

Be Spectacular!

Meet our 2016 Fitness Professional of the Year – Fitness Instructor Specialist Finalist, **Rhonda Roberts-Smith**. Owner of TAB (The Art of Balance) fitness.



How did you first get involved in the fitness industry?

At a young age I'd post flash cards in the basement with different exercises on them as our "fun" activity on PA days. I guess before circuit training was a thing I just knew we needed to be active.

When I was in the *Lion King* I had to maintain a physique for the show's unique costuming and for the challenge of performing a very physical show eight times a week—that's twice a day sometimes. Our grueling rehearsal schedule left performers injured even before the show opened.

My livelihood relied on physical ability, so I needed to find a fitness regimen that would sustain my strength and flexibility.

I realized that if I trained with more than just dance technique, my body would be happier. I began working with a trainer to help build strength so I could hold props while dancing. I took yoga to maintain flexibility and Pilates to help with core strength. I also do cardio everyday to build stamina so I could sing and dance at the same time. Dance conditioning once in a while helped maintain technique. I didn't realize it at the time, but I was already creating the building blocks for the TAB fitness philosophy. My trainer noticed my attention to technical details during my workouts and suggested that I certify myself...the rest is history.

Describe what you currently do.

I am the owner of TAB fitness. I presently do everything: teach classes and personal train. I also teach and adjudicate dance. I'm the mother to a brilliant little girl and a wife to an amazing and patient guy.

Describe your favorite fitness routine and why you love it.

I prefer a buffet. Variety is the key. Being almost 47 years old, I am not a fan of trendy aggressive workouts. I think that whatever a person chooses has to be something they enjoy and can do for the long haul.

My background is dance, so I love to dance, but when I am challenging my body, muscular conditioning is a great way to workout. Combine this with dance conditioning and stretching and you're golden.

I also teach a class called TAB.O.LEAN which is inspired by a class I took with Krista Popowych at a canfitpro conference. This is my favorite class to do and teach. I get my cardio, challenge my muscles and it's gentle on the joints.

How has your focus on fitness changed your life or that of others?

Life changed with motherhood. I retired from touring and other performances. Leaving a career is always a big decision. I still needed to fill the void with something. Fitness has always been the key to my san-

"This nomination took me out of my comfort zone and put me in a position where I had to see what other people similar to me were doing. I also had an opportunity to listen and read about the affect I was having on people's lives. It is one thing to be teaching people but it is another to see how your work has affected someone else."

ity. Teaching has also been very important to me. I have been teaching dance since I was 13. I always enjoyed the process and discovery over performance. Being invested in something gives me motivation. How blessed I am to be able to work with people who are transforming their lives. TAB has helped many see what an active lifestyle can look like.

For my family it has become our way of life. You'll find us walking, biking, and hiking together.

What is the most valuable lesson you have learned through your fitness or life experience?

Over the last 47 years I think the biggest lesson has been to always look ahead and see the possibilities for greatness. Don't just get it done - be spectacular!

You can work super hard towards a goal and it may seem like you're standing still. But just around the corner could be a surprise. You may have positioned yourself for something greater than you imagined—even if it's not that thing you were chasing.

My professional background gave me amazing life experiences and knowledge you can't get from a textbook. I am blessed to be a leader and to share my story and inspire others to treat themselves better.

What has been your greatest challenge and how did you overcome it?

The biggest challenge was pregnancy. I suffered multiple miscarriages. When my body wasn't cooperating I felt ashamed. As a very physical person, I could make my body do many things. It was difficult to accept that the one thing I really wanted wasn't happening.



I read and researched. I needed to figure out what I could do to make this better for me. I read a lot of inspiring books. *'Inconceivable Julia Indichova'* was my favorite.

Finally, without any fertility drugs or potions, I was pregnant.

These experiences lead me to Pre- and Post-Natal certification because I wanted to know more. But I also felt in some way it helped me come to grips. I believed by sharing my story, I could inspire other women with the same issues to rethink any shame. Now I have a Pre-natal class, MamaTone, and a Post-natal class, Pramtastic.

What health and fitness advice do you have for other canfitpro members to enhance their lifestyle?

I'd advise my peers to add variety to their regular fitness regimen. My body always appreciates a new challenge.

Strengthen your relationships - life is boring alone. I have recently understood that networking is the key. It provides opportunities to learn and find mentors or other like minded people that can help you grow. We live in a world where we text, tweet Facebook and Instagram. I grew up in a time where people actually talked. I think there needs to be more talking and less tweeting.

Find time to replenish your spirit. In this industry, you spend a lot of your time giving. Your physical, mental, and spiritual health is important. If you are not at your best you can't motivate and inspire others to be at their best.

Finally, have something in your life that gives you purpose and excites you or else none of this is worth it. And, if you are in the business of changing lives solely for the money you may be in the wrong business.