

## Tenets of Taekwon-Do by Simon Cox 3rd Degree.

### The Tenets of Taekwon-Do (Taekwon-Do Jungshin)

Grand Master General Choi, Hong Hi wrote that "the utmost purpose of Taekwon-Do is to eliminate fighting by discouraging the stronger's oppression of the weaker with a power that must be based on humanity, justice, morality, wisdom and faith, thus helping to build a better and more peaceful world". From this statement it can be inferred that Taekwon-Do is intended to be practised within a moral and ethical framework, and this framework is illustrated, in its most basic form, in the Tenets of Taekwon-Do.



*"The Heaven is not for any particular person but is for everyone"*

The Tenets - Courtesy, Integrity, Perseverance, Self-Control and an Indomitable Spirit - are a set of guidelines intended to govern life both inside and outside of the do-jang. They are essential for students during the hours they spend training, but it can also clearly be seen that they are desirable general character traits, and as such students should keep them in mind at all times.

#### Courtesy (Ye Ui)

"Treat your enemies with courtesy, and you'll see how valuable it really is. It costs little but pays a nice dividend: those who honour are honoured. Politeness and a sense of honour have this advantage: we bestow them on others without losing a thing" - Baltasar Graci=E1n y Morales

Courtesy can be seen as acting politely, honourably, and with respect towards others. Courtesy should be given to all, regardless of their actions towards you. A courteous man is less likely to draw others into conflict with him as a result of his actions than a discourteous man.

Taekwon-Do students should attempt to practice the following elements of courtesy to build up their noble character and to conduct their training in an orderly manner as well.

- 1) To promote the spirit of mutual concessions
- 2) To be ashamed of one's vices, contemning those of others
- 3) To be polite to one another
- 4) To encourage a sense of justice and humanity
- 5) To distinguish instructor from student, senior from junior, and elder from younger
- 6) To behave according to etiquette
- 7) To respect others' possessions
- 8) To handle matters with fairness and sincerity
- 9) To refrain from giving or accepting a gift when in doubt

#### Integrity (Yom Chi)

"Every man, at the bottom of his heart, wants to do right. But only he can do right who knows right; only he knows right who thinks right; only he thinks right who believes right" - Tiorio

Integrity is the steadfast adherence to a strict moral or ethical code. One must be able to define right and wrong and have a conscience, if wrong, to feel guilt.

It is very hard to define integrity, as it is hard to state definitively a universal moral or ethical code. As such it is perhaps best to illustrate with a list of some examples, in this case related to Taekwon-Do, where integrity is lacking:

- 1) The instructor who misrepresents himself and his art by presenting improper techniques to his students because of apathy or a lack of knowledge
- 2) The student who misrepresents himself by "fixing" breaking materials before demonstrations
- 3) The instructor who camouflages bad technique with luxurious training halls and false flattery to his students
- 4) The student who requests rank from an instructor, or attempts to purchase it
- 5) The student who gains rank for ego purposes or the feeling of power
- 6) The instructor who teaches and promotes his art for materialistic gains
- 7) The student whose actions do not live up to his words
- 8) The student who feels ashamed to seek opinions from his juniors

### **Perseverance (In Nae)**

"It's not that I'm so smart, it's just that I stay with problems longer" - Albert Einstein

Perseverance is a steady persistence in adhering to a course of action, a belief, or a purpose.

Many of the goals we set for ourselves are distant, and this can mean that we feel defeated when experiencing difficulty when only part of the way towards achieving that goal. Taekwon-Do is full of long-term goals and targets, and a lack of patience and perseverance can be a huge impediment to improvement. It is important to remember that no-one is born knowing Taekwon-Do; all the people that we see doing spectacular kicks, performing beautiful patterns, breaking so many boards, they all had to learn to do so. A certain amount of natural aptitude will only go so far - most of what we see is the result of countless hours of hard work.=20

If you desire success of any kind, this should be true throughout your life, for all matters.

### **Self-Control (Guk Gi)**

"To win one hundred victories in one hundred wars is not the ultimate skill. To stop the enemy without fighting is the ultimate skill" - Sun Tzu

Self-control is the ability to think your emotions, desires and actions through and recognise that they may have consequences further than those immediately at hand.

A loss of self-control in free sparring can prove dangerous to both student and opponent, whilst a lack of self-control in everyday life can have dire consequences: although self-defence may sometimes be necessary, excessive force should never be.

### **Indomitable Spirit (Baekjul Booljul)**

"The greater the obstacle, the more glory in overcoming it" - Jean Baptiste Moli

An indomitable spirit is one incapable of being overcome, subdued, or vanquished. This applies both to one's own life, by not allowing

adversity, obstacles or temporary failures to divert one's attention from a goal, and to others, by not allowing inhumanity or injustice.

A serious student of Taekwon-Do will at all times be modest and honest. If confronted with injustice, he will deal with the belligerent without any fear or hesitation at all, with indomitable spirit, regardless of whosoever and however many the number may be.