

## **To Whom It May Concern,**

About a year ago, I received a postcard in the mail announcing the opening of a new karate school. After visiting and taking a few classes, I made a decision to enroll in the Adult program. Looking back, I now know it was absolutely one of the best decisions I've ever made. Now, my entire family attends the school. My involvement has truly been a life changing experience for me, and if I had never visited the school, I really would have missed out **BIG TIME! It has therefore become my mission to make sure others out there DON'T miss out on a chance to experience the school.** So... if you'd like to know what going to "The Best Karate School" around is like, please read on.

### **The Journey Begins**

My "journey" began when I decided to take a few introductory classes. I really liked it there, and quickly decided to enroll in the Adult program. In the beginning, classes were a blast! Like most things that are new, I was excited to do, think, and talk about something different. I felt awesome, even though deep down, I thought the excitement would eventually dim down a bit. I was wrong. Actually, the opposite happened.

### **The Transformation Begins**

About 2 months after I joined the school, the unexpected happened. I began to completely transform. I **LOVED** being there. I couldn't **WAIT** for the next class. My body, my mind...my entire outlook on life began to change. I felt like I was in my early 20's again (**I'm 39**). It felt like a huge energy surge was created inside me during the classes, and it lingered on long after class was over. I felt unstoppable, and it felt great! And today, I'm thrilled to say, a year after joining the school...I feel better than ever!

### **A Great School**

Over the past year, I've gotten the opportunity to witness many classes throughout the different age groups. I've also talked with many of the students, as well as the parents of the child students. And what I've found is that there are so many others that share my belief that this is truly a great school.

### **How it Feels to Be on a Permanent Vacation**

*Now you're probably wondering, "What reason would Karate classes be so great as to make them feel "life changing?" I'll give you three:*

#### **1) Every class feels like a mini vacation.**

Think about a perfect vacation. You're there, and you haven't a care in the world. Your batteries recharge. You're only focused on the moment. Now, think about what would happen to your life if you experienced 2-3 mini vacations a week. That is what every class feels like. It's fun, you're focused on the moment, your body come to life, you're challenged, you have no time to think of anything else...so you feel great!

#### **2) You are surrounded by great people.**

Now picture that same vacation, and you're surrounded with people that are in the same mind frame as you. Happy to be there, and happy you're there. That's how the other students at this school make you feel. Sensei Ben, our teacher, is a great person attracting great people, and that will never change.

#### **3) The Fountain of Youth is here!**

Finally, pretend that every time you go to your favorite vacation spot you visit a fountain of youth. Now this fountain may not instantly make you young again, but it does time after time make you progressively feel younger and younger, stronger and stronger, and more and more unstoppable. Every class is one more visit to that fountain. After over 100 "visits to the fountain" over the past year, I'm definitely a different person.

### **My Message to You**

When I started at the school a little over a year ago, no one said, "You have no idea how this can change your life!" But I'm saying that to you. And until you decide to check things out for yourself, be it for you or a family member, you will have no opportunity to find out first hand. It's worth a deeper look.

**THANK YOU,**  
Dean Perkins

This is just one of the many letters I have received from students who have had great experiences studying martial arts with us. We believe that developing good exercise and health habits are critical to getting the most out of life. As Mr. Perkins noted, it keeps you feeling younger and unstoppable! Exercise that stimulates both your mind and body offers more benefits and increases the likelihood that people stick to it. This combination of mental and physical elements is what makes martial arts training a truly unique way to get or stay in shape.

Since it is the most common question I get asked, I will tell you that at Z-Ultimate Self Defense, we teach Kempo as our primary art, which is a blend of Chinese, Japanese, and Okinawan martial traditions. Kempo uses traditional kata (choreographed patterns, sometimes called forms) to develop the power of the body, as well as the most effective techniques of kung fu, karate and jujutsu to learn about using that power when there is another human being involved. **I know that might sound arcane, but it comes down to understanding a few basic principles that will enable you to learn how to protect yourself and get in shape while (and this is key) enjoying the process.**

### **What you can expect:**

Our primary goal is to help you feel more empowered both physically and mentally, through the study of martial arts. Of course, there are a lot of other benefits you can get from training in this unique discipline. Almost all of our adult students notice changes within the first few weeks of training. **Better flexibility, weight loss, and improved toning and strengthening of the muscles** are the most common areas of physical improvement. Additionally, many of them notice that they have **lower stress levels, better concentration at work, and are better able to channel their emotions.** Having the confidence to know that you can protect yourself or your family is a great bonus, too!

**How does Z-Ultimate help people get the results they want?** Through our unique personalized approach and our Dynamic Mastery Method of teaching! What the heck does that mean? It means that as teachers, we form a bond with each student through personalized lessons and help individual students achieve their personal best with an approach that is suitable for them. Study after study shows that students do their best learning in small groups, and so every student we work with does some form of training like this. Most typically, a student participates in one or more 30-minute personalized sessions each week with between 1 and 4 students of similar age, skill, and learning style. Everyone is able to take part in as many group sessions as they would like through the week in order to improve their conditioning, increase practice time, and heighten engagement with our community of martial artists. Because we understand that people have differing priorities and interests, we have some students that attend only their personal sessions and others that attend five or even six days a week. Unlike some other schools that dictate that you must come in a certain number of times each week, we leave that up to you.

### **I'm not athletic enough and other misconceptions**

So many people have heard about the benefits by now that it surprises me constantly that more people are not involved in martial arts training on some

level. After questioning a lot of people, I have found a lot of false beliefs floating around about the experience of training in martial arts and it's a real shame because these same people may be held back from doing something that would be really great for them!

**FALSE BELIEF #1: All that jumping around and "karate kid" stuff isn't any good in a real fight.**

I get that a lot from people who have never been in a real fight themselves, or who have only watched fighting on TV or in the movies. The basic fact is this: in any real one-on-one self-defense situation (not an "athletic contest" like you see on TV) if it comes down to actual fighting, is generally over in 10 seconds or less. Developing the skills to hit hard and fast are your best weapons in this kind of situation, and training in martial arts is the only thing I know of that brings out that ability. In addition, some of the practice revolves around simulating different situations so you will know what to do if it happens to you.

Certainly, if a person is taken completely by surprise, it is not a magic pill. However, if you are aware of your surroundings, it can give you the edge you need to escape. One other thing martial arts training helps with is having the confidence to respond appropriately in a situation and act from a place of power rather than fear, making it far less likely that you would ever need to use these skills in the first place!

**FALSE BELIEF #2: I have terrible discipline and am afraid I'll just end up quitting after a few weeks.**

I can't say it won't happen, and that's part of what our Starter Package (see below) will help you figure out. However, what I can say is that a couple of years ago, I came across an article that claimed that the **AVERAGE amount of time that a student studied martial arts for was approximately 7 months.** To be transparent, I can't find the article in order to properly cite it, and I don't recall the methodology they used to collect that information, but I have to say that sounds fairly accurate. Either way, I can tell you that the **AVERAGE amount of time that a student who enrolls with me is approximately 38 months.** How is that possible? It's only possible because people just like you find the curriculum interesting and engaging, they love the community that we've created, and they are getting the results they wanted. The great news about that is that even if you are "below average" in discipline, there's a good chance you'll hit or exceed your goals anyway!

**FALSE BELIEF #3: I'll never be able to take the pebble from your hand.**

In my experience, most people really don't understand what martial arts training is about. Sure, they understand it on a surface level. It is supposed to do all these wonderful things I've already mentioned, but what it comes down to is that the real secrets of martial arts training have been kept from them. I have many students who have studied martial arts at other schools who come to me for training and are blown away by the difference in the teaching that happens here at Z-Ultimate. Many schools that I have been to over the years (both as a student and as an observer) have had an attitude that there are only some people who are worth sharing the real secrets with. They subscribe to the theory that people must make themselves worthy of the knowledge, like in that old show "Kung Fu". In my mind, the reason I am here is to share the incredible things I've learned over the years:

- three easy ways to develop **incredible physical power**
- **how to project confidence** so that you are less likely to become a victim
- using your training to improve your power of **focus**
- how to **channel your emotions** so that they become productive instead of destructive
- how to access different parts of your brain so you can learn physical movements and become **totally aware** of your body
- exercises to help you develop **incredible control over your body**, even if you think you are uncoordinated!
- the **psychology of an attack situation**, and how to use your body and mind to protect yourself
- how to exercise in a way that helps you feel **energized**, not worn out

and these are just a few!

**FALSE BELIEF #4: I'm worried about being beaten up or injured.**

In my experience as both a student and as a teacher, I have seen far more people hurt playing basketball or other "non-contact" sports than I ever have from martial arts training. In fact, it is the rare injury that happens as a result of physical contact between two people, and usually (like in most areas of our lives) from falling or tripping. To that end, our facility is designed literally from the ground up, with Olympics-quality gymnastic flooring having 1 ½" of cross-linked polyethylene foam underneath to protect students from falls. Now that doesn't mean a whole lot to most people, but to me it means fewer injuries and more quality training time for everybody. The bottom line is this: if people get hurt, they tend to quit so it's in our best interest to provide the safest possible learning environment.

**FALSE BELIEF #5: I'd like to do it, but I just don't have the time.**

Our schedule is set up so that people will have every opportunity to attend classes. We understand that not everyone's schedule is the same, and that sometimes people's schedules are irregular. That's why our personalized instruction approach is so successful: with each student here attending one or more private/semi-private sessions on a weekly basis, everyone has the opportunity to schedule a class at a time that works for them, in addition to having unlimited access to the group sessions!

**FALSE BELIEF #6: I have some physical limitations, and I think they will hold me back.**

As we get older, our bodies start to send us signals that we're not as young as we used to be. One of the best things that martial arts has done for me personally is to teach me how to either overcome those limitations or work around them so that they become advantages. Now I don't feel like I'm old, but I'm in my mid-40s and a few years ago I had my hip replaced due to arthritis, which is not an insignificant operation. I had no idea what to expect and was worried that I would have to pack it in, stop teaching martial arts, and get a desk job somewhere. That was the experience I could have had. Instead, I was back to doing the job that I love in 10 days (to be fair, that was part-time, it took me another week or so to come back full-time). One of the great things that having to have that operation taught me is that everyone has their own personal limitations and that in order to really help someone, I have to be compassionate and understand where each student is

coming from. Although most people wouldn't look at it this way, I recognize the experience that I have had as a great blessing. It has reshaped the way I look at teaching martial arts, who can benefit from it, and how I communicate with and help people overcome obstacles. I truly believe that we can help you overcome those parts of yourself that are holding you back, whether they are physical or mental. In fact, for a lot of reasons, I credit my martial arts training (and the fabulous teachers who I have been blessed with) for my speedy recovery!

**FALSE BELIEF #7: I'm not in good enough shape.**

Gotta be honest, this one seems really ridiculous to me. I've actually had people tell me they were looking to enroll in 6 months "because they needed time to get in shape first." Did I ever see them again? Nope. I'm guessing they're still putting off doing other great things for themselves until next year. To me, it's a little like saying "I have to get in shape before I go to the gym." Getting in shape is an integral part of the process of learning martial arts. No matter what kind of shape you are currently in, martial arts works out the body in a different way than any other exercise I know of. It's a whole-body workout like swimming, but uses a strategy of increasing exercises so that you can take it to the level of fitness that you would like. In addition, our personalized approach allows us to help coach you so that you not only get in shape intelligently, but safely as well.

**FALSE BELIEF #8: I don't want to hold up the group class. The other people all have more experience.**

Everyone who takes up martial arts is a beginner at some time in their life. I still remember my first class and what it was like to walk into a room full of strangers and start doing something I wasn't even remotely good at. This can be scary initially, until you realize that everyone there can really help you! As Mr. Perkins mentioned in his letter, I seem to be blessed to be surrounded by kind and generous people who love helping others. And I'm not even talking about the fabulous teachers I've had the opportunity to work alongside over the years.

Part of the great thing about having more experienced people in class with you is that you can learn from them as well. You'll get a chance to see the direction you will be heading and how you can get yourself there more quickly and easily because of their example. They have all been where you are and understand that the first steps are always the hardest. There's an old Chinese saying that the journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step and that's certainly true in this case. Does that mean that you have to travel the thousand miles? Of course not, but however far you decide to go, wouldn't it be nice to know that you'll be around people who have already taken a few steps down the same path and be able to help you with some shortcuts?

However, if for some reason you aren't interested in participating in group sessions, that's fine as well. We understand that some people may have personalities or challenges that would make them feel more comfortable sticking with personalized sessions. We won't pressure you to do it if it doesn't make sense for you.

**Having said all that, I want you to know that I understand that studying martial arts isn't for everybody.**

**In fact, our program is not for everybody who is interested in martial arts!** You may not care if you get anything out of martial arts but an exercise program. You may not think our program is the best fit for you. You may not even like me as a teacher, person, or both. For those of you that are really interested in the positive benefits of training, I encourage you to look around and find the teacher or place where you feel most comfortable.

As is the nature of anything worth learning, you will occasionally have obstacles to your progress, so **if you are likely to let yourself give up at the first sign of adversity, I would also not recommend our program to you.** I believe in bringing out each student's potential over the long haul, overcoming obstacles, and enjoying the growth that is certain to happen. There are many students who have been with me for well over ten years and several who have gone on to become martial arts teachers in their own right, sharing their experiences and enthusiasm with others just like I am fortunate to be able to do on a daily basis.

But enough of that. Let's get to what you probably want to know!

### **Here's how you can get started in our life-improving program**

**STEP 1:** Call the school at (612) 564-8849 and ask for Ben. If you would prefer, you can e-mail me at edina@zultimate.com instead. (Or, if you're online and want to do it yourself, go to <https://zultimate.as.me> and click on "FREE INTRODUCTORY PRIVATE CLASS".) Whichever way you decide, we'll set up a **FREE** consultation class, valued at \$75. It will also give us the opportunity to find out how we can best help you, and in just 30 minutes, you will understand how to stand, block, kick, and punch, as well as learn a quick and easy self-defense technique. More importantly, you will learn two of the three secrets of using your body for incredible physical power, without having to get any stronger than you are right now!

**STEP 2:** I am convinced that you will be so impressed with the quality of your first experience with us that you'll want to continue. However, just to make sure our school is the right place for you, you'll be able to try our \$99 "**STARTER PACKAGE**," a special package that includes:

- 4 personalized sessions, scheduled at a convenient time
- Unlimited access to our group classes for the appropriate age bracket
- A martial arts uniform, belt, and school patches
- And as a bonus, you'll also get a Z-Ultimate T-shirt

In fact, you can even try us out for that first thirty days and if you don't notice a difference in your confidence, stress level, or physical abilities, cancel your program, and we'll refund your money.

**So this gives you the opportunity to really evaluate us to see if you are getting the results you want, risk-free!**

**Well, what if I don't like it or it doesn't work out for me?**

Like I said before, I understand that karate is not for everyone. If it doesn't work out for any reason, keep the uniform as our gift to you and we will wish you well on whatever other endeavors you choose to pursue.

If you, like the over 1500 students I've been privileged to personally work with in my career, absolutely love the school and want to enroll in our regular program, we have a very simple **KICK START ENROLLMENT** process, which we'll walk you through.

I want to thank you for taking the time to read this letter. I really and truly believe that studying martial arts can make a huge difference for you. I know because I have had it happen for me personally, and I get to hear the success stories of those who I am fortunate to call my students. If nothing else, I hope you feel more educated about the positive impact this sport can play for anyone interested in personal growth and long-lasting, life-shaping change.

In closing, I'd like to leave you with a note from a student and friend of mine who now owns and operates his own school in Enfield, Connecticut, as well as a few words from other people who have participated in our program.

I look forward to seeing you in classes soon.

**Sincerely,**  
**Benjamin Thomas**  
**Z-Ultimate Self Defense**

## **Ben Thomas changed my life.**

When I first met Ben, I was seventeen years old and like all seventeen-year-olds, I had a lot more to learn about life than I realized. Fortunately, I met Ben. He was teaching martial arts at our college, Wesleyan University, in 1991 when I took my first Kempo class with him. I have been studying martial arts with him ever since.

I recommend studying with Ben Thomas for three main reasons:

First, he has a sincere and generous heart that makes him an incredible role model for any human being. His willingness to go beyond reasonable limits for others is extraordinary. If you meet his students, ask them about him; they truly love him. If you are looking for a role model for yourself or your child, you will not find another person with more commitment, sincerity, integrity, and discipline.

Second, you will never find a better martial arts instructor. Over the past 13 years, I personally have traveled the world training in the martial arts. I have trained in 5 states and 3 countries, in over 20 schools and with more than thirty instructors. I learned Chinese and Tibetan and then lived in Asia for a year seeking martial arts masters. I even trained daily with an Asian national team. My point is that I have trained with all sorts of instructors and each of them has taught me something I value, but not one of them was better than Ben Thomas. That is why I have studied with Ben every year I have lived in the United States since we met. He has an ability to instill knowledge and to get his students to perform at the highest levels. His students consistently outperform other schools in their martial arts skills and understanding. He has always made me work hard and never made me feel stupid.

Lastly, you should study with Ben because he is a great martial artist. As I mentioned before, I have had the fortunate experience of meeting (and studying with) a lot of great martial artists, from famous instructors here in the United States to the old masters in the parks of Taiwan, Ben rates as the highest caliber in the martial arts. His movement is clean, powerful, efficient and effective. I am a head taller and probably fifty pounds heavier than Ben and he can toss me like a rag doll. In training, when he has hit me it has been very clear that if he did not hold back, I could not be writing this letter to you now. If you want to be great at the martial arts, to be able to defend yourself, or to get in great shape, you can look at thirty schools or you could just study with Mr. Thomas.

With Ben as a role model, I now run the largest karate school in northern Connecticut. It is successful because my martial arts are good and with some guidance, my heart and mind have been set on the right path. Out of respect for my other teachers, my wife and my family, I won't say that I owe it all to Ben but I will say that if he makes a tiny fraction of the difference in your life that he has made in mine (and many of his other students), I guarantee you will not regret a day of your decision to join his school. There is not a single action you could take today that will make more of a difference for you or your child than by signing up with him.

Sincerely,

Jonathan Metcalf  
Integrity Martial Arts  
Enfield, CT

# A Sample of Other People's Experiences with Our Program

*"I signed up for martial arts and self-defense. I am extremely pleased. Great for fitness too. Master Ben is fast paced and an inspiration. 3 group classes a week that are fun and highly engaging. Plus individual lessons to keep improving your skill and fitness. Everyone should do this!"*

**--Joe M, Student**

*"In the end of life what will people remember about you, it's about the people you have touched and have touched you and have made a difference. My grandpa taught me that, and I didn't fully understand until my brush with death.*

*"You and Meghan made a significant impact in my life when I came to the dojo for self-defense. You both get the golden rules of life and enjoy people, how could I not appreciate you both! You're both awesome and proof that there are nice, kind, people in this world! It was a very rough year and I still managed to get my MOJO back in the Dojo! If the need arises I will defend myself. If it ends up being my time to go, I won't go without a damn good fight at staying alive. You and Meghan knew this, it just took me some time to figure it out again and I will always be grateful you were there for me (and Kyle too). Kyle doesn't know his strength yet, but he will be a fierce little dude if he needs to be."*

**--Katie I, Student and Parent of a Student**

*"I want to remind you of how thankful I am. You taught me how to punch stuff. But the punches you taught me were not punches, they were movements that carried wind in dusty places, brought fire to frozen cities, instilled peace to the guilty, and raised glory over the highest mountains (they were awesome punches). You were a Sensei in karate, but to me, you were also a Sensei in life who taught me how to mature as a man.*

*"I remember a time when I argued with almost everything you said and I would do action before critical thought. If I had a time machine to fix things I have done, I would not fix anything because then I would never learn. I want to restart at white belt and work again to who I am now. I want to recount the events that transformed me from a boy to a man. Now, I am a changed person, and I believe it is because of you. Thank you, Sensei, for preparing me for this moment."*

**--Barry B, Student, the day after his Black Belt Test**

*"Benjamin is a very educated, understanding and motivating instructor. As a personal trainer, I value these qualities. I felt comfortable from the instant I walked through the door. I have never taken a martial arts class before and was honestly scared at first. I also had a recent injury to my back, Benjamin tailored the session to ensure I was safe, again a value I hold in high regard. Most of all, IT WAS FUN!!!"*

**--Tyler M, Student**

*"Where do I begin?! Z Ultimate Defense has far exceeded my expectations and I've been to other martial arts centers.....not the same experience at all!!!! The instructors are attentive and engaging. They truly enjoy what they do and enjoy teaching both children and adults. I am amazed by the positive energy at every class my sons and I have taken jointly, independently, and in the classroom. I love the option of private classes and set class times. My sons are both excited to go to their lessons and I have seen an increase in focus and confidence in them."*

**--Dawnn E, Student and Parent of 2 Students**

"You helped bring more physical and mental balance to my life when I needed it the most. Thank you for the instruction, you run a wonderful school!"

--Sean O, Student

"I've been taking lessons from Sensei Ben Thomas (I know, it doesn't fit together) for a little over a month now. His teaching approach totally jives with how I learn, and it seems that he's most certainly not a one trick pony. He's got a really wide background in martial arts besides just the Kenpo he's teaching, which he only has a [5]th degree black belt in (slacker). He teaches weapons if you qualify and is an all around fascinating dude. He teaches all ages and has a flexible schedule. Check it out."

--Rob G, Student

"When I decided to take up martial arts, I was looking for a fun way for Jason and I to be active together. Not only did I love it, but it began to change me. To understand just how, you need to know a little about my past.

I come from a very abusive childhood. I have gone through every kind of abuse you can imagine. I know what it is like to be kept home from school for fear the bruises would be seen. I have experienced and witnessed situations no child should ever be exposed to. My parents married at fourteen and sixteen and divorced when I was two. They both remarried right away. I was caught up in the middle, abuse coming from both sides.

As a teenager, I attempted suicide several times to the point of hospitalization. I was isolated in school, banished from normal classes. My stepmom died of cancer when I was fifteen. My Dad went crazy without her. I had to fend for myself and eventually dropped out of school. The abuse continued, bloody noses the norm. Thankfully, I met Jason. He rescued me from all that hell. We married when I was seventeen and moved out of state.

It has been a long ten years just trying to find out who I am. For the last few years I immersed myself in church. I know where I stand with my beliefs, but this particular church was very extreme. There was tremendous pressure to live by their standards. I got rid of all my music, wore only skirts and dresses, stopped going to movies, etc. They had me to the point where I thought my main purpose in life was to stay at home raising lots of kids. I felt so numb after a while. I felt like such a hypocrite. My depression grew worse every day. I knew something had to change.

That is when I considered martial arts. When I started taking classes, I just felt so free. It is a feeling that I could never explain. As I continued, I really felt as though I was "myself". Before, I was extremely shy. I never would have been able to talk in front of a group and definitely would not have been able to let people touch me! I was a different person. Karate has completely transformed me. It has given me so much confidence and self esteem. My past still does come out ... but week by week, it is still improving me in many ways. The transformation has been so dramatic that my co-workers thought someone had replaced my position! I just can't say enough about this school. I love being here and I feel very comfortable with you as my teacher.

My love for karate has me wanting to learn all I can. Right now I don't feel I'm anywhere close to being good at karate. That's an understatement! But I do know that I can do anything if I put my mind to it! I'm so excited to continue this journey!!!"

--Jessi K, Student