



The Pilates Connection Weight Loss Challenge

NEWSLETTER

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THIS WEEK'S TOPIC...

HE DID WHAT HE HAD NO BUSINESS DOING

The Story of Art Tatum – Shedding Your Self-Imposed Limits

By Mike Kramer, Staff Writer, SparkPeople.com

Cheers to a boy who didn't know any better.

Cheers to a man who didn't let a little thing like reality stand in his way.

Cheers to a self-taught musician whose creativity and skill is the stuff of legend.

Cheers to Art Tatum, maybe the greatest jazz piano player who ever lived.

Art Tatum was remarkable before he was good. Blind in one eye, partially-sighted in the other, Art idolized Fats Waller like many boys did in the 1920's. He wanted to play the piano, and he wanted to play like Fats.

That's where he began. Where he ended up proves what you can do by shedding your self-imposed limits.

Born in Toledo, Ohio, Art stubbornly refused to close his dream off in fantasyland. He taught himself to play using Braille and piano rolls, and listening to the radio and phonograph. He imitated, he copied, he improved.

But here's the really amazing part – Art didn't know he was sometimes listening to two people playing. When he practiced, he was learning to play two parts of the same song at once! He had no idea, but he did it anyway. He learned it so well that years later, Oscar Peterson heard Art playing and thought ART was two people. He wasn't the only one.

Art went on to star in the nightclub circuit that cruised through New York City, Chicago, Cleveland, Los Angeles and national radio. He created his own original and creative style that made great musical heads shake in awe and bow in homage.

Art took great pains to master his craft. He got so good at what he did that, over a two-day session,

he cut 69 singles tracks – and only three needed more than one take.

Legends of Art's skill seem almost plausible. One claimed that classical pianist Vladimir Horowitz was moved to tears upon hearing him play. It was also said that Art could identify the dominant note in a flushing toilet.

Limits – mostly false ones – can defeat us before we even start. Do you feel handicapped in some way? Does your knowledge that "there are two people playing" convince you that it's not possible to do the same? Could your goals benefit from a little less knowledge and little more naïve faith?

Art learned that the "real world" is exactly where dreams belong. All the proof he needed came on a night when he visited a club where Fats Waller was playing. That's when Fats – his hero, his idol, his main inspiration – told the crowd, "I just play the piano. But God is in the house tonight."

Weight Loss Challenge Winner of the Week:

Brenda Ross is this week's biggest loser. She lost .41%! Congratulations Brenda! Enjoy your two free classes.

RECIPE

MEXICAN SHRIMP SALAD

- 1 small onion, halved and thinly sliced
 - 1/4 cup minced fresh cilantro
 - 1 jalapeno pepper, seeded and chopped
 - 2 tablespoons canola oil
 - 2 teaspoons chili powder
 - 1/2 teaspoon ground cumin
 - 1/2 teaspoon ground coriander
 - 1/2 teaspoon pepper
 - 1/4 teaspoon salt
 - 1 pound uncooked medium shrimp, peeled and deveined
 - 6 cups torn leaf lettuce
 - 1/2 cup fat-free ranch salad dressing
1. In a large resealable plastic bag, combine the first nine ingredients; add shrimp. Seal bag and turn to coat. Cover and refrigerate for 30 minutes.
 2. Thread shrimp onto four metal or soaked wooden skewers; discard onion mixture. Using long-handled tongs, dip a paper towel in cooking oil and lightly coat the grill rack.
 3. Grill shrimp, covered, over medium heat or broil 4 in. from the heat for 3-4 minutes on each side or until shrimp turn pink.
 4. Divide lettuce among four plates; top with shrimp. Serve immediately with dressing.

Editor's Note: When cutting hot peppers, disposable gloves are recommended. Avoid touching your face.

Nutrition Facts: 4 Servings. 218 calories. 3 very lean meat, 1-1/2 fat, 1 vegetable, 1/2 starch.

Recipe from tasteofhome.com.

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