

Simple Life Changing Lessons

What I Learned from a Dancer

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First Edition

I have written consent to use the stories and names
of the people and their social media accounts
mentioned in this book.

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WHOA HOLD ON!!!

Before you start reading! This book is a self-help guide filled with lessons I have learned through finding a social media account that changed my life. Through these lessons, I share personal examples from my life that relate to each lesson. You will also find, in the following pages, some backstory of what I've faced, revealing my journey of finding a dancer's account and how it impacted my life.

At the end of the book, you will find three resource pages. One with helpful tips and one with social media contacts. You will also find a resource page for something I mention in this book that we all seem to lack.



Never give up on what you really want to do. The person with big dreams is more powerful than the one with all the facts.

Albert Einstein



LESSON 1

Never Stop Dreaming

Dreams are what help keep hope alive in all of us. Goals give us a pathway toward those dreams. Sometimes, though, along our path, dreams can change. Other times, we lose sight of our dreams or deem them impossible, and many of us choose to find new dreams and more “sensible” goals. This was certainly my story. I have seen in my journey that if a dream never leaves you, ultimately, there’s a reason for it. It is essential to never stop believing, because nothing is impossible. Still, I have not always thought this way.

Like everyone, I have had many dreams, some like a revolving door, coming and going. It seemed most of them were leaving just as quickly as they came into my life. One day in 2024, I found a social media account that changed my life forever, although my story didn’t start there.

For many years as a child, I had a false sense of self-image, believing I was an antisocial person who wanted to live a life in isolation. I typically either had my head in a book or was writing. It was either write or develop an ulcer, so I chose to write. Because of my many physical challenges and the experience of my childhood being taken from me due to my physical state of being, I had to find my world of escape. That escape for me became writing. As the years continued to pass and other dreams fell by the wayside, I wrote through different mediums, including blogs and articles.

I lived most of my childhood with an invisible condition that many doubted. It caused them to make me out as a liar on many occasions because I hid my pain well. When you learn to develop a high pain tolerance, find methods to cope with the pain, and find joy in the midst of suffering, I can understand people’s difficulty in believing my words.

In 2002, I was poked and tested beyond what I thought I could handle. I still remember those words that were spoken by the doctor who diagnosed me as if I were hearing them yesterday.

“Your condition exists and is very real, but many are misdiagnosed with similar conditions. Because of this, I had to wipe the dust off an old medical book to diagnose you properly. You have a condition called ‘Hypermobility Syndrome.’ It’s a similar condition to arthritis, with similar and different symptoms, and it’s in all your joints. Things will progress over time, and later in life, you will find it hard to keep moving and will always live with extreme pain. Find a good prescription painkiller, and I wish you the best.”

There were no adequate words to describe my despair. I needed hope at that moment, but I was met with disappointment instead. Seven years later, the doctor’s prediction came to pass. I owned several full knee supports and was researching wheelchairs. At the time of my research, I believed I was only months from spending the rest of my days in a wheelchair and on prescription painkillers. I would have ended my life because I was too young to live this way for years to come. All I knew at the time was that I would always need to live with others, and I would all too soon need full-time nursing care. This was the hand life had dealt me.

Within a few months of looking for wheelchairs, something happened. Through a series of events, I met someone who encouraged my heart when I needed it the most. This individual believed my life could improve until I could accept this for myself. Someone who instilled in me that everything good in life is possible. Through the support of others, I began taking steps towards a better future.

Like most things we all face, I have had my highs and lows. However, I kept seeing change for the better throughout the following years. Eventually, I would throw away my knee supports, and I never

ended up in a wheelchair. A little faith in this life and the right people in your corner can lead to incredible things happening, something I have seen evidence of in my own life. I learned to open my heart to receive from the best people who chose to stand in my corner and tell me, “No one is left alone in the corner,” a message I would unknowingly need a reminder of later in life.

Dreams are a funny thing; sometimes, our dreams can change in unexpected ways. I lived my childhood feeling insecure and inadequate to share what I was experiencing in life. I also was not certain who I could talk to, even if I could find the words. This caused me to retract and keep to myself, seemingly creating a façade of being “shy” and instilling in me a notion that I would always be a homebody. Someone who never wanted to travel or meet many people. That all changed one day when I was at a comedy show supporting my comedic friend, Bob Smiley. I overheard some people inspired by the event, and I hoped they would share with Bob what I heard them say. However, they never went to the free meet-and-greet to share and encourage him. Something happened to me that night. I suddenly had this passion to travel and meet other public figures. I started genuinely seeing people and recognizing when someone needed encouragement. Every time I took a step and brought encouragement and motivation to people with whom I came into contact in my travels, more opportunities came along. Eventually, this homebody turned this part-time passion into a career as a motivational coach that has expanded to thousands globally with people of all backgrounds and careers. Over the years, I have had many dreams for my life; some have changed, and some have never left me entirely.

One of my lifelong dreams was to be able to dance. While I did not desire to become a professional dancer, I loved the creative flow and expression it offered. I never saw myself as a good dancer, but I had self-confidence. I would practice every chance I could physically. Once, I choreographed one dance and taught a small group of people at a retreat I attended years ago. We danced on one of the last nights there. Not long after that experience, my physical state would become more limiting, and I had to say goodbye to that chapter in my life.

I remained focused on my more realistic future and the career I was building as a motivational coach. My job has been making connections and engaging in conversations. Through listening intently, I pull from personal experience and share life tips; give some direction where they may be stuck, and inspire their life in some way. Every connection is different, although many have similar themes. Examples of this include mind renewal, career goals, dreams, and aspirations, as well as instilling a relentless faith in themselves and that all things are possible.

Life moved forward in some ways and backward in others. While I continued to see positive change at times, I also continued experiencing many physical challenges and struggled as I had to say goodbye to one dream after another. Years put distance between me and my dream of dance, and I learned to cultivate other aspirations. I discovered a love for music and talent in certain languages. While reading became a hobby, writing became a passion that would follow me for years. I made myself busy with life and made a lifetime career of chasing other dreams.

Someone in My Corner

The waves of life have taught me that when the tide is at its highest and I am faced with insurmountable obstacles, filled with a sense of hopelessness, it’s crucial to have someone in my corner who will offer their hand and believe in me until I can believe in myself again. Over the years, someone has often come alongside me when I needed it the most, and I will always be grateful. One of those chance encounters happened online in April 2024.

I was nearing the end of a long season of difficult circumstances. After running from my purpose in life and a place I knew I was meant to live, I finally moved with great resistance. I had many reasons

for never wanting to live in the South, such as crime rates, insect breeds, an all too high insect count for someone with a phobia, and other reasons I had compiled over time. Yet something in me wouldn't let go of the notion that I was to move and continue to work as a motivational coach. This was more than a two-decade journey for me, filled with pain, regrets, and the loss of some friendships with those who no longer wanted to be in my life due to differences. Because of all that I faced beyond what I have shared in these pages, I became a neurotic emotional wreck at some point for a few of those years, and it took time to unravel the complex experience I had been through.

Two years after moving and settling in, I discovered I had bought a washing machine that was much too deep for my height. I did my best to live with my decision because there were no workable alternatives. However, after bending into my washer for some time to reach my clothes, my body was in excruciating pain. I'll never know the damage I may have done to my organs and diaphragm. However, I was curled up one too many days in my bed, crying from the pain that ensued. I kept researching and finally found a solution to help me reach my clothes. It made me smile for the first time in that season because of the object that aided me in my endeavors. Appropriate for the South, I bought boot hooks. It was just the right length to act as an extension to my arm to reach my clothes and bring them up to a level where I could quickly grab them with my other hand and place them in the dryer. After a few long, difficult months, my body was finally recovering.

I was in a darker place mentally and emotionally. I had negative thoughts about my present circumstances and my future, and I was struggling physically daily. One of the things that my years have taught me is that stress and anxiety can manifest in our bodies in a variety of ways, such as sickness, physical pain, and injuries. Stress and anxiety nearly took me out many times. On too many occasions, I had panic attacks mimicking a heart attack, and several of those experiences left me collapsed on the ground. Over time, I tried some natural alternative medicines to help with my anxiety, but nothing truly gave me the freedom I desperately needed. Thankfully, my life was about to take an unexpected turn.

Due to my physical limitations, I must schedule time for a more extended break than what is typical for others during the day and work late at night to compensate for lost time. Because of this and other reasons, I work from home, and it has been some time since I've traveled. One day during my break, I was on social media. Under the videos tab, videos are generated for me based mainly on the videos I watch the most. My most common videos have been food-related and occasional ones that involved dancing. While I love watching dance, I knew at the same time I would never dance again. Not having found any videos of interest this time, I was about to get off social media and continue my resting time. Suddenly, my eyes caught a video. Even in thumbnail viewing, I recognized the lettering in the background and knew it was yet someone else attempting a rather famous dance move from a globally recognized film. The move consists of one person running a few feet for momentum and the other lifting that person above their head. The lifted one must balance by lifting their legs backward and stretching their arms to the side. While it's doable, not many have accomplished this challenging move.

I almost didn't tap on the video because I had watched too many try this lift. Yet something in me that day decided to watch anyway. I discovered quickly that these were professionals who had mastered the dance move. I clicked on the profile of the dancer who had posted the video. I learned that this person is a world-renowned dancer, choreographer, writer, and actor named Diego Borges in Brazil. The video was in Portuguese. Unknown to many, social media often has an instant "translation" word to click on when foreign words are on a post or story. Other times, when needed, an online translation is usually close enough to give the gist of whatever you are translating. While this takes a lot of time and effort, sometimes, it can be worth it all in the most unlikely circumstances and for the right reasons. The one dance video drew me in, but Diego also shared some inspiring messages I needed to hear, and I stayed connected.

Within seventy-two hours, amazing things started to happen. I reached out to Diego, unsure whether he would see my message. I shared about how I found his account, and some content was just what I needed to hear. Much to my surprise, I heard back from him overnight, and he was overwhelmed by my words and could not stop thanking me for sharing.

Diego's account has a clear message that says, "No one is left alone in the corner." The concept comes from the global movie, which has the lift I described earlier. This idea is something he strives to live out in his own life. The objective is to notice people, show kindness, and improve their day through listening, encouraging, and sometimes inspiring them to have more confidence. Diego spoke my language through his actions and beautiful heart. Between the words he shared and watching his body language and life, I began believing in myself again, a little at a time. He stepped into my corner by responding to a few private messages on social media. Also, when I commented on a video, he would occasionally respond to me and speak with extra encouragement about precisely what I needed along the way. My soul was becoming lighter; my mind was being rewired to believe anything was possible and to have more faith in myself. Sometimes, even coaches need others to come into our corners and remind us of what we already know because we all face incredible obstacles and struggles that can leave us feeling lost.