

Zen Letter #6
February 9, 2009

"Leave nothing for tomorrow which can be done today" ~ Abraham Lincoln ~ (this Thursday Lincoln will turn 200!)

Hello everybody! Today is February 8th, 2009, Heidi and myself had a wonderful day off today. We did something amazing....we went for a walk. Why so amazing? Please let me tell you why. It was Beautiful outside: the sky, clouds, birds, saying "hello" to those we passed, talking together, admiring everything we saw, breathing in the fresh air, the sunshine on our faces~ good for the spirit! The fact that it was FREE is another bonus. No matter what the face of our nation, the sky remains blue and the clouds white on sunny day. Our house has no cable T.V. or any video game systems, (I can only imagine what they would do to a person's budget- I read that it is all pretty expensive). I am a big fan of using coupons and shopping. We love to cook at home and re-heat the leftovers, always thankful. One of our favorite things to do is sit and look out our windows of our house. Birds are so free and squirrels so agile, live and fantastic. I believe to connect with nature is to connect with God and ourselves. So for such a great day we spent,- \$0 and enjoyed leftovers. Drank tea and had good conversation mixed with a little exercise and clean air. Every day I pray and meditate for my fellow man and the spirit of our STILL great nation. What makes a people great? Money?...no, rich people are sad many times too. Power?.....that word depends on the person telling the story. Strong or meek can demonstrate power. Fame and prestige?....that is just silly. That all can fade away in an instant. I believe that a person is great because of who they really are inside, how much a person gives back or how much they appreciate everything and anything. Freedom of choice, then to chose to love and be kind to their fellow man and woman. A positive spirit is so important to inspire, I believe. In my opinion too many people spend money to find happiness. This works for a little while, maybe not at all. This is very common. Too many people have a hole and try to fill it with "things"- When spending causes more pain than good, then it should not be done. I am not trying to say horde your cash, (but everyone should save for a rainy day indeed), but do not spend to find happiness. This must come from within to be genuine and lasting. The purpose of life is to find happiness and joy. Whether through family, friends, religion, inner peace, pets, thoughts, physical health or whatever the roots, we all wish to be happy in an honest way, I believe. I want you to know something.....I BELIEVE IN YOU!!! I am writing you this letter, (on my day off=)], because I do care about you and your well being. I wish for everyone I know to help make the world a better place for today and tomorrow through compassion and understanding. Would you do me a favor? Would you write me back and let me know some things that you do that make you have joy and happiness? I would love to connect. Maybe you can give me a couple of ideas too. So anyway, on to the letter. ~

"Fathom the Essences of the Art of Peace and age disappears. You only feel old when you lose your way and stray from the path."~Morihei Ueshiba

1) Support your kids! Ask lots of questions and be a person that they can come to in good times and bad. Be a good parent first and a friend who listens second. Understand their needs and appreciate that no two kids are the same. Encourage them to be the best they can be. Lead by example, (what you put in, you will get out). Take time to watch their Martial Arts. If you really do not care how well they do, what makes you think that they will. A child just wants to please their mother and father and make them proud.

2) Have you watched them at practice lately with a positive and encouraging spirit? Just give them a little of your time and it will be a wise investment into a confident son or daughter. I often see parents in the dojo and this makes me soooo happy. Then, often times, the child gets a green, blue or brown belt and the parents might show up to watch a test. Then a parent says, "I just can't get them to practice at home." If you care more, so will they. Always remember, martial arts philosophy will last a life time if done right. Done right is to earn a Black Belt with a confident spirit. I promise, it is worth it.

3) Have you thought about joining and getting in really good shape? Yes, it is hard work at first, but you will understand what the students go through and the challenges they overcome every class. Ask a friend to join with you if you are nervous to go it alone, (2 free weeks). You will Love the Transformation of a new and better you.

4) For those who do not know how the system works, here goes: A student can buy sparring gear at any time, but at green belt, they MUST!~~ At green belt a student can wear a Black Uniform. This ALWAYS does wonders

to a student's confidence and overall feeling in the dojo. They are now advanced belts at green.~~ Patches MUST be put on uniforms, (Zen Dragon on front, yin/yang on right arm and American Flag on left arm). This is part of the uniform and is expected. We are a Martial Arts school committed to excellence.~~ At Orange or Green Belt they should own a Bo Staff, (stick 4' or 5' or 6'), {see Heidi}~~ At Blue Belt they should own their own set of Kamas, (these are NOT sharp at all), they are a traditional Karate weapon and training tool. This builds a better student.~~ A student's name should be put on all their gear in case of loss.~~ Uniforms are to be kept neat and clean~~ Students must be on time if at all possible for class.

5) No FOUL language permitted in Dojo from students or parents or guests, ever. No inappropriate talk of people, school, dojo, class mates, teachers, parents, etc. will be tolerated. We are a school that promotes the positive side to life and goal setting. Help us help you and the students of Zen Dragon stay on a good path.

6) I strongly encourage a student to try and take part in the seminars at Zen Dragon. Tickets are limited to every seminar, but every one WILL teach something incredible and life changing to the Martial Artist. These are quite literally the BEST in the world, no exaggeration. What you put in, will come back out.

7) There will be TWO FREE women's workouts to any woman who wishes to get back into better shape on Feb. 20th and 27th, (Fridays- see calendar). - Like I said...FREE 2 weeks. All women ages 12 and older. This class will be taught by Second Degree Black Belt, Cassandra Shoenerberger, and it looks to be a fun good time for the ladies, (parents welcome too).

8) Montessori School Demonstration was a great showing and a marvelous time. Thank you to all the students and parents who helped out.

9) Chess Club and Movie Night- { I did not forget, I do miss them}. We have just hit a couple busy weeks/months without any free days, (today was our only day off in the last 3 weeks), so please be patient, they WILL return SOON!

10) ALWAYS know how much you and your family mean to us. We love you. I have taught the martial arts for over 25 years, and it gets better every year. YOU are the reason. God has blessed us with being surrounded by such wonderful people. Again, thank YOU my friends!

"Being the stream of the universe, ever true and unswerving, become as a little child once more." - Tao Te Ching

Stay strong always my friend and remember to let me know the answers to the questions I asked you. Much Love~ peace and zen to you, God Bless~ David Bowers 6th degree black belt and proud owner of The Zen Dragon School of Martial Arts~

"Humility makes great men twice honorable." ~ Benjamin Franklin