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## Empowerment Specialist



# THE MINDFUL DRAGON

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We all have within us the Wisdom, Power & Magic

Issue 7

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by owning responsibility for our experience...  
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### IN THIS ISSUE:

Tori's Focus

Mindful Musings

Meet The People

Training Opportunities

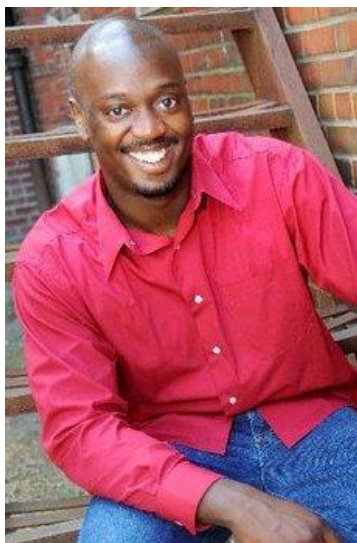
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### TORI'S FOCUS

**Body:** Do you have an aversion to sit-ups? Give this a try. Commit to continuous movement for a certain duration: the commercial break, 3 songs, 10 minutes on a timer. Begin with lower abdominal exercises (leg lift variations) and move up to the central oblique's (twisting variations), and upper abdominal (crunch variations). Change the exercise anytime you feel strain. You may also revisit exercises as needed to avoid muscle strain. Stomach presses, laying on your back with bent legs and pressing your belly button down into the floor, work as a terrific resting exercise for your stomach as well as your back and neck. By utilizing stomach presses when you need them you can easily meet or increase the duration.

**Mind:** A message has the most power when it is relevant and appropriate to the target. I think most people understand this and yet it does not stop our knee jerk reaction from measuring good

### Mindful Musings

#### RAISING THE UNCOMMON

**As I look at my two adult sons I am struck by all of the stereotypical stages that we never experienced:** the defiance, the rebellion, the distancing, the loss of respect that hopefully returns in later years. These stages that we were taught to expect in the course of raising children to adults did not happen with either child. Apparently they are not as inevitable as we were led to believe. Were we lucky? Perhaps. Lucky twice? Unlikely.

**As dramatically different as our sons are they both share similar attitudes and qualities that I find uncommon in their peers.** They both value the family harmony and opinion above all others, and they are both mature effective decision makers. Creating this family culture took a great deal of patience and effort. Many times I had to choose between the short term effectiveness of the quick answer or the decisive response, and the long term effectiveness of the exploratory answer and the evaluation of possible choices. Fortunately I had the luxury of time and the inclination towards exploration. Having said this, there are times when the hammer of authority needs to be dropped (and it was), but not nearly as often as most parents (or bosses) think, and especially not as often as they do.

We all have within us the Wisdom, Power & Magic of The Mindful Dragon!

works according to our own personal need and perspective. If the message is to relax and we need to work harder, we probably won't think it's a very good message. We value the message that speaks to us more than the one that does not. But just because a message does not speak to our current state of mind and development, it doesn't mean it isn't a powerful message. When we take the time to measure a good work in terms of the way it pertains to the target we teach ourselves to appreciate merit in things that have no personal appeal. I think that is a valuable ability to have in all facets of life.

**Spirit:** I often hear and read of actions being labeled as either selfish or selfless. It even seems popular to label people and organizations as one or the other. While there may be some truth of this in certain cases, I think it is much more likely and certainly more beneficial, to experience and recognize the selfish reward in selfless acts and the selfless benefits to others that can result from self oriented action. There is a place in each of us that is nurtured and fulfilled by giving to others and when we act from this self fulfilling place we are unlikely to feel our generosity turn to resentment when we become weary or unacknowledged. It is also vitally important to recognize the beneficial influence we have on others when we treat ourselves with generosity, patience, self reliance and all other positive actions. By seeing our virtuous actions as falling in both columns simultaneously we effectively fuel ourselves and benefit humanity.

The magic happens when each member of the family (or company, group, society) genuinely cares about their effect on the others. It would pain my sons to cause me worry just as it would pain me to cause them worry. I never punished them for such an action, but instead explained the effect that their action had upon my mind and heart. And they cared. If they repeated the same or different action that caused a similar result in me, it became another opportunity to explain the cause and effect connection. And again - they cared. Why did they care? Because I had taken the time to listen to their toddler/child/pre-teen perspectives when I caused them frustration, worry, or pain and many times I changed my future actions as a result. It became a system that they knew to be effective and reciprocal.

The other quality my sons share is the ability to make well informed mature decisions devoid of peer pressure. Decision making is a skill that needs to be taught incrementally through the years and it requires a lot of effort, from everyone. It is incredibly time consuming (for both the parent and the child) to lay out all of the possible actions and explore their probable outcomes. It requires real commitment to teach young minds to search for these cause and effect scenarios themselves. And it requires judgment from the parent to choose which situation is able to withstand immature decisions (right or wrong) and which situations need to serve as a learning tool to explain the parent's authoritative decision. I don't believe in a false sense of power - telling someone the decision is theirs when in reality it is not. I wouldn't want that done to me. I won't do it to others. And that's what it all comes down to.

Children are little people in small immature packages. Treat them with the same respect, care and patience that you would afford to your spouse, parent or boss and they will look a little differently to you. Try keeping the long term goal of a harmonious independently thinking family in sight while making your short term parenting decisions, and see what happens. The more you help your little ones to make analytical decisions the more likely your teenagers will rely

on, and be capable of their own critical thinking. Ultimatums, threats, punishment, and coercion all have their place, but if you rely too heavily on these strategies in the early years, you may find them to be useless tools as your children grow towards adulthood. However if you create a family culture of mutual concern and respect, you may raise teenagers capable of governing themselves with surprising maturity and an appreciation for your caring guidance.

**P.S. I am not alone in these thoughts. I have seen, read and heard them confirmed by a variety of sources applying to spiritual awakening, parenting and business. Some concepts are just that true.**



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