

Pathways

THE CHRIS DEWEY MARTIAL ARTS, INC. NEWSLETTER

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CONTENTS

Clarity and Clutter	1
I don't have time right now.....	2
DBA You Inc	3
Journeys & Destinations.....	4

The secret to contentment is knowing how to enjoy what you have, and to be able to lose all desire for things beyond your reach.

Lin Yutang

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Clarity and Clutter

It's difficult to get a clear sense of things with an obscured view. It's difficult to make forward progress with things in your way. It's difficult to find space for new things with a house full of old, worn-out stuff. It's difficult to recognize clutter if you can't even see it.

Clutter can take many forms... Sometimes clutter is physical. It's the stuff we do not organize or clear out of our lives when we no longer need it or it is worn out, not useful, etc. Sometimes clutter is emotional and mental. It is the old, left-over effects of events that happened years ago, but which still, in some ways haunt us.

It really doesn't matter what form the clutter takes, it is still exactly that...clutter...stuff that is in your way, blocking progress and/or blocking vision. Sometimes we collect clutter with the greatest of intentions...we don't want to waste something, or it might be useful (one day), we stopped using it and forgot we had it, we have an emotional attachment to it...and that's just the physical stuff.

Think about the emotional and mental stuff. Think about the programming that you picked up as a kid that you carry with you as an adult...how often is this sort of thing clutter that is now getting in your way and preventing you from reaching the goals you think you want to achieve. I can think of lots of areas in my life, where old mental programming gets in my way and slows my progress. I can see that until I do some serious mental housecleaning, there are some areas of my life where I'm simply not going to make any progress. So long as I cling

to old mental clutter, I have a mental home full of junk that has long outlived its usefulness...if it ever had any. Leaving aside the physical stuff for a moment, which can be a newsletter article all on its own, let's focus on the mental clutter.

I was chatting with my program manager at the business yesterday, and she was asking me about goal setting. It so happened that at the same time, I was working on a coach certification exercise that dealt with creating clarity.

One of the things about setting goals is that you must have a very clear vision of what it is that you seek. Your vision needs to be crystal clear and needs to project out years into the future so that you can see what the benefits will be for having achieved both the short and the long-term goals.

Now, I will grant you that in a life where nothing is guaranteed, visions can change with experience, but that should not stop us from clearing clutter, creating clarity and having a clear sense of what we want to achieve.

The lack of a map is sure to get you somewhere other than where you intend, unless you are walking over the same ground repeatedly, in which case, you aren't really going anywhere, anyway.

We all have mental clutter and it is not always easy to either a) identify it because we are often blind to it, or b) remove it once you find it.

One sure fire way to identify clutter though, is to look for a repeating pattern in your life. Look for places where what you think you want, is not matched by what keeps happening. It's a good place to start. ☺

I don't have time right now

I'm teaching Maymester right now at the university, and one thing about immersion courses is that you essentially cram an entire semester's worth of information into less than a month of classes.

As I told one of my potential students before the course had even started...each day of lectures is like a week of regular classes in a normal semester. So you must be present every day...losing even one day is critical in the success or failure rate.

The information comes fast, and hard. In order to stay with it, you have to be ahead of the curve, know what will be covered tomorrow in class and at least look at the textbook for that material before you come to class. Additionally, you need to remain engaged for the duration of each class, which is not easy if you have a two-and-a-half hour lecture.

So what?

One of the things I have heard more this Summer, than I can ever recall hearing is the line "I don't have time right now", or "I'll get to that later." Inevitably, the line is followed by a litany of excuses of why someone doesn't have time, or is too tired ...when really all they need to say is "It's not important to me, I'm not going to do it." At least that is honest.

Well in Maymester, and in any immersion, high pressure situation, putting things off can be the kiss of death. I will grant you that it is important to do the important stuff and know what the important stuff is, so that you can focus your attention there. But putting things off, just allows things to pile up, which only increases the level of stress that we feel.

There is a certain logic, which states that if I put something off and it never gets done, well then it wasn't that important

to begin with. The problem with that sort of thinking is that sometimes, something that appears unimportant at first, becomes more important later and holds a greater consequence for not having done it, than had we simply done it earlier.

Just as in the last article, I can think of a lot of times in my own life when I put something off, only to find it harder to master later, when I needed it. Additionally, because I didn't do the work earlier, I paid a larger price for doing it later.

A good example here is deferred maintenance on a car or a house. I remember one summer doing a lot of highway driving, driving all over the country teaching Judo camps. It seemed like I was always on the go, never had time to stop. The miles kept racking up and I kept putting off an oil change... "till the end of the trip, when I get home." Deferring a simple \$30 maintenance cost me a new oil pump and a several hundred dollar repair bill early in the fall. All because "I don't have time right now."

So I learned not to procrastinate. Don't put things off. Get them done. Even the little stuff...get it out of the way...just like the clutter...remove it.

In some ways it is exactly like clutter...keeping a tidy home. We get home from work and we're too tired to put stuff away so it gets thrown down wherever and stays there...and we get comfortable doing it. It's easy to do. It takes discipline to put something away where it belongs each and every time.

But like anything, tidiness is a learned habit.

Learn to do it now and you will discover that there is plenty of time to do what you want to do. Put it off and somehow, there is never enough time, because there is always something waiting to get done.

The 'somethings' waiting to get done start to pile up and we feel the weight of them in our lives, they weigh us down and slow us down.

In the coaching course to which I referred in my last article, I had to list some of my strengths and weaknesses. I consider (and it is my perspective, so you can say whatever you want...it is merely my perspective) that my organizational skills are a strength.

I don't know where, or when, I learned them, but they have been with me for as long as I can remember. Perhaps it was the fact that I was never allowed to have an untidy room as a child, or that I lived in a very tidy home, or that my father was an engineer and kept his workshop immaculate. It really doesn't matter...somewhere and somehow I learned to be tidy and organized. When I seem to be anything other than tidy and organized it is because I am gestating an idea or a plan, so there is method in my activities even then. From this skill has emerged my ability to manage time effectively and to reach the goals I set for myself.

Moreover, I see it play out in both the big and the little things.

Sometimes I come home and make a cup of tea and then leave the cup on the counter...I'll get to it later...but I make myself go back and wash it up and put it away...if I don't do it, I'm leaving it for someone else, or I'll have to do it later anyway...so why not do it now? How much extra effort does it take?

When you say to yourself "I'll do it later", what is the line that comes next? The nature of the second line tells you a lot about yourself.. It can help you clear clutter too.

"When everything has its proper place in our minds, we are able to stand in equilibrium with the rest of the world."

Henri Amiel

DBA You Inc.

If you look at many of the bills and the bank statements that we receive at the business, more than likely you will see that they are addressed to Chris Dewey DBA Starkville Martial Arts Academy.

For those of you who don't know, DBA means "doing business as."

When I incorporated the business it became CDMA Inc....Chris Dewey Martial Arts Inc., of which SMAA is a subset. So in the larger scheme of things CDMA is an umbrella organization for SMAA. Chris Dewey is, from a philosophical perspective, the substrate from which SMAA and then CDMA emerged as business entities. From an ecological perspective Chris Dewey is the energy of the system and SMAA is an organism within the CDMA ecosystem.

Alright, enough already.

Each of us has a name...call it a business "You inc." What does that business do? What is its energy? What organisms live there? Who moves in and out of the ecosystem, who is migratory and who is resident?

When you look at You Inc...I want you to consider the DBA bit...

You Inc DBA... as what?

Who are you as a business? What is your purpose. What vision comes from that purpose? What energy do you use to fulfill the vision? What corporate goals do you set to create the vision? What skills do you have to make the vision a reality? What skills do you need to learn? What skill sets do you need to employ from others? What do you give to them in return for their skills? What product does "You Inc DBA as YOU" generate for the marketplace? How is the market better off as a result? What **is** the market? Is it your family? The place where you work? Your community? The planet? All of these?

O.K....enough with the questions as well.

Let's get down to the meat of the article (really?)...well actually, yes.

The meat of the article is about the meaning of DBA.

I just told you that DBA means Doing Business As...but suppose I just lied to you...or at least had a different definition in mind.

Let's go with the acronym DBA where: D = Doing, B = Being and A = Allowing. I'm not sure where I got the definition, but I've had it for several years. I used to think I got it from Michael Gerber's books about the E-Myth, but I can't find it there...so clearly I got it from somewhere and can't remember exactly where. I owe someone, somewhere some credit for this; I'm sorry I cannot recall who...I am, however, fairly sure that I didn't come up with Doing, Being and Allowing on my own. Even so, the rest of what follows is all my impressions of how I use DBA in my life:

Doing. That's the activity of the ecosystem. Doing is the day-to-day running of Chris Dewey Inc.. Doing is all about energy and function, efficiency, organization, time and resource management. It's all about how the organisms act and react, it's about holistic competition, and co-existence within the ecosystem. Doing is all about objective, quantifiable events and outcomes...like budget reports and financial statements, profit margins and market share (from the corporate perspective). From the perspective of an earlier article this year, Doing is about kime and zanshin

Being. That's more philosophical in nature, but no less important. It's the 'why' I am doing what I do as Chris Dewey Inc. I do not feel a personal obligation to explain why I am doing what I do to anyone other than me. There's an element of Shakespeare and Hamlet here.... "To thine own self be true then as surely as night follows day...." Being is not about

Doing. Doing comes out of Being. Who we are at our core will define how we act. Action is always *motivated* (put in motion) by something. At some point, if you have enough congruence in your actions you quit "doing" things and simply "be"...perhaps we might want to think of being as like living in moments of flow (mushin).

Lastly, **Allowing.** Allowing is about energy flow and the recognition of energy blocks in your life. When energy flows through a system it is vibrant, when energy stops flowing, the system becomes stagnant. When Chris Dewey Inc is at its best, there is energy flowing through the system to all the systems with which Chris Dewey Inc intersects and interacts. There is flow of energy to, *and* from the system. Allowing is about removing the blockages that hold us back from reaching our potential. Allowing is about being aware of changes in energy around us and moving with appropriate action. I always come back to Judo, so here it is....allowing is about letting you push and me giving way to your tactical push, but using your movement energy to obtain my own strategic outcome. Allowing is never about resistance and stiffness. Allowing is always about grace and elegance. Allowing is about mutual growth and creating an ecosystem that is balanced.

So there you have it.

DBA...you can either be "Doing Business As" or you can be "Doing Being and Allowing"...it's your call. The key thing here is not that you DBA, in either sense, but that you become aware that you are already DBA...

So, in the final analysis, the real question becomes: Is the business that You Inc represents what you want your business to DBA?"

☺

Journeys and Destinations

Got an interesting e mail this week from one of my past students, to whom I would like to offer my thanks for inspiring this article.

If you look at the covers for my poetry books they each have photograph taken by Matt Owens, the cover designer. Matt is a great artist who possesses a clear sense of why I write poetry and his covers were exactly what I wanted. Curiously, I didn't tell him what to do, I told him the sorts of colors I wanted to work with both as a function of a marketing tool and as reflection of the things I value and enjoy. I also said that I wanted some sort of image on the front cover...(see page five of this, and each of the previous three newsletters).

I find synchronicity to be a highly amusing and entertaining device of the universe. It is curious to me that in January as I considered how to set up 'page 5' of the newsletter for the next few months, I decided to showcase all the main book covers in the first issue and then one of the book covers in each successive newsletter for the next four issues. So here we are at issue number four, which as it happens, is the last one in which I feature a cover photograph for a poetry book. How could Austin know that I had a plan for the last page of the newsletters? How could he possibly plan to send me an e mail about the cover pho-

tographs at precisely the same time as I was writing the last articles for the newsletter containing the last of the poetry book covers?

Synchronicity. It is what it is.

So, back to the covers.

One of the things that I like most about the cover photographs by Matt Owens is the perspective and the focal depth. All three pictures have an infinite perspective. They are all parallax views. In 'Paradox', the image diminishes into the distance and there is no end point..the road goes on as far as you can see into the image. In 'Journey' there is a solitary tree inviting a place of repose at the top of the hill, but just as clearly a) the road turns before it gets to the tree and b) there must be something beyond the tree. In 'Seeing' there is a fountain in the middle foreground inviting refreshment and a rest stop, but the road goes beyond the fountain, so the fountain itself is not the destination. The tall hedgerows on either side of the picture indicate our blindness to the paths adjacent to the one upon which we are currently engaged. The intersection point at the fountain indicates the possibility of a change in course.

In all three covers are some consistent themes:

1. It is not about the destination, it is about the journey.
2. That no matter how inviting a rest stop, or a view from the top

of a hill might be, the road is always onward. Each stop is only a place of rejuvenation, and preparation.

3. The end (the destination) is unknown. We do not see it
4. Faith is an integral part of the journey, but paradoxically, hope is not. We have faith in the road ahead, but we do not have hope of a specific outcome...well, perhaps that is a tad too strident for some of you, so let me explain. We hope for things in our lives. But we do not know how they will actually manifest. If I hope for one thing and get something else, I am apt to be disappointed. If I abandon hope, act on faith and keep walking, I am, in the words of C.S. Lewis much more likely to be "Surprised by Joy."

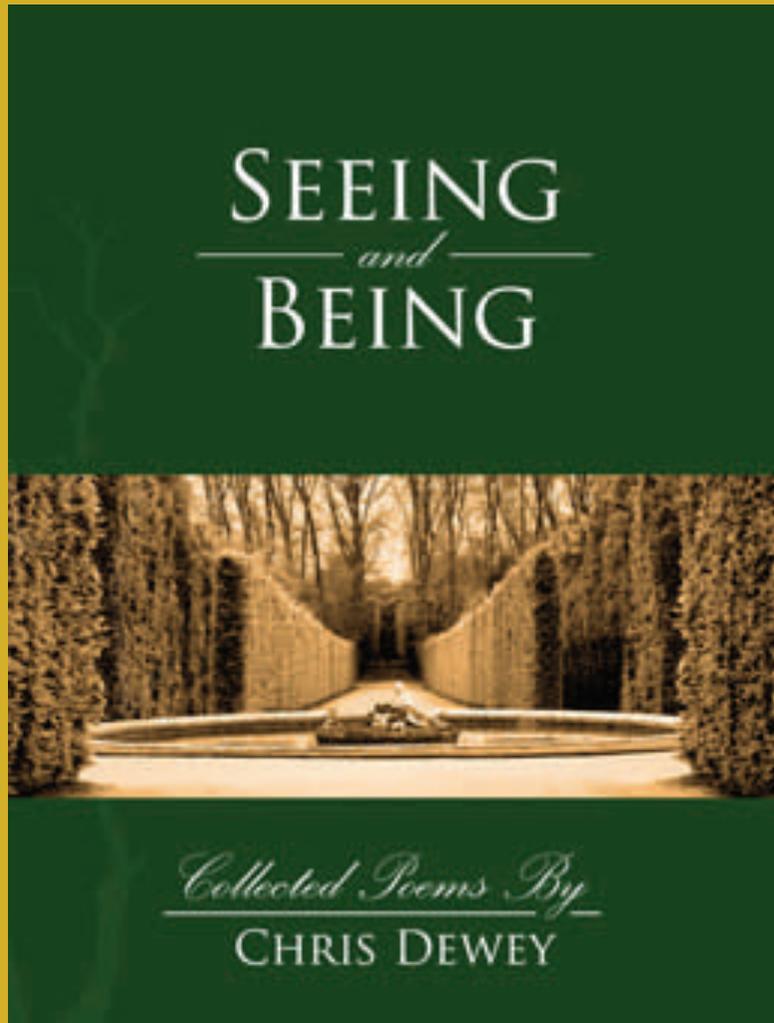
I'm not sure if all of this was in Matt's mind when he designed the covers for my books, but he created covers that were entirely congruent with my view of the poetry contained therein.

I'm not sure that Austin knew his timing when he sent me the e mail discussing his perspective of the covers. So I will end with a quote from Austin's e mail...(see below). ..it is fitting

Thank you, both Matt and Austin.

"...the road seems to continue indefinitely when we realize life is not disjointed by destinations but is a seamless journey; where once we understand ourselves, the blocks on our capabilities are removed."

Austin Davis



Make it a great summer. Ask about our summer specials for martial arts classes...(and read some poetry...mine would be nice!)

For information about classes, books and seminars contact us at 323 5522 or smaa@starkvillemartialarts.com