

On ‘The Great Escape’ And Those Who Dare to Dream

“Among Laurice’s daring escape challenges is a less than five-minute liberation from a 1½ ton maximum security safe, underwater in New York’s Hudson River... and an extrication from a straight jacket while suspended over a spiked pit filled with vipers and scorpions while hanging only by a burning rope... The crowds cheered an emerging hero — the man no walls can hold — the Master of Impossibilities...”

Millions thrilled when Laurice escaped unharmed. Laurice, Master of Impossibilities, is best known for history-making escape challenges network broadcast by ABC, NBC, CBS, CNN, and Fox to 100 countries live via satellite television. An international performing artist, Laurice has earned seven world records for life-threatening escapes. He believes that these escape challenges can evoke fascination, hope and wonder which inspire isolated and disenfranchised children and youth to overcome their struggles and follow their dream. To further the goal of reaching critically ill children, at-risk youth and frail elderly, Laurice earned a Masters Degree in Social Work. Today, Laurice and his artist colleagues at Portals Of Wonder bring their message of possibility to transform the lives of New Yorkers bound by illness, homelessness and poverty.

The underlying purpose for accepting such daring escape challenges is to offer a different model—a metaphor for “daring to do the impossible against all odds”.

Dare to Dream! Dare to seek out your vision and allow it to come true — for anything is possible.

Disadvantaged youth need an inspiring message of hope, perseverance and determination to point a way to making their dreams reality. For children fighting the ravages of a terrible disease such as AIDS and cancer, or poverty and homelessness, and for frail elderly fighting to maintain the dignity of their home and health to keep body and soul together, or for the mom and pop battling to survive to put food in the bellies of their children—these remarkable escapes can represent a daring symbol of triumph against the seemingly impossible.

The philosophy behind this message is that each child intrinsically has an inner Houdini or inner Laurice who can escape inner walls and transform their life and the lives of others. This transformative metaphor says: If only we dare to dream, to hold that dream, and help each other work toward it, our dream will come true. In this way our children and youth find greater meaning in their lives, and a way to contribute to their community. And in finding this part of self, they can find a peaceful 'home' within. This allows our youth to share their excitement, wonder and hope with the next generation.

Portals Of Wonder has incorporated equally thrilling and daring escapes into an uplifting, high-end musical vaudeville revue, Adventures of a Wizard, that illustrates the American 'can-do' attitude that overcomes adversity by pulling together in a kind and caring community. Those who face unimaginable circumstances find encouragement through this show and its breakout workshops, to say 'If they can do it – so can I!'

Laurice escaping from a straight jacket and chains encircling him is a metaphor for conquering the ties that bind us from breathing free...from finding and spreading our wings...

Laurice escaping from a safe, alone in the dark depths of frigid Atlantic Ocean's water, is a metaphor for breaking free of our limited enclosures...for walking through the walls that confine our lives.

Portals Of Wonder offers a healthy alternative to negative media images. The most courageous person is not a macho or powerful machine who kills, but the one who faces each individual and each day and the world we share with an open heart: to live sweetly, with kindness and to do no harm. Children and frail elderly rise up and flourish with the support of kind, warm and caring community, which provides the resources needed not just for survival, but for an actualized and meaningful life. Shows like Adventures of a Wizard provide community through cultural performing arts programs that many would otherwise find unaffordable or inaccessible without Portals Of Wonder. Come join us and spread the joy, hope and wonder. Support Portals Of Wonder.

"One hundred years from now it will not matter what my bank account was, the sort of house I lived in, or the kind of car I drove ...but the world may be different because I was important in the life of a child."

Please visit www.PortalsOfWonder.org