

Zen Letter #5  
January 1, 2009

"The function of leadership is to produce more leaders, not more followers" ~ Ralph Nader

Hello everybody out in E-mail land, welcome to Zen Letter number five(#5)! As I begin to write this letter to you, it is January 1st 2009! Wow, the days and years just move on by don't they? Well, if you are like me, with a New Year comes new goals and ideas. These goals `we' create to challenge our hearts and minds. As we all know, our past does not equal our future. It is true that we must study our past to know our future....but with each day comes a wonderful opportunity to create lasting change in our lives, and the lives of all those around us. How exciting is it that we can achieve anything that we really put our minds to? Wouldn't you agree that, as women and men, we can achieve any goal, fueled by our passion and hard work? I really believe that blessings are all around us every day, and these blessings can bring inspiration, motivation, satisfaction, and contentment. Our thoughts, our dreams, our accomplishments, our future- these are the things of miracles and wonder. Now, where am I going with all of this? Year after year I watch people set goals for themselves, and create great momentum in the hope that they will win and overcome the challenges that they have put in front of themselves. Some do indeed meet their resolution goals, and savor the feelings and empowerment of a personal victory. This is fantastic indeed. Then there are some that fall short and quit, all the while making excuses to themselves as to why it will never work or why it cannot be done.....Brothers and Sisters, you CAN do it! Write down your goals and have a clear plan how you can win and achieve. One at a time, finish the task ahead of you and do not quit until it is accomplished, then on to the next goal with confident momentum. Keep your chin up and expect some hardship from time to time. Understand that some time we must fight the good fight all by ourselves. Life is about personal growth and living life to the best of our abilities. You never know who is looking to you as a role model, as a hero, or as an inspiration. Live by example and inspire others with your actions, not just your words. Always believe that you can and will do it, this is key to your success. I have faith in you. You will win my friend. Happy New Year, let's make it Great!

"Keep your fears to yourself, but share your inspiration with others" ~ Robert Lewis Stevenson

So, what is in store for Zen Dragon School of Martial Arts in 2009? Well, every year I set goals for myself and my students. How we all can be better people and better martial artists, and this year is no different.

1) Seminars: Fumio Demura will be at the school on Saturday, Jan. 31st. 2009. This is a chance to meet and train with a living Legend who will change the lives of all who meet him. At over 80 years old it is a glimpse into the future of what a life of honest training can accomplish. We have less than 20 tickets left and they will sell, so PLEASE do not wait to purchase yours. The seminar will be on the True Art of Karate. Anyone who loves these beautiful arts will benefit from time spent with Grandmaster Demura. This man travels all over the world and has trained many thousands of people, from movie stars, to politicians, to serious aficionados of the Art. Please see Heidi or write me back if you are interested in one of the remaining tickets.

2) Chess club was a Great success! It was a time to meet and greet the students of Zen Dragon. At all ages and skill levels it was a Blast! We will see more of these Chess club meetings soon. We also will have a Movie night too, I promise.

3) Tournaments: There will be at least two(2) tournaments in 2009. This is a time to train hard and compete against like minded and skilled martial artists from other schools and within our own school. Everyone does not win 1st place, but that is not the real goal. The real power of competition is confidence building self achievement, goal setting(to do the best that a student can), sportsmanship, Conquering fears and self doubt, rejoicing together with family, fellow students, and friends. Self Confidence in the knowledge that hard work pays off on so many levels.

4) School and curriculum growth- every year is better than the year before on every level. This is as it should be. Martial Arts is a life style, not just a sport.

5) Students getting stronger, sharper, focused, and better. Support in the dojo and at home help make and keep our school amazing. You can help by showing your school spirit. Encourage each other to bring out the best.

Walk the walk, talk the talk, and live the life of a Martial Artist. Our duty is to help make the world a better place, but it must start within ourselves. Encourage your kids at ALL times. Help them love themselves and believe that they can do anything that they put their mind to. If YOU get passionate about their training (not just 1 or 2 times a week)- and help them to be proud of themselves, their Martial Arts will just get better and better. Sure we have up days as well as down, but we must always be patient, supportive and positive.

6) We have a GREAT contest going on now at Zen Dragon- you or your children can earn Dojo Dollars by bringing in friends to join. Each new join is \$40 Dojo dollars -per new student. Bring in four(4) new students, from different families- earn a total of \$160.00 Dojo Dollars AND at 4 students you/they win \$200 cash also. (that is \$360 total for 4 students). Talk about goal setting, here it is. Again, ask Heidi or write me back for details. Get Going! Contest Ends on February 28th 2009.(you have 2 months) Good Luck- you can do it!

7) By the way, please, let me ask you a question....Do you print these letters out and save them? Do you read them to your kids? Always remember, a student is trying to earn a Black Belt.....this is not an A in gym class.- this is not a touch down or a foul shot - this is not par or a pin – this IS a life style. Black Belt qualities are respected worldwide. A Black Belt has worked very hard to achieve these goals...Help make it better by taking part in everything possible to succeed and you or your child will be a better person for it. Sooooo get printing, reading and saving these letters. Talk about them with fellow students or family. Get passionate and excited about your life and the future. If we all work together we can move mountains and change the world in a positive way, one person at a time. Do you remember the other 4 letters?hmmmm....Did you share your thoughts with fellow students or family?? If you did, thank you sooo much. If not, get to work on successful training(mind, body, and spirit)- I have faith in you.(print)

8) Get excited about life! Turn off your TV- (I did 12 years ago and love it)- Put down the video game controller- Enjoy outside and fresh air. Enjoy the simple things that life gives us for free. Have a day where nothing but positive things come into your thinking! Share as many smiles and good feelings that you can with as many people that you can! Be the change in the world that you wish to see! Have faith and be alive, really alive- every day!- Love your life and share the vibes! Wink in the mirror often and wash it down with a big thumbs up!!! Really Love Yourself! It is a New Year everybody! Lets make is Incredible and Amazing! Thank you again for your time.

Sincerely, David Bowers, 6th dan - owner/chief instructor of Zen Dragon School of Martial Arts

"If your actions inspire others to dream more, learn more, do more and become more, you are a leader."~ John Quincy Adams