



# THE INSTITUTE FOR JEDI REALIST STUDIES

www.instituteforjedirealiststudies.org

## Welcome!!!!

Let me be the first to welcome you to what will hopefully be an amazing undertaking. This newsletter was created for many reasons, including but not limited to: increasing the circulation of information throughout the community, helping members to stay connected, and increasing the sense of community within the Institute.

Each newsletter is planned, at this time, to be released every other month and will include stories about various Jedi Realists and the paths they've walked, as well as many other exciting and maybe even discussion stimulating stories. It will also include a letter from the principal which is designed to keep the Academy students informed about the progression of the academy and any other important information.

I've also included a contact section for those who have

questions about the newsletter or wish to contribute to it. I hope you enjoy this first edition of the Institute's Newsletter!

In this newsletter we have quite a line up including a story about one of our newest members to the Institute, Benjamin. Benjamin's story will be the first of our "Spotlight" segment, which is set aside specifically for the stories of the Jedi of our community.

This newsletter also includes information about the upcoming summer gathering in 2009 as well as a book review about Neale Donald Walsch's recently released book, "When Everything Changes, Change Everything!" Finally we get to take a look into the Middle Ages and an organization dedicated to learning more about it!

Regards,

Jedi Phoenix

## Letter from the Principal

Welcome to the first newsletter! My name is Jax and I'm the current Principal of the Academy.

I'd like to use this space to update you on the behind the scenes activities of the faculty. I don't want you to have to trust that we're working on curriculum, but to have feedback so you know.

Recently the faculty has been hard at work creating an introduction course that all students will take when they begin their training. It will provide an overview of the training system as well as a taste of the main courses. We expect it to be available for

everyone in June and look forward to feedback from those who are the first to work through it.

In addition, everyone has been editing the courses we have run previously so they are ready for the workbook format which solo students will use. We have also been writing new courses so you won't run out of things to learn! We'll be sure to alert you to new course offerings as they become available through the discussion forum.

Speaking of the forums, stop by often to share some ideas, ask questions, or just get to know everyone better. In this way we'll

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build a community from the ground up. If you haven't started a training journal, or shared your off-site blog, please do so. I think those who are using them have found the added interaction useful.

So swing by when you can! I look forward to seeing you soon!

## Spotlight:

### Searching for the Jedi

As most who have been attracted to this site it began with a searching for a path of self improvement. Having spent 19 years practicing martial arts and pursuing an academic study in philosophy, religion and spirituality as a whole. I still had not settled on a truly defined path.

So in January of 09 I started to use prayer in my daily life. I didn't know who or what I was praying to, but I knew that I needed to begin to ask for direction. Long story short, in the weeks that followed I was beset by a strange and wonderful set of synchronistic coincidences. People passing me books I needed to read, finding myself in conversations I needed to hear etc. So by the middle of March while still practicing my daily prayer and now trying in vain to meditate I found myself at home with the day off. What should I do? mmm I know I'll watch *Star Wars episode III*. Sad to have to mention it, but the universe will give you what you need in ways you can understand. Having watched it I found the idea of a Jedi order fascinating. This

band of self disciplined people from different cultures and religions practicing a life I wished to emulate. So again long story short I began a search on the web for likeminded people with whom I could interact with and learn from. I came across many sites, most seemed intent on role play which was certainly not what I was looking for. Then I came across "**The Institute for Jedi Realist Studies**". Here was a small band of people using the path of the Jedi as a guide to fulfill their lives.

**"So my advice to those who are only new like I am, take the time to study and practice the information you find on this site."**

I began lurking on the site soaking up the forum and looking at the academy curriculum. I was so impressed with dedication of those involved and thought I would sign up and see where it led me. Having only joined up at the end of March 09, I have had nothing but enjoyment in reading the forum and interacting with some of the Academy Faculty.

I began Meditation 101 which has proven it's self a valuable tool for the advancement of my meditation. I believe over time both my own journey and that of the Academy will blossom into a positive contributor to people's lives.

So my advice to those who are only new like I am, take the time to study and practice the information you find on this site. Start yourself a Training Journal to keep track of your progress and give others the chance to guide you where they have been themselves. I will finish with a Bruce Lee quote I have cherished for years.

**"Knowing is not enough we must apply. Willing is not enough we must do"**

Thank you  
Benjamin

## When Everything Changes...

By Jedi Phoenix

Neale Donald Walsch, author of the popular *Conversations with God* series, has once again written a perfectly timed book, this time about the Spiritual and Mental concept on Change. Mr. Walsch leads the reader through several different conversations, breaking down the concept of change, and then introduces and discusses the Nine Changes that can Change Everything.

If you, or a loved one are dealing with Change, or you are simply expanding your Spiritual prowess as you walk your Jedi Path, this book is right for you! It is a journey

as much as it is a conversation dealing with many of the problems of change that we are currently facing in America and all over the world. Not only that but it can prepare you, as a Jedi to help deal with the changes that become inevitable while training on the Jedi Realist path. In the words of Neale himself, "Change is what is-and

**"Change the way  
CHANGE  
CHANGES  
YOU!"**

there is now way to change that...What can be changed is the way you deal with change, and the way you're changed by change."

Change is constant and all around us, but how we perceive this change, and the way we embrace this change can make all the difference! As Jedi this becomes even more important as we deal with change, but also to set a better example for others on how to deal with change. Take Neale's challenge, read this book and "Change the way change changes you!"

# Jedi Gathering: Michigan 2009

By Angelus

A real-life gathering of Jedi and Force Followers from all over the world are coming together to share their knowledge and talents with the community. This Jedi Gathering will take place July 23<sup>rd</sup> to July 26<sup>th</sup>, 2009. People will be lodging near the shore of Lake Michigan at Tower Hill Camp and Retreat Center in Sawyer, Michigan.

Accommodations will be a bit more luxurious as attendees will stay in Gammon Hall with its hotel-style rooms, shared bathrooms, and air conditioning. Meals can

also be shared in the communal dining room. Indoor workshops can take place in one of the multipurpose rooms available in the building.

While on the topic of workshops, there will be a variety of learning available. Some sessions will deal with energy work – reiki, intuitive energy, shamanic to name a few. Other sessions will focus on swordwork, martial arts, and self-defense. People will learn about Orienteering and participate in a Search & Rescue exercise.

Throughout the weekend much will be discussed about the role of the Jedi in today's world.

A high attendance is anticipated. Like all gatherings, it is sure to be enjoyable.

For more information, please visit: [http://www.jediresourcecenter.org/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=118:2009-michigan-gathering&catid=45:offline](http://www.jediresourcecenter.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=118:2009-michigan-gathering&catid=45:offline)

## Welcome to the Current Middle Ages

By Memnoich

I would like to take this opportunity to tell you of the SCA, known as the Society for Creative Anachronism, SCAdians are a wonderful bunch. Most are geeks of some sort, coming together to attempt to bring back the better points of the middle ages, the Honour, Chivalry, and Respect. You see the SCA is something that I participate in my free time. A volunteer organization, this group researches and practices medieval techniques of anything from clothing to cooking, fighting to brewing, anything you might be interested in. Now why I choose to tell you about this is because of the fighting. They have what they call light fighting, and heavy fighting, they even have rules and techniques for children's fighting.

Light fighting, which is similar to Fencing, uses styles and

**“The exercise gained from this is more than you realize, carrying the extra weight of the armour but also learning to work together.”**

techniques similar to what is seen in Olympic fencing, but instead of linear, single person fights, you are taught and trained to fight in many different situation and with multiple opponents. The skill level ranges from amateur to Professional Fencers, so you can get quite the workout and quite a bit of training with almost no cost to you. Though there are rules and equipment requirements, most of the stuff you need to begin can be put together for under \$300. If you're lucky though, there might be a person or two in your local group with loaner equipment you can borrow until you can acquire your own.

Heavy fighting involves heavy armour, think plate mail, and weapons made from sticks of rattan. Rattan is a type of bamboo, sturdier and heavy, some furniture is made from it. These “Stick” weapons approximate the weight and size of weapons from the Middle Ages, while diminishing the potential for injuries. Again this is a way to learn and train in sword techniques that allow you to train,

and actually fight against other people and even multiple people at once. The exercise gained from this is more than you realize, carrying the extra weight of the armour but also learning to work together.

With children fighting, Honour and Chivalry is encouraged more than skill and Strength. In most tournaments for kids, winning is encouraged, but acts of honour are rewarded as well. This not only teaches kids at a young age the skill of the blade, but to respect others, and the importance of Honour. These are traits that I think are great for a kid to grow up learning.

You can learn more about the SCA at [www.SCA.org](http://www.SCA.org) with an online demo of activities at [www.SCADemo.com](http://www.SCADemo.com). Check it out, you might find something you like; at the very least you'll be able to learn some valuable skills and training techniques.

# Final Thoughts

By Jax

To end this newsletter, I'd like to share a quote from the book Phoenix shared earlier. I've undergone a lot of scary changes in the past few years as my wife's health has declined dramatically. Quotes like the one I chose for this newsletter are invaluable to me. Otherwise the fear can be overwhelming, which is definitely not helpful in my role as caregiver, wife, or Jedi. I encourage you to stop by the forum to discuss it and hope this quote helps you with whatever you are going through in life.

"What you resist persists. What you look at disappears. That is, it ceases to have its illusory form. Non-resistance delivers us from what is Imagined and awakens us to what is Apparent, finally showing us the Actual Truth...Everything changes with a change in point of view."

- Neale Donald Walsh, *When Everything Changes, Change Everything*, page 229

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## The Institute for Jedi Realist Studies

If you would like more information about our training programs, or would like to ask further questions; please follow this link: <http://www.instituteforjedirealiststudies.org>. From there you may contact a staff member. For questions, comments, suggestions, or submissions for future newsletters you can contact me through email: [savvyjedi301@yahoo.com](mailto:savvyjedi301@yahoo.com). I would be happy to help in any way!!!

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## About the Institute for Jedi Realist Studies

The Institute's mission is twofold: to bring together training programs with similar standards to maximize the sharing of resources and knowledge, and then provide those training programs for interested students so they can find what training best suits their style.

We feel a strong community requires not just fellowship, but quality training. Therefore the Institute includes options for fellowship and learning through discussion forums and chats, in addition to the Academy which provides formal training

in various formats. We have taken great care to assure training is useful and applicable to real life and hope you find it of use.

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