

This is a story of a new start filled with endurance, lost love and building bonds. I hope you enjoy it. It comes from the heart.

I started my martial arts journey with TV. The Karate Kid movie (Released 1984) and the Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles cartoon.

While watching Karate Kid and Ninja Turtles I would be amazed.

The 1980's was a great time to be a kid. I wanted to take Karate classes but I couldn't. I wanted to see the Ninja Turtle movie's but I had to wait til they came on TV.

Fast forward to my mid-twenties I rediscovered Martial arts at the New York Sports Club (NYSC) in Park Slope.

My Instructor Izzy invited one day to take a new kickboxing class one day. I was there for 7 years straight refining my roundhouse kick. I never missed a Wednesday 7pm class. I had a great time. I was reserved and quiet. But I let my training do the talking.

I set a goal to be loyal to my teacher. I also set a vow of silence for a girl I liked at the gym. She was tall, slender and blonde. She had a giant plaque on her left leg calf muscle. Studying to be a Doctor of Medicine or

something. I could tell because she carried her USMLE book with her.

I waited for the right time. It never came. A love lost to time. It's ok.

She motivated me to keep training. Her discipline encouraged me from afar. We spoke once. I gave her my elliptical machine when the gym was packed.

There are some people who touch your heart. There were a few girls I liked at the gym.

I was focused on becoming the best. I didn't want a relationship at the time.

But the more I trained the more right it felt. Izzy told me to "dig deep" and I pushed harder. One day I weighed myself many years later and I weighed 185 pounds.

I did burpees, jump rope, pushups, superman's, abs and all sort of mixed martial arts moves. I made the most of my time training. I kept a training journal so I can do the workouts on my own.

Overtime i excelled. I bought over-sized boxing gloves to boost my endurance. I bought golden-yellow wraps to protect my hands. With matching shin guards.

I wore a fleece bright blue full sleeve shirt three layers of tops and thermals to keep my muscles warm. It was drenched in sweat by the time I got home. on the bottom loose fitting plastic like pants. that gave me a range of motion.

I had my Nalgene Water bottle and gloves I positioned myself looking at the clock in the center of the studio.

The tan wooden floors, front and back wall mirrors and near the window was gym equipment and boxing bags.

I kept training and my competitive spirit took over. I wanted to conquer myself.

I did everything in the gym except cycling. I took Kickboxing which taught Muay Thai and Ju Jitsu and Mixed Martial Arts. It was exhausting training regimen. Cardio to warm up before class. Then the Classes. Followed by Weight training. And then cool downs. After I would take long walks home.

I learned to do circuit training. I decided that I will spend Saturday's building my own routine. It worked out. I got in extra practice in. It made me successful.

I learned about life in the gym. NYSC was my training home. I pushed myself and took it one day at a time.

I never watched UFC. but I listened to music before I leave home to pump me up. Mostly Shinobi III: Return of the Ninja Master for Sega Genesis the three levels.

First, Then horseback running level. The sound was so cool. Second, the Hi-tech surfboard level. That was such a cool change from running and doing ninja stuff. Finally, the airship level. It taught me to keep going despite the odds.

Before Izzy approached me all those years ago. I was planning on quitting. But the girl and training gave me a reason to stay. That made me a better person. Gyms and training came and went. But those times are my most cherished.

A long wished for dream to learn martial arts finally came true. It came in the backdoor. As opportunity does.

As time passed I left NYSC. I started learning Tae Kwon Do, Aikido and Tai Chi over years. It was not the same. I will always remember the training I received at NYSC by Izzy.

That is my story of pursuing and activating human potential. I reached the maximum of my ability. Now I know the road is ever growing and stretching out. A life well-lived. Through hard training, personal reflection and deep thought.

If you have any questions and feedback feel free to leave them below.

Thank you for reading. Enjoy your day.