

WHAT IS KARATE?

Karate is love. How funny! Most people would take this as a very strange definition - or even a ridiculous one. For me, it is not so. In the next few paragraphs, I will explain why.

What is Karate? So simple and yet so complicated... Everyone has his own personal opinion; so much has been written on the topic. So very much has been written about the subject...karate. Yet it has taken me a lifetime of meditation just to sit down and begin to write about it! It is funny, really – Karate is love!

Excluding sexuality, love is a sentiment which runs deeply. Love is a sentiment which runs deeply within one's being both physically and emotionally and mentally. There are countless happenings that occur for love. There are also consequences. That perception of love, of sentiment, of total transcendence is the element to which I direct myself with this written communication.

Most of us have been able to appreciate the acceptance or recognize the rejection in something as simple as a look or an expression. Haven't you? It is a feeling in which we enter and return, or which choose to keep deep inside our being. It is the awareness of something so grand and so simple, right?

It the application of our techniques, that perception exists in the communication with your training partner; a similar perception exists in the communication with your kumite opponent. One feels his vibrations, his projections, his spiritual direction, and his intention.

The power to perceive an opponent's attack before he begins to set up, before he begins it, involves more than just looking, more than just a glance. It is a feeling that we reach, a perceptive ability that we acquire, when we enter into the spirit of our opponent, in his psyche, in his being. That spiritual insight is born within us, where love is born, and compliments the power to perceive those things which cannot be seen.

“IT IS THE PROJECTION OF STRENGTH WITHOUT LIMIT WHICH ONLY A PURE SPIRIT MAY ATTAIN.”

It is the interaction, that take and give of oneself towards the opponent – that give and take of one's self towards the opponent – and, which permits him also to see a similar parallel, something affectionate and intimate within you. All one needs to do is look; all he needs to do is see. That is the power that exist in love and that is created from love. It is the strongest power that we know of. It is the projection of strength without limit that only a pure spirit can reach, and which only a pure spirit may attain.

We have all heard stories of extraordinary happenings motivated by love, of developing super strength or uncommon courage, or of resisting incredible sufferings. These are commonly found in karate experiences.

“The pure spirit is like a god of energy,” – Mas Oyama

As written by the author Mas Oyama (Sensei of renown Goju-Ryu Karate Do fame), the pure spirit is like a god of energy. Love can make you crazy or mad. Love can cause you to lose control if you allow it to do so or if you are unaware of its power. Yes, love can make you crazy or mad, or make you lose control if you let it or are unaware. This is why pure spirit is needed, is vital, so that you can direct this

energy and capture in the void of our being the possession of the spirituality, sentiments, and projections of those which we confront. And, quite possibly, we will disarm them with only a glancing stare coupled with our projection of love. This is truly karate! This is love! It is an interaction of sentiments and feelings with the goal of spiritual harmony surrounded by combative cycles. A pure spirit, free from inhibitions and inequities, will radiate by its presence and will be noticed by all or go unnoticed if so desired. He will be in control of himself and his opponent. The one who possesses true spirit will be in control of himself and of his opponent, he will control situations that are presented and will avoid conflicts that are unnecessary. And, as a constant within the true spirit, all this will be in a context of respect, confidence and with a total lack of and free of envy.

Throughout my studies of karate and of love, I have been able to reach these conclusions. I try to practice them in my daily training. I give thanks to Mr. Takayuki Mikami, my Sensei, for teaching me and for infusing in me the power of love in karate, that is obtained through karate.

“KARATE IS SOMETHING VERY BEAUTIFUL; IT VIBRATES WITH ENERGY AND WITH FEELINGS.”

Karate is something very beautiful; it vibrates with energy and with feelings. It is something that involves the practitioner to the point of fanaticism. It contains elements that seem to be contradicting but are not. Karate is something that although viewed by a novice as contrary, possesses powers that complement each other in a perfect balance, a true philosophical dualism. Even Hollywood, in the movie THE KARATE KID, could not ignore that philosophy as the character of instructor Miyagi told his student, “Learn to fight so one will not have to fight.”

Any person not adept in karate may not understand this concept. Karate is love and love embraces all. Develop the power of love through the purity of spirit. May the power of karate / love be with us all.

Goroshi