

Giving Her A

*Faith, family, career...
Candace Cameron
Bure knows that to
succeed you have
to commit to it
100 percent*

WORDS BY VANESSA PASCALE • PHOTO CREDIT: PETER SVENSON

It's a sunny Saturday morning in May, the day before Mother's Day. I am in the Pacific Palisades at a coffee shop waiting for Candace Cameron Bure to arrive. When she does, I introduce myself then hang back while she steps in line to order. The petite So-Cal born-and-raised beauty exudes a California-casual-vibe with her pinky and thumbnails-only painted mint green, honey-hued hair topped off with a light brown fedora, and ensemble of a sleeveless army green shirt, shredded pale blue jeans, striped pullover (tied around her waist) and flats. As Candace orders, the young barista coos that she's a fan of hers.

Really though, who is not a fan? When I was growing up, *Full House* was one of my favorite, favorite television shows. When it came on Tuesdays and Fridays, I made sure to be in front of the TV. "Oh Mylanta!" everyone loved the Tanners, Uncle Jesse, Aunt Becky and Joey Gladstone, which is why the eight-season sitcom has never gone off the air in 27 years. While I will always associate Candace with her character D.J. Tanner, others may be more familiar with her as Summer Van Horne on ABC Family's *Make It or Break It* or from the list of Hallmark movies she has starred in.

We step outside and take a seat at a picnic table in the shade. I pull out the advanced reader's

copy of her book *Dancing Through Life: Steps of Courage & Conviction* (available August 1). "This is the first interview I'm talking about my book," she says while examining my copy. "This is actually the first time I'm seeing it. I've only seen it on my computer." The third book written by the *New York Times* bestselling author, *Dancing Through Life* takes readers on her *Dancing with the Stars* journey, where she took third place on season 18. "I've never done something in my life that has changed me so much. And it kinda felt a little silly, 'Oh, I'm on a reality TV dance competition' and yet I grew so much as a woman and found all of these different strengths inside of me that I guess had never been

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tested and never pushed and I had to find that within this journey on the show. There was so much I learned, that's why I wanted to write this book." The day after *DWTS* ended, Candace contacted her publisher. "The life lessons have really nothing to do with *Dancing with the Stars*. It's things that all of us struggle with or go through, the ups and downs of life, standing on your moral convictions, your values. It's being true to yourself, pushing out of your comfort zone and staying the course... and I share all the tools that help me along the way."

Earlier this year, *Full House* fans finally got what they've been asking for — a spin-off. The announcement of *Fuller House* elated fans as well as the cast, who Candace has remained close to over the years. Talks about a spin-off had been going on for a while — it just took time for them to work out all the politics of it, she tells me. "For at least a year, that's the only question I would get asked on the carpet or in interviews: Will there ever be a *Full House* reunion? And it's like, 'Um, maybe, I'm not sure,'" she reenacts with mock hesitation, and a sly smile. "'I'm not going to lie to you, but I can't really say,'"

Full House creator Jeff Franklin (a name permanently etched in my mind having seen the opening credits hundreds of times) returns as the creator of *Fuller House*. Set in San Francisco just as the first show was, this time around, Stephanie Tanner (played by Jodie Sweetin) and Kimmy Gibbler (played by Andrea Barber) along with her teenage daughter move in with D.J. to help her raise her three boys. Candace, Jodie, and Andrea collaborated with Jeff and the writers to develop their characters, and pulled elements from their own lives. "I think that it only makes sense for them to hear what we have to say about our characters, because we're the ones who played them for eight years and will continue to play them for many more years, hopefully." Netflix has ordered 13 episodes of the long-awaited sitcom, set to debut in early 2016.

The incredible fanfare around *Fuller House* has by far exceeded Candace's expectations. "All those diehard fans and people are coming out of the woodwork. Like, 'I'm a closet *Full House* fan,'" Candace whispers, "And it's the most adorable thing." The joy this brings her is evidenced by the toothpaste-commercial-worthy smile on her face as she speaks. "I'm like, 'This is great!' Even younger kids! I co-hosted *The View* a few days ago and Abigail Breslin was the guest and I was like, 'Hi, nice to meet you.' She got so cute, little-girl-nervous like, 'OK, I have to tell you. I am the hugest fan.' And oh, what did she say? I think she's recording an album and, 'I'm such a huge fan that my producer actually calls me D.J. just because of you and the show.' It was so cute. I had so many interviews this week and

Tough Love

Among her friends, Candace is known as the friend who is all about tough love. She tells me she is the friend they turn to when they want straightforward, real talk. While she is always sensitive, she doesn't sugarcoat and is the friend who tells it like it is.

it was hilarious how many people were just, I guess not closet *Full House* fans. It's like, it's OK to be a *Full House* fan, like it's kinda cool now, I guess."

Candace and her husband former NHL star Valeri Bure have three children together: Natasha, Lev and Maksim. Are your children *Full House* fans? I ask. They've watched the show and think it's funny, she explains. "They're not like, 'Oh, we have to watch *Full House*!' It's not like that at all. But I think if you ask Jodie or Andrea, their kids love it. But they're younger." Andrea's children, Felicity and Tate (who have met Candace several times) started watching *Full House* again last year. "And all of sudden it became real to them. They came over to my house with Andrea, and Felicity got all nervous because of me. Andrea's like, 'You've met Candace a lot of times.' And Felicity was so embarrassed. 'No, that's D.J.' It's like she didn't put it together before and then all of sudden I became a character. It was hilarious! Their kids are into it. Mine are just —I'm just their dorky mom. They're like, 'Whatever, Mom, you had big hair and big bangs, silly clothes.'" She laughs.

These days, Candace's Christian lifestyle has become just as much associated with her as *Full House/Fuller House* is. Internet trolls harass her social media accounts just to comment that she's become "a religious freak." Why is this even an issue for people now? I ask. "I know it's true, right? 'Cause all of us have differences of opinion, and there aren't two people on the planet that will have

the exact same thoughts and beliefs... But it is amazing how people get so riled up, especially when it comes to religion. Honestly, I don't pay attention to those kind of comments —usually the people writing those comments either haven't found a security within themselves or they're angry... You can nitpick whatever you don't like about me and that's fine, but I know who I am and I'm secure with that. You can just click off my page and unfollow me." She laughs it off, but there is a touch of somberness to her tone.

Even when I mention Candace to a friend, the first comment made is, "She became super religious." Why has the name Candace Cameron Bure become synonymous with religion? Is it because you're so vocal about it? I suggest. "I think that's it. I didn't all of a sudden become so religious. This has always been me. People are just now listening or paying attention, because I've been doing a lot more within my career. But I've always been vocal about it. I've always been unashamed about it. It's a very important thing, so I love to share that, but I'm not shoving it anyone's face. I'm not forcing it on anyone. I'm just saying that this is what makes my life go 'round," she explains.

In recent years, Candace has become a recurring leading lady in the wholesome, heartwarming storylines the Hallmark channel presents, including *Moonlight & Mistletoe*, *Let It Snow*, and *Christmas Under Wraps*. Candace has also been producing Hallmark movies with her

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company, iCandy Productions. “The last three movies that I’ve done, I’ve produced. Going forward, all the movies that I do for Hallmark I executive produce.” Her movie *Just the Way You Are*, loosely based on her life, aired the night of our interview. “When I wrote my second book *Balancing it All*, because it was the themes of being a mother, a wife and having a career and trying to balance all that, it’s like marriage becomes the tough part in that circle... The themes of it were based off of my life and my story, but the actual movie is nothing like my own life...” This year, Hallmark Movies & Mysteries released *A Bone to Pick* and *Real Murders*, two movies from the Aurora Teagarden mystery series collection, starring Candace as Aurora Teagarden. The third movie, *Three Bedrooms, One Corpse* begins shooting at the end of the year.

In *Dancing Through Life*, Candace mentions that her father didn’t understand why she chose such “a difficult career path,” and would often encourage her to find a more stable job where the competition wasn’t so stiff. But Candace, a self-proclaimed perfectionist when it comes to work, decided early on that a career in entertainment is what she wanted. She committed herself, went all in, and today this actress-author-producer-writer-dancer... has a wealth of success to show for it. Success in the entertainment world certainly does not come easily, but Candace was able to achieve it without compromising her true self or integrity.

What has surprised you the most in your life? I ask. “I’ve been very purposeful in everything I’ve done and all the steps I’ve taken to be where I am, whether it’s with my family, intentional about my faith, intentional about my career, so I don’t know if any of it surprises me. I’m still always surprised or overwhelmed that God continues to open the doors—that just makes me giddy. I just put in a lot of hard work. Over the years, doors would just shut and shut and shut, some would open and because I’d been willing to say no to a lot of things over my life to stay true to who I am. I’ve just taken the harder road, and not the easy way to get where I wanted to be career-wise. So, now that a lot of those things are happening for me, I can go back seven years or so in my prayer journal and see some of those prayers I’ve been praying for and I can start checking them off. ‘Wow, God answered this. God answered this.’ Not necessarily in the way I asked for it or wanted or some of those answers are a no, but to be able to see how what I’ve been specific about in my life over the years and then see some of those things now coming to fruition, that is what amazes me and surprises me. I’m just like, ‘Wow, God!’ Ya know? It’s just all in his timing.”

Inside Candace’s Full House

What do you do in your spare time?

“I’m either with my family or I’m working. I have a lot of great friends and friendships, so it’s usually spending some time with them as well. I’m kind of a workhorse. If I get some time to go shopping or have coffee with a friend, that’s a good thing.”

And you have Bure Family Wines (Napa Valley wine label)...

“That’s what my husband does since he retired from hockey. Our first vintage was released in 2006,” she says proudly.

What would fans be surprised to find out about you?

“We really love EDM music, so I think people are shocked, because I’m conservative in my thoughts and viewpoints, but there is nothing about me that is conservative when it comes to enjoying life and having fun, and we just love electronic dance music so much. And I can go crazy, ridiculously crazy, my kids laugh at me. But they love it. We have dance parties in our house *all* the time. Sometimes the neighbors bang on the door. It’s funny. I think that’s unexpected,” she laughs. “I like David Guetta, Zedd and Calvin Harris. My kids find all the new music and they just put it on my iPod. I don’t even necessarily know the artist, but I have a couple of friends that just text me. I got one last night. ‘This song just dropped –you gotta get it.’ Skrillex, I love, love, love Skrillex.”

If your family were to describe you in one word, what word would they choose?

“Loving.”

Favorite television show now, and when you were growing up?

“*Scandal!* *Wonder Years*, *Happy Days*, and *Growing Pains* (which her brother Kirk starred in).” **ML**