

Choreography of Awakening by Faye Kitariev, M.A.

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Choreography
of
Awakening

Chapter 14

Foreword by Steve Chandler
The best-selling author of *Time Warrior*

To learn more about the book, author or events please visit: www.ChoreographyOfAwakening.com

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The events and experiences detailed herein have either been rendered as the author has remembered them or are the product of the author's imagination. Some names, identities and circumstances have been changed in order to protect the privacy and/or anonymity of the various individuals involved.

Praise for *Choreography of Awakening*

"This beautifully written book is filled with simple wisdom I am certain will enrich your life. It is a testimonial that any path traveled with openness rather than resistance to life's experience is a worthy road to travel. And I love the way Faye weaved her figure skating metaphors into the fabric."

~**H. Ronald Hulnick, Ph.D.**, President, University of Santa Monica and Co-Author of *Loyalty To Your Soul*

"I highly recommend this passionate book...sit back and allow Faye Kitariev's poetic energy as a storyteller to choreograph your own dance of transformation and excitement for a future full of possibilities."

~**Steve Chandler**, the author of *Time Warrior*

"Faye Kitariev is a brilliant artist and coach and helped me achieve so many of my dreams and overcome multiple struggles. Her strength and brilliance are an inspiration on and off the ice. This book can help anyone believe in themselves and believe in their power within."

~**Johnny Weir**, 3-time US National Figure Skating Champion, 2-Time Olympic Competitor, World Bronze Medalist, Movie and TV Star

"Faye Kitariev's book is an inspirational journey of artistry and sport! A must read for anyone looking to inspire themselves to a greater understanding!"

~**Phillip Mills**, World & Olympic Figure Skating Choreographer

After reading this book, not only do I feel validated in my own feelings of spirituality and community with the Divine through movement and choreography within my own skating, but I feel inspired to continue on the path of growth and learning in all aspects of my life... Inspired to seek out change and knowledge; embrace the possibilities that can become realities when I reflect on past experiences, own my fears, and find the "why's" behind my future "wants".

I believe the principals explained within "*Choreography of Awakening*" are both enlightening and illuminating, stirring the soul, spirit and mind.

A must read!

~**Wesley Campbell**, 11-time U.S. National Figure Skating Competitor

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"Faye's book makes you realize that it is possible to attain your life goals no matter what the situation, she has a deep passion for everything she does, and I was truly inspired."

~**Galit Chait-Moracci**, World Bronze Figure Skating Medalist, 3-time Olympic Competitor, World and Olympic Coach

"Faye has a gift for seeing the impossible as possible, and for creating a picture of that possibility for all of us to experience. It is easy to see how she so successfully coached young skaters to the levels of excellence they achieved. Using story, metaphor, intuition and humor, she shows us her own courageous journey, both on the external from immigrant to coach of stars, but more importantly on the inner journey, the life long journey, to authentic success. Once I started it, I couldn't put it down."

~**Rory Cohen, MPH, MA, SCPC**, President, take10now.com, the author of *Take 10: How to Achieve Your Someday Dreams in 10 Minutes a Day*

"Coach Faye Kitariev in the most humble way, shares her personal journey as a young Russian skater, to a championship coach, giving us an inside look at the world of Championship figure skating, and her own process of self-discovery. "Choreography of Awakening" inspires us with its unmistakable message, discovered along the way by the author, that "There are no limits to human potential". This book can change your life."

~**Christopher Connolly, MA**, University of Santa Monica Faculty Member, Writer & Composer

"Faye Kitariev presents us a wonderful example of what it takes for one to process their life experience. She bravely moves into the biggest of life's questions; "What has my life experience given me? Who am I choosing to become? What does my future hold in relation to my life purpose?" These are not easy questions, but Faye knows that the key to life, is to go through a process that makes sense of it all. I am touched by her authenticity and courage. Her writing flows smoothly and the skating metaphor can be applied to all of our lives. I know that I am not alone in expressing gratitude that this Dragon has awakened!"

~**Mark "Dr. DREAM" Peebler**, International Speaker, Radio Host, Holistic Healing Practitioner

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“Every so often, a book comes along that can’t help but improve your life. Faye Kitariev’s *A Choreography of Awakening* is one such book. Faye interweaves words of wisdom with hard-earned personal experience to lead readers on an enlightening journey of discovery. With each heartfelt chapter, readers will feel a transformation, and if they don’t, Faye’s insightful practice lessons at the end of every chapter are sure to help them along. Take the time to read this rare gem. You’ll be glad you did.”

~**Ken Dickson**, the Author of *“Detour from Normal”*

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For Abbie

Who is my endless source of love and inspiration every day

For my Mom and Dad

Who would be proud

Foreword

The joy of self expression

There is a reason we follow athletes so avidly. There is a reason the Olympics are so enthusiastically watched. The joyful fullness of self-expression is something our own soul longs for. We see it on the playing field...and on the ice.

Even though I am a typical clumsy unsophisticated American male, watching football and playing basketball when I can, I am always drawn to the Olympic skaters---like the ones coached by Faye Kitariev, like the ones so dramatically described in this book, the *Choreography of Awakening*.

There is always a fierce but gentle physical poetry in the skating competitions, such exciting displays of grace and collapse, surges of glory and the sinking downward spiral of tragic failure, all in one inspired musical whirl on ice!

The metaphor here for awakening the human spirit is irresistible. This is life itself, at its most beautiful, tragic and heroic...all set to music!

Coach Faye's story is compelling because it is a story of awakening. Her career as a successful sports coach was deepened and enhanced by another journey she was taking..the journey of the soul to enlightenment.

Her early gravitation to the study of the Tao harmonized perfectly with the "angels" she was coaching to success in competition. In this she was not unlike the great American basketball coach Phil Jackson who brought his own Zen enlightenment into his championship-level coaching of Michael Jordan of the Bulls and Shaquille O'Neal and Kobe Bryant of the Los Angeles Lakers.

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And the spiritual depth is not inconsequential. Even though many other coaches consider such depth a kind of new age eccentric affectation, it's hard to ignore the results.

When one begins the kind of path Coach Faye began, metaphors for the highest possible life begin to appear everywhere. Everything in life becomes a Tony Robbins fire-walking seminar--producing insights and breakthroughs and joy upon joy.

Faye's story of the skater Galit is so powerful. What it taught Faye it also teaches the reader.

"Some people would quietly laugh at Galit behind her back, judging her as naive and weird. After all she had no talent, lacked flow and flexibility, and frankly wasn't going anywhere, no matter how hard she tried."

But she kept trying. Even though she finished a distant 28th in her first World Championship. When she kept on the path of purposeful practice, holding to a devoted dream, Faye watched with interest. Then she watched with envy. Finally, she watched Galit with a sense of wonder. Why? Why stay on the path?

The one night in 2002, Galit did it. She won a medal in the World Championship and Faye leaped and screamed for joy. The message from the universe was unmistakable. The metaphor sang out to Faye: "There are no limits in human potential, there are limits in human beliefs!"

The stories of skaters in this book all hold fascinating lessons in psychological pain and triumph. As she coaches her skaters in the art and sport of life itself, we, as readers feel the journey, the falls, and the uplifting successes.

Faye does not spare herself, here, either. She is vulnerable and forthcoming. Her innocence is a perfect match for her power as a coach and mentor and spirit guide...not just to the athlete, but the human being inside the athlete.

The author must have foreseen the sense of inspiration that gets produced by the end of each chapter, because it offers short thought experiments that allow us to go deeper

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into the insight each chapter inspires. These exercises are usually the part I skip in "self-help" books, but here they are too compelling to ignore. Readers who follow these guided mind exercises (soul exercises, heart exercises) will enjoy them, to say the least.

If this were merely a sports book, people would read it and enjoy it on that level. After all, who would not want to hear the inside story of what it was like to train and coach such a charismatic international champion as Sasha Cohen?

But this book is more than that. It is a spiritual biography. It is a travel diary...the journey of a soul whose only quest all along was to learn.

The great novelist Vladimir Nabokov once described a spiral as "a liberated circle." I don't know why that quotation came to mind as I read this book a second time. Maybe the image is just perfect for the spiraling beauty of Faye Kitariev's sport, especially for the athletes she has touched with her beginner's mind.

It is extremely good news that Faye Kitariev has expanded her professional reach into the world of "soul-centered" professional life coaching. Now it will be all of us who have a chance to work with her and liberate the vicious circles our worried minds keep us in. As you'll see when you read this book, her guidance is a gift.

Steve Chandler

Phoenix, Arizona

2013

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Flying Camel Spin
Stepping into the Vision

“When I let go of who I am, I become what I might be”
~Lao Tzu

14

Flying Camel Spin
Stepping into the Vision

Okay, it's time to come out into the clear water and face my own fears and insecurities. Time to be honest with you, my reader. It only seems fair. As I was writing this book, sharing stories with you, we became so intimately connected. I took you on the journey through the desert in Arizona, firewalking with Tony Robbins, explored telekinesis with Natalya, brought you on the trip to Italy, introduced you to my family and my fish. You sat through the lessons with my students, learned the inner game of double Axels, and experienced the pains of growing up in the former Soviet Union. And all the while, as I am guiding you on your journey to find the meaning and purpose in your own life, find the way to awaken the great dragon of your potential, I, too, am searching for my own answers for my own truth. I began writing this book as a figure skating coach with the intention of inspiring my readers, to go further, to achieve their dreams, reach the potential lying within. But in the process of this work my own transformation happened. A transformation I resisted for several years.

Next sentence needs to come out,

But I resist its writing.

Maybe I'll do it tomorrow.

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I pause; 'It will not run away.'
I know, not to rush,
Once it's out, I can't take it back and stay.
Is it a right decision?
Is it a right timing?
My koi fish are clear.
But I still have doubts and fear.

Yesterday, when I went to the rink to teach my students and choreograph the program, I was sure in my decision, but once I arrived and started the work, the clarity evaded me again. I enjoyed teaching my students so much! There is an unbelievable strength and beauty in them. Their complete trust and surrender to me is so precious and vulnerable! It takes supreme character and strength of heart to trust another being so unconditionally, and I accept my position of leadership they gave me with gratitude and humbleness. I love teaching. I see a great potential being awakened within my students, and I feel very responsible for their progress and their journey.

My late mother wanted me to become a figure skater, a champion. She loved figure skating all her life. The truth is, I didn't, not really. I never wanted to be a figure skater. The two things I wanted to become were a teacher and an actress. The two came together in the place where I love telling inspiring stories! I loved telling stories in such a way that my listeners would hold their breath and wait without a movement for the next word that would come out...

Here I am again, trying to squeeze the words out of my mouth... The words feel like they are soap bubbles, a foam, a thin soapy film that forms in my mouth and prevents the sound from coming out. This is ridiculous! I am not even talking, I am writing! Does it really matter? It doesn't. Writing or talking, this is my experience, and no one is going to tell me that I don't experience that! You

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know how they tell you what you feel or how you SHOULD feel? Bullshit! No one can tell you how YOU feel! You are the only one who knows that!

“Wow! You have a bad attitude, my friend!”

“Oh, yeah? So what?! Do I always have to have a good attitude? I never did sign that paper where I gave guarantees to be a saint forever. I am not a saint! I don’t want to be one. I want the freedom of having a bad attitude and throw in a tantrum when I feel like it!”

“You know, yesterday I saw the news that police in Florida have arrested a six-year-old girl for throwing temper tantrums.”

“So? I am not six, and my temper tantrum is on paper, in perfect silence! And besides, it’s not a surprise that someone has realized that sometimes it’s the grown-ups who need protection from the badly behaved children! Where was I? You have interrupted me! Oh yeah, - I sat down to tell the truth, to make an announcement, but instead, I am talking all this crap about the irrelevant stuff.... I finally get it! It is my body that holds me back and doesn’t want me to write the words.”

“Are you serious?! Why not?”

“Take a nap” it says as soon as I want to write my critical sentence. “You are tired and need to sleep.”

“Sure, but you said the same thing yesterday, and the day before, and the day before that too!” I told my body back, “Right at the time when I managed the courage to make a decision to finally just accept it and write the truth, I listened to you and took those naps. Do you remember what happened next? Nothing!!!! I never came back to write it again! You are playing the same trick on me! Why should I listen to you this time? You just want to sabotage my decisions!”

“Okay, let’s be serious. You have doubts. If you didn’t have the doubts, you would just do it. You wouldn’t linger around. You wouldn’t listen to anyone.

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You would be clear and enthusiastic. I am assisting you with giving you more time to sort things out. You are about to “jump off the cliff”. Don’t you want to be absolutely sure that this IS the jump, and that THIS IS the time to do it? You always make your decisions so quickly. Your whole life is about to change. DRAMATICALLY! Take my advice. Take a 10-minute break and clarify your intention. See your vision again. Make sure it is clear. I am your body! Why would I want to support you in making a bad decision? I am on your side, okay? Go now. I’ll wake you up in 10 minutes. I promise!”

“Fine, then! But I am telling you, this is the last time I am listening to you if you don’t wake me up and if I don’t write anything when I come back.”

“Okay, okay. Go now.”

Off I went. Ten minutes came and went, and here I am back at my writing. A thought crept in that I really do need to wait with writing my announcement. What the heck? In a few minutes I will have to move my butt off this chair, and get myself ready to go to the rink. This whole week seems like a kaleidoscope. Scenes change so rapidly that I don’t have any time to adjust to them, to figure out who and what I am, what I am doing, what’s the purpose? I feel like I am sitting on a chair and someone from behind is pushing it in the direction of their choice. My legs are too short and cannot reach the ground to have any control of the direction we are moving into, or at least use my legs as speed breakers. We are going faster and faster, and I feel as if I am just going to scream: “STOOOOP!” I don’t like going so fast. I am losing a sense of my center....

Center. Peace. Focus.

Stay in the moment.

I am here and now.

Here and Now.

HERE and NOW....

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“Who am I?”

“A writer.”

“Really? When did I become one?”

“Now.”

“Did anyone ask me if I wanted to be one?”

“Did they have to? You picked up a pen and started writing. If you are writing, you are a writer.”

“Yes, but now I have to go to the rink and be a skating coach!”

“Yes. You are a skating coach.”

“Didn’t you just say that I am a writer?”

“Not when you coach skating.”

“It’s so confusing! Why do you confuse me so much?!”

“But it’s quite simple. It is not who you are. You just wear your identities like a mask at a carnival.”

“Like a mask at a carnival?” I echoed the words, instantly changing my attitude. A memory of a dark, old Peruvian shack came to my mind.

I saw myself sitting on the worn-out, thin mattress, thrown on the floor in the corner of a small, dark room filled with the smell of the burning grasses. Several people, mostly Peruvians, gathered there, each sitting on a similar mattress, expectantly looking at a medicine man standing in the center. He was dressed in traditional, colorful Peruvian attire and an old felt hat. Carlos was his name. He smoked a pipe and explained to us in broken English the healing ceremony we were about to take part in. I heard about ceremonies like this and was curious to experience it firsthand. Carlos was brewing some tea made of local plants and offered each of us a cup. I took a sip, and the substance turned out to be very bitter but smooth. I grimaced. Carlos looked at me and smiled. I looked around and noticed that everyone had finished their drinks already. “This is what

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I wanted to do. No one forced me to come here," I told myself. I then took a deep breath in and finished the drink. Carlos nodded his head in approval and suggested I lean back on the pillows and relax. I did. Suddenly, I felt light-headed and dizzy. It was a funny feeling I had never experienced before. I remembered Carlos telling me that this was the ancient Peruvian ceremony where one learns what he specifically needs to know about life. Silently I set an intention, asking that whatever I need to know would be revealed to me. I opened my eyes. The room was still only dimly lit, but somehow it looked different. No longer was it old and shabby. It appeared as if everything there was a stage set for a cartoon, and people who were sitting on the mattresses took the appearance of the clay marionettes with painted faces. "What is that supposed to mean? What kind of sense do I have to make out of this?" When in the morning we got back to our hotel, I was still puzzled by my experience. Later that afternoon we took a walk around the old part of historical Cusco. A store caught my attention. "Let's go in here." I pulled on my husband's arm. It looked like a Peruvian art shop. On the walls there was an array of painted clay masks. I sighed. Those were the painted faces I saw the night before at the healing ceremony.

The memory of this event had often visited me, always with the same question: "What do I need to know about this? Why was this revealed to me?" And now my body tells me, "You just wear your identities like a mask at a carnival." "Is **It** talking about the same masks I saw in Peru a couple of years ago?" I wondered.

"You have hundreds of them, and you change them, like clothes." My body continued, "If the weather is cold, you'd be wearing a coat. If it was hot, and you are at the pool, you'd wear a bathing suit. Funny, but it never occurred to you to call yourself a 'bathing suit', just because you are wearing one."

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I still have not written that sentence, THE sentence that has stacked in my throat for several days now. Yet, something significant got clarified during this time. My body was so right to make me wait and linger and not rash into the inevitable.

My critical sentence was about the announcement I was preparing to make that I am retiring from coaching competitive figure skating and committing full time to my life-coaching practice. This seems like a huge decision to make, and just like that cut the ties to my past, to the incredible amount of work that I have contributed in my career, all the successes and all the knowledge. But it's true, *changing careers is not about changing who I am, it is just a matter of changing a mask.* Then what's the big deal about it? Exactly! I had to understand this concept before I could commit my decision to paper. Perhaps that was a meaning of the lesson revealed to me in Peru. As the awareness of my realization settled in my body, I got flooded with love. I don't know, I can't even describe this experience properly, but I started feeling this love, not as an emotion, but as a vibration, a high vibration of loving energy, the energy of creativity, and the energy of joy. In that moment I realized the coveted prize of the "what do you want" question, and "what is my purpose?" and even "how can I contribute to the world?" had a simple answer. I want to be in that vibrational frequency all the time, and I want to share it with others. We enjoy doing what we are doing because it gives us that feeling. This energy empowers us, moves us, makes us feel happy, connected, loving, and light. It gives us the feeling that nothing is impossible. It puts us in the flow and keeps us in the moment. Once there, it makes us crave to be in this space again and again. And if it's lost, it makes us go on the search to look for it all over again. It is what makes us know what "I am alive!" means. "Remember," I heard Carlos's voice say, "here you will learn what you specifically need to know about your life." And the understanding comes in that this vibration is who I am

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and who you are, and in the end, it doesn't really matter whether you are a skating coach, a writer, a life coach, or a bathing suit, there will be no fulfillment unless you find your way to connect with that deep source of love within you and share it with others.

I closed my eyes, and the vision of my future moved closer to me and became brighter. I was shocked, at how clear it was!

I am sitting at the table holding my favorite pen in my hand. I love my pens, always have, ever since I was a child! I am signing my first book, freshly printed, at the Professional Skaters Association's Conference. A long line of people is waiting to get my autograph, an inscription, and a word of encouragement and wisdom. I take a deep breath in and exhale. I am picking up the next book to write another autograph. My heart is skipping a bit. I am so proud of myself. I have finished this work of love, the work of inspiration. I've learned incredible truths and discovered some secrets. I am writing the next inscription, moving my pen lightly across the fresh, clean white page gently, letting the ink and my love get fully absorbed into this book. I really want to take this moment in, to experience it completely. I have earned it! Many years of intense work and learning and over two years of writing. This is my celebration! I set an intention to stay connected and grounded. In one hour I will leave this table, re-center myself, and be ready to present my subject of "Awakening the Sleeping Dragon" to the conference's audience.

I am ready for it! I can barely hold still! I am so excited now! The "rubber band in my throat" has snapped! I am ready to speak out, to share my truth! To energize and inspire! I have practiced my speech, but it doesn't matter now! It is written in my heart, and I will speak from it! There is so much energy! I feel as if I am an electrical generator. I could light the whole city of Las Vegas! That's the power of my dragon! My happy, joyful, filled-with-love dragon!

I am now ready to be called into the auditorium. I am being announced and called forward. I am walking lightly. I feel as if my body is weightless. I am enjoying the

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sensation. I am feeling so confident! My body is so healthy, radiant, beautiful, and light! My gorgeous clothes are fitting me perfectly! My energy is contagious! I am stepping up onto the platform and smiling. I have a voice! I am being heard! What an incredible feeling! I know what I want! I have it! I am living it! And it is perfect! I am looking down the aisle, searching for my family, and there they are, my soul-partner and my daughter smiling back at me with encouragement. I am feeling their strength and support, their unconditional loving. I can never fail with them by my side! They are my blessing! We have the most amazing heart-centered relationship! I am so grateful they decided to travel with me for my first big event! A rush of excitement moves up my back.

I am scanning my audience. I am seeing a young woman, practically a girl, sitting in the front row with her beautiful notebook and wide-open, expectant eyes. She is hungry for knowledge. She wants to be the best she can be. I am smiling to her. I am recognizing her as myself. How many seminars, workshops, conferences has it been? How many have I sat through and thought, "One day, I will be presenting as well. I, too, can do this." Maybe that should be my opening line after all....



*Some say that my teaching is nonsense.
Others call it lofty but impractical.
But to those who have looked inside themselves, this nonsense
makes perfect sense.
And to those who put it into practice,
this loftiness has roots that go deep.”*
~Lao Tzu

Flying Camel Spin Practice

As I finished writing the last chapter of my book, I realized that a new chapter of my life had begun. Perhaps, something new and exciting is opening up for you as well. I now want to invite you to grab your favorite pen and journal and write your own personal vision down. Create a situation you wish to experience a year from now and write it in the present continuous tense, as if it is happening right now and you are living it! Make it fun and believable. You are now living your DREAM! Let yourself grow wings and fly...