



National Association of Professional Martial Artists

# NATIONAL BLACK BELT CLUB

## NEWSLETTER

### Black Belts Know How To Take Initiative

One of the most important Black Belt character traits is the ability to take initiative. The word “initiative” means knowing what needs to be done and doing it without being told. At home, on collection day, washing the dishes when they are dirty, mowing the lawn when the grass is long and many other chores. Black Belts take pride in their initiative because it shows that they are very responsible.

You have many responsibilities as a martial arts student. You must practice regularly, keep your uniform clean and arrive for all of your classes on time and every time. Don't depend on your parents or instructors to remind you constantly of what is expected of you. Test your initiative. Study these situations and ask yourself the following questions:



1. Your younger sibling's toys are spread throughout the house, and guests are coming for dinner.
  - A. Would you leave the toys where they are because you didn't make the mess?
  - B. Would you push the toys under the couch, toss them in a closet or wherever you could hide them quickly?
  - C. Would you gather all of the toys and store them where they belong, before your mom even asks you to help?
2. Your dog is sitting by the door, begging to go outside.
  - A. Would you make him wait because it is not your turn to take him outside?
  - B. Would you scold the dog for whining?
  - C. Would you take him outside without being told because you love your dog?
3. You have a Martial Arts test tomorrow and your uniform is buried in a huge pile of laundry.
  - A. Would you wait, expecting your mom to wash it before your test?
  - B. Would you take it from the laundry and wear it anyway, hoping that it doesn't smell too much?
  - C. Would you wash your uniform and the rest of the laundry without being asked?

If you selected “C” for all of the situations above, then you are a very responsible person and know how to take initiative. If you selected any other answers, then it is time for you to set a new goal to take more initiative. Remember, being a Black Belt is not only strong kicks and punches, but also being the best person you can be!

## Training Tip:

### Never Take Your Eyes Off Your Opponent!

Bruce Lee was one of the most amazing martial artists who ever lived. In fact, his movie, *Enter the Dragon*, was probably one of the best martial arts movies in history. One message I remember from that movie was “never take your eyes off your opponent, even when bowing.” This has stuck with me my entire life. Not only is this an important self-defense message, but also it can be quite a powerful metaphor for life. There is another saying which rings true: “If you are not moving forward and are standing still, then eventually you will be falling behind.”

Quite often in your training, you’ll forget your goals or you don’t clearly define what you want to achieve. Goal setting is imperative to success and can lead to monumental growth as a martial artist. As Bruce said, “If you take your eyes off your opponent, then you could put yourself in danger.” What if your “opponent” is laziness or complacency? What if your “opponent” is lack of focus or lack of concentrated focus? Your objective must be to determine what you want to achieve in life, and then act to reach your goal. Do you want to achieve Black Belt, 1st-, 2nd- or 3rd- Degree; do you want to run a school for your teacher one day; and/or do you want to be a world champion fighter?

Regardless of your objective, it is essential that you define and set your goals, work toward them every day and be aware of the enemy within. Do not let yourself fall short, due to excuses; and continually ask for assistance from your peers, your teammates and, most importantly, your instructor to achieve your goals. Your instructor will guide you in the direction that is best for you. Remember—never take your eyes off of your opponent, even when bowing.

## FELLOW MARTIAL ARTIST:

### Bill Superfoot Wallace

Bill Wallace has been known to the Karate world simply as “Superfoot” because of his awesome left leg. He uses his foot as others would use their hands, confusing opponents with two or three rapid, fake kicks, and following with one solid knockout technique.

Wallace, a native of Portland, Indiana, began studying Karate in February 1967, after suffering a right leg injury in a judo accident. The injury left him without the use of that leg in Karate competition.

During the next seven years, “Superfoot,” who was given his nickname after his manager saw an advertisement for a “super foot-long hot dog” at a sporting event, dominated the point-tournament circuit. As a national champion point fighter three years in a row, Wallace captured virtually every major event on the tournament circuit.

Wallace was named in *Black Belt Magazine’s* Hall of Fame three times—twice as “Competitor of the Year” and once as “Man of the Year.” Wallace did not neglect his education, as he has earned a Bachelor’s Degree in Physical Education, and a Master’s Degree in Kinesiology (the study of human movement).

A year after suffering and recovering from what was considered a “career-ending injury,” Wallace turned professional and captured the PKA Middleweight Karate Championship. He relinquished the crown in 1980, undefeated and respected around the world. He is the author of three books: *Karate: Basic Concepts & Skills*, *Dynamic Kicking & Stretching* and *The Ultimate Kick*. He has also been active in the film industry, starring in or working as a trainer on such films as *A Force of One*, with Chuck Norris; *Continental Divide* and *Neighbors*, with John Belushi; and *Protector*, with Jackie Chan.

Despite his retirement, Bill Wallace continues to be one of most popular and inspirational role models of martial arts instructors and students around the world.

