



6 Life Lessons Anyone Can Learn or Teach Through Example

There are many life lessons that most people learn through experience, either their own or others'. While you could probably add many more to this list (and you should), here are 6 of the most important traits or life lessons that everyone should know and anyone can learn (and teach or demonstrate, whether they know it or not) through example.

#1- Attitude (Respect & Courtesy) - How do you come off to others, whether meeting them for the first time, or in your various peer groups? We have all heard about making first impressions, but what about changing first impressions? Your attitude, specifically how respectful & courteous you are and how you present yourself, have a major impact with how you interact with those in the world around you. A positive, confident attitude makes an excellent first impression, but sometimes even if you came off the wrong way at first, a change in attitude that is consistent can change others' perception of you. We have seen students who have had difficulty always being respectful when they're younger grow and develop a healthy level of respect. And the courteous, respectful students learn faster because they tend to listen better and find that their peers want to work with them more because they "like" them better. We call that maturity.

#2- Commitment- Commitment is about doing what you said you were going to do. Giving your word and keeping it. Time after time, year after year. Every time that you make a commitment and keep it, you gain trust. Promises are easy to make. but when your best intentions meet up with reality, and you keep your word, your word will gain a quiet strength that others won't doubt. In the Dojo, long term commitment is necessary for long term gains. You can always tell who, as a student, has committed because they've got very good attendance as they know they must be there to learn, and if they combine that with the right attitude, as stated above, they warm up, practice, and get to work. So, in and out of the Dojo, set some long term goals and then make a promise to yourself to commit to them.

#3- Communication- Communication is one of the most important things that anyone should learn to do properly, and, unfortunately, one of the most neglected in the world today. Communication is not just speaking or putting out a message, but also listening. Communication doesn't stop

when you speak, but when the other person understands what you've said. It is vital to develop good communication skills both as a speaker and as a listener, but good communication doesn't end there. It is equally vital that your communication is consistent. If you can pair good communication with commitment, then you'll be ahead of most other people. Phrases like "I'll let you know" and "I'll get back to you" will mean something. In the Dojo, you and your teacher should be in constant communication. That doesn't mean necessarily that you need to strike up a conversation with them every week, but if you're not going to be in class, communicate, asking to be excused, so they know where you are and don't worry. And when things come up in life, as they always do, from working around changes to your schedule to dealing with a problem you're having at school, with peers or bullies, etc., talk to your teacher so that they can help you, because they want to help you succeed.

#4- Patience- In an ever changing and highly technological and socially connected world, patience is becoming increasingly scarce. Fast-paced demands and social media have helped create an "instant" world. Instant responses required, instant gratification, and everything gotten quickly or it bypasses our attention span. When everything around you is moving this quickly, patience is a vital trait to both learn and show others. Patience allows you to slow down and process, really digest what you're learning. Being patient also teaches you that not everything needs to be instant and that sometimes waiting for something while putting in the work is a good thing. It gives depth to what you're doing and teaches that shortcuts are often not worth it. Patience teaches you that many things require a slower process to work. As Malcolm Gladwell says in many of his books, including "The Tipping Point", "in order to master anything, it takes 10,000 proper repetitions of that thing". As martial artists, we know to achieve proper technique that works, we need to develop proper muscle memory, and that's why we say "repetition, repetition, repetition". Students in our school are only promoted 2-3 times per year (and even less at the Brown and Black Belt ranks) because there's so much to learn and practice at each level, but we know it's worth it to develop properly. When parents or students ask me how much it is for the next belt, I always answer simply and truthfully, "If they put the time in, I will give them the belt, but they will earn the rank." Set goals, work hard, and be patient and good things will come.

Dojo News and Achievements

New F.I.S.T.– Congratulations to Jason DaSilva, Sankyu and Estefania Borrero, Purple Belt, on their being named to the Assistant Instructor program. Mr. DaSilva assisting on Saturday Mornings & Miss Borrero assisting on Monday evenings.

Charity Event– On June 2nd, 2018, the Dojo hosted a special concert and art show benefitting St. Jude Children’s Hospital. The concert was organized and emceed by Douglas DaSilva, Sankyu, and the art show was organized by Estefania Borrero, Purple Belt, and featured many of the Dojo’s very talented students, both playing in the concert and as artists. Special musical guests were Violinist Tzu-En Lee, Vox Novus Premiere Artist, and A. Lish Lindsey, Flutist, Eastern Wind Symphony. We were joined by students and staff of the Family Martial Arts Center, of Parsippany and the Morris County 4H Club Claybusters. The event raised over \$4,300 and was a huge success!

Sleepover– On May 5th, 2018, our Dojo had its 2nd annual sleepover. Students had a special class which included an obstacle course, they broke boards, had dinner, watched a movie, played games, and had an awesome time sleeping over in the Dojo.

Congratulations– Aania Falak, Yellow Belt, has her own Youtube channel where she does recipes, magic tricks, & book readings. Go to Youtube and search “Aania Falak” and click the 1st link to check it out!

Congratulations– Stan Li, Sankyu, graduated from Rutgers University on May 13th, 2018. He was able to maintain a B average and is looking forward to the next part of his journey.

Congratulations– to Michael Corey, Orange Belt II, on his new Full-time job with Asco Power in Florham Park after leaving his old position as a software development contractor for JP Morgan last fall. He is much happier in his new position. Congratulations Michael!

Congratulations– Advay Rao, Orange Belt, competed in the Pinewood Derby for his Wolf Cub pack for Pack 166 and won 1st place not only in his Wolf Den but the entire Pack 166, breaking the previous speed records. He researched (getting tips and tricks to build a fast car), designed, built, and colored the car himself. His achievement has helped teach him focus, determination, planning, and how to set a goal and achieve it. Advay has also been awarded Student of the Month for his 2nd grade class for February. Great job Advay!

Congratulations– Alohi Rao, Orange Belt, for winning student of the month for March in her 2nd grade class and for achieving the 1st habit of the 7 Habits of Happy Kids, “Being Proactive”, which is awarded for taking charge of her actions, showing initiative, being responsible, & doing the right things without being asked, even when no one is looking, which we call Integrity. She has now been recognized for 3 different habits of the 7 Habits of Happy Kids. Congratulations Alohi!

Save the Date:

4th Anniversary Dojo Picnic

When: Sunday, September 16th, 2018- 1:00- 5:00 PM

Where: Freedom Park, Picnic Pavilion

Who’s invited: All Randolph Martial Arts Academy students & their families

Sign up period with more information is coming soon...



Mrs. Hopley has been studying the martial arts in American Budo Kai since Sept. 29th, 1998 and has been actively teaching since May 2004. She earned her Black Belt in June 2006 at Karate Camp, and more recently earned YoDan (4th degree Black Belt) at the December 2016 Shiai. She is a Certified Instructor of the Randolph Martial Arts Academy.

Here's what she has to say:

I started taking Tae Kwon Do at 7 years old. My friend Hayley, who was the same age at the time, and her brother who was a year younger than us, were doing it and that was the main reason that I wanted to try it. Eventually, she wanted to play the violin, so she made it to orange belt and quit, and her brother followed out the door. However, I enjoyed it, so I wanted to stay. What started out as something fun to try with my friends, turned into something more. I made it to yellow belt but eventually, my parents weren't able to afford it anymore, and I had to stop. I was sad but there wasn't much that I could do at the time. I considered going back to other activities such as dance because I wasn't able to do both, and it was something else that I loved and had to stop doing to study the martial arts. At the time, I was busy with cheerleading and some of my other after school activities, and slowly karate faded away.

One Saturday morning, when I was around ten years old, I was helping my mom do laundry at the laundromat in the Kenvil shopping plaza. It was warm out, so a lot of shops had their doors opened. As I was walking into the laundromat, I heard shouting coming from one of the shops next door. I walked over and saw a bunch of kids doing karate. The teacher at the time, Mr. Exoras, saw me watching and gave me a kind of "come here" sign with his hand. I ran over to my mom, handed her the basket and asked if I could watch. She agreed and joined me a few minutes later, and we watched the rest of the Junior Class together. After the class, Mr. Exoras asked me if I wanted to try a class and I agreed right away. At the time, I was a shy kid who was made fun of constantly because I wore glasses. I was afraid to talk to anyone, because anytime that I opened my mouth or tried to make friends with someone new in school, the kids that bullied me pulled the new people away and told them not to talk to me. I hadn't realized how much I'd missed karate while I wasn't studying.

Fast forward five years later, and I was more confident and came out of my shell a lot more. One time, while I was training in the teen/senior class, my mom had to drop me off extra early for whatever reason, so I sat in the back behind the changing rooms (where I couldn't see class going on) to study. When I heard the word "Rei" from behind the changing room, I did what I always did and stood up and walked over to the red tape (indicating where the Dojo floor started) waiting to bow on thinking the junior class was over. Instead, they were just bowing in to start the junior class! Everyone kind of looked at me funny, and I looked around and realized I was waiting to bow onto the floor for the wrong class. I said oops, habit, and sat back down in the hallway waiting for it to be time for my class. After class, Mr. Hopley Jr. called me over and asked me if my mom could drop me off that early every week? When I said I could ask her, he asked me if I would like to join the FIST (Future Instructor's Special Training) program. I started in the FIST program at the end of May that year, at the age of sixteen. I was a FIST member for 12 years before being asked by Mr. Hopley Sr. to be an Instructor for the Saturday morning junior class. September 29th, 2018 will make 20 years for me as an American Budo Kai student. I have gained so much since then. I have more self confidence in front of groups, and one on one with people; I'm not afraid to go over to someone new and start talking to them – and I'm no longer worried that a bully might keep them from being friends with me. My friend Hayley, who got me involved in karate over 20 years ago, even recently started in a local martial arts program close to where she lives now, so you can always go back. We can try different activities for ourselves & our children to see what we gravitate to the most and which activities we're most passionate about. I found through trying and losing, and then missing it, that Martial Arts is one of the activities I most enjoy. I hope that you find your passion, and if it's Martial Arts, I'd be happy to help you, especially if you're a shy kid who's made fun of or has a tough time making new friends.

Kanpai,
Leeann Hopley #6-193