A Qualitative Exploration on the Effects of Martial Arts
And the Lives of Individuals

An Honors Thesis (HONRS 499)

By

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Abstract

This study is a qualitative examination of how martial arts have impacted the lives of individual persons in an attempt to gain a better understanding of certain psychological impacts that a person might experience. Current literature shows positive support for the idea that there are positive benefits, as well as promising possibilities for use of martial arts in certain types of therapy (Lantz, 2002; Zivin, Hassan, DePaula, Monti, Harlan, Hossain, et al., 2001). Individuals who participated in this study were met for an initial interview, a follow-up interview, and have at least one year of martial arts experience. Data for this study was collected through an initial and a follow-up interview which lasted a maximum of two hours each for each of the three participants. The interviews were recorded with a digital audio recording device and transcribed verbatim. The qualitative data management program Qualrus was used to facilitate a general thematic analysis. Discussion of results will focus on connections perceived by practitioners regarding various possible psychological benefits that can be gained through martial arts.
Acknowledgments

I would like to acknowledge my advisor, Dr. Heather Adams, and give her a multitude of appreciation and recognition for her help in guiding me through this project, as well as being a constant light of guidance throughout my undergraduate experience at Ball State University. Heather has been patient with me and helped keep me on course. This project has been fun and at times very challenging, and I could not have accomplished my goal without her help. I would like to acknowledge my family for being patient and giving me support in college as well as life. I would also like to acknowledge Dean James Ruble and the Honors College for allowing me the chance to participate and learn through the Honors College program and curriculum. I would also like to acknowledge Dean Michael Maggiotto and the College of Sciences and Humanities for allowing me the opportunity to participate and learn through the Psychological Science program.
Introduction

To better understand and grasp some of the concepts explored in this study by the researcher and participants, background information on martial arts is essential. The teaching of martial arts in Asia has historically followed the cultural traditions of teacher-disciple apprenticeship. Students are trained in a strictly hierarchical system by a master instructor and in turn must display a greater level of respect regarding each master above him in the hierarchical chain of masters. Respect, discipline, honor, and courage are greatly valued in martial arts culture.

Within martial arts, there are several different ways in which martial arts training is conducted. Kata is a Japanese word, which refers to a series of predetermined movements during which the participant is engaged in battle with imaginary opponents. Kata [kah-tuh] is often considered a key component of traditional martial arts, and the term “kata” may exist as a culturally appropriate substitute in non-Japanese martial arts. Kata were originally designed as a series of movements in which instruction and training on technique could be given, while at the same time disguising training as a form of dance. Different styles may utilize different kata or practice the same kata in different variations. Kumite [koo-mit-tay] is a Japanese term given to open one-on-one sparring. Some traditional schools do not use protective equipment, but many do during this potentially dangerous form of training in which techniques are performed and contact is made against a living opponent. Kihon [key-hone] is a Japanese term for the repetitive exercises, in which a martial artist repeats a certain technique or movement in an attempt to perfect the technique as well as develop reflexive reactions for improved speed and timing.
Martial arts, like many sports, can have an impact and cause change in an individual in several ways. Being a physically demanding activity, one would assume physical fitness to be an obvious gain. However, martial arts directly attempts to cause change in a participant’s personality traits and behaviors in addition to physical fitness (Kodman, 1982). According to a study by Frank Kodman (1982), significant findings indicated martial arts instructors scored higher than college students on Sense of Well-being, Self-Control, Tolerance, and Good Impression on the California Personality Inventory. Kodman’s study consisted of 45 male, advanced, black belt karate instructors, who completed the California Personality Inventory. The results were compared to two groups of male college students: one high-achieving; the other on academic probation. Kodman’s results indicate that karate instructors have normative personality features when compared with college students. The significant findings indicated that on measures of Sociability, Responsibility, Socialization, Achievement via Independence, and Intellectual Efficiency, the high-achieving college students scored better than karate instructors. When compared with college students on academic probation, karate instructors scored significantly higher on Sense of Well-being, Self-Control, Tolerance, and Flexibility. When all three groups were compared, there were no significant differences on 24 of the 36 subscales. The CPI indicated that when compared overall, the personality traits of karate instructors and college students are more normative than different when compared to each other. These results stand to support that there is no one personality type that best fits a martial artist, and that it can be for different types of individuals. Kodman was trying to examine martial arts and how it can affect personality, whereas other studies examine how martial arts can affect specific groups, such as aggressive and troubled youth.
Martial arts have been used in school programs for delinquent children and shown progress in reducing violent acting out and characteristics that correlate with violence and delinquency,” (Zivin, Hassan, DePaula, Monti, Harlan, Hossain, et al., 2001). According to Zivin, et al.(2001) variables associated with violence and delinquency showed a clear pattern of improvement in boys who had taken a martial arts course when compared with boys with similar behavior patterns whom had not taken martial arts (2001). This particular study used participants selected from one large, urban middle school, which included a neighborhood with the third highest juvenile arrest rate within its district. Among the population, staff and teachers chose 64 high risk adolescent boys for participation. The participants met for 30 sessions, each running 45 minutes in length. The participants were split into two groups. Both groups received the treatment condition which was instruction in traditional Shorei Ryu Kempo. Group A was instructed for the first semester, while Group B had to wait and was assigned to receive instruction in the second semester and was considered the control group. During these class sessions, kata was the main form of training instruction used. Results indicated that after treatment, Group A consistently decreased in all deviant behavior (violence, resisting rules, impulsiveness, and socially inappropriate behavior.) Results also indicated that Group B, while waiting for treatment continued to engage in and increase deviant behaviors from the initial baseline measurement. Zivin et al.’s(2001) study about delinquent children can be related to a view from Rosenberg and Sapochnik, that if martial arts have something to offer, it is that martial arts can eventually move the martial arts student beyond their aggressive state of mind (2005). Rosenberg and Sapochnik’s published dialogue is a discussion among experienced professionals who show interest in the similarities between psychoanalytic therapy and how martial arts may mesh well with the psychoanalytic experience, as well as the mass appeal of
martial arts. Sapochnik examined how martial arts have been popularized by the media, and how martial arts appeal and connect with western concepts such as depictions of masculinity. Rosenberg discussed how the concept in martial arts of no-mind relates to the psychoanalytic concept of True-Self. Rosenberg also compares the perception of martial arts training to the actual results of training to what patients expect when entering therapy and what is actually found in therapy which do not usually meet client expectations. Martial arts may appeal to individuals who desire some substitute for aggression, eliminate feelings of vulnerability, or wish to manage fears of uncertainty, but actually find a ritualized structure, similarly in psychoanalysis, which can act as a reliable container for emotions and facilitate free association (Rosenberg & Sapochnik, 2005).

Martial arts may contain psychotherapeutic properties. Martial arts may foster the integration of mind and body, teach the individual how to relax, focus, be self-aware, be self-accepting, and to persevere, as seen in a particular case study (Weiser, M., Kutz, I., Kutz, S., & Weiser, D., 1995). The gravity and importance of Weiser et al. (1995) is that it brings significant attention to the concept that martial may have therapeutic properties and possibilities. Weiser et al.'s article explains that western civilization has become appreciative of martial arts and its focus on promoting health in the last few decades, and has begun to examine martial arts as an alternative supplement to traditional verbal therapy (1995). In the case study presented, the participant engaged in martial arts and was able to process feelings and express them physically before trying to identify and verbally discuss in psychotherapy. This particular participant struggled with suppressing and denying emotions and feelings. Weiser et al. claims that the intensity of the feelings martial arts practice arouses, they cannot be suppressed as other feelings can (1995). "How long would a participant have to practice martial arts before seeing benefits"
is still a question for debate, but most articles on the subject matter agree that martial arts mastery is a long and enduring quest. Kata and Kihon were used as training tools to allow the participants emotions to reach a high intensity and allow the participant access to them and evaluate them.

Frank Kodman (1982) asserts that martial arts aim to foster certain personality traits. Personality traits can take time and effort to develop and cement in the identity of an individual. But how long would a person have to diligently train in martial arts before any change in their character or behavior would be noticed? In a study examining the effects of martial arts training on delinquent boys, by Zivin, et al. (2001), positive character and behavior changes were noted even though the boys only met for 30 class meetings, meeting three times a week for ten weeks. Jim Lantz conducted a phenomenological study, in which nine couples and twenty-three families participated in martial arts classes for at least four months (2002). The results of Lantz’s study consistently demonstrated that involvement in martial arts can facilitate marital and family development. In contrast, Wargo, M., Spirrison, C., Thorne, B., & Henley, T. (2007) examined personality characteristics of martial artists, and found no correlation between improved self-esteem and rank, which contradicted earlier research. Their findings would indicate that the amount of experience had no influence on an important substrate such as self-esteem, and due to the limits of the study could not indicate the reason for higher ranking students having less aggression. Martial arts can involve tremendous mental effort, but what can be visually observed is the plethora of organized and calculated movements. In 2008, Twemlow, Sacco, and Fonagy examined how physical movement could be used for embodiment of the mind, as a tool in psychodynamic psychotherapy for violent individuals who act out aggression.
"The goal of physical movement in this context is to provide a safe container and a healing non-coercive social context, which allows violent individuals a chance to re-tool their experiences under the guidance of a healthy ethical role model,"
(Twemlow, Sacco, and Fonagy, 2008).

Jim Lantz’s study in 2002, concerning development and martial arts, suggests as a result of its findings that counselors should be more active in using martial arts as a tool in certain family therapy settings. Physical movement has also been theorized to allow non-verbal patients to express feelings physically, which facilitates identification of feelings and emotions, which can assist with psychotherapy. This physical movement allowing for non-verbal expression of feelings may be due to the initial cognitive and emotional developments primarily in the physical, motion-driven areas of the brain (Weiser, M., Kutz, I., Kutz, S., & Weiser, D., 1995).

This study aims to contribute to this limited area of knowledge by exploring how martial arts may or may not provide long-lasting psychological benefits to practitioners. This study also seeks to examine possible short-term or immediate therapeutic relief or assistance provided by martial arts participation. Do practitioners believe martial arts to be therapeutic?

Methods and Procedures

This qualitative study is not without subjectivity and potential biases, which should be acknowledged. Any experience that would attest to my competence should also be examined. This topic was chosen as it involves two of my dominant interests: psychology and martial arts. I sought to find results that explore the therapeutic possibilities in martial arts, and expand upon existing research in psychological science concerning the usage of martial arts in therapeutic programs. My experiences as a student and an instructor have brought many experiences in which people achieved positive personal growth and adjusted to adversity in life. I attribute
much of my success in academia, and in life, to values and principals that were taught in martial arts at a young age. In a personal perspective, the therapeutic benefits of martial arts are obvious to martial artists, but lack scientific support to be implemented regularly in treatment plans or therapeutic strategies. The purpose of this study is to explore any possible benefit, positive life impact, or perceived personal growth participants might have gained from participating in martial arts.

Formulation of Research Questions

In the beginning, basic research questions were chosen to build from, give a solid direction to where the study would focus, and what would be explored. A thorough search and exploration of existing studies and data generated in published articles was done to figure out what has been explored, and what has not yet been explored in regards to martial arts and psychological science. After completing a literature review, research questions were formed from the results of other studies.

Looking at Lantz's (2002) study where couples and families engaged in martial arts, which resulted in an impact on their relationships and counseling after measuring participation for at least four months, I thought that a time element might be relevant in the possible impact of martial arts on the lives of individuals, and was worth exploring. After examining the work of Kodman (1982), I decided to refine my exploration of the time element to include experience of the individual participant, as Kodman had explored the personality traits of experienced black belts. The resulting research question sought to explore any possible time/experience factor and the magnitude of the impact on the individual.

In my personal experience, martial arts have been beneficial to me and others I know, but it is not common knowledge that martial arts are beneficial as I perceive many individuals
This is especially true in school environments, as I have personally had school administrators discourage martial arts programs. After reviewing Zivin, et al. (2001), and the impact of a martial arts program on delinquent boys, as well as how “movement can enhance the access to these traumas and offer a physical enactment in the transference that is immediately accessible to therapeutic effort, and begins an alliance that can be used to sustain lasting change derived from self-awareness...,” according to a study by Twemlow, Sacco, and Fonagy (2008), I thought it crucial to explore possible long lasting effects on participants of martial arts.

I decided to further explore the effects of martial arts after reviewing a study Weiser et al. (1995) which examined how martial arts “allows patients to express feelings physically, making them easier for non-verbal patients to identify, then translate into words, and address in psychotherapy,” and possible therapeutic properties of martial arts. In relation Weiser et al (1995), I decided to explore possible short term effects, as I was already examining long lasting effects. The last research question generated examined how martial arts participation has an immediate impact upon the physical, mental, and emotional state of the participant.

**Description of Subject Population**

There are two participants for this study. The first participant (Greg) is an athletically built, Caucasian male, in his early twenties, who was married at the time of the study and stands at about five feet, nine inches tall. Greg owns his own home and worked construction type of labor jobs. Greg has a high school education. The second participant (Marley) is an athletically built Caucasian male, in his late twenties, who was a divorced single father at the time of the study, stands at about six foot, two inches tall. Greg owns his own home and runs his own
software development company. Marley has some college education. Greg and Marley both study the traditional Mu Duk Kwan form of Tae Kwon Do.

The participant population in this study consists of individuals over 18 years of age who have practiced martial arts for at least one year. The participant population is inclusive of all genders, races, and ethnicities. The participant population consists of martial arts practitioners who currently reside in the central Indiana region. The participant population is also inclusive of all martial arts and mixed martial arts styles.

**Participant Recruitment**

Participant recruitment for this study involved the principal investigator visiting several different schools of martial arts study and first speaking with the sensei (head instructor) to obtain permission to verbally recruit students. Individuals were approached with the recruitment script in person, via internet, or by phone call.

A private location and time of convenience were agreed upon by the principal investigator and the participant. Interviews conducted were done so in a manner to ensure confidentiality as well as privacy. The time of the interview was agreed upon by the principal investigator and the participant. Before the interview, confidentiality was discussed and a letter of consent was presented to the participant. A pre-chosen set of interview questions were used to conduct the interview. The interviews were conducted in one session, and lasted up to two hours. The interviews were tape recorded. To preserve confidentiality, pseudonyms by which the participants are referred to, were assigned by the principal investigator. The participation requirement for each participant was completed at the conclusion of the interview session. Afterwards, the interviews were transcribed to assist in analysis of the interview data.

**Analysis**
Initially the study was designed to implement thematic analysis to analyze the data from the participants' interviews. However, as time and difficulties acquiring an adequate number of participants to conduct thematic analysis became a problem, it was decided that narrative analysis would make better use of the data provided due to the low number of participants. In the recruiting process, many of the potential participants declined due to a commitment to college courses, as the area in which participants were recruited has a university. This was originally thought to be beneficial, providing an ample number of potential participants. In actuality, it became the reason many individuals declined to participate. The two individuals who did participate had either graduated college already or chose not to go to college.

Qualitative, narrative analysis was carried out by using Qualrus software to code the interview recordings. Results were gathered by examining the participants' self-reported data, using such data to organize a chronological, factually accurate narrative, which is easier to make sense of than the raw data. Labov Tables were used to assist in organizing the raw data. The constructed story was then compared and related to pre-existing data from literature.

Results and Discussion

The data collected from the interview process was initially analyzed using thematic analysis in order to try and identify general themes that related the participants' accounts to the literature already collected in efforts to support the research goals of this study. Due to the weak and ineffectiveness of the thematic analysis, a narrative analysis was then implemented using the collected data. The narrative analysis provided a much stronger set of results that effectively related collected data to available literature, and assisted in achieving the goals of this study.

Within each data set collected from the participants, select answers were drawn to assist in answering research questions. Due to the nature of common language and speech, the
researcher narrated the participants' quotes and added a few words to provide clarity that would not have been understood otherwise. A researcher's analysis was added to help directly relate the narrative to previous literature and research questions.

**Narrative Analysis: Marley's story of martial arts and therapeutic use of** (see Figure 1.)

“I had a hard time during my divorce.” Most of the time, my self-control is very level. “I’m able to deal logically when emotional things happen. Anybody that goes through a traumatic experience,” like divorce, can have a “hard time with that and I definitely did. When I went through my divorce,” I was not working out at the time. “I was a pretty depressed guy.” The divorce had “knocked me down a few pegs.”

“When I started working out again, is what kind of pulled me out,” from my depression. “My friends helped me, but for myself,” starting to train again “was the best thing that I could have done therapeutically.” “When I’m working out I’m a pretty happy guy,” and I believe that “psychologically, it helps me out quite a bit too.” Even practicing “in my living room, running through a kata, or something like that” has a great impact on my mental/emotional state.

“I know” martial arts have “done a lot for me. I can see that in my day to day life and how I approach things.” As a person, I get to the point where I don’t think I can push on, but because of my training, I can. “A lot of other people don’t have” that internal strength, “our culture doesn’t require that too much nowadays.” Without what I have gotten from my training, “I would kind of be lost.”

**Researcher’s Analysis**

Marley, being a lifelong martial artist attributes his hearty mental health and overall sense of self-control and confidence to his participation in martial arts. Due to life circumstances, Marley had been taking a brief break from martial arts. Upon his divorce, which Marley
Marley reports that starting to work out again is what brought him out of his depression, and notes the effects that working out has on his mental state. Marley also attributes an inner strength that he believes is fading in society to his martial arts involvement. This may be his internal locus of control, given how martial arts allows Marley to perform exercises which he knows will cause change or effect how he thinks and feels within a short span of time. “The goal of physical movement in this context is to provide a safe container and a healing non-coercive social context,” which can allow individuals “to re-tool their experiences under the guidance of a healthy ethical role model,” (Twemlow, Sacco, & Fonagy, 2008).

Marley’s experiences and use of martial arts supports the idea that martial arts can be used as a coping skill/ have short term and immediate effects. In this circumstance, he used martial arts to adjust emotionally when feeling afflicted by the divorce.

**Narrative Analysis: Greg’s story of martial arts and therapeutic use of**

“Yeah I had some problems in school focusing, and once I got into martial arts,” things changed, “and I could focus a little bit more.” “As a younger kid” I had difficulties focusing in school, and trying to focus was a challenge in the beginning. “Then as (martial arts training) progressed, I” achieved “a little bit higher grades, and higher ranks in martial arts and higher grades in school. My attention span just broadened. I could understand and” pay attention “a lot longer, understand and focus everything,” to an extent. “(Martial arts) improved my life, skills, proved me to be a better person and just work at everything I do because you have to work to succeed in martial arts,” just as you do in other areas of life, like school because “nothing is given to you.”

**Researcher’s Analysis**
Overall, from the interview, Greg has a hardy internal locus of control and work ethic. Greg acknowledged that there were rough times as a younger child. His mother and father were going through a rough divorce around the time that he and his brother began martial arts. This could very well have been a stressor that contributed to Greg’s difficulties in the classroom. Martial arts training provided an outlet and coping mechanism for Greg, during this stressful time in his life. Regardless of stressors present in Greg’s life, the rise of his academic performance corresponds to his participation in martial arts.

For Greg, martial arts was therapeutic in the sense that it allowed him to grow and progress in important functions of life in society as a child, such as performing well in school, hence he adjusted and adapted in a positive direction. The challenges facing Greg in school, due to an undetermined stressor or stimuli, were overcome as his participation in martial arts progressed. Movement, such as martial arts, can be “used as a therapeutic tool for embodying the mind, needing specific training and skills,” (Twemlow, Sacco, & Fonagy, 2008).

Narrative Analysis: Marley’s story of martial arts and the impact on his life

“I started when I was around five; I’m 29 years old, so I’m approaching my 25th year. I’ve been in (martial arts) for 24 years now. I think I have a pretty good idea of who I am, and what I want, and what I’m striving to be and to have. Martial arts are “within everything I do, every step I take, even down to literally every step I take, trying to keep my feet straight forward, um you know it’s . . . it is who I am. I own a software development company. I have nine employees. We are very successful. We write software for the EPA. I wouldn’t have done any of it without my martial arts training, and my determination I got from my martial arts, so it is very much who I am.” Martial arts are “incorporated into everything that I do. Martial Arts kind of made me strong with my family. I am very close with my family, my mother, my father, and my
sisters, my uncles, I respect them not just because they are family and they are elders, but because they have stuff to teach me, and a lot of” those values became apparent and “those eyes were opened because of the martial arts. Socially, my social life martial arts have helped me out. (Martial arts) have given me a little bit of a name for myself; my friends respect me more. Nobody fears me, but they respect me enough not to step on my toes, and it’s actually kept me out of a lot of fights. People know I’m in the martial arts, they are more likely to try and be cool with me than start problems with me, and actually has helped me out not getting in fights, not getting in problems.” Martial arts are “everything to me. It’s what I know, I’m a musician also, I’m a software developer, and I apply my martial arts into every aspect. When I play my guitar, I don’t just play, I give it everything I have, and I give it 100%. When I write my software, I’m not satisfied if it just works. It has to be the best.”

Researcher’s Analysis

Marley applies martial arts into several aspects of his day-to-day life. Marley also discussed how many aspects of his life have been affected by his participation in martial arts, such as the closeness of his family, his social life, and his entrepreneur endeavors. Marley makes for substantial support for martial arts providing positive long term benefits as well as a good case for examining the length of time an individual is involved in martial arts compared to the magnitude of the impact that martial arts have on the life of an individual. Much of what Marley stated supports the research of Kodman (1982) and how “Karate, unlike most sports attempts to foster certain personality traits or behavior patterns in a direct manner.” Marley heavily attributes his drive for success and focus to his lifelong participation in martial arts. Also, Marley’s family bonding through martial arts, can relate to the findings of Lantz (2002), where “consistently reported that martial arts study facilitates marital and family development.”
General Discussion

From the separate analyses, interesting results have been found. Marley used martial arts to cope with his divorce, as it allowed him to re-evaluate his situation and help him adjust to regain a healthy mentality and outlook on life (Twemlow, Sacco, & Fonagy, 2008). Marley also attributes much of his who he is as being impacted by the length of time he has been in martial arts. Greg indicated that martial arts had a big impact on him in his youth, and that he believed martial arts had therapeutic properties; however, martial arts may have had a larger impact in other areas of his life that was not explored in detail by the interview question set.

From examining the data, the results indicate that martial arts are psychologically beneficial to practitioners in providing long lasting effects. Marley and Greg had learned to adjust and do well academically and socially with traits developed from martial arts. Martial arts are also effective in providing short term coping skills for adjustment in times of stress. With the crises presented in the divorce of Greg’s parents and Marley going through divorce himself, both participants were able to cope and adjust to their situations. Marley and Greg have clearly benefitted from participation in martial arts. Further studies need to be conducted to examine specifically in what ways the short term and long term benefits are acquired by participants.

There is not enough evidence from the results to support a correlation between the amount of experience in martial arts and the magnitude of the impact caused in an individual’s life. Both participants were long time martial arts practitioners and had benefitted from being in martial arts. This study having so few participants did not have any data for those who were relatively new practitioners in martial arts.

This study was not without limitations. Limitations include the inexperience of the primary investigator; availability and lack of previous research pertaining to martial arts, the
small participant sample, as well as unforeseen difficulties scheduling participation and recruitment for this study. I have gained valuable experience and knowledge which will be taken into account in further studies, including useful information on subject recruitment and the difficulties in sampling outside of a convenient population, such as a Psychological Science 100 level class. Strengths include what results are gathered as an addition to the field of psychological science, my knowledge base in the research topic, as well as the format through which the data is analyzed and presented.

Future directions can be explored with regards to the findings of this study. Steps can be taken to further examine the possible effects of practicing martial arts and the effect it may have on the body’s physiological ability to regulate emotions, as this study’s participants report that martial arts assists them in maintaining emotional stability. There is a need to further examine how martial arts can allow an individual to concentrate or focus, to possibly combat Attention Deficit Disorder, as reported. Steps can be taken to further examine the concepts brought forth concerning Weiser, M., Kutz, I., Kutz, S., & Weiser, D.’s integration of mind and body through martial arts. This study has not produced any findings contrary to, but possibly in support of the integration of mind and body theory. From this study, an examination of which martial arts exercises specifically are used by practitioners for relief from short-term stressors can be addressed, as well as an examination of how lifelong martial artists have integrated their martial arts into their identity, and how profound the long-term effects of martial arts participation can be on an individual’s identity formation.
References


Figure 1. Do practitioners believe martial arts to be therapeutic? (short term coping/adjusting)

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<th>Orientation</th>
<th>Who?</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>Marley</td>
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<th>What?</th>
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<td>Lifelong martial artist, took break from martial arts to focus on family, be an entrepreneur</td>
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<th>Event?</th>
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<td>Divorce</td>
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<th>Complication</th>
<th>Then what happened?</th>
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<td>I had a hard time during my divorce, uhh most of the time (my emotional state) is very level, I’m able to deal, uh logically, when emotional things happen, anybody that goes through a traumatic experience has a hard time with that and I definitely did, but I think I handled it better than most, umm, . . .</td>
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<td>When I went through my divorce, had knocked me down a few pegs umm I wasn’t working out at the time, and I was a pretty depressed guy, when I started working out again it’s what kinda pulled me out . . .</td>
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<th>Evaluation</th>
<th>How did MA help?</th>
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<td>yeah even if its setting in my living room running through a kata, or something like that. (martial arts) sure does change my mood (martial arts) helped me deal with my anger, I can be a pretty angry person, pretty grumpy, pretty mean person, sure can be, when I’m working out I’m</td>
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pretty happy guy, and uh yeah psychologically it helps me out quite a bit too.

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<th>Result</th>
<th>Current Situation?</th>
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<td>(Martial arts are) everything to me, it’s what I know, I’m a musician also, I’m a software developer, I apply my martial arts into every aspect, when I play my guitar, I don’t just play, I give it everything I have, I give it 100%, when I write my software I’m not satisfied if it just works, it has to be the best.</td>
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<td>Umm like I said (martial arts are) all I know, I can’t imagine what life would be like without it.</td>
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<td>Umm I think I have a pretty good idea of who I am, and what I want, and what I’m striving to be and to have, . . . I know (martial arts have) done a lot for me. Ya know I can see that in my day to day life and how I approach things.</td>
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<td>I’ve slowed down, and analyzed my son uh before acting brash or acting upon emotions umm, I’ve set down and been able to think what’s best for him, uhh I’m a divorced parent, and uh I have my son half the time, and you can hear him, I have my son half the time and it was a priority for me and I owe a lot of that to the martial arts, it it helped me through my problems and getting aside my problems with my divorce, to realize what was right, and be able to analyze my son, and give him what he needs . . . Its helped me out being a better parent.</td>
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Orienting code

obviously my friends helped me (through the divorce), but for myself (training in martial arts) was the best thing that I could have done therapeutically

... determination um you get to the point where you don’t think you can push on, because of your training you can. And a lot of other people don’t have that, our culture doesn’t require that too much anymore, so without that I would kind of be lost.