

September 2008

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# Inner Strength

## now

A *Blue Dragon School of Martial Arts* PUBLICATION  
FULFILLING THE NEED FOR PERSONAL SAFETY & WELLNESS

*Gerry Picardi was the first student in the first class Shifu Ahles ever taught, way back in 1986. Now that's perseverance...*

## Like It Or Not... You're A Role Model

At various times I have observed a very well-known or famous person, be it athlete, actor, or musical talent, make a statement such as, "I'm no role model. I just do what I do and that's no one else's business." Well, in today's world more so than any time in history, Mr. or Ms. Famous Person, you are wrong, both in principle and awareness: People are watching, and learning.

We are all role models. No one is an island, isolated from the rest. Our every action and reaction can and does

get scrutinized by whomever is in our vicinity. And if you are someone who others admire or look up to, look out. You are even more responsible, like it or not.

Like a parent to a child, where the child absorbs everything they see, hear and feel, what you put out is what that child takes in. If you tend to overreact to little meaningless things, always turning molehills into mountains, that is exactly what that child is learning to do. If you're stressed and irritable, that

*(Continued on page 2)*



## Miracle-Gro For Your Brain

Dr. Carl Cotman, scientist and director of the Institute for Brain Aging and Dementia at the University of CA, Irvine, has conducted studies on the effects of exercise on the brain and one large study on aging demonstrated that exercise is one of the factors that delayed the onset of diseases like Alzheimer's and dementia.

Dr. Cotman's studies have shown that exercise elevates a protein that helps build and maintain brain cell connections called BDNF, or brain-derived neurotrophic factor.

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## Role Model



Role model.

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too is exactly what your child is learning to be like. Think about it: how do you treat your significant other? Your own parents? Your neighbors? Your service people? Do you stay up late and watch T.V., missing the quality sleep you need? Does your significant other stay up with you because they would like to be in your company? Who's watching? Who's follow-

ing?  
Think also about all the various derogatory phrases that you may have been exposed to in your life. Who started it? Who said it first? It sure got around didn't it?  
I see it in my own children, as I'll hear the same words come out of my son's mouth that are frequently used by the Mrs. and me. His attitude toward things is like ours. And I see fears taking shape that may not

make any sense to me, or many others for that matter, but you'll find that my wife has them too. And our six-month old sits there with her bright eyes watching, listening, and taking it all in. We are already shaping her perspective of this world we all live in. We are responsible for more than the obvious.  
**How much do we influence each other?**

*(Continued on page 3)*

## Attention To Details

*"I graduated as the number one student in the class with an average grade of 94%. I was not any smarter or more intelligent than any of the other students, but I had a distinct advantage..."*

I recently completed a State of New Jersey Emergency Medical Technician Course. The course started with 180+ students. Upon completion of the course, I graduated as the number one student in the class with an average grade of 94%. I was not any smarter or more intelligent than any of the other students, but I had a distinct advantage over

the other students. I had taken martial arts classes at the Blue Dragon School of Martial Arts under Shifu Ahles. My studies under Shifu Ahles taught me "attention to details" and "discipline". Shifu stated many times in classes that "details matter". I took my training in martial arts (attention to details and discipline) and brought it

into my personal life. As a result of being detail oriented and following through with that discipline, I was able to successfully complete the course, score very high in class academics and score 94% on the New Jersey State Exam. Since starting martial arts, many people have told me how detail oriented that I have become.  
—Joseph MacDiarmid, New Milford, age 56

## Brain-Gro



Enhanced Circuitry.

*(Continued from page 1)*  
Harvard University professor, expert on attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), and author of the book, "Spark", John Ratey, MD, calls this BDNF, "Miracle-Gro for the brain." A recent article in The Record quoted Dr.

Ratey calling exercise, "the single most important tool people have to optimize brain function." The article's message is clear: "Get your body in shape, and your mind will follow."  
Dr. Ratey says, "The more complicated the exercise, the more challenging it is." And, "The ideal exercise plan would include both exercise that

keeps you learning and that keeps you moving—and keeps the challenge up. Challenge is something that we should all be striving for. It's the key to a long and healthy life."  
*Read "Spark", and you'll agree, our Kung Fu and Chi Kung (Qigong) thoroughly fit Dr. Ratey's criteria .*

# Q&A

**Q: How do we deal with emotions like anger or sadness?**

A: First of all, we don't want to hold emotions in. This can make us worse. This can make us sick over time. Anger leads to stress, frustration and depression, as our circulation gets hindered. Knowing the real reason for the emotion is very helpful. Is it because you are determined to

control something that you can't control? This is a waste of energy. We can only control our response, not the situation. Emotions are normal, and it's not like the "master" doesn't have any. The difference may be in knowing why and then focusing on finding a solution. It may also be recognized earlier when you are more in tune with your body, so you breathe deeply to calm the mind and relax the body. Then it is easier

to think clearly and respond appropriately rather than having the usual knee-jerk reaction. Regardless of the circumstances, your physical practice is very powerful to help you rebalance in times of crisis. For me personally this is not theory. In many of the worst times of my life I have willed myself to practice, utilizing the body as the vehicle for healing my mind. And I can honestly say, I always feel better afterwards.



*"Imagine for yourself a character, a model personality, whose example you determine to follow, in private as well as public."*

*Epictetus*

## Role Model

*(Continued from page 2)*

Have you heard of the study published in the New England Journal of Medicine showing that people were "57 percent more likely to become obese when a friend became obese"? Even if the friend lived hundreds of miles away, the influence remained. And the greatest influence of all was between

closest friends: if one became obese, the odds of the other becoming obese were nearly tripled! And, according to the researchers, it seemed to go either way, as the same effect was observed for weight loss. So, how many ways do you negatively influence those around you? How many ways

are you a positive influence? Do you exercise and eat right to keep healthy? Your best friend's health may be counting on it. We are each responsible for the whole. If we learn to live in peace with others and accept them for whatever they are, do, or believe, then we influence them to also accept us.

*(Continued on page 4)*

## updates

**\$200 Cash Back From Oxford Insurance For Keeping Fit:**

If your health insurance is through Oxford and you follow our recommendations to attend class regularly an average of two times a week, you can get \$200 cash back every six months that you are training at

the Blue Dragon School. How's that for an incentive? Thanks to Andre Fries for letting us know and also providing applications. Ask for one in the lobby.

**Congratulations to all students who passed for advancement in August!**

There were a number of tests for advancement in August and students really stepped up to the challenge. We don't make it

easy and when students pass they know they accomplished something. This time around was no different. All it takes is *consistent effort over time*. Way to go!

**Next 5-Week Beginner's Chi Kung (Qigong) Scheduled for the End of October!**

Just in time for the holiday STRESS! For details please call Suzanne Moschetto at 201-385-3130.

**Attention Blue Dragon School Students**

Is your martial arts practice positively impacting your everyday life? Have a story or experience to tell? Others could benefit so help spread the word! Email a few sentences or paragraphs to [isn@BlueDragonKungFu.com](mailto:isn@BlueDragonKungFu.com)



# Role Model

*"I see it in my own children, as I'll hear the same words come out of my son's mouth that are frequently used by the Mrs. and me..."*

*...our six-month old sits there with her bright eyes watching, listening, and taking it all in. We are already shaping her perspective of this world we all live in. We are responsible for more than the obvious."*

*(Continued from page 3)*

## What do you believe, and why?

Do you know why you think what you think or believe what you believe? Most people don't. If they did, there would have to be far more tolerance and acceptance of the myriad differences we have throughout the world. Thing is, if enough people believe something is true, then it becomes truth... even if it isn't.

*"Thing is, if enough people believe something is true, then it becomes truth... even if it isn't."*

Shifu Ahles

## Is what you believe serving you, or hindering you?

Instead of going through life mixed up in the chaos, just getting by, and thinking that's just the way you are, take a step back and take a good look at yourself. Who has influenced you?

Are they where you want to be in life? Are they happy and healthy? Confident, or full of fear and worry? Be careful, because role models go both ways. First, "Know Thyself."

*"Anger dwells only in the bosom of fools."*

Albert Einstein

Visit us on the web at: [www.BlueDragonKungFu.com](http://www.BlueDragonKungFu.com)



## Blue Dragon School of Martial Arts

53 S. Washington Avenue  
Bergenfield, NJ 07621

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The rewards and benefits of my 4+ years of Baguazhang training at the Blue Dragon School are immeasurable. In addition to conditioning my body and learning invaluable self-defense skills, I have gained a greater degree of mental clarity and focus from the practice of this amazing martial art. I am enrolled in an intensive, full-time master's degree program and find that I have no problem at all keeping up with the rigorous academic pace of the school's curriculum and with people half my age. In fact, my memory seems to have improved dramatically, and my mind feels sharper than ever. Additionally, through direct application of Shifu Ahles' philosophical approach to the study of martial arts, I have experienced first-hand that a focused and calm mind enables me to stay in control of my world... even under the most challenging and stressful of situations.

Rob Vena, Hackensack, age 46

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Have a friend or family member interested in trying a Free Introductory Lesson? Let us know.

# events

## Kung fu & Chi Kung Demonstration at the NJ Little League State Tournament:

The Blue Dragon School of Martial Arts was invited to demonstrate at the NJ Little League State Tournament in Bergenfield on Saturday, July 26th. Once again the students showed tremendous support for their school by participating in the demo and really giving it their all. The day was challenging due to the hot mid July sun and scheduling complications that seem to be the norm at these kinds of events. However, Blue Dragon School students persevered and did a great job!

## Dumont Fair in Memorial Park:

Come out with family and friends to have some fun in Dumont and visit us at our table. A Youth Program Demo is

possible around 10am. Check in at the school for confirmation.

## Kung Fu, Chi Kung & Meditation Fall Retreat:

Our first Blue Dragon School of Martial Arts Fall Retreat is coming up fast September 19, 20, 21, 2008 (Friday through Sunday). Located in the Poconos on the beautiful 42-acre Nichecronk Lake. Expect a true retreat along with some surprises from Shifu Ahles. The school is closed that weekend.

## Master Park Returns to the Blue Dragon School in November:

Mark your calendars for Shizu's annual visit November 5—8, 2008. Two-days of Gua Testing followed by his two-day Seminar.

Don't miss out!

# Our Philosophy

We believe that real martial arts were designed to stop the fighting, both within and without.

Not for violence, but for peace.

Not to beat down, but to build up.

Not to compete, but to work together for understanding.

Not for tournaments and trophies, but for discipline and respect.

To master the mind, by training the body.