

## WARRIOR FIGHTING SPIRIT

By Steven Rotter

Many people look to great fighters in our history and present day as those who possess the admirable and respected "Warrior Fighting Spirit". Examples include Muhammad Ali, Geronimo and our countless warriors of the military. Certainly, many of these have fought hard and courageously, walking this earth as skilled and exemplary humans.

However, let us not overlook those who fought equally hard for a cause which advanced society for the better. They too trained, studied, and practiced with tenacity to hone their skills. They too focused intensely to achieve their goals, also enduring great sacrifice for the advancement of society at large. In this realm, we acknowledge Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. who brought us advances in human rights, Mahatma Gandhi who liberated all of India, Chief Joseph who spoke truth to American imperialism, Jesus the Warrior of Compassion, and the Buddha who could be viewed as a Warrior of Oneness/Awareness.

All warriors of fighting spirit act with courage even though they feel fear. Everyone feels afraid at times, but it is our actions, which create meaningful outcomes. Facing our fears, our dark sides, our shadows, those parts of us we tend not to wish to show the world, these are the greatest obstacles in every warrior's path. I see this work on the self to be a lifelong path due to its many levels and complexities. Shining our light, our divine light on these dark aspects of ourselves is the only way we advance our state of existence. Grace is all around us to support our efforts whenever we do so.

So, we warriors of fighting spirit practice, we hone and sharpen, we persevere and get back up when we fall, and we understand in our hearts, that these shadow experiences in life, are there not to be pitied, not to dampen our spirit, not to defeat us, but rather to make us even stronger, wiser, and more joyful and radiant.

In the end, the warrior with fighting spirit will share his/her love and wisdom with others advancing all who cross his path, if they are so willing.

In this regard, I express my heartfelt gratitude to Collette, my fiery warrior-ess wife, who inspires me to be the best warrior husband I can be. To my son, Isaac and daughter Arielle, who inspire me to be the best warrior father I can be. And finally to Saito Soke', his black belt team and all through the white belts, who inspire the fighting warrior spirit in me each adventure in our dojo.

Arigato!