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Loyalty to put it simply is the quality of being TRUE and FAITHFUL to an entity.

In most cases people usually speak of loyalty when they refer to being loyal to a country or a leader.

At other times people have also referred to loyalty being applied to an object, an ideal/philosophy, or another living being not necessarily having a social status.

General Choi Hong Hi puts a lot of importance in Loyalty during his life, especially being somebody in his station, that is: leader of soldiers in the Army, and a figurehead in ITF Taekwon-Do. Soldiers who are not loyal to their country and commander will not be the best to defend the country, and will surely bring down their own side, should they wish to betray, defect, or simply desert their command.

In his biography he described many times when he came across situations where he was disappointed when loyalty was not evident. From the dealings during his time in Korea, to the later times of his life, where students and trusted members of his circle had betrayed him and his Taekwon-Do ideal.

In the east, loyalty is closely associated with honour and being honourable. Those who were not loyal were usually seen as being a traitor and deceiver, and thus were not honourable.

General Choi gave an example of historical evidence when loyalty is considered the primary quality of honour and patriotism when he quotes Won Kang, the Buddhist monk who set out the Hwarang's 5 point code of conduct; the first and foremost being: "be loyal to your king".

He also named a pattern after Po-Eun, the diagram being a horizontal line (-) to symbolise Po Eun's un-erring loyalty to his king.

While he didn't actually state Loyalty as a tenet of TKD, his teaching of loyalty nevertheless permeates the whole fabric of Taekwon-Do philosophy.

To achieve the goal of Taekwon-Do as stated in the Oath, a student will have to practice true loyalty in every aspect of their lives.

Gen Choi recognises with the progress of time, intermixing of cultures, modernisation, and the shift in consciousness into materialism, and self centredness of society, many good and honourable qualities are lost and are not demonstrated anymore.

Certainly many religions also warn the danger of the decay of modern society where all qualities of trust, faith, honesty, caring and sharing, and love will be taken over by egoism, selfishness, materialistic and money oriented societies, leading to higher crime rates, suffering, and ultimately chaos.

By promoting the quality of Loyalty amongst other things, we as Taekwon-Do exponents and teachers, can do our own small contribution to turn the tide of materialism and other negative aspects of human nature and human society.

In order to develop our own sense of loyalty we need to understand that true loyalty is earned and not forced upon anybody, and that loyalty is a two way process.

For example a relationship requiring loyalty will not last if only one party is loyal to the other. If one person party mistreats the other, very soon they will lose the respect, love, affection, faith that made the other person give their loyalty in the first place.

There are also occasions where one party will practice "blind loyalty". Due to some sort of conditioning or upbringing, a person may decide to remain loyal to somebody else no matter what.

This is a totally negative relationship, as it will cause suffering, resentment and does not help the person giving the loyalty to progress at all. In fact, if the truth be known, neither party benefits at all in the bigger scheme of things.

Examples of negative Loyalty are as follows: when loyalty is demanded off somebody using means such as fear, brainwashing, promises of large rewards. This relationship will not last, as invariably sooner or later, one party will cease to exist, or simply walk away from the arrangement.

True loyalty can be fostered by the following: promotion of love, caring and affection, a positive and supportive environment, logical and clear philosophical ideas, transparency (there are no hidden secrets), mutuality, understanding, acceptance and forgiveness, the promotion of truth, trust and faith.

A Taekwon-Do exponent will be wise to meditate upon the qualities of Loyalty in order to develop true loyalty in their lives, and to promote the quality of loyalty in today's society, starting with their peers and the society that they are involved in.

General Choi teaches us to practice this in our everyday life. Starting within our own dojangs. He outlined the code for Student and Instructor relationship. Stating each and every action the student and instructor should do to gain and promote loyalty, such as : never betray a trust, treat people equally and with courtesy.

Thus if these are practiced and become second nature, not only will it be the launching pad of success for both the instructor and the student, it will grow to help their friends and families to also become successful in life.