

Dear Parents and Students,

I am often asked by friends who know of my martial arts background how much they should pay for their children's lessons or indeed for their own. Recently one of my best friends called me outraged that the school he had just visited wanted what he considered to be too much money to teach his son. This was the response we discuss...

What are martial arts lessons worth to the shy little boy who never raised his hand in class for lack of confidence? He was letting a world of learning pass him by before gaining the self-esteem to not only to raise his hand but to actually ask questions having taken just a few months of martial arts lessons.

What are lessons worth to a Mother who is a single Mom struggling to make it through life with a young son lacking in focus, motivation, and self-discipline. After nine months at Franz Karate, there were tears in her eyes when she and her beaming son came in to the school with his first ever report card containing an A!

What are lessons worth to the little eight year old girl, whose lessons gave her the ability and skills to give a strange man a hard enough kick in the shins that he let go of her long enough for her to run away? Thankfully, they arrested him later that day. As a parent I get chills even thinking about such things, but I am sure those parents will never question the value of those lessons.

What are lessons worth to the Mother of a young teen who has attempted suicide because he felt his life was worthless? After three months of training in martial arts, that same young man is doing wonderfully in school, now has a girlfriend, and feels that he is full of life.

What are lessons worth to a father, an auto mechanic, with chronic back problems that vanish after several weeks of the stretching exercises before class? What's the increased life span for the Dad, an attorney, looking to vanquish his stress after long days dealing with difficult people and finding serenity just punching and kicking the heavy bag at the school?

What are lessons worth to the nurse grabbed from behind as she unlocked her car coming off the night shift at a hospital? (Not to mention a certain ironic pleasure she must have taken for rendering her attacker to the ward she had just left under armed guard!) All thanks to a special Women's Self-Defense class at the school that showed her how to use keys and other everyday objects as emergency weapons.

What are lessons worth to the doctor, who due to work related stress, was on the verge of suicide whose life has been turned around due to his training in martial arts and who also claims he is happier than he has ever been in his life?

In a world of gangs, drugs, and high school shootings, we all think it will never happen to our kids. What's it worth to a parent's extra peace of mind to have their teen involved in the pursuit of physical and mental excellence while learning the value of respect to themselves and others surrounded by a positive environment of discipline and learning?

What is a child's confidence and self-esteem worth? What is it worth to experience the joy of self-discipline, focus, motivation, persistence and accomplishment? What is less stress and better health worth? More importantly, should you ever have to face a threatening situation, what is your life worth?

I submit this respectfully. I am a direct product of the successes of the martial arts. Martial arts have saved my life (more than once), given me the discipline needed to succeed at anything I do and helped me to learn how to help others by becoming a leader in today's unguided society.

I thank all of my students, parents, and their friends for making our school what it is for it IS you who knows and understand the values and benefits of well taught focus, discipline and respect only martial arts training will provide to people of all ages.

I look forward to any comments you may have.

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