



Tarka L'Herpiniere

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Adventurer and Endurance Athlete

Bilingual: French/English

Although only in his mid-twenties, Tarka L'Herpiniere has shown **tremendous courage and ambition** to tackle some **awe-inspiring expeditions**. Most recently, Tarka (and his partner, Katie-Jane Cooper) completed the entire length of the Great Wall of China from West to East becoming the **first people** to achieve this. Their expedition lasted six months.

Tarka speaks with passion **about taking opportunities, facing difficult challenges and staying focused** in tough times. He knows what it is to **face disappointment and hardship** and how vital it is to **stay motivated**. Tarka seeks to inspire audiences to break free from any self-imposed limitations and **achieve their goals**. His humour, dramatic photographs and film footage create a **memorable and entertaining presentation**.

At just 16 years, Tarka L'Herpiniere took a bicycle out of a skip, restored it and set off on a 1,000km journey. A couple of years later, inspired to test his limits and motivation, Tarka **ran the equivalent of 8 consecutive marathons** in 8 days. Growing up in the French Alps, Tarka excelled in the outdoors and his adventurous spirit flourished. Tarka's sporting skills include skiing, rock and ice climbing; mountaineering, mountain biking, paragliding, skydiving and BASE jumping. Although a talented rugby player (Tarka played for London Wasps and Bath RC), Tarka's first love remained the mountains. An **experienced mountaineer**, in 2006 Tarka attempted to summit Mt Everest with a group of elite climbers without oxygen. At more than 7km above sea level, Tarka developed a **highly dangerous condition** (High Altitude Cerebral Edema) and had to be evacuated. He then found himself abandoned on an airfield in Kathmandu just as Civil War was breaking out. He shares the story of his **dramatic evacuation** with audiences. Tarka has experienced

the challenge of Arctic winters too with successful expeditions in 2002 & 2003. The following year, Tarka attempted to become the youngest person ever to reach the North and South Poles, unaided and in succession, but regrettably, sponsors had to withdraw and Tarka couldn't complete the project.

In 2007, Tarka L'Herpiniere and his partner Katie-Jane became the first to walk the length of the Great Wall of China from West to East, a journey of more than 3,000 miles (4,300km) which took them 167 days. (The full extent of the Wall had only recently been revealed by archeologists.) The expedition took them through rural China and **remote, dramatic and inhospitable landscapes** but it is their encounters with people and their generosity that will stay with them most. They survived the heat of the Gobi desert and blizzards and -35°C in snowy mountains.

Inspired by Tarka, Katie-Jane (an ex-model and body-double for Cameron Diaz) underwent the most **colossal transformation** to prepare for and complete this expedition proving that **ordinary people can achieve extraordinary things**. Tarka and Katie have developed an inspiring dual talk giving both sides of their unique story. Tarka is also an experienced 'solo' motivational speaker.

Speaker Topics

- follow your dreams
- persevere in tough times
- courage & conquering the fear of failure
- achieve your goals - achieve your potential
- Co-operation in adversity

Tarka is increasingly fascinated with how resilient, resourceful, determined and flexible human beings can be. During late 2008, Tarka cycled through Africa. Part of this expedition was to raise awareness of the charity Re-Cycle - an African project to collect and ship second-hand bikes and spare parts to Africa.

In February 09, Tark and Katie-Jane will join Pen Hadow's Caitlin Arctic Survey at the North Pole where they will be living in a tent at around - 50°C. They return at the end of April 2009.

All of Tarka's expeditions raise money for charity and often involve scientific research to help us better understand the human body and its behaviour in **extreme circumstances** as well as the world we live in. Tarka and Katie-Jane are currently planning their next epic expedition that Sir Ranulph Fiennes has described as "Set to be the greatest expedition of the century". Tarka and Katie-Jane will embark on an unprecedented and historic journey. Using only their own motive power, in the form of manhauling, cycling and ocean rowing, they will go beyond what was believed possible as they navigate the globe on its polar axis to complete the 30,000km **epic voyage** from one geographic pole to the other.

A documentary filmed and narrated by Tarka, 'The Great Walk of China' was published on DVD in January 2009.

Speaking Style

Fluent in English and French, Tarka is an accomplished, experienced speaker. He has excellent film footage and photographs to draw upon to tailor each talk. His style is inspirational, engaging, enthusiastic and humorous. Tarka also offers a captivating dual talk with Katie-Jane Cooper about their Great Walk of China.