

# Back When I First Started

My desire originally was to get myself back into my high heel shoes! But how many of you know that God will take a desire as selfish as that and turn it into His ministry? I would sit in church and watch the ladies go by me, and it occurred to me how many were overweight and out of shape. Then my dandruff rose, because I thought of all the big clubs near the neighborhood that were not catering to our needs. When I would go in there, I did not see many who looked like me. I asked myself, where are the sistahs going? Well, I decided to tackle this problem myself. After I received my certification from Jazzercise, I went out into the community doing demonstrations on how to do different exercises to help with health problems. Anywhere they would let me, I would go and put on my leotards and tennis shoes and teach. It is funny when I look back on it, because many times they tried to make a mockery of me,



but I think I was so determined that I did not see it, or was too preoccupied trying to reach the people, that I choose to ignore it. What I was doing was not about them, it was for the needs of the people so I was not deterred. For five years, I went from pillar to post demonstrating exercise and talking about getting into shape.

Here is my first demonstration in a mall in Fort Worth, TX about 1980.



A friend told me about a skating ring that was not being used, and that the owner needed some revenue coming in.

My husband was my manager, and he set up the deal, and I opened my first facility in Ft. Worth, Texas. We put together our first photo shoot, made flyers and I went out on the corner at the stop light dressed in leotards. As the cars stopped at the light, I was like the Fireman with the Buckets, I went from car to car giving them a flyer and inviting them! I invited wives and mothers to come to join me at my new facility located at the skating ring for a fun-filled workout sure to

put their health back on track! I was so excited to be in business, and in my community, serving those who looked like me. This is from my first flyer....Fitness designed with you in mind!! My whole family was involved. My son was my sound man, stage



and table set up. My daughter was the assistant to my best friend who was my door lady (or customer service rep). Her son was my maintenance man, and he kept the place cleaned and in order after everyone left. With

the help of many in the community, we made the papers, had announcements on the radio, and people came out to see what was going on and to participate. It was a fun time and a growing time.

I thank God for the beginning, because it has kept me over the years. We stayed for over a year at the skating ring and then went on to several Recreation Centers in the community.



My craft grew, my audience grew, and my desire to teach grew and grew.

I wanted to do more and more classes. I went from teaching on Saturdays to teaching almost every day in different locations, and my income increased as well. We soon became “Dancerciz” dance exercise fitness!



After a while, I called this my job!! Because I made money at it and was able to contribute to my household

from what I was doing, I felt like an entrepreneur and very proud of myself. I did a story in a local military magazine, and then they started bringing out their young recruits to my class to participate in our aerobics program.

I found this picture that they took for the story. I was sitting on a stationary bike for



the photo shoot. This was at least 1985 or so. I hope you can see the joy and excitement in my eyes at this turn of events. God was blessing me and showing me favor daily. This kept up for the next 20+ years.

As the recruits started coming to my class and most of them were young men, my group of ladies grew by leaps and bounds.

After a while, I started having talk sessions after each class discussing morals, attitudes, and destiny. I felt so

in touch with my audience that many sought me out after



graduation just to let me know how they were doing. I felt like a momma hen with those

young people. But they taught me how to push forward for my desire and to make a

career for myself. I would say to them that I was just a housewife, and had limited

education. All I can share with you is what I've learned through living. I did not know that this



was causing a rift in my home. Well, my

husband felt that I was spending too

much time trying to

save the world from being fat with all these classes, and not enough time tending to the

children and our home.

My son started acting out in school, and it seemed that everything was going wrong. He got suspended for fighting a couple of times and I just quit teaching and started helping my husband with his business and



following my son around. It broke my heart, but I wanted more than anything to be a dutiful wife and a good mother. Everything in its season, so I cut back and eventually quit all together.

Another opportunity presented itself when my husband lost his full-time government job. We needed other income. I helped him full-time with his entrepreneur business, did mine in the evenings, and monitored the kids, kept the house and myself up, too. All that went on for about five more years. We make it do what it do! A couple years later, my husband filed for divorce and moved out of the house.