

FAQ ABOUT DANCERS

MAISHA MALIHA

It's no news that dancers have been slightly looked down upon for reasons both logical and illogical. Some people think dancers are stuck-up and aimless. Add to that a bunch of ridiculous questions and we have the perfect stereotype. Here are some of the most frequently asked questions dancers have come across.

1. So, are you a professional dancer or what?

Ans: I've trained for years; you could say I am.

2. Do you get paid for it?

Ans: Per show, yes.

3. How much?

Ans: How much do YOU get paid for tutoring Chemistry when you barely know what CO is?

4. Aren't you worried that once you quit dancing, you're going to gain a lot of weight?

Ans: Who're you? MY MOM??

5. Are you worried you won't be able to excel in your field since it's a niche market?

Ans: I have put in a lot of time and effort into dancing. Whether it was hours in a parking lot or money to take classes, I've happily made sacrifices for it. Although you can say that the rewards are immediate and fleeting, there are many lasting things I've taken from dance.

For one, I'm confident. My introverted nature blossomed to a point where I'm comfortable being myself in otherwise anxiety-evoking situations.

Secondly, I've met people who have moved me, inspired me. At the risk of sounding dramatic, having a passion and a family that supports it can do WONDERS for your soul.

Thirdly, aside from the more internal effects, so many dancers emerge with other skills that are related to dance. Cinematography? Event planning? WRITING ARTICLES?? Maybe dancing itself isn't the destination, but relevant experiences can definitely be the vehicle to take you places professionally, or just help you grow as a well-rounded person.

6. Why are you dancing? "Kono holud-e nachbe?"

Ans: Dancing doesn't necessarily have to mean I'm practising for a *holud*; just like you practise each day and hope to get better at playing the guitar, I need to practise as well.

Also, it's my cousin's wedding...

7. You're so amazing! Can you dance at my sister's *holud*?

Ans: I... don't even know you. No.

8. Why do you post dance videos? They seem like you're seeking attention.

Ans: It's a form of paying tribute to my art. It's perfectly alright to recognise your skills to promote yourself.

And damn straight, I'm seeking attention. Can you do 72 pirouettes in a minute?

9. How do you concentrate on your education with frequent rehearsals, and for what?

Ans: I manage to balance my schedule and give equal time to both my education and dance. To answer the latter part of your question, I do it because it motivates me. It's a blessing to find something you're actually good at. Being torn down by negative remarks at every step of the way makes me want to prove people wrong even more.

10. Are all dancers clique-y?

Ans: HUGS FOR EVERYONE!

Maisha Maliha speaks what crosses her mind in the most positive way but is often misinterpreted and thought to be a lunatic. Unfollow her at www.facebook.com/MyshoeMaliha



PHOTO: RIDWAN ADID RUPON

YOU KNOW MY NAME, NOT MY STORY

Woes of having an uncommon name

MAYABEE ARANNYA

Go ahead and read my name. Try and pronounce the last name in your mind (or out loud, depends on whether it's normal for you to randomly shout people's names.) Most people would pronounce it as A-ran-nee-a or just blatantly ignore the "r" and pronounce it as Au-non-na. I've met only a handful of people who have successfully pronounced it as Au-ron-no. I wouldn't even blame the people who didn't get it right. I mean, why would the spelling even be so complicated and not match the actual pronunciation at all? Yet, that is how our cruel languages work. Having an uncommon name might be nice when everyone compliments you for it, but when you sit there with the certificate you worked day and night to earn and see it says "Oronno" on it, you basically start wishing your name was John.

People with any name other than the generic Maisha or Sadman or Anika end up leading a life full of misspellings and mispronunciations. And the worst part is, you never stop caring. If the entire world is adamant in calling you something completely wrong, you become equally adamant in changing that. But sometimes, there isn't anything you can do about it. It just becomes a game of gritting your teeth at their blunt ignorance while your friends, who have finally learnt your name right after all these years, laugh at



the hilarity of the situation. You don't get the joke, though. You keep correcting them.

For example, my best friend's name is Firoz Tishun. Horribly uncommon too. Whenever we join a new class, the first thing the teachers do is ask us to repeat our names a few thousand times and when they finally pronounce it themselves, they end up with something like, "Fairouz Tahsin." Or maybe even "Tushin." My friend Akhlar gets called "Akhlar" or "Akhtar" on a regular basis. All we can do is laugh it off, hopelessly try and correct them and maybe

mispronounce the teacher's name behind their backs as a form of pathetic revenge, like how we call Qudrat sir "Qudrati" or "Quadrat". We're very cool, I know.

People with common names that are spelled differently face similar problems as well. Maishas that spell their name as Mayeesha, or Anikas that spell their name as Anika, or any person who has the name Intesar/Intesar have set themselves up to a life of disappointment and unnecessary wasting of time correcting people.

Fear sets in too. Every time you apply for a new ID card, you start praying that they won't make a mistake in the spelling. Even more so because once the faulty ID card is made, you know for sure that you'd be too lazy to apply for it again. You'd live with the misspelled name but you'd complain about it every single day.

All the mistakes get to you. Last year, I unconsciously began writing my last name as "Aranny" on every single test I sat for for maybe one or two months. Maybe the misspelling is like a contagious disease that most people have and us people with uncommon names are the only ones still unaffected.

Mayabee Arannya is a confused soul still searching for a purpose. Give her advice on life at facebook.com/mayabee.arannya