



ZenQuest Martial Arts Center

55 Pittsfield Road-Building 10, Lenox, MA 01240

(413) 637-0656 * train@zenquestmac.com * www.zenquestmac.com

An Okinawa Karatedo Association, Demian Mata Jiu-jitsu Network and Siyodtong Boston Affiliate

NEWSLETTER May 2024

Martial Materialism Part II Focusing On What's Important

Last month we took a look at common distractions that get in the way of the personal development that we can gain from our journey in the martial arts. This is known as 'spiritual materialism' in endeavors like Yoga or Meditation, and can be called 'martial materialism' when applied to the martial arts. To combat martial materialism, practitioners and instructors alike must emphasize the importance of inner cultivation along with the physical training. Here are some specific strategies the student can use for that purpose:

Immersion In Training - One of the best ways to keep on the path of real development is to stay focused on the training. When drilling in class try to practice immersion, being thoughtful of the technical aspects of the material. It is not that we cannot enjoy our training at the same time, but our priority should be focused on the training.

Cultivate Mindfulness - Incorporate mindfulness into training through practices of concentration, awareness, calmness, breathing exercises, and reflective thinking into martial arts training. These practices help cultivate our focus, self-awareness, emotional resilience, and a deeper understanding of our martial arts journey. A focus on mindfulness will also improve our mind-body connection which can also improve the quality of our lives.

Focus on Personal Growth - Practitioners should focus on their personal journey of growth and self-improvement rather than seeking external validation or comparing themselves to others. We should enjoy the culture, gear, friendships, and experiences in our journey but not let those things distract us from our personal development. Special attention should be given to the principles of Mushin, Zanshin, & Fudoshin...Clarity, Awareness & Calmness.

Emphasize Core Values - Martial arts should be grounded in core values such as respect, honor, responsibility, and perseverance. These are covered in the ZenQuest 'Code of Conduct', and form the foundation of true martial arts practice. These should be learned and woven into every aspect of our training.

Practice Humility - Adopt a culture of humility and continuous learning within the martial arts community. Students should approach training with an open mind and a willingness to learn. Students must show respect for all levels of skill and experience in the dojo and help to foster a positive learning environment for all there. In the martial arts we learn by DOING. At times, we



(Continued on page 4)

<i>In this Issue</i>	<i>Page</i>
MARTIAL MATERIALISM PART II: FOCUSING ON WHAT'S IMPORTANT	1, 4
IMPORTANT REMINDERS, ADVANCED CONCEPTS	2
PROMOTIONS, DATES TO NOTE, NEW STUDENTS, BIRTHDAYS, TERMINOLOGY	3
LIGHTS, CAMERAS, ACTION	4

Important Reminders

Below is some super important reminders for students and parents for optimizing their martial arts journey at ZenQuest. Please take note of the following:

Optimizing Attendance In order to guarantee a long and successful experience in the martial arts it is very important to managing our training properly. This means setting a schedule for regular attendance and sticking to it. For children ages 7 to 12 we recommend two or three classes each week (one or two classes per week for kids ages 4 to 6.) Less than this may result in them getting discouraged because of slow progress, and more will likely result in them getting burned out over time. For adults we recommend attending two to four classes per week (in each art they choose.) Adults are usually able to manage 'burn-out' better than kids, backing off on attendance a bit when needed.

Following Etiquette Students need to learn and be aware of the expectations in the dojo/gym for actions and behavior. This starts with being sure to arrive for classes between fifteen and five minutes before classes start. For kids, this means that parents are responsible for this part of their participation. Once at the gym, everyone is expected to follow the rules for conduct including cleanliness, coachability, and respect towards others. Students who are unable to follow the rules for conduct will experience delays in advancement and, in extreme cases, removal from the school.

Tuition Due Dates Students who choose to attend classes using 'incremental' enrollments (those for one month, three months, etc.) are responsible for keeping track of their tuition schedule and keeping their enrollment current. Although we provide reminders at the front desk, students and parents are ultimately responsible to make their tuition payments on or before their due dates. **Students must renew their membership in order to attend classes on the day of their due date.** Also, missed classes may be 'made-up' during a student's enrollment period, but cannot be used to extend their due date. All of these issues can be avoided by enrolling via our 'EasyPay' subscription option. For more information on this please stop at the front desk or send us a message.



Advanced Concepts News

We recently finished out our latest round of 'Advanced Concepts' clinics at ZenQuest with seminars for Sityodtong Muay Thai and Demian Maia Jiu-jitsu. As previously reported, an AC clinic had already been held for advanced Uechi-Ryu students back on March 16.

On Saturday, April 13 eligible students attended the latest advanced Muay Thai clinic. After a brief discussion on teaching and advanced training issues, the group were taken through some 'Block and Return' drills to develop intelligent reactions and counters to common attacks. The drills first focused on isolating one attack and response at a time, but finished with combining all of the drills together in a more 'free flowing' format.

The last of the AC clinics in this round was held for a healthy group of our Jiu-jitsu students on Saturday, April 27. In it we covered material from the Demian Maia 'Backpack System.' This Included important principles of back control, maintaining and recovering position, and different attack strategies.

At the conclusion of this seminar several promotions were awarded including: Andrey Norin, Elias Casey, and Zachary Kmetz to Blue Belt; Levi Giumarra to 2-Stripe Yellow/White Belt, Jennifer Somerville and Matt Moreau to 4-Stripe Blue Belt; Dan Dufur and Chris Kupernik to 1-Stripe Purple Belt; Russ Moody and Glen Giumarra to 2-Stripe Purple Belt. Congratulations to ALL and thanks to everyone who participated in this round of AC clinics!



IMPORTANT DATES

May 25 & 27 - NO CLASSES
 June 1 - NAGA Albany
 June 29 - No Boundary Muay Thai
 July 14, 1:30 pm - Kyu Test
 July 21 thru July 28 - 2024 Kikai Camp

NEW STUDENTS!

Welcome: Rothana Chin, Josie Cusak, Luc Kastrinakis, Malcolm Kastrinakis, West Brokaw, Nathan Terry, Jules Junkins, Jess Levy, Eli Geminder

Welcome Back: Nathan Terry, Chris Manley, Jason LeFerbvre, Charlie Guyer & Sean Callahan

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

Shaun Courtney 5/3
 Craig Jones 5/7
 Malcolm Kastrinakis 5/7
 Mahad Ali 5/8
 Brody Mechek 5/8
 Robert Inesta 5/10
 Kathy Petrucci 5/11
 Andrew Arce 5/15
 Mathieu Moreau 5/19
 Shawn Chambers 5/20
 Oscar Southard 5/20
 Emily Gabriel 5/21
 Weston Aube 5/23
 Jedd Hall 5/25
 Amanda Saunders 5/25
 Ella Piretti 5/25
 Christopher Boyle 5/27
 Connie Gordon 5/29
 Citlali Hernandez 5/29
 Gustavo Perez 5/31

RECENT PROMOTIONS**TIGERS:**

5kyu - Caleb Tullock
 6kyu - Arthur Coleman, Logan Polk
 7kyu - Aarav Bansal
 8kyu - Landon Prior, Oscar Southard
 9kyu - Sam Gariepy

DRAGONS:

5kyu - Lana Darby, James Polk
 6kyu - Paige Blake, Joel Ospina, Montanna Inesta
 8kyu - Myra Bansal

COBRAS:

8kyu - Nilani Broussard
 9kyu - Roman Bates

PYTHONS:

2-stripe yellow - Levi Giumarra
 1-stripe grey/white - Montanna Inests
 3-stripe white - Sebastian Chavez-Norbury, Myra Bansal
 2-stripe white - Penelope Chavez-Norbury, Henry Fougere
 1-stripe white - Lily Huh, Sienna Huh

JIU-JITSU:

4-stripe brown - Matt Gerlitz
 2-stripe purple - Russ Moody, Glenn Giumarra
 1-stripe purple - Dan Dufur, Chris Kupernik
 4-stripe blue - Matt Moreau, Jenn Sommerville
 Blue - Zach Kmetz, Elias Casey, Andrey Norin

MUAY THAI:

White - Mary Hannah Parkman

Terminology**Progress**

Japanese: Shinchoku
 Brazilian: Progresso
 Thai: Cerun

**“Best Martial Arts Academy”
 ZenQuest Martial Arts**

*Berkshire Eagle's
 Readers Choice Awards
 SEVEN years
 running!*



Lights, Cameras, Action

We recently installed cameras in our training rooms and a monitor in the reception room. This allows students and families to watch what's happening in our training rooms in real-time. This is a closed system at ZenQuest which cannot be shared or published anywhere. The system is currently functioning, but we are already looking at ways of making it better.

Many of our students and parents will remember when we had a fitness room between the two training rooms. This space had fitness equipment in it like treadmills, a stationary bike, a squat rack, a weight-bench, and a variety of weights. It also had shelves and hooks for storing different targets used in classes. This room also served as a place where family members or prospective students could watch classes at times through one-way mirrors.

During the pandemic most of that fitness equipment was sold off because the gym was in financial survival mode. Once we were able to reopen (following a four-month closure) that room was used as a place for students to hang jackets and place shoes. At that time there was one-way traffic through the building and students would exit from the side door in the fitness room. Once we were able to go back to our normal mode of operation, we were faced with a choice of rebooting the fitness room, or simply converting the space to additional training space. With classes busier than ever, we chose to incorporate that space into the back training room in 2022. Unfortunately, eliminating the fitness room also meant that people would no longer have a place to easily view classes. However, the new video monitor set-up will provide a convenient alternative for that.



(Continued from page 1) **Martial Materialism Part II**

must work out how to execute a technique without knowing exactly how to do it at first. This means that making mistakes is actually part of the learning process. Even after mastering a good portion of a martial art, we will have moments where we will be humbled. Having humility is the only way to endure these challenges.

Learn About Tradition - Learning the history, philosophy, and cultural heritage of a martial art will provide a stronger connection to that style. Understanding the roots of the art can instill a greater sense of respect and appreciation for it beyond the physical techniques and strategies. This also enables the senior student to share these aspects of their art with others.

Try Service - Service in the martial arts starts with being a good student and setting a good example for others in the gym. It also means doing our best to be a good training partner and exercising 'partner preservation', keeping our partners safe and healthy. More experienced students may take on a teaching role at their gym to expand a 'generous mind' and give back to the martial art that they've benefited from. Lastly, engaging in community service projects, charitable initiatives, or outreach programs will demonstrate the positive impact of martial arts practice beyond individual achievements.

By embracing these principles and practices, martial artists can transcend martial materialism and rediscover the true essence of their art. Ultimately, martial arts is not just about winning competitions, earning belts, or dominating others; it's about inner transformation, self-discovery, and the pursuit of excellence of the mind, body, and spirit.