

In this essay I will discuss the tenets of Tae Kwon Do in relation to my experience of sports. The tenets of Tae Kwon Do are courtesy, integrity, perseverance, self control and indomitable spirit. In looking at my experience of sports, the tenets can be applied to many aspects of both. I have taken part in both team and individual sports and these include: rugby, softball, cricket, volleyball, springboard diving and golf. I was a late starter in Tae Kwon Do and have been training in this for the last 3 years.

The first tenet I will discuss is courtesy. The Tae Kwon Do handbook describes this in the following way: "students should attempt to practise the following elements of courtesy, to be polite to each other, to encourage a sense of justice and harmony, to distinguish instructor from student, senior from junior, and elder for younger, to behave oneself according to etiquette and to respect others' possessions".

The dictionary definition of courtesy is: courteous behaviour or act, and courteous is polite and considerate.

In the team game of cricket, players must be courteous of other team members opinions and also the wishes of the coach. This promotes harmony with in the team it also allows the coach respect for his ability and experience with the game. Courtesy is displayed when acknowledging a good technique carried out by members of your team and the opposing team.

For example: a batsman in cricket may acknowledge a good bowl that got past him by stating this to the bowler or the bowler may congratulate the batsman when a bowl is dispatched to the boundary. Similarly in rugby, courtesy is shown to the referee by the players in respecting his decisions whether you agree with this or not. The individual sport of golf has a strong sense of etiquette, for example, allowing a smaller group of golfers to play ahead so as to not hold them or the rest of the field up. When putting on the greens, the competitor who has the longest putt to go first. The player that won the previous hole is shown the courtesy of teeing off first on the next hole.

Courtesy is important in all aspects of sport and also in how we act in our daily lives. Not only does it make both team and individual sports more enjoyable, most people respond positively to acts of courtesy with a smile or a courteous act in return.

The second tenet of Tae Kwon Do to be discussed is integrity. The TaeKwon Do handbook states" that in Tae Kwon Do the word integrity assumes a looser definition than the one in usually presented in the dictionary. One must be able to define right from wrong and have the conscience, if wrong to feel guilt."

The Oxford Dictionary and Usage Guide states that "integrity is honesty, wholeness and soundness.

In the team game of rugby, player integrity is relied upon. Many opportunities abound to bend the rules in tackle or ruck situations if the player is lacking in integrity.

If you find yourself on the wrong side of a ruck for example, the temptation to upset the oppositions opportunity at a smooth transition to playing the ball how they would like, this often occurs in the heat of the situation usually resulting in a penalty. The offender needs to accept their wrong doing and make every attempt to refrain from doing this if the situation arises again. A player who may attempt to sway the referee, by disputing his decision, could be found to be lacking in integrity.

The game of golf requires a strong sense of integrity, as keeping your own score is a prerequisite of the game, often you can find yourself alone on parts of the course, so both

your opposition and your team mates are relying on your honesty in scoring. If you don't score correctly, you are only going to lie to yourself and to your team mate. Deliberately underscoring your game is ultimately only fooling yourself and does not allow for improvement in your game.

Integrity and honesty go hand in hand, both are paramount to allowing the game, whether individual or team, to flow. They allow for respect from team mates and opposition. This can also be applied to every day life, in that nobody likes a cheat and ultimately you are only fooling yourself.

The third tenet is perseverance, the Tae Kwon Do handbook states that: "To achieve something, whether it is a higher degree or the perfection of a technique, one must set a goal then constantly persevere."

The Oxford Dictionary and Usage Guide states that: "perseverance is the act of continuing steadfastly, and being persistent."

This tenet can be applied to the team game of rugby. In a tight or close scoring situation, persevering through attacking via your forwards may be the only choice the team has of breaching the opposing teams line. Also in volleyball persevering with blocking the ball at the net may eventually force an error allowing you to secure service or a point for your team.

In the individual sport of springboard diving, as in Tae Kwon Do, perfecting a dive or a technique, takes a great deal of perseverance. It can result in a high level of frustration and in some instances physical pain. Crashing in to the water from a 3,5 or 10 metre board has painful consequences, but getting back up there and trying again and again will result in a very high level of personal satisfaction.

One of my favourite quotes from an unknown source is: "What the mind can conceive and believe, it can achieve. Perseverance ultimately brings great personal satisfaction when achieving sporting goals as an individual. It also allow this sense of satisfaction to be shared with team members in team sports. Never give up or underestimate your own ability or you may die wondering, what if?"

Self control is the fourth tenet, the Tae Kwon Do handbook states that this tenet is extremely important inside and outside the *do jang*, whether conducting oneself in free sparring or in one's personal affairs. An inability to live and work within one's capability or sphere is also a lack of self control.

The Oxford Dictionary and Usage guide defines self control as control of oneself, one's behaviour.

This tenet can be applied to the team sport of softball. Often from the first innings you can find yourself and your team in a pressure cooker situation and the course of the game can be affected by an umpires call. Self control is essential in this situation, because from the first ball pitched both teams yell encouragement to their respective team mates, this not only raises their confidence but is also to upset the opposition. This is sometimes referred to as gamesmanship. It is important to exercise self control in your calls so as not to offend personally, but to keep it focused on the field of play. Strangely this gamesmanship only adds to the comraderie at the after match get together.

In golf this tenet is essential, as the nature of the game at all levels, is that it is possible to have a bad shot somewhere on the course, whether this means hitting the ball into the rough or a hazard such as a lake. Many times I have teed the ball up with the intention of driving it 250 metres and have only achieved 10. So often I have seen golfers lose their self control in these situations and hit their golf bag with their club, or they throw their club further than their ball. Not only do they have to walk further to pick up their gear, but you can usually guarantee they will not do well on any further holes until they have calmed down and regained self control.

According to Lao-Tzu "the term of stronger is the person who wins over oneself rather than someone else. (Tae Kwon Do techniques handbook) There was never a more true statement, exercising self control in all your sporting achievements will ultimately reward you and also frustrate your opponents, and also alert them to the fact they lack this themselves.

This also applies to how you conduct yourself in lifes many 'curve balls'. A cool, calm, collected demeanour will gain you respect in many situations, from applying for a job through to dealing with a disagreement both at home and in the workplace. If you show good self control, others are more likely to follow your lead and this makes for a more harmonious life.

The last tenet of Tae Kwon Do is indomitable spirit, according to the Tae Kwon Do handbook this is shown when a courageous person and their principles are pitted against overwhelming odds. A serious student will at all times be modest and honest. If confronted with injustice, he will at all times deal with the belligerent without any fear or hesitation at all, regardless of whosoever and however many the number.

The Oxford Dictionary and Usage Guide to the English Language define indomitable as unconquerable, unyielding and spirit is defined as a persons essence or intelligence, their soul.

The team sport of rugby can provide an example of indomitable spirit. I have played several seasons of rugby in the position of fullback. I would often find myself alone in one part of the field, standing and waiting for the ball to come down after a high kick. I would position myself to catch this and would then see the opposition bearing down upon me in the form of a 90kg forward, (an overwhelming odd in that he had a 20kg advantage on me) knowing I would be thumped the moment I caught the ball. I had to deal with this, showing indomitable spirit (and a little prayer) to catch the ball, side step the oncoming player and kick to clear the ball.

This tenet can be very difficult to apply to individual sports I have pursued, as it usually applies to situations where more than one person is involved.

Occasionally, you may encounter bullying tactics by the opposition, which is designed to intimidate, dealing with this with indomitable spirit will prove the worth of the person who is able to withstand this.

In day to day life we often encounter situations where sticking up for your beliefs is paramount. In doing this it shows indomitable spirit, as it requires a lot of courage to go against people in positions of power, for example, an unreasonable employer or a persistent salesman.

I believe when General Choi Hong Hi was developing and writing the tenets, he was not only referring to the art of Tae Kwon Do, he also was advocating we continue this into our personal lives. In this essay I have discussed the tenets of Tae Kwon Do in relation to both individual and team sports, I have also tied this in with how we should conduct ourselves generally. If we all show a little courtesy, honesty and integrity, throw in a touch of self control, then maybe we would not encounter any belligerence to deal with; with indomitable spirit; and we could then spend more time persevering with our art.