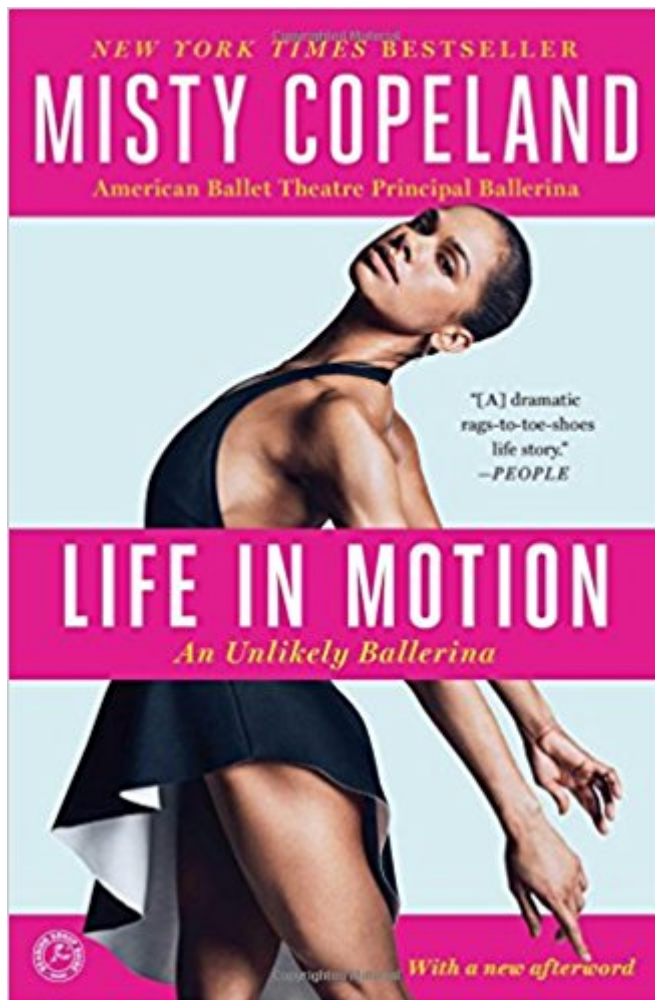


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# Life In Motion: An Unlikely Ballerina



## Synopsis

Determination meets dance in this memoir by the history-making ballerina. In this instant New York Times bestseller, Misty Copeland makes history, telling the story of her journey to become the first African-American principal ballerina at the prestigious American Ballet Theatre. But when she first placed her hands on the barre at an after-school community center, no one expected the undersized, underprivileged, and anxious thirteen-year-old to become one of America's most groundbreaking dancers. A true prodigy, she was attempting in months roles that take most dancers years to master. But when Misty became caught between the control and comfort she found in the world of ballet and the harsh realities of her own life, she had to choose to embrace both her identity and her dreams, and find the courage to be one of a kind. With an insider's passion, Misty opens a window into the life of an artist who lives life center stage, from behind the scenes at her first classes to her triumphant roles in some of the world's most iconic ballets. A sensational memoir as "sensitive" and "clear-eyed" (The Washington Post) as her dancing, *Life in Motion* is a story of passion, identity and grace for anyone who has dared to dream of a different life.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

**\*Starred Review\*** If you'd asked Copeland, soloist for the American Ballet Theatre, when she was a young African American teenager about her vision of the future, she would probably have said that the only thing less likely than her writing a memoir was her becoming a world-class

ballerina. But when a teacher encouraged 13-year-old Misty to take ballet at the Boys and Girls Club of Los Angeles, she discovered a hidden talent. Her natural flexibility and grace had her on pointe within two months, something other ballerinas work years to achieve. She was offered lead roles before finishing high school. Her professional success is impressive, but it's not what makes her memoir such an unexpected page-turner. After all, we already know Copeland will overcome racial and socioeconomic bias to claim her spotlight. What keeps us reading is Copeland's intelligent, fair, and warm voice. She speaks with candor about having to lose her luscious curves and cover herself with white makeup to look more acceptable on stage, but she never places blame on those who asked her to do so. Her story is an inspiration to anyone—man or woman, black or white—who has ever chased a dream against the odds, and the grace with which she triumphs is an example for us all. --Amber Peckham --This text refers to the Hardcover edition.

An unexpected page-turner...Her story is an inspiration to anyone—man or woman, black or white—who has ever chased a dream against the odds, and the grace with which she triumphs is an example for us all. (Booklist (starred review))Engaging... [Copeland is] a poised, intelligent writer whose temperament—disciplined, determined, driven—gives the book a special spark— | In LIFE IN MOTION, she looks back on the past without bitterness or anger, only gratitude. Hers is an out-of-the-ordinary story about defying stereotypes, and she shares it in an inspiring narrative that's enlivened by her own grace and generous spirit. (BookPage)Instead of rags to riches, Copeland goes from baggy shorts to leotards as she navigates the whitewashed world of ballet. (Library Journal)It's no wonder Misty Copeland is a role model for countless aspiring ballerinas. (Dance Spirit Magazine)Reads as a modern day Cinderella story—[this memoir is an inspirational read—especially for aspiring dancers. (JET Magazine)Wrenching and revelatory. (The New York Times)Thorough, sensitive...clear-eyed. (The Washington Post)[A] dramatic rags-to-toe shoes life story. (People)Captivating...heartrending...literary. (Lisa Jo Sagolla The Kansas City Star)Remarkable. (Juicy Magazine)Misty's unwavering belief that we can be anything that we dream is an inspiration— an inspiration to break the mold, follow your passion, never take no for an answer and do it all with grace, kindness and the spirit to help others on their journey. I am thrilled that my two daughters have a role model in Misty, who is breaking down doors that that they will never have to. (Rachel Roy)A raw, honest tale—|.Her memoir is filled with passion, pain, success, and—pure joy. (Ebony.com)Misty Copeland, a ballerina of extraordinary talent and charisma, offers an autobiography as mesmerizing as her dancing. She overcame adversity in the studio, in her home life, and in ballet's own traditionalism to become one of its brightest stars— her passion and

perseverance will inspire dancers and non-dancers alike. (Eliza Minden, author of *The Ballet Companion* and Co-Founder and Head of Design at dancewear company Gaynor Minden, Inc.) [Misty Copeland's] book is a breezy read for such deep subject matter, but her beautiful and prevailing spirit shines through on every page. (The Inlander) Reading her memoir...it becomes even more apparent how this 31-year-old woman has parlayed her natural talent along with an uber intense discipline, passion and focus, into a stellar career. (The NWI Times) Misty Copeland's *LIFE IN MOTION* is an inspiration to all young people. She is the Jackie Robinson of the ballet world, and a true role model for an entire generation of new ballerinas. (Frank Sanchez, Vice President, Boys & Girls Clubs of America) [LIFE IN MOTION] is the stuff of which movies are made. (Chicago Sun-Times) What a remarkable, encouraging story. Written naturally, modestly, and conversationally...[readers will] feel her triumphs and tragedies, wincing whenever she falls and cheering her on every time she gets back up. Brava, Misty. (Bildungsroman) A tale of hardship and remarkable success. (Los Angeles Magazine) A poignant primer proving the power of perseverance in the face of adversity. (The LA Sentinel) An important book for teen collections. (Angela Carstensen School Library Journal) Told in graceful prose...[Copeland's] achievements will encourage all those attempting to beat the odds in competitive fields. (Publishers Weekly) A page-turner...fascinating and emotional. (The Philadelphia Enquirer) [Parts] the curtain on the ballet's central illusion: that it is empowering for the female dancers at its centre. Providing a behind-the-scenes look at the glory and gore of ballet...you find yourself rooting for her. (Deidre Kelly The Globe and Mail (Canada)) A wonderful read. (Jia Tolentino The Hairpin) A gift to all balletomanes, not just the brown ones. (Esther Cepeda) She embodies both fearlessness and femininity, reflecting the life of contradictions and obstacles over which she's leapt so beautifully. If ever a solo ballerina was poised to become a household name, it's now. (Yahoo!) "Although ballet fans never lack for darlings, rarely does a dancer become an old-fashioned star...her path to becoming a star ballerina has been as dramatic, unlikely, and hinged on coincidence as the plots of most ballets." (Rivka Galchen The New Yorker) The story Copeland tells about her rise to ballet glory is compelling and inspirational. (Seattle Times)

I've always loved Classical Ballet; I feel it's the most beautiful form of dance there is. It's something my wife and I share. When I met her she had a Mikhail Baryshnikov calendar on her wall. She danced when she was very young. She introduced me to Ballet and Artistic Gymnastics, both she had done in her youth. Sadly ended by injury. We both love to watch "So you think you can dance."

as it brings some fantastic dancers to the stage and some of the wildest choreography I have ever seen. It brought us "Twitch"! This last season we were watching as usual and I noticed a guest judge I had never seen before and I asked my wife who it was. She asked me, "You don't know who that is?" I had no idea other than that she looked very serious. She said "That's Misty Copeland; one of the best ballerina's there is anywhere." I shrugged my shoulders, "OK." Her critiques were so precise and on point; every toe point; every movement; every emotion. I was like, "This dancer knows her business." I was impressed and I believe she was on for two episodes. My wife still was asking me how could you not know who she is? One thing I did know; she knows her business. The above notes don't relate directly with her book but will. I'm married to a Latina and she told me that she wasn't always welcomed in all of circles due to her not being white. Being white, I didn't fully get it because I wasn't raised that way. The statement "This is for the brown girls." should and probably relates to all women or men of color. Reading that made me sad but it should make every decent person sad. Her story was a great read. It was one of a young prodigy being pushed and pulled in so many directions at a young age that tore at her feelings so drastically that it was painful to read in some places. So many families have to endure hardships and many talented people whether it's dance, acting, other sports or academia are kept from them because there is no one there to see the talent. Those are the ones who suffer. I'm glad the Boys and Girls club was there for her and she was discovered; what a waste it would have been to have never seen such talent. Thanks Misty for giving back to those who helped get you started. The book is very open and raw; she doesn't hold back on any of her life story. It's happy in many places and heartbreaking in others. It's a journey of a budding artist who tells her story almost from when she can remember to this year. She gives those in her life who helped her more than just credit; she showers them with praise. She admits to the reader her fears and how she overcame them (I love Krispy Kreme too). For so many to take to her, shows a spirit not found in many people no matter what race they are. In the end her family is her biggest love and that crowns the book for me. I hope my wife and I can see her dance live one day; that would be a truly wonderful experience. That recalls the dance of Firebird with stress fractures. Most athletes would be sidelined with that. It boggles the mind how she did that. I'll check out Firebird when I get a chance. Thanks for a great experience.

Misty Copeland's life is an inspiring story for any young person! My young ballerina is a huge fan of hers but as a mother, I see her story as applicable to anyone. It's about not giving up, not listening to the nay-sayers, and truly paying attention only to that inner voice. Ms. Copeland has demonstrated tremendous perseverance and dealt with it gracefully. I recommend this book for any

young person, male or female! Even more "mature" individuals who still want to learn how to embrace life with passion and fearlessness! Thank you Misty Copeland for publishing your story.

Before reading this book I did not know about Misty Copeland. I've been so engrossed in writing my own book that somehow I missed all Misty Copeland's TV interviews and announcements of becoming a principal dancer for ABT, and her ads for under armour ads. So this book was my first introduction to her. Misty Copeland's story is fascinating. She did a phenomenal job catapulting the reader into her world on page 1. I, like many other "brown girls and women" can relate to the complexities of what it means to be an impoverished African American child trying to reach your goals. This book nailed it. However, *Life in Motion* is not just for African American girls. I think many of the themes found in this book is universal "working hard to accomplish your goals," "finding your voice," "the art of perseverance," "tools in relinquishing fears," "forgiveness." The list goes on. Misty repeats often that her goal going forward is to reintroduce the world to the art of ballet. She has succeeded with me. I plan to attend a local ballet performance and I plan to see Misty perform as well. Bravo!!!

After reading this book, I was left in shock because I did not know how inspiring a book could be. I decided to read this book because I am a dancer. I have been competitively dancing for 5 years and I love it very much. I thought it would be interesting to read a book that I could relate to so much. I have also looked up to Misty Copeland because I knew about her story but I did not know just how powerful it was. She has a lot of stories that are easily relatable to. Even if you are not a dancer, it is still a very powerful and moving story. She talks about things that are very relatable for most people like stress, anxiety, eating disorders, and much more. Misty had kind of a rough life as her mom was always dating new guys who physically and verbally abused her and she was forced to take care of all of her siblings. She finally found dance which was a huge outlet to releaser her emotions. Even if some or none of this has happened to you, it is still a story that needs to be heard about. I honestly don't think that there is anyone who should not read this book. The message Misty conveys is amazing and really makes you think about you and your life. If you are a dancer or not a dancer I highly recommend this book. You will not regret it.

I loved this book, and I love Misty! I remembered seeing her on "So You Think You Can Dance" as a guest judge, and thought she looked beautiful as a ballerina. Her story of starting late in ballet, attracting people who believed in her enough to house, clothe, feed, and give her free ballet lessons

so she could move out of the motel she shared with her mother and 4 siblings (where they slept on the floor) is an amazing lesson of fortitude, talent, work, determination and rising above all obstacles put in her path. A wonderful affirmation of what's possible in life if you just won't back down or give up. I recommend this for everyone, but especially for young people everywhere - Misty will show you the path to success. Great job, Misty!!

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