

Living the Tenets

By Florinda Peterson

Introduction

At the start of classes, grading and tournaments, we recite the student oath, of which the first is “I shall observe the tenets of Taekwon-Do”. The five tenets are the principles by which we should conduct ourselves within the Taekwon-Do community. In addition, since we all are part of a wider society, we should endeavour to transpose these tenets to our everyday lives as well – at home, at school, at work, in the general community. We should try to live these tenets.

The Tenets

So, what are the tenets? They are:

1. Courtesy (Ye Ui)
2. Integrity (Yom Chi)
3. Perseverance (In Nae)
4. Self Control (Guk Gi)
5. Indomitable Spirit (Baekjool Boolgool)

I will go through each of the tenets and discuss what they are; their definitions, how they are applicable in the Taekwon-Do community and the general community.

Courtesy (Ye Ui)

What Is Courtesy?

Collins New English Dictionary, 1956, defines courtesy as “politeness of manners; an act of civility”.

In general terms, it is about being considerate, generous and helpful with others. It is good conduct and etiquette, decency, thoughtfulness, kindness and respecting others and their feelings. Behaving courteously shows you appreciate the other person. Courtesy is thinking of others and their needs, and doing things for them. It is offering help, even if it is as simple as carrying groceries or holding the door for someone. It is being “others-centred”, not “self-centred”. As President Washington said, “How far you go in life depends on your being tender with the young, compassionate with the aged, sympathetic with the striving, and tolerant of the weak and the strong. Because someday in life you will be all of these.”

Military courtesy is intended to show mutual respect and reinforce discipline. It is also supposed to encourage “*esprit de corps*” and provide a basis for developing good human relations.

Courtesy in Taekwon-Do

“It can be said that courtesy is an unwritten regulation prescribed by ancient teachers of philosophy as a means to enlighten human being while maintaining a harmonious society. It can further be as an ultimate criterion required of a mortal.” – from the Condensed Encyclopaedia.

Taekwon-Do students should practise the following “to build up their noble character and to conduct the training in an orderly manner”:

1. “To promote the spirit of mutual concessions”. Handle matters in a “give-and-take” manner. Everyone has something to offer; be open and listen to what they have to say.
2. “To be ashamed of one’s vices, contempting those of others”. Make an effort to give up one’s vices, and encourage others to do the same.
3. “To be polite to one another”. Be polite by not barging anyone out of the way just to be in first position. Listen to your instructor when he/she gives instructions; this also helps you know what you need to do to improve your skills. Do not pester, harass or bully other students.
4. “To encourage the sense of justice and humanity”. Treat each other with equality and tolerance. No one should be discriminated against because of gender, age, race or lifestyle preference.
5. “To distinguish instructor from student, senior from junior, and elder from younger”. To do this we bow to the instructor first, then the senior ranks, then the elder students of your own rank and then the juniors. We observe the practice of ranking in recognition of the effort the student has put in to reach his/her position, and the respect we hold for that person.
6. “To behave oneself according to etiquette”. Because Taekwon-Do originated in the military, the way we show courtesy is based on military courtesy. Thus we say “Yes or no Sir/Ma’am”. If you wish to speak to a senior, wait at attention until he/she is able to speak to you. Do not initiate hand-shaking; wait until the senior extends his/her hand first. Always let the seniors enter or exit first. When the most senior person enters the *dojang* the first person to see the senior calls the whole class to attention and then bow to the senior. When at competitions, always bow in and out of the ring. NEVER back-chat your instructor or seniors.
7. “To respect others’ possession”. Show social responsibility by respecting other people’s possessions. If you need to borrow anything, take good care of the article, and return it in good order.
8. “To handle matters with fairness and sincerity”. There are always two sides to every situation.
9. “To refrain from giving or accepting a gift when in doubt”. Ask yourself why the gift is being offered. If you are not sure of the reason to be given the gift, it is better not to accept.
10. Be helpful: help another student with, say, a technique; volunteer at Taekwon-Do events, like tournaments, camps, gradings, etc.; bring out equipment before class and put them away after class.

Courtesy in the General Community

1. It doesn't cost anything to smile. So, smile and be courteous to people you meet, even those who may not be nice. Courteous behaviour can really brighten up someone's day. Courtesy and a smile can also diffuse anger, by saying "God bless you" or "Have a nice day".
2. Always consider other people's feelings. If you did something wrong, or if you yourself behave rather rudely, apologise. If criticism is called for, make sure it is constructive and objective. Use complimentary terms to buffer their self-esteem. If someone is rude or pushy, it is still possible to be complimentary: "having your own set of values and beliefs is admirable", then excuse yourself and leave. Listen to the other person and let them convey their point of view. If you disagree, do so gently; do not let emotions dictate your behaviour. Respect their opinions and decisions.
3. Consider other road users; give them the opportunity to merge into the main traffic if that is their intention – letting in one car is not going to make a difference to the time it takes for you to reach your destination. If someone cuts you off in traffic, let it go – road rage will only get you in trouble. If you want to change lanes or make a turn, make sure you have ample time to indicate your intention. Do not tail-gate; it is not only rude, it also can be dangerous.
4. Personalise your interactions with others; address them by the name they ask you to call them. If not, then address them by their titles: Mr, Mrs so and so, etc.
5. Keep your word. Do what you say you will, when you say you will. Only make a promise you intend to keep, and don't make misleading or vague statements.
6. Remember your etiquette and manners: "please", "thank you", "you're welcome", "excuse me", etc.
7. Treat other people's properties with respect. If you need to use them, seek permission first, and return them in the condition you got them.
8. When a person treats you with kindness, be appreciative; express your gratitude. As philosopher Jacques Maritain said, "Gratitude is the most exquisite form of courtesy".
9. Ask after people, without being too nosy or intrusive.
10. Be humble. Everybody has their strengths and weaknesses; someone may be better than someone else at some things, but no one is better than someone else.
11. Cursing or using profane language is NEVER courteous.
12. Do not be impatient or pushy. Allow someone to go ahead in queue. It was Cai Qen Tau who said, "In life, the best conduct is to take a step back, rather than vying to out-step others".
13. Text messaging while engaging in a conversation? You are not showing courtesy to the person you are talking with.
14. Give up your seat in the bus/train for the elderly, the harassed mother with fractious children, or some one with heavy baggage. Help them cross the road, onto busses and trains, or into aeroplane seats.

Courtesy at Home

1. Respect your parents and siblings by following the rules of the home. For example, if your parents say you should be home by a certain time at weekends, be sure to stick to it.
2. Do what you are asked without arguing: taking out the rubbish; bringing in the washing; doing the dishes etc.
3. Do nice things for your parents, like making them breakfast sometimes, or offer to baby-sit your younger siblings so they can have some time to themselves.
4. Be considerate. Clean up after yourself when using the shower or making snacks. Hold the door for members of your family
5. Be kind to the younger and elderly members of your family; help out when they need help. Do not be a bully.
6. Respond quickly when called for an reason – for meals, for help etc.
7. Own up when you mess up. Apologise and say “sorry”.
8. Treat properties with respect; your parents have worked hard to obtain them. You will be depriving other members of the family if you wrecked them.
9. Do not use bad language on your family members (or on anyone, for that matter).
10. Always mind you manners and say “please”, “thank you”, “you’re welcome”, etc.
11. Respect each other’s privacy; knock on the door before entering another family member’s room.
12. When speaking to your parents or siblings, speak clearly; do not mumble.
13. Respect each other’s feelings. If your sister is sensitive about her weight, do not call her “Chubs”, for example.
14. Respect each other’s possessions: if you wish to borrow anything, seek the owner’s permission first, and remember to take care of it, and return it in the condition you got it.

Courtesy at School

1. Follow the rules of your school. If your school does not allow cell phones turned on in class, make sure it is turned off. If no jewellery is allowed during school time, do not wear them.
2. Respect your teachers by listening to them and not disrupting the class by making rude noises or throwing things around. If you need your teacher’s attention, raise your hand and wait until he/she is able to respond. Do not yell out, or cut in on someone.
3. Respect your school friends by not being a bully, whether verbally or by text messages.
4. Respect your school; be proud of it by not littering, looking after resources and equipment which have been made available for your use.
5. Be on time for any of your activities – your class, music practice, sports practice, etc. If, for some reason, you are late, apologise and try not to repeat it.
6. There is no need to push and jostle to get in front of the line; let others go in front of you. As Cai Qen Tau said, “Step aside on the narrow path to let your follower pass”.
7. Be kind to the younger students; offer help when you can. If you see a younger student being harassed or bullied, help him/her by, say, taking him/her to a teacher and report the incident.
8. Do not use bad language on anyone. Mind your manners and say your “thank you”, “Please”, etc., and when you make a mistake, say “sorry”.

9. If someone makes a mistake, or gives the wrong answer to a teacher's question, or makes the wrong move in the sports field, do not laugh or boo. Imagine if you were in that situation, would you welcome it?

Courtesy in the Workplace

1. Treat your co-workers with respect, even if they do have a lower job status than yours. What they do may make the difference between a pleasant and an unpleasant atmosphere when they make your cup of tea, bring in your mail, photocopy your documents, etc. Show your appreciation for what they do with a smile and lots of thanks, and do not take them for granted.
2. Take instructions with grace and give instructions gracefully.
3. Always be considerate. Whoever used the last sheet of paper in the photocopier should refill it. In the lunchroom, do not leave dirty eating and drinking utensils lying around; it doesn't take many minutes to put your utensils in the dish washer.
4. Again, don't forget manners go a long way. Hold doors for others if you see them struggling; push the lift buttons if you see them with their arms full. If your job involves dealing with the public, serve people with a good attitude and a ready smile.
5. Recognise the achievements of others with sincere and warm praise, not just shallow flattery.
6. Keep personal or in-house issues out of sight or hearing from customers/clients/the public. Keep what is private private.
7. Don't be tardy: arrive promptly, even early. And never be late for an appointment.
8. When in a meeting, pay attention to what is going on; don't go checking your emails or opening correspondences. Take care with how you dress; overly casual dressing can be seen as a subtle put-down of the other participants of the meeting.
9. If you share your work space with others, like in a cubicle, a workroom or a work station, make sure you keep your area tidy.
10. Gossiping and back-stabbing is not courteous. It can also have serious repercussions; you might be up for libel or slander.

Effects of Courtesy

1. If you treat others with courtesy, you will gain their respect.
2. Author Brian Tracy said, "When you go through your day expressing kindness and courtesy to all you meet, you leave behind a feeling of warmth and good cheer, and you help alleviate the burdens everyone is struggling with."
3. Courtesy creates a peaceful society. In 1997 Paul Johnson wrote in *The Spectator* "Bad manners and high crime rates are all part of the same disease". From this observation, Chuck Gallozzi hypothesised, "As we raise the level of courtesy practised in society, we lower the crime rate!" This is because a considerate person doesn't steal, a kind student doesn't bully; a thoughtful person doesn't cheat, and a respectful person doesn't murder.
4. When you are courteous and others-centred, you learn to be tolerant, kind, understanding, etc. After all, as Cai Qen Tau said, "To benefit others is, in the long run, the basis of benefiting yourself."

5. By showing courtesy to your co-workers, they can see that not only do you respect them, but also that you value their time, input, and who they are. This can increase their self esteem, thus increase their productivity and job satisfaction. Conversely, when others show courtesy to you, you will be happy and thus increase your productivity too.
6. When you are courteous to your co-worker who share your work space, by keeping your area tidy, not only do you keep a congenial relationship, it also makes your office look better for clients who just happen by, and this might be the clincher that makes them want to do business with your organisation.
7. In the military, courtesy helps keep each other safe because in battle “*esprit de corps*”, and camaraderie make people look out for each other.
8. Helping a young child/elderly person across the street, or opening the door for someone with full arms is not only courteous, but it ensures the safety of the people you are helping.
9. Showing compassion and kindness to your classmates or team-mates could gain you new friends. Showing respect to your teachers by listening and following instructions could result in you achieving better grades.
10. When someone notices your courteous behaviour, that person might be inspired to show courtesy to another person, resulting in a chain of courteous behaviour and kindness. This will certainly create a peaceful world.

Why We Must Not Forget About Courtesy

John Hooker wrote a paper called *The Polite and The Rude* in which he noted that Western culture has evolved into behaviour that is based on abstract principle of fairness, rights, justice and democracy. Everyone is entitled to a fair share of whatever – points of view, riches, etc. In pursuing fairness, arguments and counter arguments are put forward, “with minimal degree of courtesy. Courtesy does not play the necessary integrative role in the West than it does in much of the world. Because the West subscribes to the rules of fairness and individual rights, it can tolerate rudeness.” (Hooker, 1998)

While, currently, Eastern culture pays a lot of store by a structured behaviour code, where courtesy and respect are revered, especially to elders and seniors, one can’t help but notice the influence the West has on these cultures. One can speculate that eventually, Eastern cultures might go the way of the West.

We have seen, above, how courtesy can make the world a better place. Therefore, we, as Taekwon-Do practitioners, must do our part by inculcating into our students the importance of courtesy.

Words of Wisdom

“What is courtesy? Consideration for others.” – Mark Twain

“There can be no defence like elaborate courtesy.” – E.V. Lucas

“Rudeness is the weak man’s imitation of strength.” – Eric Hoffer

“He who listens becomes the master of what is profitable.” “As for the ignorant man who does not listen, he accomplishes nothing.” – Ptahhotep, Vizier of 5th century BC Egyptian dynasty

“To honour yourself, respect others first.” “What you do not like done to yourself, do not do to others.” - Confucius

Integrity(Yom Chi)

What Is Integrity?

Collins Dictionary’s definition is: (a) the quality of being honest and morally upright, (b) the state of being whole/unified, (c) soundness of construction.

In general terms, integrity is about keeping to a strict moral/ethical code, knowing right from wrong, and choosing the right. It is the soundness of moral make up – a complete honesty. As Einstein said, “whoever is careless with the truth in small matters cannot be trusted with the important matters.” Integrity is about matching your words with action. Having integrity means being whole/undivided, free from corrupting influences or motives. “Integrity simply means not violating one’s own identity.” – Eric Fromm

Integrity isn’t the same for everyone, depending on their culture and/or belief system. For example, some people believe it is fine to kill animals for sustenance, others not at all. But whatever your belief, if you stick to it, you have integrity. Here is a controversial point - Charleston Heston has integrity because he is undivided in his belief that people should be allowed to have guns.

Integrity is a skill learned over time. Only you can apply it to your situation; you can’t force it onto others, nor can anyone force it onto you unless you want it and see its value.

Integrity does not necessarily mean you have to follow the rules. If your personal belief clashes with a set of rules, then you are showing you have integrity by breaking the rules. For example, the rule of your, say, sport says you have to be available at all times to play for your club. Your personal Christian belief says you should not do any work on Sunday. So, if your club is scheduled to play on a Sunday, you will be breaking the rules when you decline from playing.

Integrity in Taekwon-Do

In Taekwon-Do, integrity is about knowing what is “right and wrong, and having a conscience. If wrong, to feel guilt” – Condensed Encyclopedia. That is, to acknowledge you have done wrong, be sorry about it, apologise for it, and attempt to rectify it.

Instances where integrity is lacking:

1. “The instructor who misrepresents himself and his art by presenting improper techniques to his students because of a lack of knowledge, or apathy.” Therefore, to show integrity, the instructor must seek to improve his knowledge, by attending seminars, courses, etc, so that he/she can then teach his students properly.
2. “The student who misrepresents himself by ‘fixing’ breaking materials before demonstrations.” A student with integrity would practise and practise, and practise some more to improve his breaking skills, not resort to ‘fixing’ things.
3. “The instructor who camouflages bad techniques with luxurious training halls and false flattery to his students.” The instructor with integrity would realise that luxury does not make perfect; practice makes perfect. Using flattery is not being true to yourself and others; it is not seeking the best in others.
4. “The student who requests ranks from an instructor, or attempts to purchase it.” The student who has integrity would understand that the only way to achieve something is to work for it; it is earned. Don’t corrupt the rank by asking for it to be given, or buying it.
5. “The student who gains rank for ego purposes or the feeling of power.” Gaining rank for ego or power does not demonstrate sound moral uprightness. The student of integrity seeks to gain rank to improve him/herself, his community and humanity, by following the tenets, with the aim of building a peaceful world.
6. “The instructor who teaches his art for materialistic gains.” The same argument applies as for point no. 5, regarding the student. Taekwon-Do is not for glory and riches; it is for the betterment of society. This is adhering to Taekwon-Do ethical code.
7. “The student whose actions do not live up to his words.” Since integrity is about matching actions to words, a person of integrity will do what he says he will do. If the student promises to help at a tournament he/she will keep his/her word.
8. “The student who feels ashamed to seek opinions from his juniors.” A person of integrity, who has “soundness of construction” – a strong self-belief, does not need to feel threatened by others. He is open to other opinions, ideas, etc, and only choose to assimilate what matches his present make-up. As the ancient Egyptian vizier, Ptahhotep, said, “May your heart never be vain because of what you know. Take counsel from the ignorant (the less Taekwon-Do-knowledgeable juniors, in our context) as well as the wise.” This shows that you value and respect your juniors and that you appreciate their worth. Don’t forget, our juniors may well be experts in other fields.
9. Integrity is not teaching your students dirty tactics just to win a competition.

Integrity in the General Community

1. Ensure that your actions match your words. Do what you say when you say; attach a high value to your word – that is, walk the talk.
2. Be steadfast, resolute; have a clear, uncompromised set of values – of what is right and wrong, and stick to it. Choose to do what is right rather than what is expedient.
3. Strive to be your best self – real and straight forward. Be true to every part of yourself: mental, physical, emotional and spiritual. Live up to your own standards; always do your best and give your best. Be honest and act on your honesty.

4. Do the right thing for the right reason, even when no one is looking, even when it is hard to do, even if you get in trouble for sticking to your guns. Dare I mention Peter Bethune, the whaling protestor, as an example? (Well, I have.)
5. When interacting with others, be honourable and fair; stick to your principles and take responsibility for your actions. Have the courage of your convictions, even if you looked silly.
6. Be willing to evaluate what you do and how you do it, and be open to input from others, choosing only what is compatible with your situation.
7. Look for the best in others; do not make assumptions. Remember, your set of values are not necessarily theirs.
8. Be true to yourself as well as to others. If you say you value honesty, don't be upset when they tell you their honest, if unflattering, opinion of you. If you say you believe in treating people with respect don't be annoyed if a salesperson takes too long attending to your custom.

Integrity at Home

1. Practise honesty; take responsibility for your actions and if you make a mistake, try to rectify it. For example, while playing in the yard, you left the gate open, and your dog got out. When your mum asks who left the gate open, admit your mistake, and then start looking for your dog. Don't try to claim some good deed which you have not done. For example if the rubbish was taken out and no one knows who did it, perhaps because the person who did isn't there, don't claim that you did.
2. Do the right thing even when no one is looking. For example, your mum bakes muffins for your school fund raising and told you not to eat any. Do not be tempted to sneak one, thinking she will never notice one missing.
3. Keep your promises; do what you say when you say. If you promised your dad to wash the car, do not shirk the job.
4. When interacting with your family members, be fair and honest. Tell the truth even if it gets you in trouble. For example, you see your older sibling sneaking out of the house when he/she is being grounded, and she says for you not to say anything. But when your parents call for the older sibling, and, when getting no response, ask you where he/she is, you tell the truth. You might get in trouble with the older sibling for "telling tales", but you have a clear conscience.
5. Marriage or relationship partners practise integrity by not cheating on each other.
6. You have been to the shops to do your mum's shopping. When you get home, you check the docket to make sure you got everything on the shopping list. You notice that one item is not on the docket even though it is in the shopping bag, which means there is extra money. Do you pocket the money, or go back to the shop and pay for the item? Exercise your integrity; you pay for what you buy.

Integrity at School

1. Do the right thing even when no one is watching. For example, your teacher leaves the room for a few minutes while your class is doing a test. You don't know the answer to

a question, and you can see your classmate's paper. Do you attempt to copy his? If you have integrity, you don't.

2. You are given an assignment to do, but you have so many things going on in your life – sports, part-time work, etc. Do you access some past paper and make it look like your own. No, you should knuckle down and do your own research. Plagiarism is not showing integrity.
3. At school, there is always a lost-and-found pool of properties. If, while looking for your lost property, you saw something really desirable, like the latest ipad, do you pretend that the ipad is your lost property? That would be lacking in integrity.
4. Your teacher is writing on the board, and she asks a really tricky question. Some one pipes up with an answer which turns out to be correct. Your teacher turns around and looks at you and says, "Well done, Thomas". Well, you know it wasn't you who gave the answer. Do you claim the praise? Not if you have integrity.
5. You may be given access to a computer at school so you can do your school work. Would you be tempted to use the technology for accessing your emails, your Facebook or Twitter account? A person with integrity will not be abusing the trust given to him/her in letting him/her use the appliances/equipment for anything other than what it is intended for.
6. When you are given resources, like a text book, to use for the year, you should look after it well and not vandalise it by scribbling or drawing in it. If you thought that the book is yours to do what you like with it, and you get found out, you should accept responsibility for your actions and make reparation. Do not make a false claim that someone else did it or the previous year's student did it. Sometimes you may accidentally break something, like a science glassware. Do not try to hide it – let your teacher know; that's integrity.

Integrity at the Workplace

Staff:

In the workplace you are paid for doing certain things within a period of time. So how do you show integrity?

1. You don't steal: (a) Time by gossiping on the phone, taking longer than your allocated break time, viewing and downloading material on the internet other than that connected with your work. (b) Physical things like stationery or equipment, small or inconsequential you think they may be. (c) Intellectual property like sale strategies or merger plans.
2. Be truthful and honest. If your job is a bean counter, keep an honest set of books, following legitimate accounting procedures. Make sure your communications are open and direct.
3. Take responsibility: (a) for your part in a project; (b) if you made a mistake don't make excuses or point fingers at others – live your values.
4. Respect others – your seniors, your colleagues, your juniors. Give and invite honest feed-backs.
5. Integrity requires you to do the right thing and make the right choices, even if it does not benefit you; to put aside your own agenda for the good of the organisation.

6. Be reliable. This involves getting the job done, when and how you promised. If you encounter problems, speak up, so you can get help to get the job done.
7. If you are privy to sensitive information, do not brag about what you know; keep it to yourself. Confidentiality is a prime example of workplace integrity.
8. Don't abuse your privileges, For example, if you are given access to a work vehicle during work hours, then don't use it for personal use without permission. Respect your organisation's property and reputation.

Bosses:

1. Very often, juniors are expected to work harder to ensure the smooth running of an organisation – the mail gets posted, the phones get answered, the tea gets made. They have no independence, and this could give rise to some sort of “classism” in the workplace. As a boss of integrity, you could make sure that this does not arise. Your staff need to see that you have their best interests at heart, and that you value honest and healthy interactions, and that they will not be deliberately diminished by your actions. Find ways to validate, listen to and take seriously their views and feelings. Avoid “blowing people off”.
2. If you expect your juniors to work hard, then you should be prepared to do the same, and more; that is, walk the talk, and lead by example.
3. As you expect your staff to take responsibility, so you should be prepared to shoulder responsibility for any mishaps.
4. Give clear directions so your staff know exactly what is expected of them. You state what your intentions about the organisation are, your values, and where you are taking them with the organisation.
5. Be sound in your beliefs and convictions; know who you are and what your organisation stands for. Do not hide behind a role that sets you apart and above others.
6. Work together – collaborate. Listen to all input, even from the really junior staff. Make use of, and affirm, the strengths of each person and help them grow.

Business Owners:

1. Be passionate about your business; let your belief in it shine through to your customers. The integrity of your business is at stake.
2. Be honest and up front. Don't withhold information from customers/clients for fear you might lose a sale. Do what is right, not just for you, but for your customers.
3. Appreciate your clients; this shows you are genuine and can be trusted. Do not bribe them into spending more money with you. Just give something back to them to show you're grateful for their business and loyalty.
4. Be personable and available. Being available to meet the needs of your clients shows you care and that you have integrity.
5. Take responsibility – face up to any mistakes and make things right. Your clients will appreciate it and will be more ready to forgive your mistake than if you tried to cover it up.

Effects of Integrity

Personal:

1. If you are honest and true to yourself, you will never have to struggle on the inside to decide how to act on the outside. Integrity helps people from making poor choices.

2. If you are honest, fair and reliable at your work, people will trust and respect you.
3. If you are not honest with yourself – that is, if you lie to yourself, this implies that your judgement is not important. This results in a diminished sense of self respect, and in time you trust yourself less and less, until such time as you don't trust yourself at all. If you don't trust and respect yourself, how can you expect others to trust and respect you.
4. By keeping your promises, you show that you are reliable, and can be depended on. Keeping promises builds trust and confidence.
5. If you do what is right, your conscience is free – that is empowering. There is no need to fear rejection or looking silly. This leads to increased self confidence and courage.

Bosses:

1. If you respect and value your staff, you develop and maintain an emotionally healthy workplace. Work will get done when people feel their best, as valued and important members of an organisation. When you invite input and affirm their strengths, you increase a person's skill sets, and thus create opportunities for their growth for advancement.
2. Stability and productivity: if the boss treats his staff fairly, support them and stick up for them; if staff can see that their boss is committed to doing the right thing, the workplace will become a stable environment, which increases productivity.
3. Safety and innovations: the boss with integrity makes it safe for staff to perform at their best; he provides them with a sense of empowerment. If they know that they are safe to be open and honest, that there are no retributions for speaking up, they perform better, and this leads to innovations.
4. Reference/models: staff look up to, and emulate, bosses who have integrity. More people will trust you; it shows you can be counted on.

Business:

If you believe in your product/service, be honest and up front in your dealings with your clients; if you are approachable and appreciate your clients, they will trust you with their time and custom.

Words of Wisdom

“Do not give others the task you dislike performing yourself”. “Correct your mistakes as soon as you have found it.” “You must not forget the promise you have made, however long-standing it may be”. “Plagiarism never earns respect.” “Do not be ashamed of consulting your subordinates”. “Be strict with yourself, be lenient towards others”. “Setting a good example saves you the trouble of giving orders to your men” – Confucius

“A wise king respects the opinion of his men; a silly king bosses them around” – Xun Tzu

“Honesty does not incur grudge, power does not settle the grudge” – Zua Juan

“Integrity is what we do, what we say, and what we say we do” – Don Galer

“Rather fall with honour than succeed by fraud” – Sophocles, Greek philosopher

Perseverance (In Nae)

What Is Perseverance?

Collins Dictionary's definition is: "a determination to continue; persistence; continued diligence; not giving in; tenacity"

Perseverance is about commitment; sticking with something once you have started it, even when it may become boring or difficult. It is hard work and determination, and not giving up, even if faced with set backs. If that happens, then you should be prepared to be flexible and adapt to changing situations. To persevere is to reaffirm your belief in what you do; being firm in your decisions and staying focused on your goals, working hard towards them. It is about always finishing what you started, even if you had to take a detour.

Perseverance is not about wearing yourself out trying to "track down" success or achieving your objectives at all costs. It is not stubbornly sticking to your plans, despite advice of more experienced people, at the expense of your health and mental well being. It is about pacing yourself, taking a breather if need be, and then carry on.

Perseverance in Taekwon-Do

In Taekwon-Do there are certainly instances where perseverance is needed. From learning a technique, a short term goal, to aiming to be a senior *dan*, the long term goal. Commitment and perseverance is what is needed to achieve it.

1. As a beginner student you learn that a block is not simply a block. So to improve your execution of the technique, you come to class every week, practise the move in class, at home, seek help from the instructor, the seniors, etc. It may become boring, repetitious, doing the move over and over again, but if that is what it takes to get it right, then you keep on. You need to be patient. The General himself said, in his memoirs, "Once I set my mind on a certain goal, I had to stick to my purpose until I achieve it."
2. A *gup* grading needs a plan of action to achieve. You find out there are several components to the grading, so you make a plan on how to achieve it – you need to practise the patterns, the self defence, the step sparring, etc. The business of practising is about repetition, which some people might find tedious, but the goal is to pass the grading, so you stick to the plan. The General's motto may help you stay on track: "The wise never rest, improving themselves with strong will"
3. Next, the plan may be to earn a black belt, which requires an increased level of training and practice. Further on, you may wish to go for the senior *dan* ranks, and so on. Along the way, there may be obstacles – may be an injury, a struggle to balance training and other commitments like family, school, work, self-doubt, etc. But, to persevere, you need to work your way around it. Seek advice from other students who have done what you plan to do. May be you need to medicate your injury, prioritise your commitments, sacrifice your television time, but don't give up. Just keep the goal in sight – you want that *dan* rank. If, for whatever reason, you don't succeed on the first try, get up, dust

yourself off, and try again. As Robert Kennedy said, “Only those who dare to fail greatly can achieve greatly.”

4. There is a tournament coming up, and you want to try for that. So you make a plan to improve your fitness, learn how to improve your points in sparring. Then you train for it, maybe four or five times a week

Perseverance In The General Community

1. If you have aspirations to achieve something, and you are committed to it, get advice from people who share your aspirations, and who have shown tenacity to get there. They will provide you with positive encouragement and reinforcement – that is what you need to not give up.
2. Learn to be patient; things don't always work after the first try. Thomas Edison tried thousands of times before he could get the light bulb to work. Keep your pace; just don't lose sight of the goal. Remember the story of the tortoise and the hare – the tortoise got to the finishing line by keeping a steady pace, and not giving up. It was Zhuang Tzu who said, “Do not make haste, because a great undertaking cannot be done overnight.”
3. Keep calm when encountering difficulties. Face your obstacles with thought rather than complaining about the task. Set backs can be stepping stones; learn from them.
4. Be prepared to sacrifice – things, relationships, costs of your project. To gain leeway in one way, you may have to give up another thing.
5. Don't give up on difficult situations; work a little harder and longer on tasks you don't like – associate something pleasant with the task. Focus on what you can do.
6. Live healthy. That helps you to focus, to be resilient and to have optimism and self confidence.
7. Ask “What's true?”, not “What do others think?”. When you are true to yourself, you believe in yourself, in what you do, so you don't give up.
8. Identify negative thoughts and habits and dump them. For example*:

- complaining, grouching about situations
- blowing small problems out of proportion
- dwelling in the past
- worrying about things that may not happen, or that you can't control
- viewing yourself as a victim
- worrying about what others are doing, or what they have

* courtesy of Topachievement.com

Just get on with what you are about; all the above will prevent you from achieving your goal.

9. Be ready and willing to forgive yourself and others if you or they mess up. Get over it, forgive and try again. Carrying around disappointment, hatred and disapproval is toxic.
10. Take risks; fight your fears by keeping track of the goals and priorities you have set for yourself and go for it. It was T.S. Elliot who said, “Only those who risk going too far can possibly find out how far to go.”

11. Prioritise your resources and time. Resources are scarce and you need to make the best use of them.

Perseverance At Home

1. Short term goal: The lawn needs doing, your mower has given up the ghost and you have spent your savings buying a bigger car to accommodate your growing family. How do you overcome this? Either borrow a mower from a friend/neighbour or relative or spend a small sum of money hiring someone to mow for you, until you have saved up enough to buy a new mower.
2. Taking on a job: The house needs painting so you bought some paint and started painting. But it is a big job, and it is difficult reaching the higher parts of the house. In addition, the summer weather tempts you to enjoy it at the beach. Then your best friend rings up asking you to go fishing. What do you do? Well, you have started something – finish it. Sacrifice being with your friend fishing; you can do that another time; your priority is painting, before bad weather comes round.
3. Long term goal: Marriage itself is a big commitment. You don't give up on it just because you have problems; you work it through because you believe in your marriage. Perseverance is needed to make relationships last. No one is perfect; they have to be accepted with their faults.
4. You may have health problems with a member of the family. So, you gather information about the problem, you seek help from supportive people (the doctors, etc), then you come up with a plan to tackle the problem. You seek support from those who had gone through a similar situation; you persevere.

Perseverance At School

1. When you decide to enter a maths competition, you follow up that intention by sacrificing play time and television time at home to study for it.
2. Trying a new sport, or playing a musical instrument means you keep practising to improve your performance.
3. You are taking part in your school's cross country run. You are getting tired; you feel like a strap is tightening across your chest and you have difficulty breathing. You feel like giving up, but you persevere and keep going till you reach the finish line.
4. Last year you were so close to making the first XV, so you will try out again this year.
5. Over winter you fell ill, so you missed several weeks of school. Now you need to catch up; you don't want your results to fall short. So you take extra tuition, stay back after school, work longer at home, etc.
6. You have a learning disability, and you sometimes feel like there is no point in carrying on because you can't seem to make any headway. But with the help of your teacher aide, you begin to understand some things, so you stay with the programme.
7. There is an essay that you have to do, on a subject which you find difficult. All you want to do is get an "Achieved" and be done with it. However, your teacher points out that you need more details here, provide examples there, include a graph there, so you take it in, and what do you know, you've got an "Excellence".

8. There is a dance club starting at your school; your friend is keen for both of you to join up. You think dancing is for “geeks”; you would rather try out for rugby. Would you be strong enough to give it a go, and explore the possibilities?
9. You are in Year 13 and you really want to achieve an excellent result so that you can enrol for that university course you’re very keen on. So you devise a plan to make your work load not so daunting – break up your year’s course into smaller, more manageable chunks. For example, in term one you only have one essay to do, in term two you have an essay and an exam, in term three an essay, an exam and a practical investigation and in term four just one final exam. Then, just stick to the plan.
10. You have to be SMART* to pursue your goal:
 - The goal should be **S**pecific – I want to do better than “Achieved”
 - You should be able to **M**easure whether you have succeeded – no more detentions!
 - Make sure the goal is **A**ttainable – I want grades that will get me into that university course
 - Be **R**ealistic – I should be able to make the 5.30 am swimming practice
 - **T**imely – it can be done in a school year

* Courtesy of Oakridge Sixth Grade class of 2010

Perseverance At Work

1. There is a presentation that you need to get ready for a client who wants it in two weeks time. There is not too much time, but you really want his business, so you need to put in extra time to prepare it. You have to sacrifice two weeks of family time. Can you handle two weeks? Yes? You persevere.
2. A big renovation is going on in your work building; your equipment, stationery, your ‘tools of the trade’, etc, are stored in one area of the building and the staff have to share space. Every time you need something you have to traipse along to storage area, and this renovation is going to take eight months to complete. The working condition is very frustrating, but everybody perseveres and carries on the best they can.
3. The current economic situation is very tough; finance is tight, competition is stiff, costs are increasing. Sometimes you feel like closing up the business, but no, you hang in there, and find ways and means to increase your market share.
4. In work or business you need to be creative to come up with a new product, new ideas to market products. In many instances the first time you try something, it doesn’t always work. Imagine if all those early inventors – Bell, Edison, Jenner – didn’t persevere. We would not have telephones, electric light bulbs, vaccinations.

Effects Of Perseverance

1. Through experiences of trial and tribulations, the fighting spirit is strengthened, vision cleared, confidence and success achieved. “A winner is not one who never fails, but one who never quits.”
2. If you took risks and persevere with your pursuit of something, along the way you will find out what you are capable of – that will give you a boost in the confidence stakes.
3. Because perseverance is about aiming higher, imagine the benefits that result – not only the psychological, but the emotional and the material. There are improvements all round.
4. Even if you lose at the first try, you still win – because you have jumped that first hurdle. Then you get up and prepare for the next one.
5. People who persevere even after setbacks, learn to be creative in finding ways to solve problems, and you learn to be resilient.
6. Those who persevere strive to control events that affect their circumstances, and this fosters “adaptive preparedness” (Bandura, 1986, in Markham, Baron & Balkin, 2005). They learn to be prepared for any eventuality – a good attribute to have in times of crises like the Christchurch earthquake.

Words of Wisdom

“I haven’t failed. I’ve identified 10,000 ways this doesn’t work” – Thomas Edison

“Our greatest glory is not in never falling, but in rising every time we fall.” “Words should be true; work should be finished” – Confucius

“A man who easily gives up an important job will accomplish nothing.” – Mencius

“Perseverance isn’t just about long races; it’s about many short races in a row.” – Walter Elliot

“Be like a postage stamp, stick to something until you get there!” – Josh Billings

“Never, never, never give up!” – Winston Churchill

Self-Control (Guk Gi)

What Is Self-Control?

Collins definition of self-control is: “control over oneself, temper, emotions and desires; self-restraint or self-command”.

So, it is the ability to control or restrain impulses or reactions. That is, doing something right, even though it is against basic desires and inclinations. It is about consciously moderating your emotions, understanding how and when to demonstrate those feelings appropriately. It means control of yourself and the way you behave with others, and not lashing out at those who make you angry. It is the ability to make decisions about how and when to express thoughts and feeling and which impulse to act on.

St Ignatius Loyola said this: “Be slow to speak, and only after having first listened quietly, so that you may understand the meaning, learning, and the desire of those who speak. You will thus know better when to speak and when to be silent.” This I take to mean stand back, listen and understand where the other person is coming from before you say anything. Standing back and listening is exercising self-control.

Self-Control In Taekwon-Do

1. Self-control is very important in Taekwon-Do, because we are doing a physical activity. Imagine the number of injuries sustained at sparring if we did not exercise self-control. If we didn't control our punches and kicks, people will get seriously hurt, even resulting in death, because our techniques are very powerful. When sparring, or learning to spar, and you get hit, don't hit back just to get your own back. Step back mentally, calm yourself and don't retaliate.
2. Learning techniques is repetitive; some people might find it extremely boring. But if you want to improve your techniques, you do need to repeat the movements. So, control your angst and discipline yourself to get on with it.
3. When you get to a higher level, even a higher *gup* level, you might be asked to help teach beginners. As beginners, they may know very little, and they will make mistakes, forgetting what you have taught them. Don't give up on them; exercise patience and self-control. Remind yourself that you were once a beginner. Think twice about what you say. What you say will influence whether they stay or not.
4. Juniors are supposed to put equipment out at the beginning of class and putting them away at the end of class. Sometimes juniors may be absent on some occasion. Don't think that because you are not junior, it is beneath you to be doing the fetching and carrying. Do the right thing and get the class ready, or tidy up after class.
5. Follow the rules and protocols of being in the *dojang*. Don't be tempted to think that you are above rules, and that you don't want to be constrained by them.
6. Don't be tempted to show off your knowledge of Taekwon-Do to people outside of Taekwon-Do.
7. Seniors, when you spar with juniors, do not over-power them. Tone down your expertise and work to their level; share your knowledge with them. They are there to learn. There is no need to compete with them.

Self-Control In The General Community

1. Think before you speak. Don't always say whatever comes to your mind; you might regret saying it. What is said cannot be unsaid, and someone, or their feelings, might get hurt.
2. Take control of your physical self. Eat healthy, do exercises and keep fit, even if you don't like it. Get enough sleep and rest time, even if you love partying till late. Limit the comfort foods, even if you do so love ice cream.
3. Learn to prioritise. Attend to the most important thing first. Create a list to keep track of what needs doing and what has been done.

4. Control your environment by keeping it tidy and getting rid of clutter. Get a stowage system for your possessions/work equipment, so everything has a place.
5. Be conscious of your responsibilities and keep them in mind when tempted to act impulsively or emotionally. So, you go to work/school even if you don't like your job, or would simply like to stay home.
6. When you feel angry or frustrated and you need a reaction/response, take the time to stand back and emotionally disengage, so your mind is as clear and calm as possible. That is, delay your reaction. Then you can make the right decision. Count to ten, control your breathing, think of a "happy place" to calm yourself.
7. Take responsibility for your mistakes, even if you feel like denying them. Or, if you see someone doing something wrong, don't keep quiet about it because you are afraid of repercussions. Do the right thing and take control of your fears.
8. Be courteous and treat others well, even if you don't like them.

Self-Control At Home

1. When there are visitors to your home, and adults are talking, do not interrupt them; wait until they have finished their conversation before saying what you want to say.
2. If you want something, or want to do something, and there is only one equipment, or facility, for example using the shower, wait for your turn.
3. If you feel angry or frustrated, maybe because your sister has messed up your room, take a break from the situation, or remove yourself from it. Don't go into a rage. Go outside and toss a ball around until you have calmed down. Then you can face the problem rationally.
4. Take control of your life by planning ahead; use a diary and write down things that need to be done at certain times. Note down in the diary a reminder to yourself several days ahead of the scheduled event.
5. Be frugal; learn to budget and manage your finances. Don't live above your means; be careful with your expenditure.
6. Take control of the tasks that you don't like doing. They still need doing; don't put it off. The lawn still needs mowing even though you want to watch your favourite sport on television. Your homework still needs to be done.
7. Take control of your environment; keep your room tidy.
8. Treat your siblings/parents/children the way you want to be treated.
9. When your parents rebuke you, don't talk back. Let them finish what they say, while you calm yourself, then you can present your case.

Self-Control At School

1. Students have a lot more access to information through technology. If you have the privilege of using the computer for your assignments/research, do not be tempted to go into sites not related to your work, even if you feel like going into your Facebook, Twitter, etc.
2. Yes, you have a lot of things going on in your school – sports, production, art exhibition, etc. Do not be tempted to just finish your projects/assignments half-heartedly, just because you are busy with extra-curricular activities, and not give it your best. A school

I once attended has the motto “Aim Higher”. You would do well to take that on board. Take control, aim higher; don’t simply be content to get “Achieved” – aim for “Merit” or even “Excellence”.

3. Stay focused on your work, whether it’s class work or extra-curricular.
4. In class, if you want to say something, raise your hand and wait your turn. Do not simply barge in on someone else’s time.
5. If you are outside the classroom, for whatever reason, keep quiet, instead of loudly hailing someone else who is outside. Other students are getting on with the work in class.
6. Follow the rules in your school – in class, in the gym, on the sports fields. They are there for your safety, for the smooth running of the activities. Do not attempt to be the centre of attention by breaking them.
7. Take charge of your environment; don’t throw rubbish around. If you see rubbish lying around, pick them up and put them in the rubbish bin.
8. Do not give in to peer pressure; be yourself. Meekly following the crowd is not exercising self- control.
9. If someone is teasing and annoying or hitting you, don’t give in to temper. Take a deep breath, count slowly to calm yourself. Think and evaluate the situation as follows (courtesy of Leah Davies - The Essential Skill of Self-Control):
 - If I hit back, we’ll get into a fight
 - I might get hurt, or I’ll hurt him
 - I might be sent to the principal or get expelled
 - My parents may have to come to school
 - I’m not going to let him get me into trouble
 - I don’t know what his problem is, but I’m going to stay away from him
 - I’ll choose to do the smart thing and walk away
10. Learn to wait in line at the tuck-shop, waiting to get in the school bus, etc. Don’t push and shove; you will get your turn.
11. Don’t fidget in class or at assembly. Pay attention

Self-Control At Work

1. As with students in school, use technology to help you do your work, not for social networking or personal shopping. Do that at home. Stay focused on your task.
2. At meetings, don’t be tempted to push your ideas and suggestions. Wait till it is your turn to speak.
3. Don’t go around the office, or on the telephone, chit-chatting. You can do that at tea time or lunch time.
4. Offices, businesses and organisations have their rules for the smooth running of the place. They are there to be followed, not broken. So, don’t go lengthening your break time; you might not be able to finish your task if your work time is shortened.
5. Do not indulge in office gossip. Think before saying anything, you might hurt someone, or their feelings.

6. As with the school situation, if someone annoys you, step back, take a deep breath and count slowly until you are calm. Then you can face the person rationally, or if you wish, you can take it to the office supervisor to deal with.

Effects Of Self-Control

1. It keeps in check self-destructive, addictive, obsessive and compulsive behaviour.
2. You get a sense of mastery over your life; a balance in your life; helps to discipline yourself.
3. It helps keep over-emotional responses in check/moderation.
4. You don't feel helpless, or be too dependent on others
5. It helps with mental and emotional detachment, so you feel calm, leading to peace of mind.
6. It enables the control of moods and rejection of negative feelings and thought.
7. Self-control strengthens self-esteem, confidence and inner strength, so you can take charge of your life.
8. It makes you a responsible and trustworthy person.
9. It prevents reaction to outside influences; it makes you learn to think first.
10. Self-control improves your relationships, develop patience and tolerance.
11. When we learn to discipline ourselves and thus become calm and at peace, and feel good about ourselves, we can then help others to resolve their struggles and adversities.
12. Resisting temptation, and thinking first before saying or doing anything rash enables us to stay safe.
13. Exercising self-control develops wisdom and willpower.

Words of Wisdom

“He who conquers others is strong; he who conquers himself is mighty” – Lao Tzu

“You can never have a greater or lesser dominion than that over yourself” – Leonardo da Vinci

“The highest possible stage in moral culture is when we recognise that we ought to control our thoughts” – Darwin

“What lies in our power to do, it also lies in or power not to do” – Aristotle

“To learn technique you must carefully control the workings of your mind and body. This is what students misunderstand. Controlling the mind and body does not stifle the spirit; it sets it free” – Hideharu Onuma

“Warriors take chances. Like everyone else, they fear failing, but they refuse to let fear control them.” – Ancient Samurai saying.

Indomitable Spirit (Baekjool Boolgool)

What is Indomitable Spirit?

Collins dictionary defines indomitable spirit as: “not to be subdued”, “that cannot be overcome”, “unyielding”, “unconquered”

We can add more adjectives to that – adventurous, audacious chivalrous, confident, courageous, daring, fearless, gallant, game, heroic, resolute, strong, unafraid, valiant, impregnable, insurmountable, ruthless, unbeatable, undefeatable.

All of the above qualities will not diminish when a person with indomitable spirit is faced with hardships and adversities, no matter how great the odds.

Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam, the 11th president of India believes that indomitable spirit has two components. First is the vision, leading to higher goals of achievement, and second is the resolute determination to overcome any hurdles along the way.

It is easier to have a grasp of indomitable spirit if we were to distinguish it from perseverance. Perseverance is about endurance – a physical effort. You set a goal, and then all you have to do is work towards it, stick to it and not give up, and you will reach it. It is a goal that is actually attainable with patience and determination.

With indomitable spirit, it is knowing that the goal is sometimes seemingly impossible, but working towards it anyway, despite obstacles on the way, or failures. It is the “will of the soul”.

Indomitable Spirit in Taekwon-Do

“It is shown when a courageous person and his principles are pitted against overwhelming odds. A serious student of Taekwon-Do will at all times be modest and honest. If confronted with injustice, he will deal with the belligerent without any fear or hesitation at all, with indomitable spirit, regardless of whosoever and however many the number may be.” – Condensed Encyclopaedia

1. Starting a new venture takes courage and spirit. The General had oodles of it when he founded Taekwon-Do and proceeded to spread it. He had to face all manner of hurdles – political, financial, personal – spreading it throughout the world, to the extent that he had to leave his home country so he could carry on with his work.
2. In a Taekwon-Do situation, the student with indomitable spirit will face his/her opponent bravely, even when the opponent is more experienced, taller, bigger and faster, and who has already won lots of trophies, while for him/her this is the first tournament.
3. Earning a black belt is pursuing a dream. To get there you have to do the hard yards – training extra hours, improving your fitness so that you can last the gruelling 2-day grading. How much more daunting this will be if the student has some disability, whether it is physical, psychological or emotional. These students have indomitable spirit – they face their challenges and refuse to cave in. They have earned their belts, and some have gone on to achieve senior *dan* ranks. There is the story of Master “Scottie from Canada” who, despite ADHD and a traumatic early childhood, has

achieved his VII dan. See also the story of our own Board Chair in the latest *Taekwon-Do Talk*.

4. Staci Grove, a Taekwon-Do practitioner, tells the story of a boy with a physical disability. He was struggling to walk without his crutches, but he took part in the patterns competition, and won silver. And this from not being able to walk without his walker when he first started Taekwon-Do. At the end of the competitions, he was dancing away, lifting his crutches high in the air, a huge smile on his face. What a valiant spirit!

Indomitable Spirit In The General Community

1. Natural disasters bring out indomitable spirit in people. Take Christchurch for example. They don't know when, or if, the quakes will stop, but they carry on with trying to rebuild their lives. The same goes for the communities affected by the tsunami in Japan – living with the uncertainty of a damaged nuclear plant must be harrowing.
2. Politics. The seemingly impossible situation between Israel and Palestine demonstrates the unyielding spirit of those who are committed to finding peace for the region. As well, the freedom fighters of Libya – a rag-tag fighting body with no training and little equipment – against the might of the government's forces. They go in there prepared to sacrifice their lives to achieve their goal. Not to forget Leonidas' famous 300, facing up to Xerxes' mighty force, ready to defend their country.
3. Starting a new life in a new country. The pioneers who came to New Zealand, who went to Australia, and the Americas went through physical hardship and many obstacles to establish their lives – from the dangerous voyages, to breaking the land, to establishing lawful communities. Even in present days, where there are no physical hardships to endure when migrating to new countries, there are still the language and cultural barriers to confront.
4. In the sporting field. We hear of a lot of athletes/sports people who have health and physical problems, but who pursue their dreams any way. The Special Olympic teams typify this audacious spirit, as do the participants of the National Veterans' Golden Age games, where competitors range in age from 60 to 96, some of whom compete in wheel chairs.
5. Charitable works. Any charity worker will know that it is a hard road to hoe trying to get hold of funding for charity. In the current economic situation, it is like trying to squeeze blood out of stone. When the worker is faced with a terminal illness, that is doubly daunting. The story of Cheri Melillo, the founder of Canstruction, a charity organisation which runs competitions for architects, engineers, contractors, and students, to design and build large structures made entirely from cans of food, and then have the food donated to food banks, is inspirational. Even through her illness, she worked hard to make sure Canstruction will carry on after she is gone.
6. Health conditions. When Helen Keller became blind and deaf because of an illness, her determination to overcome adversity and her affliction seemed an impossible pipe dream, but we all know about her success. She became a writer and a crusading humanitarian, and energised movements to help the blind and deaf.

Indomitable Spirit At Home

1. When disaster strikes the home environment, an all the usual day to day living is disrupted – when there is no water, electricity or gas for heating and cooking, when you can't do your ablutions, and your house is broken and leaking – you would have to dig very deep to find that internal strength, that indomitable spirit, to endure and get through the situation.
2. When tragedy strikes and you lose a family member through no fault of his/her own, how do you find the strength not to lash out at the other person involved. You would need a strong spirit to be able to overcome the tragedy and look forward and forgive.
3. If there is an illness or a medical condition in the family, you will need to be very strong not to simply succumb to the situation. You will want to fight it, and find ways and means to find a remedy, even if it means going overseas or doing extra jobs to pay for treatments. That strength, that spirit, will help you over the pitfalls, the false hopes, the occasional despair. And if a treatment doesn't work, you look again elsewhere, and you keep looking until an outcome is reached.

Indomitable Spirit At School

1. Natural disasters. The Christchurch earthquake affect schools to the extent that some schools cannot function from their own site. Such is the situation with Shirley Boys' High School, so it was arranged that they share the facilities of Papanui High School. Papanui students start at 7.30 am and finish around 1.00 pm, after which Shirley students start and not finish until after 6.00 pm. Imagine the logistics to teachers and student sharing equipment and facilities. It is certainly a testament of their fortitude and indomitable spirit that they were able to carry on with students' education in such a situation.
2. Disability/learning issues/health issues. Since the introduction of mainstreaming, students with problems become part of normal classes. This can be a huge hurdle for them, even with the help of teacher aides, trying to keep up with the rest of the class when you have issues to overcome. Yet, there have been instances of students who are dyslexic, or have Asperger's Syndrome, etc, who succeed in school, and beyond.

In The Workplace/Business

1. Illness/injury/medical condition. When an American police officer was shot by a suspect, he fought and managed to stop the assault by the felon. The story of a Nepalese girl, Jhamk Kumari Ghimire, who was born with cerebral palsy, which makes it difficult to speak or use her hands, yet she overcomes her hurdles and becomes a published writer.
2. Innovation. Refusing to accept failure, Alexander Graham Bell kept pushing on, and after 30 attempts, finally made the telephone. And he was a dyslexic. Thomas Edison, another dyslexic, went through thousands of failures before his light bulb worked.
3. Disasters. Again, the courage and spirit of workers and business people in Christchurch in being determined to carry on and rebuild is something to be applauded.
4. Human Rights. In the ever problematic situation in Israel-Palestine, and NGO – Physicians for Human Rights – work tirelessly to provide the right to health for all

people of Israel and Palestine. Championing the marginalised is no easy task when faced with prejudice. Imagine if a lawyer is to defend a black man, and he knows the jury is prejudiced against his client. Yet, in spite of this, he takes the case on.

5. Trade. Despite laws prohibiting street trading, the market women of Nigeria kept coming back, setting up their food stalls again and again, after government officials tear them down each time. They do this because their men have lost jobs due to the general downturn of the global economy. Threats of punishment of breaking the law do not deter these women from trading, nor do stiff competition from big operators.
6. Artistic creativity. A young Chinese girl was born without fingers on her right hand, but that does not prevent her from learning and performing the piano. International artist Angel Goza overcomes a debilitating permanent nerve damage to her right hand caused by a car accident to pursue her craft. Beethoven was deaf, but his music defied that deafness. Picasso and da Vinci both had to overcome dyslexia to leave behind their beautiful creations.

Effect of Indomitable Spirit

1. When people dare to be different and accept challenges, like the Bangladeshi women – who live in a conservative society where women are confined to their gender roles – who trek and climb the Himalayas, they learn to face life's challenges with grit. They then learn to face and overcome all kinds of fears, and they become more confident.
2. People with indomitable spirit give us beauty with their artistic creations – the paintings, the music, etc.
3. They attempt to protect people from political upheavals and build a more peaceful world.
4. They give the world the product of their courage to innovate, and make life run more smoothly.

Words of Wisdom

“A man of confidence fearlessly pursues what he thinks is right, though 10 million opponents might rise against him” – Zeng Tzu

“Both adversity and predicament helps to improve one's personality, and play a role of furnace kindling his gallantry”. “New hope sprouts from the greatest adversity” – Da Xue, Jung Yung

“Without enduring small difficulties, you cannot accomplish a great cause” – Confucius

“You must do the thing you think you cannot do” – Eleanor Roosevelt

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