

## *Third Eye Insight*

By Erin Colton

Once and a while you hear a story that's life changing. For me, it came about a month ago when introduced to a Long Islander who single handedly changed the way I think. His name is Devin Fernandez.

Devin was diagnosed Retinitis Pigmentosa 8 years ago. RP, as it's called, is an eye disease that progressively takes your vision away. In many cases, you end up going completely blind. And probably the most frustrating thing about it, it happens to people who have already had their full sight. Just imagine, after living more than half of your life, not being able to ever see again.

When Devin, who's from West Islip, first learned about his diagnosis he'd been working the security industry for more than 20 years. He owned and operated his own security business, installing residential and business security systems. Devin had to change his entire lifestyle because of his impairment and now can't perform some of the duties that goes along with installing systems. Take another second to imagine, working so hard in life and in your career, feeling like you're at the top of your game, when one visit to the doctor's office changes it all.

For most people news like that would send you into a tail-spin of negative thoughts. Feeling bad for yourself, wondering "why me". But Devin, he asked himself different questions like, "what is this experience trying to teach me" and "how can I share my knowledge with others?"

Devin's amazing ability to look on the positive side stems from his love for Martial Arts. When he first found out he had RP he had just got started in Martial Arts and was a yellow belt. Now, he dons the name "Sensei", meaning Teacher, after working hard at perfecting his practice for ten years. Through all ten of those years, he was visually impaired. Devin told me Martial Arts energizes him. He said it forces him to step out of his comfort zone, and when you do, it feels so good.

After spending more than 40 years of his life going in one direction, Devin is now headed in another. He has created something called "Third Eye Insight." It's a Martial Arts program for the blind and visually impaired. It provides martial arts training, yoga, meditation and self defense. While attending one of Sensei Devin's classes, I met a legally blind student who told me Third Eye Insight has provided a whole new outlook on life for her. She said although she can't see all the things she used to, she's now feeling them again. She's acting like her normal self and now believes losing her sight wasn't something that was done to her, rather a blessing that was given to her. I guarantee you Devin feels the same way.

Devin is who he is because of the people he surrounds himself with. He's good friends with a man named Glenn Poveromo, also known as, "The POV." He helps people with "The Power of Visualization." Glenn believes everyone's minds posses unlimited potential and through his teaching, people can visualize being positive and seeing the best in every situation.

One day inside a class at Third Eye Insight has changed my life forever. I've gone from appreciating life and what has been given to me, to knowing I'd be ok if any of it was taken away. Devin Fernandez was a normal, every day kid who grew up in West Islip. He went to West Islip High School, played sports, went to college, owned his own

business, married his high school sweetheart. He is proof this disease can happen to any one at any time. And he has proven there is life after it.

In the words of Sensei Devin, "People aren't useless. People aren't disabled. They are challenged. And just because you're challenged and going blind... that doesn't mean life ends."

For more information about Third Eye Insight, visit [www.thirdeyeinsight.org](http://www.thirdeyeinsight.org) or you contact Sensei Devin by email at [info@thirdeyeinsight.org](mailto:info@thirdeyeinsight.org) .

I hope by reading this, someone else's perspective on life was changed.

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