

Listen to Your Heart ~ by Sharon Lee Riguzzi

I met up with an old friend the other day, someone I hadn't seen since college days. Granted, it took a rather lengthy conversation to catch up on jobs, kids, and so on. And then I asked her, "What else are you doing with your life?"

This question might have made some hesitate before speaking, but she didn't miss a beat as she shared, "Well, I've been doing some artwork. In fact, my work has been in a few shows."

Of course, I was impressed and happy for her, but before I could share my congratulations, she continued, "Do you remember our grammar-school art teacher?" Amazingly, I did. An old toughie (of course, thinking back on it now, I realize she could've been my current age).

"Well," she continued, "one day in fourth grade as she was inspecting each child's artwork, she took one look at mine and declared that I shouldn't waste my time. I would never be an artist—absolutely no talent."

That message played in her mind throughout the rest of her school years, as she watched from afar as high-school students' work was showcased in the glass cases in the hallways. That message followed her into adulthood.

Until one day just a few years ago, now a teacher herself. Sitting in the back of one of the watercolor classes her students were taking, she just picked up a brush and stared playing. When the teacher walked by, he asked her how long she had been painting. Looking at her watch, she said, "Twenty minutes." Thinking she misunderstood his question, he asked, "No, I mean how long have you been painting?" Again she gave the same answer. "You're kidding me! You have such talent!" he said enthusiastically.

The floodgates of emotion opened, releasing what she had always wished for but never dared to explore were being validated. And the rest is her history.

My purpose in sharing this encounter is twofold:

For all of us to recognize just how powerful our words can be, either to a positive or negative effect.

No matter what messages we might have received in life, if you hear a little inner voice trying to shout, "I've always wanted to _____," listen to it! Even if it doesn't work out, you are never worse off than you were when you were just wondering.

So many of us have gifts that we've never taken the time to explore, be it a comment someone once made or our own lack of self-confidence that keeps us from our dreams.

If I could share with you the radiance on the face of my friend as she talked about her passion coming to fruition, all of you would rush to create that for yourselves.

You deserve it, and so does the world.

Here's a great recipe...your friends and family will enjoy this dinner. Show off your talent on the grill. It's so easy to make and it looks truly "artistic" on their plate!

Grilled Scallops with Corn and Asparagus

Weight Watchers Recipe

PointsPlus Value 7

Prep time: 18 min

Cook time: 17 min

Serves: 4

A summery meal that can be made either indoors on a stovetop grill or outside, under the stars.

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Ingredients

1 tsp lemon zest
1/4 cup(s) fresh lemon juice
1 Tbsp olive oil, extra virgin
1 tsp table salt, divided

1/4 tsp black pepper, freshly ground, divided	
1 pound(s) uncooked scallop(s), sea variety (use large ones)	
1 cup(s) fresh tomato(es), ripe, diced	
1/4 cup(s) basil, fresh, chopped	
3 spray(s) cooking spray, divided	
4 medium corn on the cob, husked	
1 pound(s) uncooked asparagus, tough ends trimmed	

Instructions

- Preheat stovetop grill pan over medium-high heat.
- Combine lemon zest, lemon juice, oil, 1/2 teaspoon salt and 1/8 teaspoon pepper in a medium bowl. Put scallops on a plate and drizzle with 1 tablespoon lemon mixture; turn to coat and let stand at room temperature for 10 minutes. Add tomato and basil to remaining lemon mixture and set aside.
- Meanwhile, lightly coat corn and asparagus with cooking spray; sprinkle with remaining 1/2 teaspoon salt and 1/8 teaspoon pepper. Grill corn until browned on all sides, turning occasionally, about 10 to 12 minutes. Grill asparagus until lightly charred and tender, turning occasionally, about 5 to 6 minutes. Place corn and asparagus on serving platter; set aside (they will be served at room temperature).
- Coat scallops with cooking spray; place on grill pan. Grill until scallops are just cooked through, turning once, about 5 minutes total; add to platter with corn and asparagus. Spoon tomato mixture over scallops and asparagus; serve. Yields about 4 scallops, 1/4 of asparagus, 1 ear of corn and 1/4 cup of tomato mixture per serving.

Notes

- This recipe can be made on an outdoor grill too. For easier grilling, thread scallops onto metal or wooden skewers (make sure to soak wooden skewers in water for 30 minutes first).

Jumbo shrimp can be used instead of scallops or try a combination of the two (could affect *PointsPlus* value).