

Hong Kong Times

A Publication of the Seven Star Kung-Fu Support Society

Kung-Fu Philosophy - A Way of Life

Many people, like you and I, have dreams and hopes of accomplishing something great one day. Everyone has the ability to do so but may not realize it or have the determination to carry through on their dreams and goals. All too often many people give up before the race is won. For some, it may be a lack of confidence and motivation, and others a lack of direction and determination. To achieve anything worthwhile in life, we must firmly resolve with determination that winners know no defeat. We must set our sights on the objects of our heart's desire and never deviate from that course which we set for achieving it. We must persevere until we achieve that goal which we have set before us. We must not let small obstacles throw us off track or defeat us. After all, you cannot keep a determined man or woman from success.

If you should stumble upon an obstacle, you must get back up on your feet and continue on. For stumbling is not failing...only those who do nothing, do not make mistakes through stumbling, failing and making mistakes, we learn and become stronger and wiser. It is the rough and rigorous training of mind and body that makes a real man or woman. It is adversity that separates the strong (winners) from the weak (losers). Our greatest glory is not in never falling, but in rising every time we fall.

A determined martial artist does not give up in the face of defeat. But rather, trains harder/smarter and keeps trying until he/she has reached his/her goal or mastered that technique which he/she thought he/she never would. He/she is not easily swayed every time a

difficulty confronts him/her. If he/she can't go over it he/she must go through it.

Patience

Impatience is one of the greatest killers of enduring success. Nature never hurries and neither should we. The good martial artist knows that he/she can't practise a technique one day and expect to perfect it the next, but aren't most of us like that? Patience is a difficult trait to achieve. It is a necessary principle to master if one is to succeed. There is only one way and one alone to achieve patience. First, we must understand what it is; two, we must have a burning desire to conquer it; third we must practice, practice, practice until it becomes a habit. Every time we feel impatience creeping upon us. We must clothe it with patient thoughts or actions. Do this until patience becomes a fixation. There are many ways of learning patience in life. Practising martial arts is an excellent way of learning it. Every jump, kick and punch requires not only skill, control, accuracy, power, speed and timing but also a lot of patience if we are ever to master the techniques and forms.

Wisdom

Wisdom is not knowledge. Wisdom is the right appreciation of knowledge. Wisdom is education in action. "Education is the knowledge of how to use the whole of one self." "Many men use but one or two faculties out of the score with which they are endowed. A man is educated who knows how to open it, how to keep it sharp, and how to apply it to all practical purposes." Wisdom is truth in action. Truth is the foundation of all knowledge and the

cement of all society. "There is no defeat in truth, save from within; unless you've been there; you're bound to win."

Educate the heart as well as the mind. Refine all knowledge into pure golden truth. Wisdom follows discovery of self when we resolutely determine to bring out the best that is within us, establish worthy life aims, plans for their attainment, and put our shoulders to the task of achieving the objects of one's heart's desire. It has been said that "wisdom is form of experience." Experience is a good teacher, especially when we can profit by the experience of others who have laboured long hours, days, weeks, months and years to learn some of life's lessons. Wisdom is the Sifu (instructor) who not only teaches his students the theory behind the technique but also its application not in one but various different situations and circumstances.

We must honour our founder Wong Lang (China) who is a Buddhist of the Shaolin Monastery. The late grand Master Low Kwoon Yuk (Shang Tung province, China) 4th successor of the Seven Star Praying Mantis style. He was one of the ten Northern Tigers (champions)!! Grand Master Kwok Cho Chiu (Hong Kong) 5th successor. Master Kwing Fai "Bolten" Kung (Hong Kong) 6th successor. Our Sifu Mike Purnell (Red Deer, Canada) 7th successor. We must keep this in our mind, without our Sifu and their Sifu, and the founder Wong Lang we would not be able to study the martial arts of Seven stars Praying Mantis Kung-Fu today!!

Written by Frank Chu

How Martial Arts Has Influenced My Life.

My name is Gabriel and I have been training with Sifu Mike for almost ten years now, so Kung-Fu has influenced my life in a very big way.

When I was four years old I was very hyper and full of energy. My parents took me to the Kung-Fu studio to try a few classes and use up some of my energy instead of wrecking the house. I liked it instantly!! After a few classes I would always jump about practicing my new knowledge around the house and could not wait for the next class to learn more.

As I grew older and learned more Kung-Fu, I started to compete in tournaments. I enjoy seeing other styles of martial arts and competing against them. Sometimes I win, and sometimes not. This makes me go back to the kwon and practise more.

Sifu Mike has taught me a lot more than just Kung-Fu. I used to have a bad attitude at school; "bugging" and teasing other kids, and they would do the same to me. Sifu fixed that right up. He said to me that the more Kung-Fu knowledge I learned, the more humble I should become. He also said that I should talk my way out of trouble instead of showing off, and only use my training as a last resort. Now those kids are my friends and we respect each other.

Kung-Fu has given me something to do instead of running around and getting in trouble. I am learning new things, staying fit, learning how to resolve my problems in a peaceful manner, meeting new friends, and enjoying the challenge.

In September 1996, I tested and earned my black sash. I am very proud of this but, I still have a lot to learn about Kung-Fu and life itself. I think I will continue to train and study the Chinese culture for the rest of my

life, and will never regret starting.

By: Gabriel St. Martin

Bring Your Art To Life

Move, Defend, Attack And Broken Rhythm Part 3

This is the third part of a three part series designed to cover the basics of these two topics and then combine them to take your martial arts to a higher level.

Part 3- Putting It All Together

Martial arts is a matter of awareness. Awareness of one's self, one's opponent, your surroundings and the situation. Now that we have discussed Move, Defend, Attack and Broken Rhythm we need to tie them together in a practical way with a rope called awareness. How is it that we can use our new knowledge to improve our forms and sparring?

For continuity, we will relate these concepts to our forms training (an article on how forms training relates to sparring will be the subject of another article). Once you have learned the sequence of the form and understand the order in which the various techniques are put together, you are ready to move on to some of the more advanced elements of the form. When polishing a form, the practitioner must pay particular attention to the matter of rhythm.

In two-man sets, for example Doi Ja, rhythm develops naturally. One student plays the role of "attacker" and sets the rhythm of the form, the other student "defends". Because of the practical-application style of these drills ("trying to beat" the other student) it is easier to assimilate the concept of rhythm. When working on one-man (single-man, solo) forms it is much more difficult to discover the "rhyme and reason" in the movements.

In the early stages, a Kung-Fu student, will learn the rhythm of the form by

observing his instructor and senior students, and then emulating them. However, true understanding of a form comes from constantly thinking about it, not from observation. The practitioner must thoroughly understand the nature of the movements, the applications, what the moves mean, where the targets are, and what he's defending against (Move, Defend, Attack)(and the breathing). All of these circumstances will influence the (Broken Rhythm) rhythm of the form.

Generally speaking, the beginning student will not have much luck with rhythm. He will perform his forms in a largely metronomic fashion: one-two-three. Even movements obviously designed to be executed slowly or quickly will be performed with little regard for the rhythm of combat. But as the practitioner ascends to more advanced levels, he will begin to see moves he thought were preformed one-two-three, are actually executed one...two-three or one-two...three, with a short pause between two of the movements. He eventually realizes that the opponents he is confronting within the framework of the form are being met in different ways in terms of rhythm.

If this level of forms practice is attempted too soon or without supervision, the student will simply be "playing pretend." He imagines opponents coming at different speeds and makes up his timing in response. However, true understanding of a forms rhythm is centred around understanding why techniques are grouped as they are.

One of the best ways to perfect a technique or group of techniques is to breakdown their execution into discrete, logical segments. With forms, this is best done by choosing a short sequence of perhaps three or four techniques and working upon those

Continued on Page 4...

Chinese Zodiac

How It Works

The Chinese Zodiac consists of a 12 year cycle, each year of which is named after a different animal that imparts distinct characteristics to its year. Many Chinese believe that the year of a person's birth is the primary factor in determining that person's personality traits, physical and mental attributes and degree of success and happiness throughout his/her lifetime. To learn about your Animal Sign, find the year of your birth under the signs above.

Rooster - A pioneer spirit devoted to work and quest after knowledge. Sometimes selfish and eccentric. Trouble with Rabbits but fine with Snakes and Ox.

Tiger - A fighting spirit - aggressive and courageous. A sensitive deep thinker who is true blue with friends. Marry a Horse or Dog but beware of the Monkey.

Rabbit - Luckiest of signs - talented and affectionate, yet shy. You seek peace. Marry a Sheep or Pig - not Rooster.

Snake - Wise and intense, but vain. Passionate and determined. A winner with money. Rooster and Ox are your closest signs - Pig is enemy.

Sheep - Elegant and creative - best in arts. Passionate but timid. Most

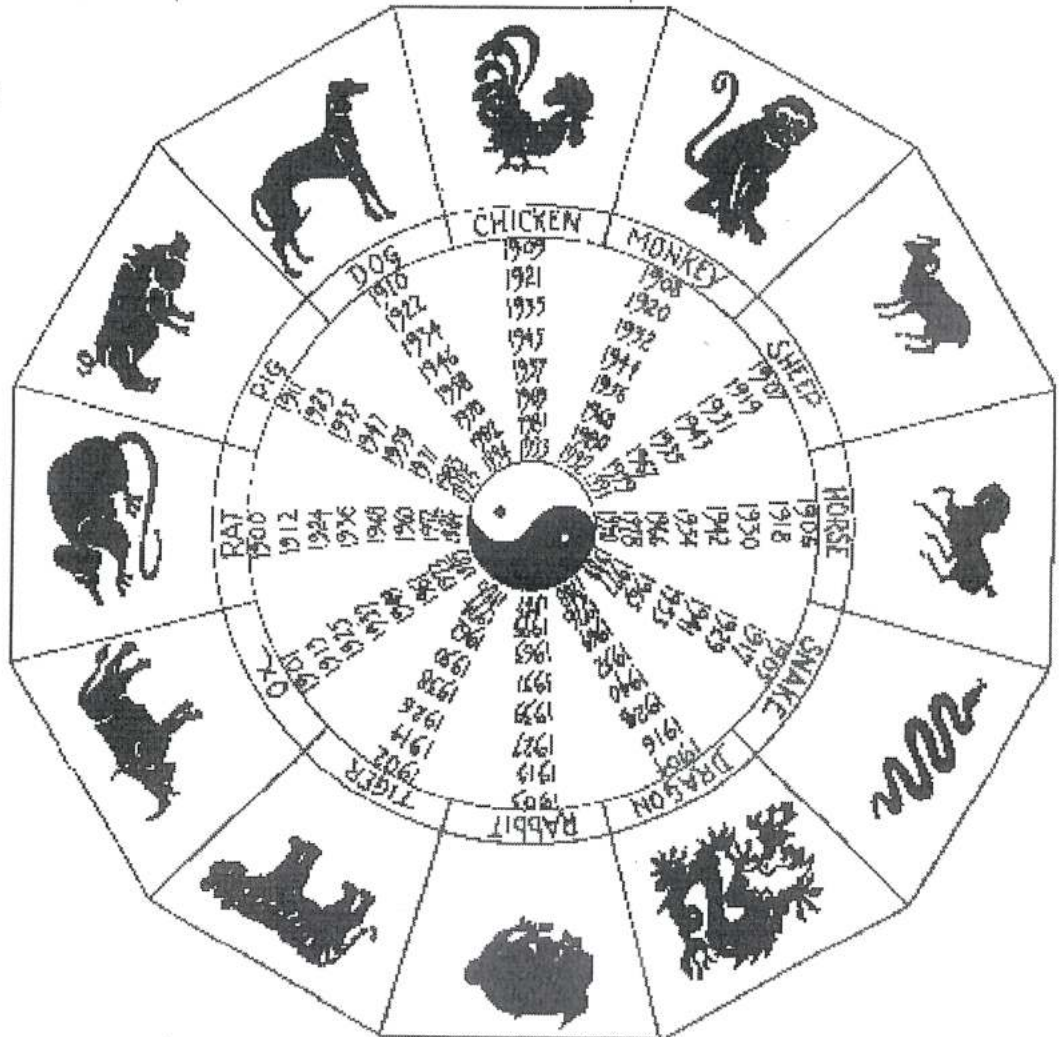
compatible with Rabbits and Pigs. Avoid Ox.

Dog - Honest and loyal leader of men. Generous but stubborn. Earmarked for success. Horses and Tigers are friendly but watch out for Dragons.

Pig - Shy but short tempered. Affectionate and kind to loved ones. You are impulsive and honest. Most

Horse - Cheerful and popular, but impatient. Handy with money - always a winner. Compatible with Tiger and Dog - but never a Rat.

Monkey - Very intelligent and able to influence people. Good politician. Thirsty for knowledge. Talented and inventive, but easily discouraged. Seek a Dragon or Rat - not Tiger.



compatible with Sheep and Rabbits. Steer clear of other Pigs.

Dragon - Excitable, with complex life. Stubborn on outside - soft-hearted inside. A born leader. Compatible with Monkey and Rat. Beware of Dog.

Ox - Bright, inspiring and easy going. You make an outstanding parent. You should marry a Snake or Rooster but not a Sheep.

Rat - Ambitious and honest, but prone to spend freely. Quick to anger. Compatible with Dragons and Monkeys - avoid Horses.

movements exclusively. Repetition is important, yet performing the complete form every time will exhaust a practitioner before he gets a chance to correct problem areas. However, when you concentrate upon only one portion at a time you refine the details, the intricacies that give the form its character.

Practising in such a manner enables you to focus your energies on longer, stronger, and fuller motions. Gymnasts call this quality amplitude and when a form displays this property individual techniques become sharp enough to stand on their own merit. Instead of half-motions blurring into one another (ie. SSL #5 and #8), each technique is unleashed with uncompromised power and focus. Its all too easy to sacrifice the fullness, and combative value, of a movement when one's attention is diffused over the form as a whole; training in segments reduces this tendency to sloppiness.

If you are introduced to the concept of rhythm correctly you will see a whole new world open up in your forms. For instance, where are the nerve strikes in your form--stimulating the region with one move (the "block"), and then enervation with the strike.

Luckily, our forefathers had the

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If you have any comments pertaining to the contents of this publication please call us, or contact us in class.

foresight to include a huge amount of knowledge within each form. Don't be afraid to get inside your form and take it apart piece by piece to discover its hidden techniques, its *Moye, Defend, Attack*, its natural breathing pattern, and its rhythm. In this way the form will truly be yours.

The Rhythm of Forms - Dave Lowry
Black Belt Dec '96
9 Ways to Improve Your Forms -
Y.K. Kim and Tim McCarthy
Black Belt Dec '91

What Kung-Fu Means To Me.

Martial Arts has a big role in my life. At first I took dance classes and took Kung-Fu in the summer only. As I got older, I found Kung-Fu more challenging and have been there ever since (7 years).

Two of the main things Kung-Fu has taught me are discipline and responsibility. In order to learn all the moves to my forms and stay on top of them, I train five nights a week. I found this difficult to do at times, but I did not give up. The more I practised, the easier my forms became. Now I enjoy my classes and look forward to learning the new knowledge. If I do not try hard, I do not learn more. This has taught me to be responsible for myself. No one can practice for me so I work hard to show myself that I can be responsible too. I think that this sets a good example for the younger students and believe that it is my responsibility to set a good example for them to follow when I help Sifu teach them.

Kung-Fu has also taught self-esteem. I used to be very shy and would never raise my hand or speak out loud at school. Sifu always made me feel good by saying that I

worked hard and should be proud of myself. This gave me the courage to compete in tournaments. After I realized I could do this in front of large crowds and five very serious judges, speaking and raising my hand at school was no problem!

Kung-Fu keeps me fit, helps me with coordination, speed, and strength. It has also changed my way of thinking. I know now that it is important to respect all people and to talk my way out of trouble and only use my training if I feel threatened or it is my last resort.

I know Kung-Fu will always be a big part of my life. I am now 12 years old and have just earned my blue sash in June. I will continue to train hard and work towards my black sash. I am very happy I followed my brother's footsteps and switched from dance to Kung-Fu. I look forward to learning more knowledge and trying to figure out how it applies to all areas of my life.
By: Justine St. Martin

Coming Next Issue

- Stretching
- Abacus
- Meditation

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