



“DANCE LIKE NO ONE IS LOOKING”

The question you are probably asking yourself is, “How can I dance like no one is looking if I am competing and all these judges are watching me?” The answer is simple: You Need To Dance From Your Heart. What does that mean?

Dancing comes out of a longing inside of us that brings us to a place of expression in movement. Of course there are many things that involve being able to dance with excellence. We must have what all dancers call technique; the equipment necessary to dance at one’s best in the style of ballroom dancing that we choose. We must train vigorously, and hard to get to a place where we are able to actually what I call enjoy what we do. The choreography, the steps, the memorization of the movements must become second nature; and then we need to become the music as we dance. We must feel the music in our innermost being and then express the music through our movements.

Of course in ballroom dancing we also must express the movements in relationship to our partner. This takes a lot of practice, and also a lot of patience. Why patience? We are dealing with two different human beings, with different personalities, feelings, and emotions. Dancing can convey every human emotion; yet the two people in partnership need to become as one as they express themselves to the music and the individual dance they are doing. There has to be a constant awareness of each other. There is an action and reaction that takes place between the two people that are dancing in their movements and their expression to the music. Basically the partners are telling a story. Eventually the partners flow together in their movements with such ease and freedom to the music; that it creates an atmosphere that draws the audience and also the judges into their dancing.

Little children are able to dance like no one is looking; they have no inhibitions, and do not care who is watching them. I am not saying to dance like a fool or look foolish with no discipline; but what I am saying is that many times as we train and compete we lose sight of the whole reason we are dancing, which is the joy and happiness it creates inside of us. This is what makes a great performer versus a good performer. Top professional dancers are always striving for perfection, their work is never done, and there is always something new to learn or another technique to perfect.

As I reflect back on my own career, I can see many times when I was striving too much, and did not enjoy the journey. Do not let the search for perfection get in the way of your enjoyment of your dancing. Especially do not focus on the negative, focus on the positive and what is working well in your dancing and partnership. Not only will this help your dancing, but improve your relationship with your partner. Concentrate on how much you can do, not on what you cannot do. Shut the voice inside your head that continually tells you that you are not good enough, or the voice that brings the anxiety and stress weeks before the big competition day. We usually would not dream of speaking to other people the way we speak to ourselves, our minds need to change, and be quiet. So don’t put up with it for a moment longer!

Another aspect to consider is, are your coaches encouraging you and supporting you? Not only do they need to be teaching you proper technique and choreography, but also be what I call a mentor that can be counted on in all areas. Find someone you can trust and talk to about your feelings not just about your dancing. This is another important aspect of making your dance journey enjoyable. Eventually the excess striving, anxiety, and pushing to perfection can lead to some type of either emotional or physical breakdown in your life. It might take years, before you see the consequences. Instead learn to relax and enjoy your journey of dance now. Remember everything has a time and a season, but you will get there.

Question: Are you enjoying the journey in your ballroom dancing? If not, take a long hard look at what is taking place inside of you. Are you striving too much, are you too anxious about the competitions, is the joy of what brought you to dance still there? I would encourage you to really sit down and visualize yourself at the beach or at some place that you love, and see yourself dancing as if no one is looking. Be proud of yourself and be proud of what you have already accomplished. Concentrate on the positive, smile and enjoy, enjoy, enjoy! Get out there and Dance Like No One Is Looking-You Can Do It!

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