

Last Sunday, March 30, 2014 we lost a wonderful soul and inspiration to all who knew him.

Max Myers embodied so much of what I - and I am sure many of you - continually aspire to achieve and express. Among his many attributes were dedication to his family, loyalty to his friends and colleagues, a work ethic of continually striving for excellence, patience, and a steadfast focus when approaching any challenge or task in front of him. The list goes on.

I cannot fully express the profound impact this man had on me and how much he greatly enhanced the lives of so many.

Of course, as many of you here know I have had the privilege of knowing Max for the past twenty four years as a fellow Taekwondo practitioner and ambassador. Much of what I share with you now will be from this perspective.

When I was a young man and just beginning my career as an instructor, Max was such a great student of Taekwondo. As he progressed and became a black belt, he was profoundly positive and encouraging to me as a leader and as a mentor. He inspired greatness in me and in everyone around him. Max always found a way to be positive, encouraging and respectful with everyone he encountered.

As I progressed in my training and teaching and aspired to do more for the Taekwondo community as Indiana State Taekwondo Association President, Max was my obvious choice to be an officer in the administration. I was honored that he accepted my request to be part of the administration and together we made great strides in the growth and development of Taekwondo in Indiana. It was a tough job. I leaned on him a lot for his encouragement, and wisdom. I will always consider him a big part of that success as he provided the guidance we very much needed.

When I started the Indy Cup Taekwondo Championships in 1996, it was again Max, who was right there supporting me and supporting the event. For the last eighteen years, Max never missed the event and he was always there lending a hand, leading people, and ensuring success. Next Saturday, we will honor him at this event by dedicating it to him.

A few years ago, Max was promoted to Taekwondo Master Instructor. This honor was well deserved and it dispelled the idea that only people of a certain age or physical ability could achieve this level. For those who practice martial arts, they understand that most of what we do is in the mind. I cannot think of anyone who was a greater example of this philosophy.

As I have shared with some of you here, I consider it a blessing that Max and I had just visited the Friday morning before his passing. We had a great discussion about many things – family, Taekwondo, life. It had been quite a while since we had the chance to sit down and have a profound discussion. God works in wonderful ways.

When he left, he was very comfortable with goals we had plotted for him moving forward. Max was always very good about taking a step back and evaluating where he was and where he wanted to go next.

Clearly, life presents challenges every day for all of us, and Max was working through how best to approach his challenges. It was a wonderful time of reflection that God provided the two of us. I am comforted in knowing that Max was happy with where things were headed in his life. I am so grateful that I had this time with him, and even more so for the 24 years.

I will never forget the day Max died as it was a beautiful sunny day on which my wife and I planted several trees and cut a garden in our back yard. It was a long hard day of work that Max would have appreciated, and I did not even have to cash in any COUPONS! Looking at this now and how I spent my day was very symbolic of Max's philosophy of continually planting seeds of leadership and positive energy and cultivating growth into everyone whose lives were privileged to be touched by his kind and gentle spirit.

Although he always considered me his martial arts instructor, I learned many valuable life lessons by watching Max lead and interact with his family, friends, and students. He was always there to support me throughout the time I knew him and he was a mentor to me as much as I was to him. I know that his mentoring, encouragement and leadership of people permeated every aspect of

his life and not just in the realm in which I knew him. He was what I consider to be a true teacher. I will dearly miss Max.

The fact that Max and I shared a special visit so close to his passing and that the day he died found me planting and gardening solidifies in my mind and my heart that God has a plan. It gives me comfort that I will see him again. Until that time I will strive continually to embody the seeds he planted in life.

I leave you with this message of what I personally believe and I hope that you will find comfort in it. When someone we know and love dies, we mourn OUR loss. We miss them and it hurts. The Bible says that “believers in Christ” go directly to be with the Lord – our Creator of all that is in the heavens and on earth. This is a place with no sorrow or tears and filled with peace and joy. As a Christian, this is what I call hope, faith, and love.

So now it is up to us - his family, friends, and colleagues - to move forward carrying his spirit of greatness. I think one of the best ways we can honor Max is to take time to reflect on our own lives and look at ways to embrace challenges, set goals, and improve – mentally, physically, and spiritually.

It is my hope that all who have known him will emulate his steadfast leadership, kindness, and work-ethic. I am certain that this is what he would want and expect from all of us.

As sad as we are right now, I know Max would want all of us to remember the great times too. Yes, he would appreciate the acknowledgment of his passing and he would understand our mourning. However, he would also expect you to carry on and put forth your best effort to reach your goals while doing your best to mentor and help others reach success.

Thank you, Max. And thank you God – that we will see each other again.