My Danish Aerobics Instructor

Although I retired from IBM Research Center 15 years ago, I still have a long list of research projects to do and books to write. To fulfill this lifetime goal, to live longer is not sufficient; it should be healthy and energetic for many years to come. It is well known from medical research that uninterrupted physical exercise could achieve this, but persistent motivation is required.

When I joined IBM in 1985, the company paid for taking aerobic classes in sports clubs. Soon I was addicted to step aerobics: a high-intensity, low-impact choreographed group exercise which also improves mental health and prevents dementia. The key is to find a capable and motivating instructor. In New York, there are many. In 2000 I was transferred to IBM Florida, and there were no good instructors. Spending a full year, I passed a national exam and became a certified step-aerobics instructor. I was a step-aerobics instructor for a couple of years.

In 2007, I came back to New York, and joined New York Sports Clubs. There I found a superb step aerobics instructor Debra Ann. Born in Denmark, she teaches an Ultimate Step Aerobics class every Saturday morning. It is very intensive and advanced. The group of participants has been quite stable. To motivate participants, she organizes a costumed event every Halloween weekend, which is similar to a masquerade ball. Each year I play a role in a popular movie. It becomes a fun for everybody, and enriches my motivation.

Here is me as Toreador with Debra Ann in 2011.
Again, me with Debra Ann in 2015, I played Dr. Sharp.

With Carolina, when I played Dundee killing a crocodile.
Again with Carolina, I played Caribbean Pirate.

Batman and Mickey Mouse.
In 2018, Debra Ann organized the party during the Jul time. Logically, I played Nutcracker. I did the one-hour intensive exercise with the masquerade mask on. Everyone was pleased.

Besides the high-intensity Saturday step aerobics class, I do less intensive exercises at the New York Sports Club every day, including swimming and hula hoop. Nevertheless, Debra Ann's step class is always my favorite not only because it is intensive, but also the masquerade class serves as an annual exam to monitor the condition of my physical and mental health.