

Lessons From Las Vegas: Shattering Limitations

In July, 2006 I attended the International Dance and Exercise Association (IDEA) conference in Las Vegas. As someone who started my coaching career by helping people create and achieve their fitness goals, I have attended this 4-day event for nearly a decade.

Over time, I worked out a preference for my favorite presenters and topics and generally stayed with the tried and true.

This year, maybe because it was in Vegas, I decided to gamble and take some risks. By this I mean, I signed up for classes that put me far outside my comfort zone. What would normally cause me to run screaming from the room in a cold sweat? I can sum it up in one word...

Dance.

Despite working in group exercise, I never had any dance training, and actually have a lousy sense of rhythm. Whenever I went "dancing", I sat on the sidelines and watched my friends spin around the floor. If a guy asked me to dance, I'd give a strained smile, shake my head, and utter the words, "I don't dance."

For years I avoided diving into dance classes at IDEA because, c'mon there's no way I'm going to put myself next to classically trained instructors who started taking tap at the age of 2. And I knew my incredibly talented dancer friends would have no problem pointing fingers at me and laughing outright at my attempts to look hip or graceful. (Yes, you know who you are.)

But this year I survived classes rooted in jazz, hip-hop, and afro-Cuban styles.

Did I look graceful? Not always. Did I look ridiculous? You have no idea.

Why am I telling you this?

Stay with me. I do have a point.

On the first morning of the conference at 6am, while I stood in line in for coffee near the hotel lobby, I stared as a trio of partiers strolled past with their Heinekens still in hand. I had probably gone to bed the night before around 11pm and these people were just calling it a night well after dawn. This blew me away.

That night I stayed up until midnight. The next until 2am. And the final night I pulled the covers over myself at 5:30 in the morning.

What did I do to occupy myself all night long? Play roulette? A late night with Celine Dion?

My friends and I went dancing.

And I had a fantastic time on the dance floor.

Amazing.

In the past, dancing until dawn was not even a remote possibility.

I hid behind those words, "I don't dance."

But by smashing that notion and taking some risks, by being willing to look ridiculous, I experienced some amazing things that I wouldn't have seen had I stuck to my usual regimen of early to bed, early to rise.

What limitations do you put on yourself either in your business or in your life?

What notions are you hiding behind?

How does an unwillingness to look ridiculous hold you back?

Food for thought.

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About the Author

(c) 2006 Kim Nishida, Small Business Success Coach and founder of Ready to Evolve Coaching, helps you get focused, get organized, and get going!

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