



GMA News Feb 23

Congrats to our newest LD graduates: Clara Gibson and Adam Spiering

Upcoming events:

Feb 11 th	Black belt prep 9:00-10:30
Feb 18 th	Leadership Team 9:00-10:30
Feb 18 th	Demo Team 10:30-11:30
Feb 18 th	Stick fighting 12:00-2:30
Feb 18 th	Korea trip planning meeting—updates and fundraiser planning 5:15 before game night.
Feb 18 th	Go and other Game Night-- Go explanation at 6:00, all others at 7:00-9:00
Feb 25 th	Korea trip Private Lesson Fundraiser 9:00-11:30
March 3 rd	TKD testing 5:30 (No TKD class)

Valentine Passes Coming Soon

Don't forget to look out for our annual Valentine Day Guest Passes to share with your friends. If they bring one in, they get the bonus, and you still get the referral credit on your tuition.

GMA Wishes a Happy Birthday to:

AJ Starodub	02/02	Adama Diallo	02/04	Katie Mason	02/04
Amojean Olvey	02/05	Rylan Jones	02/06	Maddox Sparks	02/07
Nico Inman	02/07	Finnegan Vandewalle	02/10	Eli Gaskin	02/10
Jasper Scott	02/10	Eli Elmore	02/12	Michael Heady	02/12
Kimberlee Diallo	02/14	Dawson Lane	02/17	Elisabeth Workman	02/17
Mikayla Kirk	02/20	Chuck Goforth	02/21	Dillon Dudley	02/21
Collin Goodner	02/22	Aubrey Ledford	02/22	Bentley Collins	02/23
Rylee Bryant	02/25				

Quotes of the Week

This month we will be revisiting our focus points.

Training Anniversaries

Cathy Petraits (TCC 13 yrs.)	Clay Thacker (BJJ 11 yrs.)	Annika Gray (TKD 5 yrs.)
Joseph Runnebohm (TKD 3 yrs.)	Jude Haywood (HKD 2 yrs.)	Dawson Lane (TKD 1 yr.)
James Russell (LD 1 yr.)	Seth Mackin (BJJ 1 yr.)	Lily McDonald (TKD 1 yr.)

This Month in Martial Arts History (selected from "Dates with Destiny" in *Martial Arts Success* by John Corcoran.)

Feb 1882	Jigoro Kano opens the Kodokan and becomes the founder of Judo.
Feb 2, 1965,	Brandon Lee's (son of Bruce Lee) birthday
Feb 12 1968,	Jean Jacques Machado (BJJ pioneer) birthday
Feb 22, 1972,	Kung Fu debuts on TV and starts a craze.
Feb 26, 1988,	Blood sport with Jean-Claude Van Damme is released, inspiring Mr. Sieg and countless others.



More on How Martial Arts and Goal Setting Go Hand in Hand, Including Concepts of Yin-Yang

Our students are once again completing the goal setting exercise we start at the beginning of each year, and we take that exercise very seriously. Obviously, we are biased, but we think the martial arts are a great way to learn the valuable life lesson of goal setting. Besides teaching the discipline, focus, and perseverance required to succeed not only in martial arts but in other arenas of life. Their rank progression of belts gives a great example of short term and long-term goals, breaking the bigger goal of black belt up into more manageable steps along the way. And yes, our goal setting exercise requires students to also set other goals such as financial ones, but the way ordinary people win with money is by steady, consistent, and disciplined efforts (kinda like martial arts practice.) I think martial arts teach many additional lessons relevant to goal setting, including some that are seemingly at odds with peoples' goals that are focused on outcomes. Some of these are issues that I have wrestled with in my own goal setting.

For starters, goals must be realistic. Psychology takes note of those people who fantasize about lofty long-term goals, such as becoming a doctor or professional athlete, but who make no short or intermediate term goals or other action plan to get there. Initially, in the short term, they feel good about themselves for setting such an ambitious goal, but long term, they actually feel worse because they didn't come close, or didn't even really try to achieve their aspirations. As noted, the belt progression is a great way to help avoid that in martial arts practice, but it doesn't help everyone. Besides being our goal setting time, January is also the time we have several people join us as part of their New Year aspirations. We of course welcome new, enthusiastic students, and believe their choice to start martial arts is an important one. But when we see people enroll with the ambition to be amazing BJJ fighters, only to find out how much work it is, or get otherwise distracted, or make class once a month, I wonder how they "feel" in retrospect about their martial arts career. What feelings do you associate with another woulda, coulda, shoulda?

At the same time, goals must also be a challenge. The last few years I have crushed my reading goal, which gives me a hit of dopamine when I look at my finished stack of books. This year I raised my quota. If I just barely reached my old goal this year, even though I technically met it, I would consider it to be a serious backslide, so I will probably be happier and get farther reaching for this new standard. Similarly, as a school, we have had terrific enrollment numbers. I would have been ecstatic if you told me during the covid shutdowns that a few years later we would rebound this strong. I try to not get too caught up in the numbers here because that is not our true mission, but I still make goals and performance measures for us as an organization. The numbers I originally had in my mind from a few years ago would not be much of a stretch...we are very close to hitting them already. So, I have increased them to a level that makes sense, attainable, but at the same time makes me uncomfortable.

Simultaneously, there is something to be said for being grateful and happy for where we are and not being too obsessed with more. Perhaps this is the yin and yang of goal setting...being happy but not satisfied. Learning to be content but striving to be more. It is indeed a difficult balance to achieve. And there is also a component of the martial arts that teaches about living in the moment and being accepting of circumstances.

The martial arts are also about enjoying and focusing on the process and not being too preoccupied with the outcome. We even have maxims about embracing the suck and eating bitter, because life is hard and a struggle sometime. We talk about falling down 7 times and getting up 8 in order to acknowledge failure is going to happen, and we talk about investing in loss.

But here is the catch...all of those phrases are ultimately to improve us, to adapt and overcome, to better ourselves. We embrace the suck not to relish in it, but accept it is making us better so things will suck less in the future. We invest in loss now to have more wins down the road. We enjoy the process along the way, but we trust the process will improve us.

Norman Mailer once said "Every moment of one's existence, one is growing into more or retreating into less. One is always living a little more or dying a little bit." That is why we set goals, even when by all accounts we are doing fine. Because the alternative to continuing to grow is starting to die. And that is why I think martial arts and goal setting go hand in hand. It teaches the discipline to keep coming to class, and every class we are trying to punch a little harder, understand technique a little better, sharpen the blade a little more. And being complacent in class comes with corrective feedback...tapping in sparring, failing a belt test, etc. Conversely, when you achieve your next belt, you can take pride in your accomplishment, but you also get right to work on the next one. That is life...there is another mountain to climb on the other side. That is why we continue to set goals, because we are made to keep fighting.