

“What can I say about Dom? I first crossed paths with Dom when I was just 17 years old, and little did I know that this chance encounter would change the course of my life. Dom, my mentor, became so much more than that; he was like a father to me. Under his guidance, I not only improved my drumming skills but also learned valuable lessons about teaching, conducting clinics, performing with bands, and managing my own business. I can unequivocally assert that without Dom Famularo, I wouldn’t be living my dream as a professional drummer. We became associates and started conducting clinics together, teaching, co-authoring books, and leading educational programs for our sponsors. The memories of our time together are abundant and treasured. Dom would dedicate entire days to teaching me, and during our breaks, he’d take me to restaurants where he’d share profound life insights, always leaving me inspired.

I vividly recall a moment during a lesson when he noticed I didn’t have an agenda, and he promptly took me to Staples to get me one. His unwavering dedication to my growth was evident in every action. Or during another lesson, after four years, he said, ‘You are ready for Jim Chapin,’ and Dom immediately called Jim to invite him to the studio for my lesson. I had the opportunity to continue with Jim for four years. Dom also connected me with fifteen teachers in New York while assisting me in organizing my time and practice to absorb all that knowledge effectively. One particularly memorable occasion involved an extended seven-hour lesson that stretched late into the night. Afterward, we decided to



buy steaks and fire up Dom’s barbecue. The experience was nothing short of unforgettable. We savored our meal around 11 pm., and then, with an infectious enthusiasm, we found ourselves back at the drums to continue the lesson. It was always very intense with Dom. He consistently encouraged me to perform for other students, even when I had just completed a grueling 12-hour drive. Despite my exhaustion, he was teaching me the valuable lesson of pushing my limits and motivating myself. This skill has since become an essential asset during my travels and tours.

Another remarkable chapter in my journey with Dom unfolded at the Cape Breton Drum Festival in Canada. English being my second language and in the process of learning it, Dom presented me with a challenge: ‘Steph, I want you to be the event’s emcee.’ It was a deliberate push outside my comfort zone, a hallmark of Dom’s teaching style. I realized this was a crucial step in my growth, and it became an incredible experience. Suddenly, the sole French speaker in the room was conducting the presentations in English. That’s the essence of Dom—he constantly placed us in situations where we could expand our horizons and learn beyond our comfort zones. During our outings for pizza in New York, Dom would always ask, ‘What do you like?’ My response would be, ‘I like cheese. I like vegetables. I like Chicken.’ To this, he’d say, ‘Great, now pick something you didn’t mention.’ Always encouraging me to try new things and embrace the richness of life itself in the little things. Onward and Upward!”

—Stephane Chamberland