

WHY LEARN KARATE - IF ONLY FOR PASSION?



As I think back, I remember Professor Chow-Hoon talking about certain individuals' techniques and about the people who made them famous. He would refer to them as a "Karate Man", or "This guy was a Judo Man, or a Gung Fu Man". After giving his talk and description of these individuals and their techniques, I asked the Professor, "If so and so was a Karate Man and so and so was a Judo Man and so on and so forth, what does that make us?" We trained in all the arts he just gave a description of. Were we to consider ourselves Judo and Jujitsu people or Karate Men? He said, "I want you to be a Martial Artist".

This brings me to the question of why should students of Jujitsu learn about Karate, or for that matter, Hapkido or Escrima? If they wanted to learn about these other arts, I'm sure they would be training in them to begin with. Instead, they are in Judo and Jujitsu because it is what they want. Either because they are more adaptable to it and they feel more at ease with it, or it's in their blood - it is their passion.

When I was younger and first learning the art of Karate-Do, my personal feelings were that I didn't like it. I asked Professor Chow-Hoon, "Why should I learn Karate?" I confessed to him that I didn't really like it,



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for Judo and Jujitsu were really my passion. I told him I was really just going along with the flow of the class and I was willing to work hard at it, but that my heart wasn't really in it. It was here that Professor Chow-Hoon brought out a fear. "What happens when you come across an opponent well versed in the art of Karate?" Again, as in many times before, he shed enlightenment on my shoulders. In order to defeat the art of Karate, I must first understand its strengths and weaknesses. In order to do this, I must undertake study of the art, and study it with as much passion and heart as I did with Judo and Jujitsu. I learned not only the strengths and weaknesses of Karate, but about Judo and Jujitsu in the process.

Professor Chow-Hoon gave me a formula for developing not only a method to attain a higher level of skill and knowledge, but also the reason to study other Martial Arts. The interchanging of options grows with the learning of additional Martial Arts. Learning their strengths and weaknesses, and finding out where yours are, you should take and blend the best of all the arts. In the end, your level of skill and knowledge accentuates. This provokes innovation and change – IMPROVEMENT – because variety is the spice of life, eventually all the arts will become your passion.

James Muro

