

THE SELFLESS AMBITION OF KARATE-DO

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Just as in life, to learn and grow as a karate student, one must learn to be humble and put others before themselves. When an individual is only concerned with his or her own well-being, the true meaning of karate can never be understood and that person will never be able to serve others. Before selflessness can develop, one must humble him or herself in order to begin living a selfless life. Throughout my karate training I have had to learn this lesson in order to grow into the person I am today. If not for karate and all the Sensei that have helped me through my journey, I would never have learned this crucial life lesson.

Looking back at my life, I can see how much other people have given me. I am disappointed in my past life for failing to recognize and reciprocate the selfless action of others. Because of karate, I have finally learned this lesson that I had neglected throughout most of my life. I can never begin to thank Shihan Tony Mendonca for all the training and wisdom that he has shared with me. In the six months leading to the 2013 Taikai in Spain, Shihan Tony instructed and mentored me both physically and mentally. Throughout our many training sessions, he humbled me and showed me the errors of my selfish ways. He informed me that unless I learn this lesson, I could not be a useful asset to karate or TKFI. As a result of this thought, I began noticing the many gifts given to me and became more grateful, giving, and more consciously aware and caring of those around me. Because I stopped being blindly concerned with only myself, my mind and spirit were opened to my surroundings, ready to receive and give. From this newfound understanding, I was able to learn and to grow because the barrier that was previously holding me back had been removed. This is just one of the many ways karate has changed my life for the better.

“I shall train with the spirit of humility”. This principle underlines an essential aspect that all must possess in order to live a selfless driven life. If a person neglects this attribute then he or she will create a wall built of pride and arrogance that in the end only hinders the learning of the individual. By only being concerned for ones’ self, a person can never be of service to others. Family, friends and other people close to us sacrifice many things on a daily basis. However, many times these actions are simply ignored by the recipient. To practice selflessness an individual must recognize and reciprocate the generous sacrifices every time the opportunity presents itself. To even further our service around us, we must ascertain how we can grow as people to become a useful asset to others.

My life in the past was lived only with selfish intentions, but I have learned that living for others is one of the greatest contributions that a person can make. Among the many other lessons and skills that karate has taught me, this understanding has helped me become a better person. Karate has taught me so much, however, from humility I understand that I know very little compared to others. This is why I am always open to continually learn from others. Ultimately from selfless lifestyles, we may grow as people and strengthen our minds and bodies through karate training.