



DanceStudioOwner.com Teleseminar

Positive Rivalry in Dance: An Inspired Pas de Deux!

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**Suzanne
Gerety:**

This is the DanceStudioOwner.com member-only teleseminar today. We are really excited. Chantale and I connected almost a year ago and she has such an incredible background. I am fascinated with it because of my dance background and my sports background.

As I have shared on our teleseminars, I grew up in the dance world and am heavily involved in dance, but performance never was my thing. As I became an adolescent I actually did a rebellious teen thing and said, “No to dance! I’m going to play sports!”

It actually paid off for me because all of my dance training really helped me be quite a competitive athlete. I think there are many things we can draw from this and it is what I love about you, Chantale, and your background.

I am really excited about the topic of Positive Rivalry in Dance. This is an issue. What does it look like? What does positive rivalry look like? I am going to let you get started. I may have questions to ask as we move along, but I think we can all learn something today, so I will let you get started.

**Chantale
Lussier-Ley:**

Absolutely, and thanks so much for having me here. It is a pleasure once again to connect. Has it been a year almost already? How time flies!

Suzanne:

It does.

Chantale:

I could not agree with you more. The world of sports has much to learn from the dance world and vice versa. There are so many commonalities and then there are interesting things that make each domain ever so slightly different. I think there are plenty of opportunities for cross-learning.

One of the themes where we see this the most is when we start talking about competition. It is interesting because, of course, in sports it is right out there. At the end of the day it is something we always talk about. With most sports it is a timed event or someone or some team that will win and, therefore, another person or team will lose.

We are not afraid to talk about competition in sports, but in dance it seems to be something we almost shy away from talking about. However, we experience it. This is why I think the idea of positive rivalry can really be useful in the context of dance.

Basically, it is the idea that competition can be viewed as the ultimate form of cooperation. Of course, I am sure we can all think of some terrible example where competition was not done in a sportsmanlike perspective. Maybe there is more than one way to do competition and maybe, in fact, it can be viewed as cooperating.

Two of my great mentors in the sport and performance psychology, Botterill and Patrick, have written quite a bit on the topic of positive rivalry. They describe it as the idea of, “I hope you do well because that makes me do better and that is actually better for both of us.”

Research has been done in areas like competition and cooperation in sports and we have found that top competitors seem to embrace this attitude of positive rivalry as opposed to negative competition. It encourages a win-win approach.

One of the things from a psychological perspective that is so interesting is that if we open ourselves up to this idea that competition can really be positive rivalry, instead of falling into the pitfalls of some irrational belief and feeling like everything is on the line with a particular event or competition, and falling into the pattern of really being afraid to fail, all of a sudden we can approach success.

Instead of operating from fear, we are psychologically operating in a way that is embracing the challenge in front of us.

If we think of the skill development of dancers, if we think of even personal improvement as people, as artists, I think this is where positive rivalry, kind of in a nutshell, has a lot to offer.

Suzanne:

Sure, that’s great insight. I guess I have a question. Many of our members or people listening to this call may have a dance team they are working on or growing a dance team. They may have a dance company. There are many studios where the concept of competition is something they really want to avoid because, unfortunately, there have been many negative stigmas attached to competitiveness in dance.

On a daily basis, we also have to work with our own dancers within the classroom and within the team to avoid having dancers pitted against one another; to avoid the situation where one person keeps getting the lead and so on.

You have a great outline here, but before we go onto the next point, help us understand what positive rivalry looks like at your dance studio.

Chantale:

This is where I think I have reflected on this quite a bit through the years. I have to say that my own personal opinion and experience has changed. Now I have come to realize that we cannot really describe dance as an individual sport or a team sport because it is actually both.

Many times, depending on the sport that people will follow, they might train in a group setting, but the competition element will be very clear that it is either an individual sport or a team sport. In dance, these boundaries are never quite so clear.

As you said, at a studio, one minute you might have all these dancers taking a class together and training together, but the next minute they are trying out for the lead in a particular production. This is where communicating boundaries is key.

There are times when we are competing for training and for skill improvement and to challenge one another, and then when we are actually competing with other people to see where we are in terms of our performance level, how we are able to put it all together when it counts on performance day, and again, to embrace the challenge that it brings us.

Of course, perhaps it is reminding the young dancers we are training that down this road, this is what the professional world of dance will look like. We will have friends in dance and, hopefully, we will be able to nurture all kinds of wonderful friendships in dance and be able to dance together every day. However, at the end of the day we will all be auditioning at times for the same gigs. How can we do this in a way that respects ourselves and our peers in that process?

I think the respect part is huge and the communication is probably another big part from an education standpoint.

Suzanne:

One of the things I really enjoy, Chantale, and what I learn from you each time we speak are the things you write about. You have a great way of communicating.

I think one of the greatest challenges for studios in the communication part is that we are so busy doing the work of running the studio or running the classes or setting up the meetings or setting the rehearsal schedule or picking the competition that we forget to actually sit down and talk about what we are doing here and why we are doing it.

I think we avoided for many years the notion of competitive dancing. We would have a performance and we would happily embrace performance opportunities, but there was a lack of embracing the competitive side. Frankly, sometimes it is a lack of knowing what to say and I think you just said it really well. I appreciate that clarification. I will let you move along in your presentation here.

Chantale:

To jump off of what you just said, I totally appreciate the very long to-do list we have as studio owners and dance educators. The list goes on and on.

You were asking what it looks like in the studio. I don't expect all of the studios in the country to all of a sudden have sports anchors on hand to facilitate these competitions. That is not going to happen and it does not need to happen.

You all know your dancers best and it may just be a matter of once in a while starting a rehearsal or even a tech run-through before a big show and saying, "Why are we doing this? What does competition mean to you?"

As you alluded about not necessarily knowing what to say, a lot of times I find that not having the answers but asking the question right there generates the most meaningful conversation by the dancers. They figure out why they value competing and what they get out of it.

I think that actually reconnects them to the idea that competition can be positive. They realize, “Hey, wait a minute, I love the challenge and I love knowing that I surpassed myself. Yeah, sometimes I surpass myself because I know there is another strong dancer who is competing here.” Sometimes it is just asking those questions.

Suzanne: That’s great. You talk about some of the pitfalls or things that could be showing up as negative rivalry?

Chantale: Yes, I know I am not the first one to call it this. I don’t know who said it first, but the green-eyed monster is jealousy. It is a human fundamental emotion, so certainly we all know what that feels like and it feels icky, for lack of a better word. It takes our focus away from who we are and really robs us of any sense of perspective, I think.

If I had to find from a sports perspective one good thing about jealousy, it is giving us information. I think that may be something else to open the dialogue with our dancers, too.

If we are feeling a little bit jealous—maybe our best friend got the lead yet again—it is normal. If we are feeling disappointed, it is normal. However, what is that feeling telling us? Is it telling us that we need to do something? Is it telling me that I need to keep working really, really hard? Do we need to remind our dancers of that?

Is it telling me that I need something from people? Maybe it is telling me that I hesitated and I did not go to that audition, but my friend did. Now she has the part and I am feeling bad about it. Well, maybe that is telling me that next time I need to be daring and just go for it.

Then I can recognize that that little green-eyed monster is actually giving me really useful information.

Maybe it is even making you recognize that the person you are feeling competitive with may have certain technical or performance skills that you want or maybe they have certain personal traits. Maybe they are the kind of person—and we all know dancers like this—who will be in the front row, center every single time.

Maybe sometimes we see students who are not feeling so great about themselves, but they are back row to the left. Maybe they are dying for that attention or recognition or even some feedback from teachers, but they do not know how to take that step to once in a while place themselves in a position that will give them what they need.

I think this is where the little green-eyed monster of jealousy can give us some really insightful information. What am I feeling and why am I feeling it?

Suzanne: Let me share a real-life example that happened to us this past May or June leading up to our very busy performance time of the year.

These girls and boys spend a lot of time together during the week between classes and rehearsals. They are together quite a bit and some behavior patterns emerge that can be negative or positive.

There were some kids who felt they were being bullied in the class to the point at which we had to have a huge meeting. People were fearful to step into the front and center; they were afraid to upset so-and-so.

Speaking of our teenagers, they are dealing with their own sets of emotions and there are all of the peer group dynamics. There is so much going on with emotions and so on, so, like you said, jealousy can rear its ugly head in many ways and it can mutate into things that are unhealthy.

As the studio owner or teacher, I guess my next question is when do you step in and identify that? What are some signs and things you can do to help keep that at bay?

Chantale: That is a great question. Certainly, as you said, there are even all the times between classes. Some of these people are even going to school together, so even when they are not at the studio they are spending time that you as a dance educator or studio owner may or may not have any control or influence over.

This is one of the things I love so much about teaching. When we are in that studio and when we are in that room, we get to create sort of a sacred space hopefully of trust and a place where it can be okay to try things and be okay to fail. It can also be okay to have all kinds of emotions.

With that said, of course, as you pointed out, that can be a lot to manage because it involves a group. There are many different group dynamics at work all at the same time. That is why I would suggest that if a teacher is aware of something like this going on, instead of just hoping it resolves itself, have a little five or ten minute pow-wow or a little chat and just ask some questions to bring it to the surface.

Usually, this is when we realize, as with the green-eyed monster, it is really tiny at the end of the day. Then everybody learns how to process their emotions in healthier ways.

Suzanne: Absolutely, and I think it goes full circle back to asking, “Why are we here? How can we compete and yet collaborate and exercise teamwork all at the same time?”

Chantale: This is such a basic example, but I know most dancers can relate to it. I will say this when I am teaching ballet classes, “If you are not a strong jumper, you know who is strong in the class. Go stand next to them because you will feed off of their energy and you will jump better.

“If someone is traveling great, try to pair up with them going across the room. Try to match the way they are using the space and their energy.” I think by saying these things, we are acknowledging that we all have strengths and weaknesses and it is making that okay.

It is also presenting the idea that competing is actually fun as opposed to some negative thing where someone has to feel bad or something.

Suzanne: That’s right. I think if anybody has a takeaway from this call it is that I really would love to transform the conversation around competition from always having a winner or a loser or a negative stigma as if it would be something that would tear down the studio culture. Only if you let it.

That is one of the big takeaways and, again, it goes back to what you have to add to that next. There is something inspiring to take away from that, especially if we get into the throes of winter right now.

We are in the middle of the winter; the burnout, the injuries. A studio owner told me about her lead dancer breaking her foot. This is the stuff that demands a way to get through it. I'll let you keep going with your presentation.

Chantale:

You are bringing up a ton of very important things. I can tell you that over here in Ottawa we are dealing with the same thing. We have a show in two weeks and, unfortunately, we have a few lead dancers who are injured. All of a sudden, we have to cooperate and we have to make sure other dancers are learning other dancers' parts.

Yet, of course, we also have to navigate everyone's feelings around that. I know this is not easy, but I think it is an important part of the process. We have the old saying, "The show must go on." Maybe it does not have to be quite so stressful and negative.

In preparation for this talk today, I was thinking, "What are some examples?" For some reason, I was getting a lot of figure skating examples in my mind, but I know there are dancing ones, as well.

For those on the call like me who can recall the 1988 Calgary Olympics, in figure skating there was this great positive rivalry that was the battle of the Brians.

Following the Olympics, there were a lot of interviews where both Brian Boitano and Brian Orser said that they were able to achieve the performances they had because they knew they had such a strong competitor to face.

In Canada, we have Elvis Stojko and Kurt Browning who were the first ones to land quads in competition. If it wasn't for the fact that right here in the homegrown Canadian skating world that we had these two top competitors fighting positively with each other, who knows, maybe the quad would never have happened in that time.

Even more recently, in Vancouver, I do not know if anyone remembers the ice dance couple. Here in Canada we had Virtue and Moir and in the U.S. it was Meryl Davis and Charlie White. They actually trained together. Even though it was Canada and the U.S., they actually trained together and they have an incredible relationship with each other.

That particular day it went to Virtue and Moir, but I was reading this morning an article by them and they literally said, "We wouldn't be here if it wasn't for them because they are so strong."

In the research world I see the same thing. Great minds and great performers emerge around other great minds and great performers. Why is this? We get inspired by each other; we challenge each other; we learn from each other. I think this is the way that competition can actually be healthy.

However, we have to remember to bring this meaning to competition. That is actually our job. We need to positively challenge each other. That is the role of competition.

Suzanne: I love that. Those are some great examples. I want to address the topic of parents and then I want to make sure we open up the call to members who want to ask questions.

Parents can either be the thorn in the side of a studio owner, really fueling their own little gossipy conversations on the side that could be detrimental or parents, if given the right guidance and coaching, can be really helpful. What role do the parents play in creating positive rivalry in dance?

Chantale: Obviously, their role is huge. At the end of the day, at the end of a dance competition or in sports, at the end of any competition or event the kids will go home with the parents.

Many times in the work that I do with athletes, it is very interesting to find out the conversations that take place in the car. This is very, very telling. As you said yourself, it can be something that incredibly supports the work of dance educators or, sadly, it can just add fuel to the fire.

There is one thing I wish we all did a bit more, certainly in dance and the same thing in sports. You alluded to the culture of the studio. I think this would be huge in the culture of the studio. It is to have a couple of parent meetings here and there where you get to communicate how you see their role in supporting their child.

It might be through dance exams or dance auditions. I have had parents come up and say, “We do not know how to deal with the emotions after an audition.” I think it is probably the same situation after dance competitions. Parents want to help, but they do not know how.

I think as educators we can communicate and say, “Here is what we would like you to help us communicate to our children.” Then we will all be on the same page.

Suzanne: I am a mom of two young children; they are not really at the competitive level yet. I think what happens a lot, and we are dealing with this in an upcoming issue of Dance Teacher Magazine, is that parents ultimately may show up doing crazy things and making sweeping comments, but they just want their child to be happy. Truly, the source of it all, as weird as the things are that they do, is that they just want their child to be happy.

I think like you said, there are many parents entering the dance world with their child and they have no personal experience as to what dance should be or should entail. They make up their own interpretation.

I think it goes back to how we are so busy and there is no time. It feels like that last thing we want to do is deal with the parents, especially the one that is frustrated by the audition results or the whole host of things we deal with. I think we need to take the proactive approach here.

In the same way that we communicate what it is going to cost and the dates, we have to have a conversation in there covering, “Here is what we are creating here and this is what you can expect from an audition.” Those are the things that will make a difference. Like you said, it is helping them understand both the positive rivalry within the dance classes and the community it will build when we can compete together as a team.

Chantale: As you alluded to with the cost-effectiveness kind of thing, if we look at time as definitely having value, having a chat, say, in September with parents is a really wise investment of time. It can actually save us time and energy later in the year when the auditions, performances, competitions, and exams are all happening.

We have already laid the groundwork. After that it is just a matter of reminding each other throughout the year as a community and as a studio culture. At least we have set out these intentions and then we are all trying to live according to these ideals.

Yes, human emotions will come into play, but we can embrace those emotions and know what to do with them a little bit more if we remember what we value. I think that is the whole thing. It is asking kids and parents, “What is the value of competition?”

Before we know it, at the end of the day it is not going to be about ego; it is not going to be about trophies; it is not going to be about these things we thought it was about. It is going to be something much more fundamental. Ultimately, between you, me, and everyone on the call, it will be way more fun.

It is about that challenge we give ourselves and surpassing ourselves. Sometimes it is even surprising ourselves. Maybe those things would not happen if we did not put ourselves in a competitive situation.

Q&A With Members

Suzanne: Good. Is there anything we can do to help you because you carved time out of your day today to be on the call?

Caller: You know, there was something that we experienced last summer. We had our competition team try out and a girl did not make a top team. She, honestly, was okay with it. It was the mom who was not okay with it.

Of course, she came back and we had a discussion about how we could help her prepare to do that next year. She did not want to take that information and told us that she was going to pull her kids out. Not only that, she was going to “take us down.” It is one of those things about last summer that was, quite frankly, horrible and it is scary to me.

What I got from this conversation so far is the importance of talking to parents and letting them know the expectations. It is communicating so that if their daughters do not make a certain team or if they do not make the solo part on the team they know how we expect them to act, so to speak, and what they can say to their daughters to help the situation be better.

Thank you for that because I never really thought about talking to the parents about those specific things.

Chantale: Yes. I am so sorry to hear about your experience. It certainly sounds like that was a pretty extreme and, obviously, very stressful and upsetting situation to deal with. I am sorry to hear this is happening.

Unfortunately, it is probably not the first or the last time that we in the community will encounter these situations. As Suzanne was saying, I think that is when we have to maybe remind ourselves.

Of course, it is normal, right? It is easy to imagine that this parent is just horrible and see it that way. Then we are setting ourselves up for terrible communication. If we can remember that even though the parent is very, very misguided and not healthy, they are giving this out of love and care, maybe there is still room to have a healthy dialogue with that parent.

Of course, there are times where it is just better to send the business elsewhere. Who is losing? We have a child who is “suffering” in the middle of this when, in fact, we can probably just have conversations before these events take place to remind everybody.

Even the idea, by the way, of not making the team, of failure is not a bad thing. It may be important to remind parents that, in fact, sometimes we do people a disservice by placing them in a situation they are not ready for. This is part of learning and it is not a bad thing. It does not make them bad people and it does not make them bad dancers.

Suzanne:

I am glad you brought that up. I am so sorry to hear about this situation; it is so stressful. Sometimes I think the parent’s line gets blurred because they are writing a “check” every month for dance. It becomes confusing for them. They are thinking, “I am paying for this, so what are you missing? Well, put them on the team. This kid is going to be in this class whether you like it or not.”

They tend to forget that though they are paying for something, there is an artistic and qualification level. We deal with this every year all the time. We have had students make scenes about class placement. It is something that we have to deal with as studio owners.

They may or may not respect the policies, but you bring it up because you are not alone with parents. We have had heart wrenching discussions after auditions with our staff saying, “What is this going to do? Not only is it going to water down the whole team if we put kids on this team who really cannot hold their own, but what are we going to do for those kids that may have the potential to be on the team and we have no place to put them.”

This is a topic for another whole conversation, but it is hard knowing how to work that out. I am glad you brought that out.

Chantale:

If I may, I will add one little point related to that. It is the same in sports. You have the stereotype of parents who are living through the child and so on, but the point you brought up was the check every month.

It is the same thing in sports. There is the financial commitment and then, of course, all the time commitment of Saturday morning, Sunday morning rehearsals, driving back and forth.

In a way, then, it is not surprising that parents forget why they even committed to all of this. I think this is where we can remind a parent through asking the question, “Why is it important that your child be in these classes?”

Sooner or later, a parent will remember that it is about having fun through dance, about learning, about developing their skill, their creativity, their personal passion for dance and so

on. I think when we remind parents of what the point is that eventually, hopefully, the big picture perspective comes back a little bit. It is not easy stuff.

Suzanne: It is not easy. If you have a question or wish to add something, please go ahead.

Caller: I have a question. I appreciate the combination of the positive and the challenge in competition and things like that. Within the team, obviously as you described, they are together many hours in the week. It almost becomes like a sibling effect with the bickering and then you add the teenage emotion thing.

We have tried many ways in our studio and it seems the affect works for a day or two and then it dwindles down. What is the way to bring up this conversation and have this conversation with your team as you are gearing up, heading into hard practices, towards competitions, to really work together as a team.

I see this happen so often in our studio and I'm sure it is normal in most studios. You always have the stronger dancer and when you are trying to enforce that positive energy and "let's all be there for each other," there are always those girls that tend to dote on or gravitate to the one strong dancer.

Then you have the few that sit over there, whether they are hanging their heads pouting or just frustrated that they cannot do as well, and it breaks that team apart.

I am looking for suggestions on ways to bring things together more as a group and to diminish that as much as possible. I realize, of course, it is always going to be there somewhat. How do I get those teammates to work together knowing that it is the only way they are going to produce a positive piece as they are doing it?

Chantale: Again, I go back to questions. I am big on questions because, of course, in my role when I meet with dancers, aside from when I am teaching my ballet classes, of course it is the facility dialogue.

It is helpful to have a couple of these questions in your back pocket to pull out when you feel it is important. These are questions like, "Why do you dance?" Give five minutes of air time for dancers to remember and to articulate to you, the teacher or the choreographer, and maybe to each other why they are actually there.

Sometimes it is asking that question at the beginning of the year: "Why are you here? Why do you dance? Why do you want to be on this team?"

There is another layer I like to add, especially from a group perspective. That is, "What do you bring to this team?" First of all, I think it makes people feel good. It makes them think about all of their strengths and some of the assets that they bring as people and dancers.

Then it also makes them accountable. "Oh, right, I am contributing something to this group dynamic. What do I bring to this team?" Of course, the second part of that is, "What do I need from the group?"

Some people might say, "I'm here to have fun. Yes, I want to work really, really hard, but this has to be fun."

Somebody else might say, “You know, I want to do this as a career. This is a stepping stone for me.” Either way, people have a chance to vocalize their motivations. Then we, as a team, can better know how to navigate preparation towards performance and competition.

I don’t know if that is helpful, but I find that these questions really help groups gel together.

Caller: Sure, thank you.

Suzanne: It is a great question. It happens at our dance company. You hear the bickering and it wears it down. Like Chantale says, it helps the more you can open up the dialogue. You hate to have more meetings and more time spent on that, but it really has been a force for us. When you feel that tension, have you tried some teamwork activities? What kinds of things have you tried?

Caller: We have done some different styles of teamwork activities. We have also done some different quotes we have found through dance. We have placed those with specific names under them and had them go to them and work together on what this means and why their name is in that grouping. We have done things like that.

We have done some things that do seem to work. I think things like that work for a while, but you have to realize that you are dealing with kind of a sibling environment due to being together so often. Of course, then you have to add the teenage issues to it.

We have tried to have the discussion saying, “Look, even if you are not extremely close friends outside of the studio, when you walk through these doors you are a team. We all have a common goal here that we are after in what we are trying to achieve and do, so we need to work on that together.”

I find that sometimes what happens throughout the class is that particular students may get a lot more encouragement from others as opposed to student who do not. Even though you see positive on many different students, it may be just one student that they are all kind of cheering for or whatever when we are doing things. Then you find other students who sit there with a defeated look and this tends to turn into an irritable look.

We have tried to explain that when you get to that point you are affecting yourself in the way you dance; you are affecting your team in the way you are as a group; and things like that. We definitely try to bring that up.

As you say, you are also trying to achieve a lot within a class, so the more time you spend on that you are taking away from your dance time and you get the possibility of that frustrated parent who says, “I’m writing a check for this and they only did this for so long.”

Chantale: I really appreciate what you are saying about actual activities and things like that. Sometimes it could be a five-minute discussion. Other times it is the “let’s roll” model.

I was thinking about some examples in dance and I find that there are such differences in habits and cultures and routines depending on the dance form. However, if we look at Bboys and Bgirls, for example, they do the Cypher, right?

Ballet students would have a whole lot to learn from the dynamics that are to be found in the Cypher, whereas in fact, they are battling, but at the same time they are totally challenging each other. It is like, “Here’s what I got. What do you got?”

That is actually how they learn. I think the tradition of tap and hoofing was sort of that same kind of idea where, “Here is a rhythm. What are you going to do with it?” and “Oh! You brought it a step up!”

Sometimes it broadens the atmosphere in small doses, of course, but in my ballet classes all of a sudden I will take a sauté exercise that we have done traditionally. I do three or four lines or whatever while changing who is in the front row. Then all of a sudden I will switch it up and make them do the sauté in a circle and they have to watch each other. We see who is jumping the highest.

Every once in a while, two dancers will volunteer to battle out their little sauté exercise in the middle of the circle. It is small and it is silly, but we have a lot of fun with it. It reminds us that we can work, challenge, and still smile and like each other through it all.

Caller: Absolutely.

Suzanne: That’s great; awesome. We have a few more minutes. I want to be respectful of everyone’s time. If there is anyone else with a question or a comment, now is the time or it’s not, no worries. We always have the discussion forum to fall back on, as well.

These are great conversations, you guys. I really appreciate everybody sharing and asking because it never shows up looking black and white. Everything with studio ownership shows up gray or, at least, that is how it feels.

Being in our role is great and I share that with our members and I hope it comes through, but we deal with it. We have to fire someone on our staff this month and it is not going to be pretty. Things happen. We have the parent who is absolutely, positively causing problems. There are meetings we do not want to have as in the case of the dancer getting injured. F

This is how studio ownership shows up, so when you are armed with some really positive things to fall back on, it makes a difference. Chantale, these are great questions asked sometimes or just guided inquiries.

Sometimes it just takes a moment to ask, “What are we doing here?” It can help bring us back to why we do this. Why are we getting up every morning out of bed, putting our feet on the floor, and doing this all over again? I think that is really helpful.

Is there anything else you want to add or anyone else on the call who wants to ask anything or share anything before we go?

Chantale: Jumping off of what you just said, I have one last little thought. This is where we have to practice what we preach, especially because we are so overloaded and we are human, too. We will get frustrated with the kids or with the parents.

I think it is important for us to reflect on these questions sometimes. As a studio owner or as a choreographer, you can ask yourself, “Why am I so invested in this competition or this exam or this performance? Why am I doing it? What am I bringing to it?”

Maybe it is not a conversation that needs to happen with the dancers. Maybe we need that five minutes every once in a while to think about it, too. Then we just ask the question and see what the kids come up with. Three minutes later we get back to dancing, but hopefully we are truly present in the room again with the best of intentions.

Suzanne: Absolutely, and thank you, Chantale, for bringing up the gift of the conversation around how it is not about avoiding failure; it is about approaching success. Rivalry, competition, and so on is an incredibly positive thing when you frame it in that way.

I want to thank everybody on the call today. This is a DanceStudioOwner.com teleseminar. Thank you so much for being here. We appreciate everyone’s time and I wanted to say thanks again. I will definitely be available for any questions. Chantale can be available for questions. If anything comes up after this which you want help with, we really are here to support you.

Chantale: Absolutely.

Suzanne: Yes, so thank you everyone. Have a wonderful day and thanks for all you do for dance.

Chantale: Thanks, everyone.