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The word loyalty defines ongoing commitment and duty to stand alongside someone or something that you believe to be good, important and mutually supporting.

In an idealistic way loyalty is a mutually benefiting arrangement. Both parties can earn each other's respect through acts that create commitment to each other or where one party assists the other and a bond is created with the intent to repay the support.

Loyalty is called into question in a situation where one party faces a decision that will affect the other, and the choice that is made results in either a negative or positive effect on the relationship. Someone is considered loyal in this situation if they choose the decision that has a positive effect on the relationship, even if it means denying them a favorably considered outcome of the alternative decision.

A high level of loyalty can be considered in an act that requires no payment in return. However, there may be many basis for loyalty including family, friendship, relationship, student/instructor relationship, employment, bought and demanded loyalty. The extent of loyalty normally will grow with the length of involvement between two parties in a relationship.

I owe many important life events to my involvement with ITFNZ Taekwon-Do. It was at a Taekwon-Do camp in the role of marketing director, where I met a man who offered me my first job. Shortly later Master McPhail gave me the opportunity of being a business consultant for the first time. Upon shifting to Auckland and traveling abroad Taekwon-Do people provided places for me to stay. Many of my best friends have resulted from Taekwon-Do. The unique opportunities, challenges and support of ITFNZ has provided me with everlasting skills that I have used in my personal and business endeavors. For these reasons and others to numerous mention, I am extremely loyal and indebted to Taekwon-Do, and the people and organisation of ITFNZ.

It is saddening to note that over time ITFNZ members become disillusioned with people, acts, and decisions that have supposedly been made by ITFNZ, attributing individual acts to a tarnished image of the organisation as a whole. However, ITFNZ is more than any one person. Neither we forget that ITFNZ exists only in the heart of every student and every instructor, and in the passion of its elected administrators. Its movement forward represents the collective mutual loyalty of its members to serve each other and the common purpose.

While the organisation has excelled due to the loyalty of key members, we all have seen less involvement in clubs, events and in administration. There is certainly a generational shift in society where the exception has become contribution. While laws and rules assist to demand contribution, it is through the inspiring leadership of our generals and captains that we will nurture and inspire future generations to commit with loyalty to the pursuit of this grand vision.

Giving is a contagious and key part of loyalty. If we as instructors can demonstrate unerring loyalty we will inspire students in our schools to do the same. It is then also our responsibility to provide opportunities for others to give of themselves, become involved and grow loyalty one step at a time, just like we did.