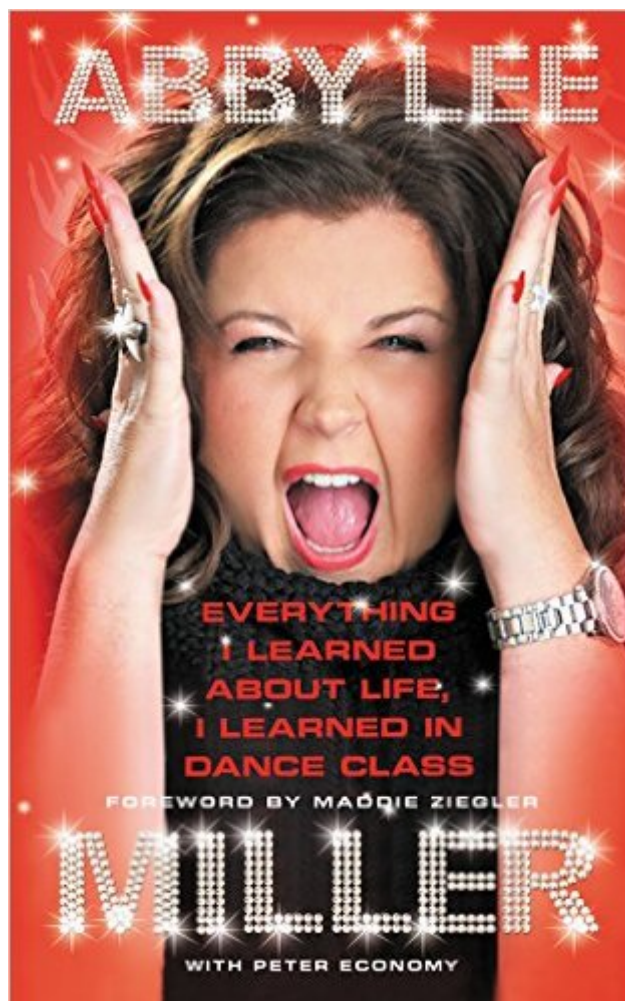


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# Everything I Learned About Life, I Learned In Dance Class



## Synopsis

Ultimate "Tiger Mom" Abby Lee Millerâthe passionate, unapologetically outspoken, tough-as-nails star of Lifetimeâs phenomenal hit *Dance Moms* and Abby's Ultimate Dance Competitionâoffers inspirational, tough love guidance for parents who want to help their children succeed and for readers of all ages striving to become the best they can be. If you want to help your kid reach the top, you can find no better coach than Abby Lee Miller. While some may criticize her methods, no one argues with her results. Her kids excel, her teams win, and her alumni go on to Broadway careers. Organized by "Abbyisms," her unique and effective philosophies on hard work, competition, and life, this straight-talking guide provides clear and proven advice for achieving success, from figuring out your child's passion to laying the groundwork for an exciting future career. Abby answers tough questions from real moms, shares all the stories fans want to hear, and includes vignettes from shining alums who give their take on her unique approach and how it helped them make their dreams come true.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

I am a huge *Dance Moms* fan, and I desperately wanted to like this book, but it's probably one of the most poorly written, dishonest, gimmicky things I've ever read. It essentially felt like reading a lengthy *Tiger Beat* magazine article. Abby goes to great pains to insult and demean Christi, Chloe, and the Hyland clan, which of course is not news to anyone who is familiar with the show. The fact that she does so doesn't bother me that much; what bothers me is the passive-aggressive methods she uses to pull it off. It's cowardly, exaggerated, and extremely childish. The book has some

sections that are in "question and answer" format. My problem with this is that the questions are clearly invented by Abby in order to facilitate the rant that follows. She's not "giving advice" on how a dancer or a mother should behave; she's merely complaining about all of the negative aspects of her job. The book is filled with the usual bragging and name-dropping ("I have former students working for Euro-Disney [because I'm still under the false impression that this is meaningful or impressive to people].") and imparts no information upon the reader that one could not discover with a simple Google search and twenty minutes to kill. The information in the book is also extremely repetitive. The book could have been whittled down to about twenty pages and would have lost nothing content-wise. I also find it laughable that she spends a decent chunk of time giving advice on how to run a dance business. The woman was formerly a half a million dollars in debt and in bankruptcy proceedings.

I bought and read this book with a mind toward fairness, and in an attempt to better understand the motivation of Ms. Miller. Obviously, a reality show will try to stir up drama and to tell a story, which is what Dance Moms does, so I was curious to hear her point of view. In her show "Dance Studio Rescue", Ms. Miller appears to be a much more balanced human than her portrayal in Dance Moms, showing an ability to demonstrate empathy and motivation not based solely on cruelty. Her book, however, is juvenile, petty, narcissistic and gossipy. It is also written like I might have written in my diary when I was 13 (completely agree with the reviewer who mentions a teen oriented magazine as a reference). She expresses so much pent up anger and frustration, which may be justified, but it comes across as unkind without a hint of self reflection. I grew up dancing, so I certainly appreciate and am inspired by her love of dance, however, she takes many opportunities to take out 11-13 year old children in personal attacks that do not provide advice or guidance to parents or young dancers (eg. "Chloe is conspiring about something with her mom" "Chloe is always with the tutor in the front of the bus. It seems like she monopolizes the tutor's time." "Chloe and Paige are silly blondes.."). She spends a good deal of time taking out the mothers, too, but they are adults, of course, so I didn't find that as distracting. She sprinkles in a huge amount of name dropping, which comes across as sort of pathetic, but again, a minor distraction. She lives with the delusion that anyone who has a critical word to say about her is insanely jealous. Again, no ability to self reflect or consider other points of view.

I have watched Dance Moms from the beginning, and I freely admit I do NOT like Abby Lee Miller. I do think she may be a good dance teacher to a limited extent, but I must admit that I am a bit biased

because I love ballet and do not like many of the dances that she has choreographed, which are heavy on aerials and on rolling around on the floor. Does the Swan Queen do a walkover? Does Sleeping Beauty roll on the floor? She does admit that ballet is a basis for all dance, but she does not seem to care for it much. In a later chapter she says that parents should be required to take their children to a Broadway show and the Radio City Music Hall Christmas show. What about The Nutcracker? I have taken my three daughters to see it and own about 5 versions on DVD. Abby never admits to being nasty, just strict. She's wrong; she's absolutely nasty. She doesn't realize that different kids need to be treated differently, and she also lets her feelings toward the mothers affect the way she treats the kids. She also doesn't seem to value higher education, feeling that kids who go straight to New York or to work in Disneyland or on a cruise ship are ahead of the kids in college. She places no value on kids socializing or doing the usual teen-aged activities, especially when it takes them away from dance class or rehearsal. Her overemphasis on competition is ridiculous. My kids have been to very good dance schools which did not participate in competitions but instead gave performances once a year and occasionally in places like the National Capital Trolley Museum. Schools which are primarily ballet schools do this rather than compete. She also never, to my knowledge, sent a student on to a more specialized school like the one run by the Pittsburgh Ballet.

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