

## Focus

by Eric Fass - 2nd Dan Spring Branch



*1968 - Grandmaster's first demo at Allen Steen's National U.S. Karate Chamionships at Dallas, Tex. with Master Rhee, performing Jang Kwon two men sparring form and one hand sparring.*

Think of life as a journey to the summit of a personal mountain. The summit is attained when life, as we know it, ceases to exist. We have died.

This statement reflects the very essence of the Chayon Ryu martial arts training and oath.

As one attains knowledge, one begins to realize how little they know and that there is so much more to learn. The humbling realization that one can never embrace total universal knowledge is the beginning of enlightenment. Formal schooling teaches one the principles for living ones life. Success confirms the lessons learned. Failure is just another lesson one is learning. Failure forces one to reflect on their imperfections, to become humble, to make corrections, to grow and to continue the journey to new heights of enlightenment/ knowledge. Success and failure are called experience and these are the building blocks of one's character. One must always **seek perfection of character** since it provides the stable path for life's journey to ones personal summit.

One cannot negotiate life's journey to a personal summit without the truth. As a mountain climber cannot lie about his climbing skills and expect to safely climb a mountain, neither can one safely negotiate life's journey lying to oneself. The latter provides no substance or foundation to support the very essence of ones character, resulting in a very shallow unstable person. One must

Although one never reaches an ultimate perfection of character, the continual learning process constantly improves ones character. There is a physics/ math analogy that basically says; if you continually half the distance between you and a wall, you will never touch the wall but you will get very close to it. One must consider this analogy when training. Each time one improves their physical and mental proficiency one has come closer to perfection of their character. One must always **endeavor** to improve one's character.

One must have principles with which they navigate life's journey. These principles are the core of ones very essence of being. The bamboo on the Chayon Ryu emblem defines these base principles: Honesty, Humility, Sincerity, Purity, and Loyalty. When one is challenged to violate any of these base principles one must realize that to stray from the principles is a weakness in ones character. It is not always easy, nor appreciated by all when one resists the temptation to stray from their base principles but it does define a truly reliable person. **Be faithful** to one's core principles.

Humbling of oneself is a character enriching practice. To show respect to someone, whether it be an enemy, friend, someone of authority, or someone much younger or older than oneself, does not diminish ones own integrity or knowledge. In Chayon Ryu one bows in all those circumstances to foster a respectful conduct in training and on life's journey. **Respect others** is an honorable practice in the dojang, as well as, in daily life.

As one practices the teachings of Chayon Ryu and progresses through the ranks of color belts into the ranks of black belt, one is continually developing physically and mentally. The evolution in ones character over the years is dramatic. One no longer feels the necessity to publicly demonstrate the physical techniques but rather applies the mental spirit to avoid physical confrontation. Life's journey will present many challenges where one will need to make a split-second decision to resolve a problem physically or mentally. In ones training one learns it is better to avoid (mental) than to block (physical). One learns to Refrain from Violent Behavior which improves ones character.

know the true essence of their character to realistically face life's challenges. When you **live the way of truth** you have self-respect and self-esteem.

