

Secrets of a Thriving Adult Dance Fitness Program

Part 2 – The Ideal Type of Adult Dancer



In the afterglow of an exhilarating workout, with mascara smudged haphazardly under our eyes, Patricia and I sat together on the studio floor, red-faced and sweaty. “That felt good,” she said, “first class in twelve years and my body hasn’t felt this good in ages... you know what?!? My knee isn’t hurting!” “Yay!” I respond, “I’m so glad!”

“You know I teach,” she continued, “but I don’t take class anymore.”

“Don’t you miss it?” I blurt out. “Girl, you of all people! I remember you in Ms Sidimus’ class and how much you loved it! Don’t you miss it like crazy?”

She was staring at the floor and I realized she was fighting off tears. I didn’t back away from her pain. Welcomed it. Whispered, “You should be dancing, Patty.”

Ahhh. There they were. Big beautiful juicy tears splashing down on everything, confirming that I had touched that secret pain. I just kept talking... “I didn’t dance for 15 years, Patty, and I was so sad. I didn’t even recognize my life or who I was or even what I was missing! And I just couldn’t do it anymore – I couldn’t deny it anymore!”

Silence for a second. “I’m so embarrassed,” she finally blurts out. “I used to be GOOD and now...”

“It’s okay... it’s okay... you’re just a woman now. We all grow up, but Patricia you have to dance again.”

“Ughh” she shakes off the tears and grabs for tissues. “I know... but at the studio, everybody knows me and I’m fat and I don’t want to be seen in class being terrible.”

“Oh screw what anybody else thinks,” I wail. “You need to do this for you! And besides, I think it would be inspiring to others. Listen, when I started back, I put myself in class with teenagers. Patty, I was 41 and SO FAT – 30 pounds heavier than I am now – and I was so ashamed around all those young snotty teenagers. But you know what? I just did it. Started taking class 5-6 days a week and took my life back. The weight came off over time. And my spirit returned. It’s like everything shifted back into place emotionally for me; and from that first day back, I basically haven’t missed a day.”

She looked at me with wide eyes.

“Okay, I exaggerate, but honestly, I have truly danced 4-5 days a week since then, religiously! And THIS IS WHY I created The Dancer’s Workout®: Adults only! No kids allowed! This is for us!

“I couldn’t believe how good it felt today,” she says. “...I mean I was lost as hell, but I loved it...”

“Everybody is lost their first day!” I interrupt. “It doesn’t matter. What matters is that you are dancing again!”

Secrets of a Thriving Adult Dance Fitness Program

Part 2 – The Ideal Type of Adult Dancer



Page 2

“...and what a great group of women you have! They made me feel... so... SAFE... like it didn’t matter that I have to hide under this baggy shirt...”

“They don’t care about that,” I jump in, “they just love to dance and are glad you’re here with them.”

“But how did you find these women?”

“Patty, there are so many women like you and me. I mean, they’re not dance teachers, but there are so many women out there who used to dance who quit and who miss it like us. They’re EVERYWHERE. You just have to find them and get them to try it.... It’s not easy to get them into class; but once you do, they are hooked!”

“I’m thinking about my adult ballet class with only like 3 people coming, and I’m always trying to build that class.”

“Yeah, you need to find the former dancers, not the beginners, not the ones who never quit, you need to find the former dancers who have a strong emotional yearning for it and make it a safe place for them to return to dance.”

“Wow. It opens up a whole new world.”

“I know. Keys to the kingdom. You have to know who your quote “ideal potential students” are before you can find them. They’re the ones who feel like us...”

Abruptly I get up and run to the thermostat. “I’m freezing in here!!! I had to turn the temp to 67 before class but now with my clothes soaking wet from class, I’m FREEZING!!! I’ve got to change into dry clothes!”

“Me too!” Patricia shouts out as she grabs her dance bag and runs to the dressing room.

Watching her scurry to the back I flashback to 30-some years ago, remembering the dressing room full of teenagers like myself, who are stretching on the floor, doing homework, giggling about me trying to stand behind David at the barre, and never even realizing these were some of the most joyous and defining moments in our young lives.



For more information about Jules and The Dancer’s Workout®, visit <http://www.thedancersworkout.com>

Jules Szabo is a UNC School of the Arts Classical Ballet Graduate

Click [here](#) for her featured story on the UNCSA website!

