

**With utmost respect and appreciation
Yesterday, today and tomorrow**

Sensei Kirk Farber, Osprey Dojo
Submission for Rokudan Rank

Training in the Martial Arts improves with time. As with years come growth, yet more important comes wisdom. It is with wisdom that advances past plateaus. In 1993, I wrote about “**Teaching is an Art**”. In 1997, I wrote about “**Speaking is an Art**”. Now with time and experience comes the true vision that “**Understanding is an Art**”. A Black Belt promotes respect, yet it is the actions and commitments which can bring out greatness within a Sensei.

It is with great honor and respect that I share with you the “Understanding” of my role within the style of Cuong Nhu Oriental Martial Arts.

The rank of Rokudan represents the Master level, thus I feel that there are three main topics that should be involved/addressed prior to obtaining the rank of a Cuong Nhu Master. Ironically, they are found in our very first code of ethic. The first two topics are mentioned, the third is implied.

Cuong Nhu students should strive to improve themselves and their abilities in the martial arts in order to server the people.

- - Improve One’s self in all aspects of life
 - Serve the community by sharing/educating others
 - Respect each other, yet especially Respect one’s self within

Strive to Improve

“If you are hungry – go to the kitchen”

As long as I can remember – my Cuong Nhu attitude has always been “If you are going to talk the talk – then you have to walk the walk”. One of my favorite quotes has always been the words from O’Sensei “Vision without action is a dream soon forgotten”.

In my younger days, I would make sure that I got a workout while teaching. I was adamant that if an instructor was going to have a student practice a technique – then the instructor needed to demonstrate the technique.

Having competed in martial art tournaments for over 25 years, it takes training and a different level of attitude, as performing in front of others is a great way to motivate ones’ self. Self Improvement creates a confidence and attitude of Can Do!

Now at age 47, my body can’t take the physical training from years earlier, but I have learned that focus should not be on what one can not do, but more with what one can do!! I can no longer run the miles that I did for so many years – But I can jump rope for a better cardio workout then ever before – I am grateful!

Four years ago I took it upon myself to create my own website to share my thoughts and ideas. The vision of the website evolved into a business, teaching and sharing principles (found within Cuong Nhu). Multi-tasking

and focus allowed me to be my own boss.

Serve the People

“Teaching is Learning”

Twenty-one years ago (1985), I offered a Common Sense Self Defense (CSSD) seminar for women at Prudential Insurance Company. There were over 300 women who showed up for the seminar, though free it taught me that many people who are not familiar with a specific topic yearn for knowledge and information. I saw how the knowledge that we, as martial artists, could take for granted, could be shared to build one’s own confidence and peace of mind. It has now evolved into ongoing seminars for a wide spectrum of clients over the last 20 years (school children, senior citizens, corporate America, neighborhood families, civic/church communities, keynote presentations, etc.)

Nine years ago (1997), I was asked to be a guest (motivational) speaker for the juveniles in the Jacksonville Jail. I soon realized that the principles and concepts of our training could get a positive message across, even if only one of the kids ‘got the message’. Well nine years later, the program is the most popular program requested in the jail. The Youth leadership program is now called “Power, Polish, and Purpose” with the opportunity of expanding beyond the Duval county jail. The 3 segments consist of Power (wisdom of Martial arts to overcome the obstacles while realizing that control is more powerful than force), Polish (toastmaster protocol of having the juveniles learn importance of speaking/interview skills), and Purpose (character education where a word is the theme each week). My friend, Almon Gunter, who is also a partner in this wonderful program was the 1984 and 1988 Olympic Trial finalist (13th fastest person in 200 meter yard dash) who came from a small town called Baldwin. His high school track was I-10 and 301, with the point being – It is not where you come from..but rather where you are going too! The program now is 24 weeks each year at the Duval County Jail.

Three years ago (2003), I developed a children’s program to emphasize fitness (martial arts, juggling, and jump rope) while incorporating both public speaking and moving arts (make up kata). The name is simply F.A.C.E. (Fitness And Character Education), as Sensei Joe Varady helped create the logo. The ideas came from my years of Cuong Nhu, volunteer jail program, teaching children, and fact that I believed in the motto “Do what you love, Love what you Do!”

The program has now evolved, thru time, into general assemblies for entire schools’ population, summer camps, private lessons, receiving grants for troubled youths, and currently teaching the **F.A.C.E.** program at 9 different locations.

The theme for the last 3 years is very similar to the theme of last years’ 2005 Training campout – **Making a Difference!** And this year’s 2006 theme – **Passion from within.**

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Respect

“The Greatest man is nobody; the Greatest self is to know thyself”

The 3-O’s is a philosophy that all Cuong Nhu members are familiar with, yet respect is the driving principle behind the concept. We all know the importance of “Respecting others”, but it is the confidence and ability to respect one’s own self that allows true understanding of growth.

Personally, I have been through some difficult times the last three years with work, divorce, and finances. Yet Cuong Nhu has helped me “Understand” that the respect I have for myself (through my own goals and accomplishments) is greater than any obstacle that I can cross in life.

Knowledge from yesterday allows changes for tomorrow. If one did not understand blending, fluidness and change - then growth would be stagnant. As a Martial Artist who can appreciate the traditional styles of Judo, Shotokan, Aikido, Wing Chun and Tai Chi - We can only admire and respect our elders. But it is Cuong Nhu Oriental Martial Arts that can teach the teachers that the evolution of Martial Arts is a way of life. The roots have been grounded deep into the soil and the style will grow and prosper due to the wisdom and inspiration of evolution.

It is with great admiration and honor knowing that I am sharing a demonstration for Rokudan rank that truly represents the spirit of Cuong Nhu. The memories and experiences of training have allowed me to fully understand and appreciate the importance of pushing myself, helping others, and respecting all within my path of life.

Thank you for the opportunity, as I have earned the rank of Rokudan.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kirk Farber
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