

PINK **QUALITY** LITZ

A chat with
Tiffany Smith



Killers mood

Avoid
These Guys

learning
Mary Murphy's
secret
to success

First Day on the Job
Looks

Fashionable
Maternity

beauty
Home Remedies

CRAZY FASHION





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Interview with Mary Murphy

INTERVIEWED BY LILLY BABINEAU

Pinkblitz Magazine Editor in Chief Lilly Babineau had the opportunity to chat with Mary Murphy. Mary is a professional dancer and choreographer, as well as the most well known judge on 'So You Think You Can Dance'.

PB: You were born in Pinnow Folten, Ohio. What was life like when you were younger, like your school life?

MM: I was popular, but not for the reasons most would think. I was a tomboy and had 3 brothers, and so everyone called me 'Huckleberry Mary' simply because I built rafts with the boys, figure skated on the pond. That was my life. I wanted to do what my brothers did, and we all wanted to be track runners. I did everything—long jump high jump, etc.

I wasn't girly at all, I didn't wear dresses or wear makeup. I was brought up very Irish catholic. I went to catholic school until the 7th grade and then went to public school. It was the coolest thing, all the cool girls went to public school. I went to college, I could have went and played bassoon, drums, but at the time there was nothing good about being in the drum section.

I took quite a beating that first year, and the abuse was so bad that I went to the president band director and showed the bruises because they were hitting me with drumsticks. I could play things they couldn't play and I just wanted in, but they weren't

having it. So I asked for help. He said, "I think you need to find another instrument", instead of actually helping me or sticking up for me. It was devastating. It all worked out for the best though. Ended up with the bassoon and fell in love and could have went to Ohio State on a scholarship. I wanted to go to university and run track, and a degree in Phys Ed.

PB: When did you realize you had a passion for dancing?

MM: At university, I had to take an elective in dance so I took modern dance and fell in love. The next step was in NYC and I never thought I was good enough, my husband at the time moved us to Washington DC, and I saw an ad that said no experience necessary and went for it.

Ended up going to NYC with some people at the school and it was just like the movies. On the floor there were like 20 dancers and they were all doing a waltz. The way they were communicating with each other. I felt like I got hit by a lightning bolt.

I could feel it, and said out loud "I wanna be a pro ballroom dancer."

“The abuse was so bad...the bruises because they were hitting me with drumsticks.”

PB: Aside from dancing, what other hobbies and interests do you have?

MM: Some of my hobbies I've given up, like snow skiing. Ever since I've had cancer, I'm all about health and nutrition and doing things that get my body back, because I want to dance again. I refuse to have surgery.

In 1996 I returned from pro ballroom dancing and began teaching for 8-10 hours before the show came. Standing there and teaching in heels tightened me up so much I couldn't even touch my knees. It was too much. My arms and leg became so numb, they thought I had MS. They ran so many tests, my muscles were just so tight that I needed to start working on it.

2010 was the last time I danced.

PB: Everyone knows you from So You Think You Can Dance. What's something you can tell us that our readers might not know?

MM: I absolutely cannot sing, I'm horrific. I love it, but it's not something you can fix.

PB: What is Mary's Chance to Dance? What inspired you to start the initiative?

MM: [It's a non-profit corporation which provides ballroom dance training to teachers, children, and families, who might not otherwise have this opportunity.]

It was an educator down in San Diego, and I had been thinking about a program, and all the sudden someone just pops up and wants to do it.

I offer free dance camps and I do

choreography every year, and the kids get choreographed by me. We offer programs for amputees and people suffering from Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD).

[The target population is those children who would not ordinarily have the opportunity to participate in the art of ballroom dance. There is no cost to children or families to participate and the Board of Directors serve on a volunteer basis, so all donations go directly to children.]

For more information on Mary's Chance to Dance, please visit:

<http://marymurphyschancetodance.org/>

PB: Did you really act as a dance double for Julia Roberts?

MM: I did, and that was my first gig in Hollywood. After I retired from dancing, I went into the US Swing Championships, they were very snobbish in that. I made the finals in 3 days and a woman handed me a piece of paper for an audition for a movie.

She looked very bizarre, pasty looking, and I thought well she looked crazy. When she told me Tony Dazzle, she convinced me to try out. She said we were the perfect body types and fit the mold perfectly. They wouldn't tell us anything about the movie, but we made the cut.

PB: What can we expect to see from you in the next year?

MM: I'm hoping you expect to see me in the best shape of my life. I hope you will all see me dance again, and I'll look up to the professional part that I left in.





Advice from Mary...

Nobody talked to me about health and peak performance, or about nutrition. If you are skinny, you were presumed healthy, but I ate fast food all my young adult life. I inhaled it. What I know today, how much better I would have been if I had been eating right before peak performances. I wish someone would have told me about how healthy eating and nutrition could affect my performance. Perseverance is important, never underestimate determination and heart.

