

DON'T LIE TO YOURSELF



There are too many instructors out there trying to attract students by presenting karate or the Martial Arts as an exotic, mystical kind of adventure. They tell the public that their style is a secret form of self-defense. This is very misleading since in my opinion there really is no such thing anymore as a secret technique in karate. All of the principles and movements of karate can be proven scientifically. If anything can be said about technique it is that they sometimes are hidden within other techniques, but one only has to study and take a good look in order to see them.

Sometimes instructors will talk and give out the “mystical” bit about martial arts because it definitely appeals to one’s dramatic sense of combat, since fighting is probably one of the most dramatic things of life itself. Life is constantly based upon conflict of one kind or another.

We must revise our educational approach, or the attitude of how the arts are introduced. This is a very important hurdle. It’s very hard to tell people just what karate, jujitsu or whatever martial art you practice is all about, it really comes down to improving or bring out your character. Becoming a better person is the real goal here. And this is a case where it really has to be experienced in order to for it to be understood. It cannot just



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be a discussion, no matter how many books you read on how to swim, it doesn't mean you know how to swim, you have to get into the water.

There are some karate systems which directly claim that they alone teach and practice the only true form of karate, and no other system understands or appreciates the true meaning of the martial arts. The student cannot afford to veer into the quicksand of prejudice; they should be educated that each style has something unique to contribute to the total picture of the martial arts. This is something I believe Prof. Okazaki tried to do because he had foresight; later on systems like Kajukenbo showed the same insight. You have to try to take the best or the technique that suits you – it has to work for you first.

There are instructors out there who don't trust or respect each other. They have too much pride in their own art and reject all others if they use a different kind of kick or punch. But any kind of kick is effective to a certain degree. I feel that the more a person became familiar with other methods of fighting, the better off he will be. This is not to say that they should forsake his art for something else, but they should learn how to adapt the principles and concepts they have learned to other ways of fighting. This is where real understanding of their art and one's self come into play. Sometimes this isn't an easy thing to do, let alone accept.

Brain washing it's members within a system often results in behavior patterns similar to those of the old-time bible carrying fundamentalist, "if you don't believe the way I do, then you're not a true Christian", and so forth. Many churches closed their doors to members of other denominations, this ended up defeating the purpose of "religion", and similarly, some karate systems close their minds and doors to members of other schools – thus undermining the spirit of "brotherhood".

People deal better with honesty than with lies, but you've got to be upfront with yourself first and foremost; if you don't have a product that is marketable, then you've got to work on improving it. If that takes going outside of your own system then so be it. Those that chose to give a mystical description of what they teach; usually are only hiding their short comings, and they're only lying to themselves. This all catches up with them in the end – it's only a matter of time.



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“No one nation has a monopoly of the sun, religion, race, culture or system of martial arts. No one has a monopoly of the truth.”---Prof. James Muro

James Muro

