



## **Liberate Dance are hosting an online 12hr dance-a-thon to support founder, Vickie Simmonds, through life threatening complications of sepsis**

**August 2021** - Liberate Dance will be hosting a 12-hour Dance-a-thon on Saturday 21st August to raise money for our wonderful founder, Vickie Simmonds.

<https://www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/12hrdanceathonforvickie>

Vickie is a well loved member of the disability community, having set up Liberate Dance - the UK's first exclusively wheelchair-based dance company, which aims to make dance accessible for wheelchair users.

Vickie's life has been turned upside down since October 2020 when she developed sepsis and went into septic shock. Consequently, she's now living with four extremely rare and life-threatening illnesses with no cure, requiring experimental and off licence treatments which are not funded by the NHS. So far, Vickie's family have spent over £10,000 on all of her medical treatment. Due to the complexity of her situation, and the need for ongoing private medical treatment, the costs are only going to continue to increase and the family are now fundraising to help support Vickie's recovery and the long journey she is now on. More detail on Vickie's incredibly difficult journey can be read here:

<https://danworth375797610.wordpress.com/2021/05/06/vickies-story/>

**Amanda Watkinson, CEO, Move Momentum** said *"Vickie is the loveliest, kindest person and it's deeply unfair all the health issues that she's had to face. Please support us in helping her on her road to recovery by donating whatever you can and sharing our fundraising page far and wide!"*

Vickie grew up with a passion for dance and performance until her health declined in her teens. She was later diagnosed with Ehlers Danlos Syndrome and in 2017, sustained a spinal cord injury, causing her to become a full-time wheelchair user. Since then she has played wheelchair basketball and para ice hockey and went on to represent Great Britain at the 2018 Women's World Cup.

Vickie has always had a smile on her face, inspiring those around her and spreading positivity everywhere she goes. Vickie strives to be a positive role model and advocate for wheelchair users and people living with disabilities across the country and around the world.

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**For further information, please contact:**

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**Notes to editors**

**About `Move Momentum**

Move Momentum is a local charity based in Winchester that aims to make dance accessible to everyone. We provide opportunities to learn dance for groups of people for whom dance is less accessible. We offer weekly dance classes for young people, older adults and people with disabilities.

Our mission is to provide accessible, inclusive and affordable dance classes. We know dance changes people's lives because we witness it first-hand and we believe that everyone should have access to a high-quality dance education enabling them to improve mental and physical well-being and enrich their quality of life.

**About Liberate Dance**

Liberate Dance is a wheelchair dance company set up through Move Momentum and run by [Amanda Watkinson](#) and [Vickie Simmonds](#).

The aim of Liberate is to make dance accessible for wheelchair users, celebrating the freedom and movement a wheelchair brings to people with physical disabilities. A variety of styles of dance are taught from a wheelchair, from hip-hop to contemporary and all use the chair as a way to create new movements through dance.

We are a friendly, welcoming group for people with disabilities. Our Liberate Dance classes are far more than a dance class, we are a support network and family. We run weekly classes for adults and young people both in-person and online, which are inclusive, adaptable and flexible to meet participants' needs.