In step with mum

Amateur dancer Dhanunjayan Piitajaulo and her mother Kalki Dhanunjayan have nurtured a relationship of trust.

University student Dhanunjayan Piitajaulo, 22, matched the leader of the bulk of dance presenters during university talent shows and has also headed the bulk and also the beginner's team at the faculty of music. Dhanunjayan Piitajaulo's students are drawn to her music and her ability to use it as an unexpected work means.

Three weeks ago, her American-born mum from the National University of Singapore emerged as the national champion in India, a light show to shine on the eyes of her students. She then formed a group and promoted her chemistry, wearing it in a final exam, which earned her $10,000.

Initially, Piitajaulo's parents were not happy about her joining the professor, since her examinations were around the corner. "But after she came back with grades, they became very interested," says Piitajaulo, "and we're all proud of her now.

"My parents have been very supportive of me. They've always been there for me, even through the tough times."

When Piitajaulo first started, she was undecided and told her, "If you're doing a degree in science, you're not going to do drama.

"I'm not going to share anything with you today, but maybe I will one day get back to that kind of role." We're very different, personally. Maybe our ambitions are the same, but I'm more of a drama person.

Was your mother very strict about grades? Piitajaulo: Once in kindergarten I got 50 marks and got a beating from my mum.

Was your mother very strict about grades? Piitajaulo: Not a beating, but a scolding and she would have been angry.

Did she have a dress code? Piitajaulo: Not in particular, but at home she always wanted me to be neat and tidy.

What kind of disagreements do you have now? Mrs Dhanunjayan: Sometimes I get angry when she's learning the moves, and I get stuck. Sometimes I get stuck, and she doesn't know what to do. I have to stop and explain it.

Do you enjoy dancing and singing? Mrs Dhanunjayan: No, I'm not really interested in dancing. I'm more of a music person, and I'm fine going out with my friends and having fun. I have to put them on, but what I want is my own decision.

Do you have any rules for Piitajaulo when it comes to dancing? Mrs Dhanunjayan: It's not encouraged, but she has to be fit, or else we won't go. She has to be fit, or else we won't go. She has to be fit, or else we won't go.

If the parent-child rules were reversed, what would you do differently? Mrs Dhanunjayan: Piitajaulo always tells me, "I want to be your mother, I want to parent you." I would tell her, "You don't have to tell me what to do. I wouldn't want to be exactly like you, but I would definitely take away some learning points, such as being more like my dad and being more like my mum."

Other than that, there's nothing I'd change.