him most when he stood up to Mr. Trump.

"This wasn't planned in any way. Because this is a reality show in 'real time,' it was quite a shock to me to be sitting alone in a boardroom with Gary Busey, and I was the one who was fired! So, my comments came right from the cuff," recounted Baldwin. "Because my words were disrespectful to Mr. Trump, I did apologize in the media about the way I phrased my discontent. I've since seen Donald Trump. He has been kind enough to fully embrace me and let bygones be bygones. I think this, more than a lot of other things you might read about Mr. Trump, shows what kind of man he is."

*"Two of the lessons I learned were about trust and strategy. More than people might expect, 'The Apprentice' is a mirror of real life."*

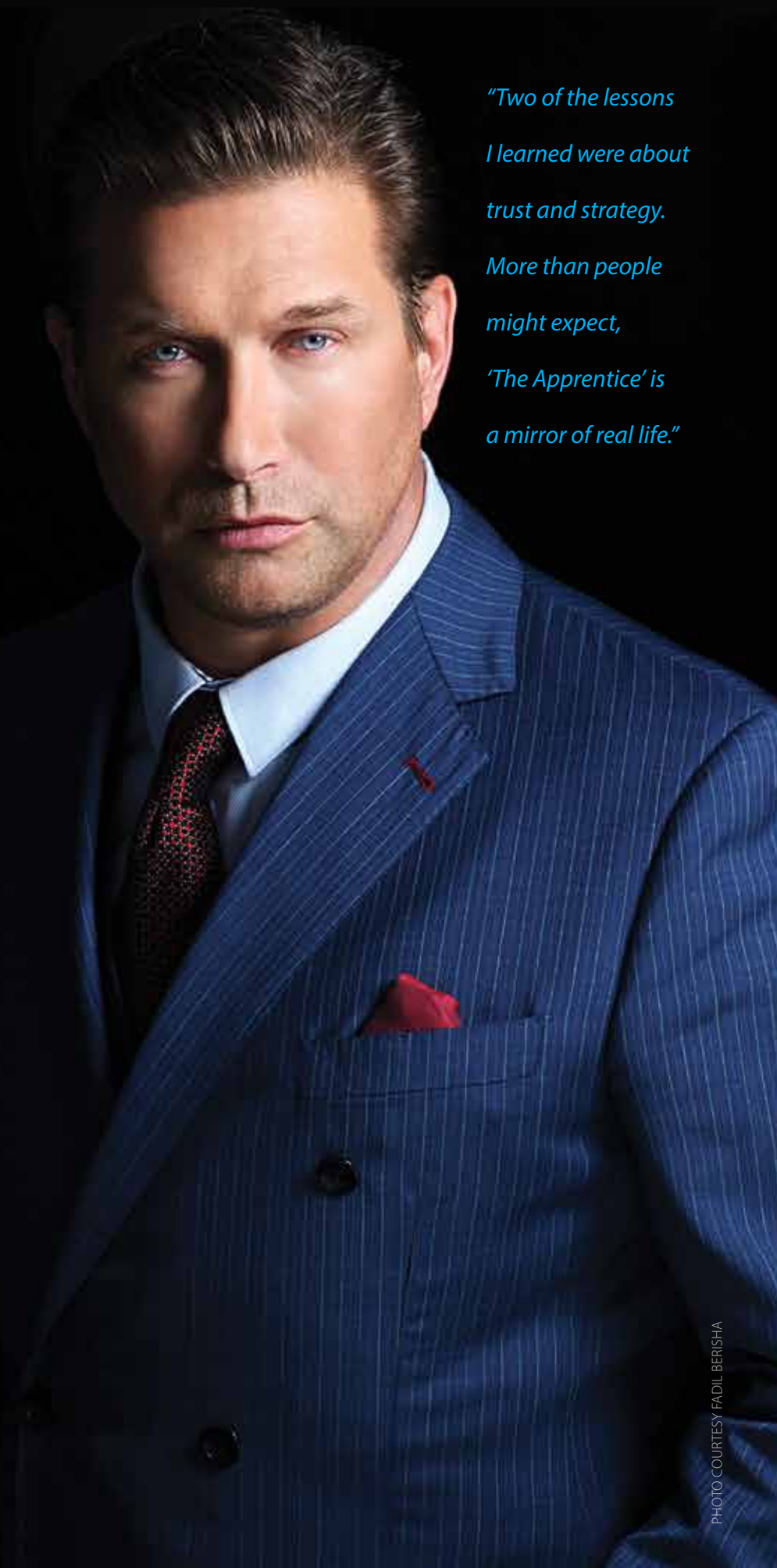


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Brett Michaels, Stephen Baldwin and Brande Roderick

## FRANK TALK WITH HOLLYWOOD'S BAD BOY

My luncheon with Baldwin (who is perfect to play the part of the duplicitous Secret Service Agent Sean Ives in the movie version of my book *The Racing Heart*) was a brain child of Matt Rich, of Planet PR, who shares both Stephen and I as clients. Our get-together was initially meant to engage Baldwin, who loves *The Racing Heart*, in the preliminary 'talks' about how to adapt my novel into a movie. Simply put, we wanted to pick his brain.

There are lots to pick in this blue-eyed maverick, underdog extraordinary who grew up in a Kennedy-clan-like fashion of sibling rivalry, matriarchal dominance, political differences and emotional and financial ups and downs worthy of a true celebrity.

Trust me, even at Michael's, a popular New York eatery full of literary and political notables, Stephen was asked for an autograph. Watching Stephen's kindness and patience with his fans made me sympathetic to his life's challenges. Simply put, I wanted to be like him.

I told him it seems like he has lived in the shadow of his older brother, Alec, a notable actor and a staunch Democrat. "Do you feel this helped you, or deterred you, in life," I asked.

"Early on, because we didn't know how much talent he had, we couldn't be sure about the outcome that obviously has been very positive for me throughout the years," Baldwin responded. "No matter what, we're still a bunch of jocks from Long Island who just keep pinching ourselves about our success."



Donald Trump Jr., Donald Trump Sr., and Eric Trump

To read more of my interview with Stephen Baldwin – including a chat about his political differences with Alec, go to [www.SouthFloridaOpulence.com](http://www.SouthFloridaOpulence.com). ●



Ava Roosevelt

**Editor's Note:** Ava Roosevelt is the author of *The Racing Heart*, a romantic thriller set at the famed 24 Hours of Le Mans Endurance Race ([www.theracingheart.com](http://www.theracingheart.com)). She is also a Palm Beach philanthropist and wife of the late William Donner Roosevelt, grandson of President Franklin Delano Roosevelt.