

DOM FAMULARO: LIVING LIFE WITH A PASSION

by Kees Boer

IT'S A WONDERFUL LIFE WHEN YOU'RE DOM FAMULARO, DRUMMER EXTRAORDINAIRE.



"I'm having a wonderful life," says Famularo, "because I get to live my passion, which is playing music and, specifically, playing drums."

"When people say to me, 'Dom, what do you do for a living?' I say, 'I hold wood in my hands, and I strike metal and plastic, and I make noise! ... Now if I organize the noise, then I get paid!'"

For the last 30 years, Famularo has traveled from China to Holland, from Brazil to New Zealand, and all over the United States, performing with legendary musicians and holding masterclasses and clinics around the globe.

Dom is one of the fastest, if not the fastest, drummer in the world. We've all heard drummers do a drum roll on a snare drum with such speed that you couldn't tell the individual notes apart. Dom can do that with his feet!

While Dom is extremely well versed technically on the drums, he also plays very musically. His clinics are extremely entertaining, even if you aren't a drummer.

When Dom was 11 years old, he formed a band with his two older brothers and they were hired around town to perform.

"So, in the community, we were kind of known as the Famularos," he says. "There is no greater joy as to when you can perform for someone... it's fun and then, afterwards, you get paid!"

By the time Famularo was 12 or 13 years old, he had started to take lessons and then was introduced to the Beatles. The Beatles were a huge influence on him back in 1964.

"A year or so later, I went to a Buddy Rich concert at the age of about 14 and I

was hooked!" he said, "My gosh, the excitement, the fun, and just the energy, and the people's reaction. This is incredible! I knew that was for me!" Within the drumming community, Dom is best known for his teaching. He lives in Long Island and has more than 400 students that travel from more than 15 countries to study with him.

Dom offers advice on finding a good drum teacher. He suggests interviewing a prospective teacher to find out how long they've been playing and to ask to hear them play live or on a recording. In addition, ask them to explain some aspect of playing.

If they say something like, " 'Yeah, you got to kind of feel it. You've got to kind of do it from your heart,' " says Dom, "when you hear they are not exactly explaining it, that's when it gets tough. The explanation has to be pretty clear."

"The second part is, they should have a really good sense of the skill, so that when you watch them and hear them, they should really impress you as to what you are experiencing," he continued. "So, if they can impress you in both the playing of the instrument and the ability they have to explain it, that's a good combination!"

Through Dom's teaching he developed a system of success, he calls the "Cycle of Self Empowerment."

"This has been such a wonderful expansion to my career," he said. "With my students, I came up with a formula that is a cycle of what I feel is empowerment. Empowerment means to give power. I believe that if we want to do anything in our lives, we have to give ourselves a power that allows us to succeed in this. Before I can make someone

happy, I have to be happy. Before I can love someone, I have to love myself. And before I can empower someone, I have to first empower myself."

"So with that, I put together these notes and formula, and I have been teaching it for over 20 years with my students," he said. His ideas have worked so well with his students that their parents began to see out the formula, and the "next thing I know is that someone says: 'I have this team of salespeople, can you come by and explain this formula to the salespeople?' 'Can you come by and show my school? I'm a teacher and teach in a university. Can you come by and show this to my students?' "

"Well, eventually, when I began to see an interest, I put all of my notes together and wrote a book," Dom said. "I call the book: *The Cycle of Self Empowerment*. I've had an amazing amount of calls from high schools and universities all around the world that have literally flown me in to do lectures at their school."

Famularo brings along his drumset as he talks to thousands of students about self-empowerment and perseverance, integrity, and other values.

"Then, when I want to explain or demonstrate discipline for example, I sit down and I play the drums, and they go crazy!" he said. "What a great way to reach the kids through music, such a great hook to grab the kids!"

For more information about Dom Famularo, check out his website at: www.domfamularo.com. If you want to get some great tips on how to play the drums, you want to also check out his cyber drum lessons that he teaches for free at the www.vicfirth.com website.