

Simply Dawes-ome

MORE THAN A DOZEN YEARS AGO, U.S. OLYMPIC CHAMPION DOMINIQUE DAWES CAPTURED OUR HEARTS WITH HER GRACEFUL PERFORMANCE. NOW SHE'S CAPTURING OUR MINDS WITH HER ENCOURAGING WORDS | BY JON FINKEL



One tour of the White House in a lifetime is fairly normal. A visit to the White House as an invited guest is impressive. But two invitations to the White House? In one month? At the request of the president? “It just worked out that way,” Dominique Dawes says humbly. “I was there to celebrate the signing of the executive order creating the White House Council on Women and Girls, and the following week I went back with other female stars like Alicia Keys to travel around D.C., and speak to young women and kids to inspire them. We dined in the East Wing. It was fun.”

Life has been pretty exciting for Dawes since she last caught the nation's eye as a two-time medalist at the 1996 Olympic Games. She qualified for her third Olympics (2000), performed on Broadway, got a job as a commentator for Yahoo! Sports and launched a successful career as a motivational speaker. And she has stayed in phenomenal shape throughout.

Has your gymnastics training helped you maintain a healthy lifestyle in your post-

Olympic career? I think so. I do squat jumps, push-ups and pull-ups to stay in shape. I'd say my workouts are gymnastics-based, but I mix in yoga and lots of jump-rope work. I'll jump rope for 30 minutes while watching TV.

How about your nutrition? I'm big on controlling portion size vs. dieting. I tried

diets, but it was hard to keep the weight off. Now I have salad or fish for most meals. If I want a burger and fries, I'll have it, but I won't go overboard.

So it's all about balance? Exactly. I used to dedicate 36 hours a week to training, but now I make sure there's more balance in my schedule. If I sit at my desk for more than two hours, I get antsy. So instead of fighting it, I take my dogs for a walk. I like to keep moving.

How did you wind up as a reporter for Yahoo! Sports? After the 2000 Olympics I acted on Broadway, then tried TV. I was a commentator for women's gymnastics, but that wasn't what I wanted to do. In 2008 I got the opportunity to cover the Olympics for Yahoo! Sports. I've met so many amazing people.

Who are some of your favorites? At the Super Bowl I got to chat with [then-] Indianapolis Colts Head Coach Tony Dungy. I was so excited to talk to him because his book is so inspirational.

Do you have any tips on how our readers can achieve their fitness goals? It's

important to set goals that are realistic. Give yourself time. It took your body years to get where it is; you can't change it in days. It's also very important to have a big support group.

Anything to avoid? Don't beat yourself up if you miss a goal. It's not easy to make big changes quickly, but keep challenging yourself and you can achieve the changes you want. **hers**



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