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THE MINDFUL DRAGON

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We all have within us the Wisdom, Power & Magic

Issue 23

Ever growing, grounded in the earth, reaching to the heavens... By owning responsibility for our experience... We Are Empowered!

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HIRE-A-SHINOBI

ENLIGHTENED SOLUTIONS FOR DAILY LIFE

I am a big believer in social entrepreneurship and this new foundation is a great example of a win-win-win enterprise. A group of people, or in this case Ninja, have pooled their resources to offer needed services that help a community live happier lives. That's a role model worth following.

Check out their [Hire-A-Shinobi](#) website and [Our Awesome Ninja blog!](#)

Hire-A-Shinobi

Enlightened solutions for daily life



TORI'S FOCUS

Body: Have you ever used stress as an excuse for unhealthy nutritional choices? I would imagine that we all have. Do any of these statements sound familiar?

I live on coffee and diet coke because... I'm in college, I'm broke, I have to keep up with the craziness at work, the kids are running me ragged, I'm not getting enough sleep.

I eat (insert fattening comfort food) because... my heart is broken, I lost my job, I have no time, I'm worried, I've been going through hard times, this is my life.

How often, when our minds and bodies are screaming for support, do we turn a deaf ear? At the very time when we need strength, health, and energy, we starve our bodies of nutrients and attack it with chemicals. When we need clarity of thought and calm decision making, we ingest mind altering stimulants, depressants and enough sugar to put ourselves on a glycemic rollercoaster. When we are out of time and low on self esteem, we fill ourselves with food that cause repercussions that will take time, effort and frustration to undo. Does this sound helpful?

Stress consumption is not the same as eating for enjoyment. When we elect to enjoy a rich meal, a devilish dessert, or a favored libation, we are mindful (hopefully) enough to fully appreciate it and whatever compensations

Mindful Musings

MOUNTAINS AND STRAWS

We all have a need for comfort and acknowledgment but never more so than during times of stress. We are also more willing to put in the extra effort to offer those desired responses to someone who is struggling and suffering. With this in mind, is it any surprise that we might want to draw attention to our obstacles and effort?

We all have done this on more than one occasion, perhaps even regularly. We create lists of hardship to justify our suffering. *How could we not feel stressed when all of these bad things happened?* When the next bomb drops we eagerly add it to the pile. The longer the list, the heavier the weight, the bigger the bundle, the more everyone appreciates the final straw that puts us over the edge into the land of emotional neediness.

It makes sense and it usually produces the desired result, but at what cost? Our thoughts become focused on the negative. Compiling our evidence takes time, thought and energy. With every thought, we reinforce the hardship and justify the stress until we forget (if we ever really knew) that stress - is optional.

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

While there are clearly stress-inducing situations, the level of anxiety that we experience, or whether we choose to suffer any anxiety at all, is just that – a choice. We already know at least one viable and time tested reason for choosing it. High levels of stress justify and invite comfort.

What about acknowledgment? Have you ever created or exaggerated an obstacle so that you would feel prouder and more deserving of an achievement? Perhaps your natural talent or previously acquired skills made the path seem too easy and therefore unremarkable. Perhaps the resources at your disposal made you seem too privileged for others to recognize and appreciate your effort and fortitude. Perhaps your easy attitude did not display the stress levels by which others measure accomplishment – and people do measure in this way. Perhaps the accomplishment itself didn't feel significant enough to you in comparison with the super human feats occurring in the world around you.

I have felt each of those things at one time or another and have made my life harder as a result. But somewhere along the way, I stopped trying to prove how hard things were and started enjoying how easy things felt. I started measuring my achievements according to the results and the harmony I maintained to achieve them, rather than the effort expended and the hardship I survived. That hasn't changed the way others perceive me but it has changed the way I perceive myself. It has also changed the way I perceive others.

When harmony became more notable to me than stress, I started recognizing it more in others. I started noticing those who moved through life with ease. I started giving credit to what I had probably considered to be luck or blessing. I stopped equating stress with perseverance or measuring a journey by how low the start. I found myself freely offering comfort and acknowledgment to those who might not seem to need either but always appreciated both.

And I did all of this for myself as well. I decided that living a blessed life is a good thing. Easy is the goal. Harmony is the result. Mountains to climb and bundles of straw are no longer required. Living a happy, tranquil, fulfilled life is quite enough for me! [\(read about hidden benefits for worrying\)](#)

DRAGON ATTIRE

Clothes to inspire
the way you want to move

Meditation Jewelry/Mala to inspire
the way you want to feel



we might have to make as a result. Stress consumption is done for all the wrong reasons, generally to excess, and without any consideration for the resulting consequences or real enjoyment of the moment.

So the next time stress drives us to mindless consumption, let's stop and ask, "Will this give me the strength I need? Will this help me feel calmer and think more clearly?" If not... step away from the coffee and donut!

Mind: Even the most concise truisms are subject to context and condition. Slogans and quotes, can be very inspirational, motivating, and thought provoking, but they can also lead to laziness and rigidity of thought. Why? Because they require very little thought or effort to pass along and once voiced they tend to ring in our brains as irrefutable fact. The catchier they are, the more true they seem, the less we question, the quicker we share. The more famous the author, the more we trust, the less we challenge, the more we repeat. That's not to say that certain statements are not worth repeating, but perhaps they would serve a greater purpose as launching pads for our own critical thinking and creation.

Reducing complexity to simplicity, requires honing in on the essence of what one wishes to convey and leaving out all the exceptions that are not important to the message and the depth that cannot be included. Those statements were made within context regarding movies, lessons, marketing, situations, injustice, etc. and yet sometimes we treat them as if they were all encompassing. I see a lot of this on Facebook where sharing is made reflexively easy. When I read them, I take in the intended message but then I challenge myself to question it. Under what conditions would it cease to feel true? Concise is more portable but essential wisdom can be lost in the reduction.

Spirit: It amazes me the extent to which people will go to vent anger. They will create hoops through which to jump simply so they can express their fury over the perceived hoops they are sure that others require. They will take minutes, hours, even days from their lives to confront and combat something that stole mere seconds of their time. They will whip themselves into a frenzy about something that only began as a an annoyance or discourtesy. I say "they" because it's so much easier to see this in others. However, the real observation to make is how and when and why - we do this ourselves.

It's especially amusing when we catch ourselves venting about the way other people vent.