

I fell, but Taranaki Taekwon-do is helping me up

By Georgia Irvine, II Dan

I am a hypocrite. If someone needs help I absolutely believe that they should ask for it, and that there should be no shame or judgement in that act. Frustratingly when it comes to asking for help for myself though, I struggle to follow through, struggle to get out of the mindset that needing help for myself is a weakness, and that I don't want people to see me or my work when it isn't perfect. Not of this applies to other people though, only me. In fact I want others to ask for help, to better themselves and their work. Thus, a hypocrite.

This is something I will have to overcome if I truly want to improve myself in any aspect of my life. Thankfully, Taranaki Taekwon-do is a fantastic place to start. I am incredibly lucky to belong to a club with a group of kind, experienced people who create an atmosphere of non-judgement, where the members want to work together to push students training further. The anxiety that my work isn't good enough which stopped me from submitting University assignments is forgotten at training. Instead of being worried that somebody at training will criticize my abilities, I would be more upset at letting the club members down by ignoring my training, something so many others have put work into as well.

As well as the atmosphere of our particular club, the art of Taekwon-do itself is an amazing motivator. While at times I have struggled to leave the house, or didn't talk to anyone for days at a time, Taekwon-do is something I could get moving for. Whether it was to feel better physically, to try some cool technique that made me feel more awesome than I am, or just to feel like I am a part of something important, training is something I can drive myself to do. Though depression has before had me spending all of my spare time sleeping, the physical and educational aspects of Taekwon-do manage to engage my mind and body, and add more substance to my day. General Choi Hong Hi's ethical and moral philosophy, which he carried over into Taekwon-do emphasises how important the art is, and gives it a bigger place in my mind, not just a sport but a way to become a better person. All of this has improved my wellbeing, and helped me move forward from any previous failures, by concentrating on something meaningful.

So while my mind can be my enemy, any future education and career I may have is uncertain, I am glad to be holding on to my training and the people who train with me. I know that whatever my future is, Taranaki Taekwon-do will be a huge contributor to life and wellbeing.