



Be Some Body STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

Christine Chromiak

I am very excited to announce Chris Chromiak as the October Spotlight! When Mrs. Chromiak first entered the studio, I was honored to see my son's former middle school teacher interested in my classes. She has been coming for over six years now and brings a positive attitude and enthusiasm to the studio. Her profession of teaching and directing outstanding musicals for middle school students is very demanding and an exhausting job, but Chris makes the time to give 100% effort in her workouts. I applaud her focus and concentration in improving her stamina, strength and flexibility through the years. She has improved tremendously with her strength in core, lifting heavier weights and admired balance. She shines with great attendance and is disciplined throughout Boot Camp programs with good nutrition. Chris has seen inches melt off, and she truly appreciates the mental benefits of exercise.

I was very moved when I first read Chris's story below, and I admire her courage and honesty of sharing her story. I am sure most of us have struggled with seeing ourselves in those distorted mirrors and are guilty of putting ourselves down. Accepting your body is a huge victory, and I applaud Chris for recognizing her greatness! I am certain Chris is leaving a positive impact on each of her students, too!

♥ *Melissa*

Be Some
Body

Here is a picture of me as a teenage girl. When I was cast as a Kit Kat girl in Cabaret and found out I would be wearing fishnet stockings and tights on stage, I refused the part because I was ashamed of my body. Instead, I played the clarinet on stage in a modest outfit that covered up my body. The sixteen year old girl in the picture did not like her body. She ate carrot sticks and drank Diet Coke and exercised; however, nothing changed about her body. In her mind, she was not acceptable to society and not attractive. She wanted to be someone else who had less curves and be someone with a slender frame who looked good in Lee jeans. How silly was I? I look at pictures of myself now and think- what a waste of mental energy and self-loathing!



The person I am now does not exercise to be someone else and this is the biggest change I can explain to you. I exercise because I love my body as it is, and I appreciate it. Yes, I am proud when I feel my clothes become looser and I feel the endorphin-infused benefit of more energy. By paying attention to what I eat, I do it because I love my body; not because I hate it. I think being able to exercise is a privilege that many people do not have in their lives. When I leave Melissa's classes, I feel happy, accomplished, and very lucky.

The biggest obstacles I face are internal. My thinking gets in my way about what and how I eat. I know what to do and how to do it, but there is some devil inside that says, "oh come on, one doughnut can't hurt." I forgive myself when I make mistakes, but I also need incredible structure and rules when I am dieting because I am an emotional eater. My husband understands that when I set up a "cross off the days" calendar I am being strict with my diet. I refuse any temptations in the faculty lounge and I do not buy anything sweet for the house (sweets are my weakness). I also allow myself to enjoy some weeks during the year with impunity. Mostly during holidays and vacation. This has become a great balance for my life, and a great relief to my psyche.

I literally lived walking distance (two houses) away from MECA when I first moved to Connecticut. At the time, I was at the bottom of the pay scale, was saving for a down payment on a house, and had a car loan. I checked out going to class at Be Some Body, but couldn't afford it. I do not take for granted the fact that I am older now and can afford to take these great classes. We all know how wonderful Melissa is at what she does.

Compliments such as "Oh, have you lost weight? You look great" don't tear me up anymore. My immediate thinking used to be, "does that mean I was hideous before?" I don't compare myself to others. My body is unique (as is everyone's). My thinking has changed for the better. My reason for exercising is not to become someone different. It is to celebrate the person I am. I like who I am and what I look like. This has made me a happier person. My husband says he loves my "partridge" body, and I do too. That's why I continue to treat it to exercising and eating right (at least most of the time).

Embrace and love your body.

It's the most amazing thing you will ever own.