

Chapter 4
ATTITUDE

TANG SOO DO MOO DUK KWAN

*G*rand Master Hwang Kee (1914-2002), President of the Moo Duk Kwan and Chairman of the Board of Trustees - Korean Soo Bahk Do Association, has set forth the following principles so that the members of the MOO DUK KWAN can maintain the regard and prestige that has been earned by their predecessors.

EVERY MEMBER SHOULD:

1. Promote the highest moral character through the training of TANG SOO DO.
2. Always seek truth and practice it.
3. Respect and obey their parents, teachers and elders.
4. Love their country and contribute to their community.
5. Develop confidence and humility.
6. Practice both inside and outside of class.
7. Always do their best to promote intellectuality.
8. Not hesitate to sacrifice themselves for justice.
9. Do their utmost to develop TANG SOO DO as the most popular Martial Art in the world.
10. Develop their endurance.
11. Be calm and humble.
12. Always remember that the ultimate purpose of TANG SOO DO is to promote and emphasize the character building aspects, in which respect for people is the cardinal principle.

CODE OF ETHICS FOR MASTERS AND INSTRUCTORS

1. Set an example of what you expect from others.
2. Emphasize the future rather than the past or present.
3. Look for, and deal with, causes rather than symptoms.
4. Admit, and learn from, making a mistake.
5. Don't pass the blame.
6. Consider both the long-range and short-range results.
7. Everyone involved should benefit - a win-win situation.
8. Practical and ethical means should be used to achieve practical and ethical ends.
9. The dignity of every individual should be respected.
10. Try to understand others, and make yourself understand by them.

ASPECTS OF TANG SOO DO

PRINCIPLES OF TANG SOO DO

1. Responsibility
2. Sincerity
3. Justice

TEN CREEDS OF TANG SOO DO

1. Be Loyal to your Country
2. Be Obedient to your Parents
3. Be Loveable between Husband and Wife
4. Be Cooperative between Brothers
5. Be Respectful to your Elders
6. Be Faithful between Teacher and Student
7. Be Faithful between Friends
8. Be Just in Killing
9. Never Retreat in Battle
10. Accompany your Decisions with Action and Always Finish what you Start

MENTAL TRAINING - ELEVEN POINTS OF EMPHASIS

1. Reverence for Nature
2. Physical Concentration (Ki Hap)
3. Courtesy
4. Modesty
5. Thankfulness
6. Self-Sacrifice
7. Cultivate Courage
8. Chastity
9. Be Strong Inside and Mild Outside
10. Endurance
11. Literacy

MENTAL TRAINING - FIVE REQUISITES

1. Oneness with Nature
2. Complete Awareness of the Environment
3. Experience
4. Conscious
5. Culture

KEY POINTS FOR ADVANCEMENT

*D*uring training you must concentrate to the limits of your mental endurance. You can perform with all your mental and physical ability during training, however, without mental concentration, there will be no advancement. The technical and mental training of TANG SOO DO should be combined as one. The HEART, MIND, AND BODY should be in union at all times.

The TANG SOO DO student must heed the advice of his master and the more advanced elders from other schools. He must listen and never forget their advice. LISTENING, WATCHING, AND OBEYING are key points for advancement. In order to advance, the student is told to strive to obtain the true spirit of TANG SOO DO. Training is on a continuous basis and one learns a little at a time. However, the student must not take breaks in training, as it will result in a step backwards. They should always strive for advancement and when they do advance, they must not brag or boast. Self-praise and over-confidence is a sickness which corrupts training in TANG SOO DO.

MATTERS THAT DEMAND SPECIAL ATTENTION WHILE TRAINING IN TANG SOO DO MOO DUK KWAN

1. The purpose of training should be the enhancement of both the mental and physical self
2. Sincerity is necessary
3. Effort is necessary
4. Consistent schedule of training
5. Do your best when training
6. Train in the basic spirit of Tang Soo Do
7. Regularly spaced training sessions
8. Obey the word of instructors and seniors without objection; watch and learn
9. Do not be overly ambitious
10. Pay attention to every aspect of your training
11. Pay attention to the order of training
12. Get step by step instruction with new hyungs or techniques
13. Overcome idleness
14. Cleanliness is desired after training is finished

IMMOVABLE WISDOM

*W*hat is most important in the art of TANG SOO DO is the acquisition of the mental attitude known as "**IMMOVABLE WISDOM**". This wisdom is intuitively acquired only after a great deal of practical training. The attitude of "IMMOVABLE" does not mean to be stiff, heavy and lifeless as is a rock or a piece of wood. It is the highest degree of mobility while its center remains immovable. The mind then reaches its highest point of awareness, ready to direct its attention in any direction.

Whenever your attention is distracted or arrested by the weapon of your opponent, you lose the first opportunity of making the first move by yourself. You delay, you think and while this deliberation is going on, your opponent is ready to strike. Do not give them such an opportunity. Follow the movement of your opponent, leave your mind free to react without the interference of your deliberation. You move when your opponent moves. This will result in your opponent's defeat .

This, non-interfering mental attitude, constitutes the most vital element of TANG SOO DO. If there is even the slightest thought or distraction, then there is interruption. When the hands are clapped together, the sound issues without deliberation. The sound does not wait and think before it issues. One action follows the other without being interrupted by the conscious mind. If you are troubled, seeing your opponent about to strike you down, and are considering what action to take, you are giving your opponent opportunity, that is, a void into which he can attack.

Allow your defense to follow the attack without a moments deliberation and there will no longer be two separate movements known as attack and defense. This immediateness of action will inevitably result in your opponent's defeat. Like a boat gliding smoothly down the rapids, the mind of no hesitation, no interruption is highly valued.

The mirror, of wisdom, reflects all instantaneously one after another, keeping itself intact and undisturbed. All TANG SOO DO must seek to cultivate this.

TANG SOO DO TRAINING ATTITUDE

*N*o matter which Martial Art you are trying to master, continued earnest practice is of primary importance. This is especially so in the practice of the art of TANG SOO DO, because it concerns itself with the mental aspects to a greater degree than any other art. Usually, a talented person may excel even though they have not practiced as long as another and a powerful person will be able to overcome others even though they have not trained as rigorously as others have.

In TANG SOO DO training, even a clever person cannot hope to be able to use the various arts when an actual occasion arises, if they do not practice with a purpose. They may think and feel that they truly understand the maxim:

"MOO DUK KWAN - TO STOP BOTH INNER AND OUTER CONFLICTS, THEREBY BRINGING PEACE."

But they only think they understand. Usually they will forget all that they have learned in a very short time.

If you practice correctly, you will move automatically with reflexive action when it is necessary to do so. Conscious actions are slow, while subconscious actions are fast. In TANG SOO DO, you must always practice to coordinate the use of the mind and body. To do this, it is not enough to understand the arts with a conscious mind only. TANG SOO DO must be practiced continuously to firmly implant the movement into the subconscious mind.

To truly learn anything, one must study with a "re-creative", open-minded attitude. This is especially true in the practice of TANG SOO DO. An old adage says: *"If you pour tea into a cup which is already full, the cup cannot hold all the tea and much will be spilled. If you pour tea into an empty cup, the cup is ready to accept all that it is given."* So too, if a mind is full of preconceived ideas and shallow thoughts, then that mind is unable to accept any new ideas or knowledge.

While training, always receive the words of your teacher earnestly and obediently; be broadminded; learn the basic principles well; practice cheerfully and correctly; and strive to build a noble character within yourself. Learn the arts, master them and make them a part of your being.

The road of a TANG SOO DO student is a hard and rigorous one. However, the final result will be one who is well respected, not only for their ability in TANG SOO DO, but also for their contribution to their community as a model citizen of fine character.

DEVELOPMENT OF CHARACTER

*W*hat we have or what we do in life is not nearly so important as what we are: for what we are is the sum of our character, and it is our character which gives our life meaning.

Good character cannot be purchased, borrowed or given away. It must be built slowly and carefully, not in a hour or a day, but during the course of a lifetime. Author Maltbie Babcock wrote, "*The workshop of character is everyday life. The uneventful and commonplace hour is where the battle is lost or won.*"

We do not fight the battle alone. Many influence the development of our character. Although parents cannot deliver character to us in a package, they are responsible for the traits and attributes which make us what we are. We learn love from those who love us; charity from the charitable; faith from trial and hardship; and courage from endurance and defeat. The opposite is just as true: If hate is all we see then we cannot be expected to know love. We learn slowly and silently, and usually from others.

Good character does not appear spontaneously. It is developed through life and living - through exposure to light and darkness. A photograph is a good analogy - too much light and the picture is devoid of detail; too little light and the picture is left in darkness. And so it is with life - it takes the right amount of teaching, example and experience to build good character, and usually it evolves so slowly that we fail to see when we are getting the wrong amount of "light" - when our character is poorly nourished with too much of what is bad for us or too little of what is right.

It was Brooke Westcott who said we grow weak or strong "*Silently and imperceptibly as we wake or sleep ... and at last some crisis shows for what we have become.*"

It is, therefore, incumbent upon each of us to make a conscious effort to fill our life with the kind of experiences - the right kind of experiences - which will help us develop good character.

THE PRINCIPLES OF A TANG SOO DO BLACK BELT

1. They are motivated primarily by ideals of service rather than by riches. They are in TANG SOO DO because they love TANG SOO DO and enjoy this way of life. They believe that people, not fighters, are the most important thing in the world and that the basic purpose of TANG SOO DO is to enrich the lives of people.
2. They are a trained and educated person who has undergone a prolonged period of preparation for their work. They know the values which should be sought through TANG SOO DO in a democracy. They are deeply committed to democratic ideals and values. They constantly seek to improve themselves professionally.
3. They voluntarily join their professional societies, attend meetings and contribute both time and energy to further the work of their profession and elevating its standards.
4. They conduct themselves at all times in such a manner as to enhance the prestige and dignity of their profession. They know that people judge a profession by the individuals who are in it, and that undignified conduct on their part will hurt their profession in the eyes of the public. Their professional life and conduct are regulated by a code of behavior based on moral and ethical principles.
5. The TANG SOO DO person seeks to exclude from the profession those who are not qualified to instruct. They are interested in the exercise by the association, by the profession itself or by both or some form of control over who may enter into, at least, the responsible TANG SOO DO positions. They want no quacks, frauds, or unfit individuals in the profession.
6. They are an active leader, not a prima donna. They prefer cooperation as a way of life. They work with all agencies and individuals in the community on matters of common concern. They are motivated primarily by the ideal of public service.
7. They insist on high standards of excellence in their work; they are not satisfied with mediocrity, but are constantly working to upgrade their professional performance. They are motivated by a spark of divine discontent, they seek perfection although they never quite achieve it.
8. There are a lot of wonderful people in TANG SOO DO who teach it because they love it, many at great personal sacrifice.
9. Finally, the professional person in TANG SOO DO enjoys life. For how can they lead others on joyous living if they don't live joyously themselves?

CHARACTER IS WHAT WE REALLY ARE

*Y*our character is what distinguishes us from others. It is the way we think and act when no one is looking, when we are sure no one will ever find out what we have done. It is what we really are, not what others think we are.

Character doesn't come by chance; it takes time and patience to develop. It is earned through experience of trial and suffering; it is built by overcoming weakness. We build character when we conquer an undesirable passion, thought or desire. Trifling though it may seem, it becomes another mark on our character.

A person is literally what they think, their character being the complete sum of all their thoughts and feelings. People are the molder of their own character, it is made or unmade by themselves.

Character is not to be confused with reputation. "A man's character is the reality of himself." said Henry Ward Beecher. "His reputation is the opinion that others have formed of him."

William Davis observed the difference this way:

The circumstances amid which you live determine your reputation; the truth you believe determines your character.

Reputation is what you are supposed to be; character is what you are...

Reputation is what you have when you come to a new community; character is what you have when you go away...

Reputation is made in a moment; character is built in a lifetime...

Reputation makes you rich or makes you poor; character makes you happy or makes you miserable.

Reputation is what men say about you on your tombstone; character is what they say about you before... God.

It is true that a good reputation is important, but it is meaningful only when backed by an equally good character. "A good name is seldom regained," wrote Joel Hawes. "When character is gone, all is gone, and one of the richest jewels in life is lost forever."