

Competitive Ballroom Dancing Preparation

SET A REACHABLE COMPETITIVE GOAL – competition finalist, new routine, next practice, etc . . .

RESPECT YOUR PARTNER AND/OR INSTRUCTOR AND HIS/HER NEEDS –

- Clarify industry standards (for professionals)
- Communicate your needs and expectations
- Remember that your instructor is a professional that is a teacher and coach, not a companion
- Everyone learns differently – find out what works best for you
- If it does not effect YOUR dancing – LET IT GO!

PRACTICE –

- Practice only what you know . . .you are not responsible for anything else.
- You and your partner are a TEAM on the floor . . .work together!
- Focus your practice
 - o Set a goal for the practice
 - o Accomplish those goals
 - o Celebrate your accomplishments
- Study your process during rounds – are you consistent?
- If you need help – ask for it.

FINANCIAL MEANS –

- Do only what you can afford (lessons, costume, travel, hotel, entry fee, spending money)
- Start saving now – even if its only a couple events a year, save now so you can have a great time!

PRIVATE LESSONS –

- Make them work for you
- Make them consistent
 - o Beginners should have 1 lesson a week plus a social dance to practice what they have learned
 - o Intermediate should have 2 weekly lessons plus a social dance
 - o Advanced should have 3 or more weekly lessons and should attend as many events as possible
- Practice after your lesson (make sure its in there!)

COMPETITIONS –

- They are allowed to run an event 30 minutes before it is posted. (BE IN THE BALLROOM 1 HOUR BEFORE YOUR HEAT)
- Find out what works best for you – how much do you need to get “warmed up?” How much is TOO much?
- Sometimes its all about the politics
- You can’t always win
- Hydrate in between rounds
- Winning takes time, money, . . . and time and money!
- Dance at the level you are most comfortable
- In order to place – you must be seen throughout the event (on the dance floor). . . there is NO substitute for consistency.)
- Evaluate your experience (was this a good comp for you? Why/why not? What could you have done better . .if anything?)

REMINDE YOURSELF:

- o “I enjoy competing MORE than sitting out – no matter what the judges say!”
- o “Each comp is like an audition . . make sure you get the part!”
- o “Reassess when you are doubting yourself . . **why are you dancing in the first place?**”
- o “Convince them of what you want to show them – sell it on the floor!”
- o “Don’t complain about things you cannot control . . ie the floor, music, and judges . . . they are NOT excuses!”
- o “Every competition is a learning experience.”

And most importantly . . .

Practice like you need it, Dance like you love it, Perform like you want it – HAVE FUN!