

## Regretting Nothing

“Starting tomorrow, you’re going to be taking dance lessons.” Accepting the sudden statement with no complain, the young girl opened her mouth.

“When? Where?” She asked curiously.

“Every Saturday; it’ll take about an hour to get there so we’ll have to leave early. My friend is a teacher there and she might be teaching you. Her daughter will be there too.” The girl nodded slowly and began her next question.

“Why am I taking dancing? I’m not a good dancer.”

The young girl’s mother smiled endearingly and replied, “I remember when I was a little girl thinking how nice it’d be to dance on stage. I’ve always wished I could’ve taken dancing when I was younger; it’s something I really regret not doing. You’ll thank me for this. Don’t worry; you’ll have a lot of fun doing this. You’ll get to wear beautiful clothes, and put on makeup, and dance on stage, and...” The woman continued talking in a wistful voice, lost in her dreams of the past, not noticing the young girl’s disgruntled expression.

The young girl meanwhile sighed; she did not think this was going to be very fun. Not fun at all. She tuned her mother out and turned thoughtful; she envisioned herself dancing to some upbeat pop music, and smiled. Maybe it wouldn’t be that bad.

It wasn’t until the next day that she realized that she would not be doing modern dancing like she had hoped for; she was to instead do Chinese folk dancing. Needless to say, she was not pleased. Not pleased in the slightest.

As a child, I have always lacked the motivation and talent to do much more than spend my days passing through life sitting in the lap of luxury provided by my parents.

My only responsibility in life was to please people so I could avoid the trouble or consequences that would follow if I failed to meet expectations. I enjoyed my peaceful life too much to allow anything to disturb it. That's why, before dancing, I never challenged myself. Even now, I still prefer things to be easy-going and carefree.

Because of my up-bring, when I had first discovered that I would be doing Chinese folk dancing, I tried nearly everything to get out of it before finally resolving to put in as little effort as possible. I was resentful about my situation and began believing that dancing had no benefits. At that time, I never would have thought that I would be spending the next 10 years of my life dedicated to it or that I would come to consider my previous misconceptions of dancing as wrong.

Despite my initial displeasure, I grudgingly began to appreciate it over time. Now Chinese folk dancing is my favorite Asian art because of the many experiences and life lessons it has given me. I have participated in events such as parades, competitions, and much more. Perhaps my most meaningful moments were the times I went to Disneyland to perform. Through Chinese folk dancing and AATF itself, I have met new friends that I can share these experiences with. Just recently I won two Platinum awards at a competition that I participated in with the very friends that make me enjoy dancing so much. Despite this, it still took me a long time to warm up to the thought of dancing.

What really made me grow fond of dancing is that dancing has taught me new ways of enjoying life as well as important morals and philosophies. For example, an important lesson from all those times I put in effort during dancing is: Do your best at whatever it is that you do, even if you do not value it at first. Another thing I have been taught is the feeling of satisfaction after achieving something through hard work. Even

now I am still learning about important values such as hard work, integrity, teamwork, leadership, responsibility, endurance, and dealing with hardship among many others.

These are all important traits that make up my character. Without dancing, I would never have come to be the person I am today. Dancing is more than merely a pastime of mine, it's an important part of me and life without it would be unimaginable. I am glad that I was pushed into dancing and I don't plan on stopping anytime soon.