

Karate Do

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Applying for the rank of Yandan

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This paper is based on my love and journey to live and understand the true meaning of karate do and how it applies in my daily life. Many people view karate in different ways, some as a way to gain physical dominance, some to improve their physical physique, while others search to heal or improve their state of mind. For me it is a road to continue where I once had left off, a desire that was planted deep within my soul as a young teenager many years ago.

My journey started as a seed planted at a young age taking judo at the local YMCA with a neighbor that lived down the street. I was a small, skinny kid trying to survive going to a school where government was experimenting with bussing children of different ethnic groups to integrate different cultures to learn and grow up together. After period of time of taking Judo, classes I learned how to take care of myself, build self-confidence and cope with the daily struggles of school life. Judo would later be replaced by the desire to play guitar so that chapter of my life was closed for the next 25 years.

At age 39, I was truly blessed to have my son Noah come live with me and once again I felt the need to pick up an old journey and begin a new one with him. It was so important to be able to find a karate school where we could both train together. We tried many schools, but none seem to fit because I was determined to not compromise my Christian beliefs in order to learn the art of karate. My last try before giving up was a school called Okinawan Shorin-Ryu karate do. As we entered the front door of the school, words on a dry erase board were that of a Bible verse. This was a sign that we were where God had wanted us to be.

Karate do, for me meant to be able to spend time with my son to teach him respect and discipline. Most important we worked as a team, setting goals, even more importantly to complete them without quitting.

I was told that we could not do class together but once I was yellow belt I could help with the kinder karate class. This worked. I was not only able to be with my son but it also showed me a desire to continue to work with the kinder karate class for many years to come.

Karate do for me has been a way to have amazing friendships that I have had for over sixteen years, that have supported me and helped me through many good as well difficult times. This has been the most amazing part of my karate journey. I think the most life changing part of my journey was a small talk I had with Kyoshi before going to meet my now wife and her parents in Peru. This has been the greatest choice I could have ever made and owe it to him and my family for their influence in my life.

Karate Do has helped me to focus physically and mentally to always strive to learn more and to stay in shape as the body that I have borrowed slowly shows signs of wear. I have enjoyed many years of weight training. Karate has helped be to keep balance and flexibility that I would have never had with weight training alone.

So, to tie karate do into a final meaning, I look forward to continuing to try and better myself as a person, student, husband and teacher. Always having the humility to learn from others. I'm thankful that I have obtained the skills to take care of those around me as well as myself. Mentally I want to continue the path of patience and understanding. Spiritually, I hope to always carry the light of Christ in all that I do. Physically, that I can keep this body that I have in the best condition possible as I move into the later years of life.

Karate-do is a lifelong path that I look forward to continue to grow in as well as pass down. So that the true spirt of karate-do will be passed down for many decades to come.