

Discover Your Potential

By Louis Castro, PT, DPT

Hispanic, overweight,
lonely, and insecure
from eight to sixteen,
I'm not sure?

Always in trouble
At home, in class ...
Parents always arguing
Who never finished high school.

The doctor said no more
rice or tortillas ...
WHAT — are you serious?
We have to get your waist down.

Home was a war zone,
screaming, yelling, tears.
Damn alcohol takes
another family victim.

Trying to fit in,
to find the right crew
growing up, juggling life.
No drugs, no alcohol,
just want to be accepted,
just want to be cool.

This war never ends.
Looked for any excuse to leave,
to escape the pain.
Oddly enough, alcohol
helped me stay sane.

10th grade, another test failed.

Another dozen visits

to the principal's office.

Louis, what's happening?

You're going off the rails.

College? No way;

I didn't know what it was —

Parties? Natural ice and drugs?

And residency? Grad school?

Pshh forget that shit.

Another test —Wait—89—

Woah, I passed?

Who is this?

Louis! Looks like you

might have a chance.

You were walking in the dark alone.

No lights, no path, no guide.

Until somebody helped you see

a bright light—a potential.

You had missed it. You were blind.

The small flame inside shines bright.

A soft voice helps you look and see —

remember why you're alive!

Along the journey,

things challenge you —

a few bad chapters,

disappointments, bruises.

They do not define you.

It's hard. You will fail,

but get up, you got this.

All that matters

is how you respond.

Each moment a new moment,

each day is a new day.

You define your attitude

based on what you say.

Adversity is scary,

but don't be afraid.

One step at a time —
you'll cross the finish line.

after every storm
sun and rainbows shine.

Celebrate small victories.

Just take a moment,

Eh! Drink some wine!

stand tall, breathe,

look in the mirror.

Challenge yourself.

See how far you've come.

Discover who you are.

Don't give up, because

About the Author/s



Louis Castro, PT, DPT is a physical therapist in Southern California. Originally from Long Island, NY, he never expected to land on the West Coast. He is a first-generation student who has obtained both an undergraduate and graduate degree. He graduated from Sacred Heart University with an Exercise Science Bachelor's degree, followed by a Doctoral degree at the University of Southern California Doctorate Physical Therapy program. He never imagined this would be the career he would fall in love with. However, adversity throughout his life had been a blessing in disguise. Therefore, he strongly believes that providing inspirational hope to others can unfold a potential unseen, just as it had for him. "Believing in yourself is the first step."