

# *The Tenets of Taekwondo*

*A tenet is an opinion, principle or doctrine that a person holds or maintains as true.*

*The five tenets of Taekwondo:  
courtesy, integrity, perseverance, self-control, and indomitable spirit  
should serve as a guide for all  
serious students of the art.*

## **Courtesy**

Taekwondo students should attempt to practice the following elements of etiquette:

1. To promote the spirit of mutual concessions.
2. To be ashamed of one's vice, contemning that of others.
3. To be polite to one another.
4. To encourage the sense of justice.
5. To distinguish the instructor from student and senior from junior.

## **Integrity**

In Taekwondo, the word integrity assumes a looser definition than the one usually presented in Webster's dictionary. One must be able to define right and wrong, and have the conscience, if wrong, to feel guilt. Listed are some examples, where integrity is lacking:

1. The instructor who misrepresents himself and his art by presenting improper techniques to his students because of a lack of knowledge or apathy.
2. The student who misrepresents himself by "fixing" breaking materials before demonstrations.
3. The instructor who camouflages bad techniques with luxurious training halls and false flattery to his students.
4. The student who requests rank from an instructor, or attempts to purchase it.
5. The student who gains rank for ego purposes or the feeling of power.
6. The instructor that teaches and promotes his art for materialistic gains.

## **Perseverance**

There is an old Asian saying "Patience leads to virtue or merit," "One can make a peaceful home by being patient for 100 times." Certainly happiness and prosperity are most likely brought to the patient person. To achieve something, whether it is a higher degree or the perfection of a technique, one must set his goal then constantly persevere. Robert Bruce learned his lesson of perseverance from the persistent efforts of a lowly spider. It was this perseverance and tenacity that finally enabled him to free Scotland in the fourteenth century. One of the most important secrets in becoming a leader in Taekwondo is to overcome every difficulty by perseverance.

## **Self-Control**

This tenet is extremely important inside and outside of the do-jang, whether conducting oneself in free-sparring or in one's personal affairs. A loss of self-control in free-sparring can prove disastrous to both student and opponent. An inability to live and work within one's capability or sphere is also a lack of self-control.

## **Indomitable Spirit**

"Here lies 300, who did their duty," a simple epitaph for one of the greatest acts of courage known to mankind. Although facing the superior forces of Xerxes, Leonidas and his 300 Spartans at Thermopylae showed the world the meaning of indomitable spirit. It is shown when a courageous person and his principles are pitted against overwhelming odds.

A serious student of Taekwondo will at all times be modest and honest. If confronted with injustice, he will deal with the belligerent without any fear or hesitation at all, with indomitable spirit, regardless of whosoever and however many the number may be.