

N A T I O N A L

black belt club

the official newsletter of the nation's leading black belt club

Black Belts Know How To Take Initiative

One of the most important Black Belt character traits is the ability to take initiative. The word "initiative" means knowing what needs to be done and doing it without being told. At home, this includes taking the garbage to the curb on collection day, washing the dishes when they are dirty, mowing the lawn when the grass is long and many other chores. Black Belts take pride in their initiative because it shows that they are very responsible.

You have many responsibilities as a martial arts student. You must practice regularly, keep your uniform clean and arrive for all of your classes on time and every time. Don't depend on your parents or instructors to remind you constantly of what is expected of you.

Test your initiative. Study these situations and ask yourself the following questions:

1. Your younger sibling's toys are spread throughout the house, and guests are coming for dinner.
 - A. Would you leave the toys where they are because you didn't make the mess?
 - B. Would you push the toys under the couch, toss them in a closet or wherever you could hide them quickly?
 - C. Would you gather all of the toys and store them where they belong, before your mom even asks you to help?
2. Your dog is sitting by the door, begging to go outside.
 - A. Would you make him wait because it is not your turn to take him outside?
 - B. Would you scold the dog for whining?
 - C. Would you take him outside without being told because you love your dog?



3. You have a Martial Arts test tomorrow and your uniform is buried in a huge pile of laundry.
 - A. Would you wait, expecting your mom to wash it before your test?
 - B. Would you take it from the laundry and wear it anyway, hoping that it doesn't smell too much?
 - C. Would you wash your uniform and the rest of the laundry without being asked?

If you selected "C" for all of the situations above, then you are a very responsible person and know how to take initiative. If you selected any other answers, then it is time for you to set a new goal to take more initiative. Remember, being a Black Belt is not only strong kicks and punches, but also being the best person you can be!

Biography: Diana Lee Inosanto

Diana Lee Inosanto began her martial arts training when she was a child. She is the daughter of the famed guru Dan Inosanto, who was chosen by the legendary Bruce Lee (a close friend and his teacher) to head his Jeet Kune Do organization. Diana Lee, the firstborn child in her family, was named to pay tribute to her honorary uncle Bruce Lee.

As a young child, Diana was immediately exposed to martial arts training, but didn't take it too seriously, wanting more play time and less workout time. At an early age, however, several bullies hit and scratched her at her school, which changed her thinking about the importance of learning self-defense and the martial arts.

Diana's martial arts training is extensive and consists of the styles of Jun Fan Gung Fu (Jeet Kune Do), Filipino Kali, Thai Boxing, Pencak Silat, Shoot Wrestling, Wu Shu and Savate.

She is considered by many to be one of the best female martial artists. Her picture has graced the covers of many martial arts magazines, including *Black Belt*, *Inside Kung Fu*, *Inside Karate*, *World of Martial Arts*, *Martial Arts Online* and *Yoga 411*.

Following in her father's footsteps, Diana travels around the world teaching and promoting the

martial arts. She travels and works with Ron Balicki, her husband, who is a martial artist, professional shoot wrestler and stunt/fight choreographer, to spread the lessons of the arts.

Aside from her travels, Diana works actively in Hollywood as an actress, director and model in a wide variety of TV and movie projects. These projects include *Mystery Men*, *Wild Wild West*, *Red Corner*, *Barbwire*, *Face Off*, *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, *Walker Texas Ranger*, *Team Knight Rider*, *Touched by an Angel*, and New Edition's MTV video, *Hit Me Off*.

Diana appeared on MAD TV, "fighting it out" with Jerry Springer and on The *Rosanne Barr Show* for "The Tough Chicks" episode. Diana also wrote, directed, produced and acted in the movie *The Sensei*.



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TRAINING TIP

Meditation: Taking a Vacation in your Mind

Many people have attained higher planes of enlightenment through the ancient art of meditation, and have incorporated meditation into their work schedules and daily routines. The ancient monks lived longer due to the benefits they derived from meditation.

Zen sitting meditation is a period of nothingness. Doing absolutely nothing except focusing, relaxing and using proper breathing techniques helps to purify your mind and body.

Start with only five minutes per day. Wear comfortable, loose-fitting clothes, so you'll be able to sit on the floor, or a pillow or cushion. You may sit in yoga-style, with both legs crossed at the ankle in front of you, or sitting on both legs folded underneath you in a kneeling position. Don't sit in a position of total body relaxation. Try to keep your body upright and stable.

The first step in meditation is to try to clear your mind of what has been bothering you and of any other thoughts you may have. This is called inner chatter. Try to focus on some object, such as a piece of fruit or on the numbers one through ten, as you incorporate your breathing. Inhale through your nose and exhale through your mouth. The timing of each breath should be in eight- to ten-second intervals. Count in your head to inhale, slowly, from one to ten. As you exhale, count from ten backwards to one.

As your concentration develops, you'll find your heart rate will decrease and your state of relaxation will increase. You'll also be able to meditate sitting in an office chair, the seat in your car or even a park bench. Remember that it takes time to excel at meditation, but the benefits are endless. Keep your spirit strong.

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