



National Association of Professional Martial Artists

NATIONAL BLACK BELT CLUB

NEWSLETTER

Take Your Training to the Next Level

Often, we measure our progress with a pass-or-fail system. In the public school system, there are many ways to grade a person's ability or progress: "A+" through "F" or, numerically, 100 (or more with extra credit) to 0 percent. Sixty-five percent and greater is typically a passing grade, while a "C-" or less is failing. How do you measure the quality of your ability? What will help you take your training to the next level? What is it in a person that drives him or her to succeed or fail?

Within the modern military, there are elite forces, such as British S.A.S or United States Navy S.E.A.L.S, which are considered the cream of the crop. The rate of success in these teams is very low: as low as one in 10. What do the individuals who succeed in those groups have that most people do not? The answer is simple: They have the drive that makes them champions. What will you do as a martial arts student to go above and beyond, take you to the top of your class and elevate your training to the next level? Your choice will determine what you achieve.



Chuck Norris once wrote in his book that nothing came easy to him. He claimed not to be the most talented in his class; he didn't have inherent skills that made his life easier and he was not a natural. Yet, he became one of the greatest martial artists, actors and altruistic humans on the planet. He worked hard to reach his current status in the world. He realized long ago, and has been quoted many times saying, if you want to be a champion you must work hard. The best life lessons are probably the ones you learn the hard way. Success that doesn't come easy is sweeter and more rewarding. If success comes easy, then the task is probably not that difficult for you; or, possibly, if you are blessed with above-average raw talent, then you must challenge yourself twice as much, and push yourself to yet a higher level. Never settle for the less than the best and never give up. Anything worth achieving is worth your best effort and hardest work. Take a long, hard look at where you are and where you want to be—then set goals and push yourself until you reach your goals.

FALL 7 TIMES, GET UP 8

In defining what is the most important element to success, in any endeavor, you would be hard pressed to find anything more important than attitude.

In Japanese, the word for attitude is shisei, which is made up of two kanji meaning shape and forces. In other words, it is the attitude that shapes the forces in our lives. Modern success coaches state the same thing when they explain that whatever you believe in, with conviction, will become your reality. This is the process where the karate-ka (student) learns the proper attitude in dealing with conflict and begins to learn how to display tamashior an indomitable spirit. In reality, it is this attitude that may be more important in victory on the battlefield than specific tactics or strategies.

At the foundation of proper attitude is the belief that you are guaranteed victory as long as you do not quit. The classic saying "nana korobiyaoki" or "fall seven times, get up eight," represents this indomitable spirit or winning attitude.

As a student develops confidence through his martial arts training, he begins to demonstrate this winning attitude in a variety of ways, including speech, posture and deeds. The dojo is filled with the sounds of the karate kiai. The kanji for kiai translates as energy, join or in other words, "come meet my energy." The student learns how to overcome temporary discomforts on his path towards victory.

He understands that all worthwhile accomplishments come through hard work and perseverance, and a warrior is the epitome of those qualities. After all, if it was easy, everyone would do it, and then it would lose its value. Indeed the warrior attitude is priceless and cannot be bought. It is earned only through hard work and discipline.

....continues next month!

FELLOW MARTIAL ARTIST: CUNG LE

Cung Le (Vietnamese: Lê Cung; born May 25, 1972) is an American mixed martial artist, actor, and former Sanshoukickboxer who asle competed as a Middleweight in the Ultimate Fighting Championship, holding a record of 2-1 with the organization.



In Sanshou (Sanda), he is a former International Kickboxing Federation Light Heavyweight World Champion, having a professional Sanshou record of 16-0 before moving to mixed martial arts (Le also held an undefeated kickboxing record of 17-0).

He defeated Frank Shamrock to become the second Strikeforce Middleweight Champion before vacating the title to further pursue his acting career. Le is perhaps best known in mixed martial arts for competing in Strikeforce, holding a record of 7-1 with the organization before its demise. In mixed martial arts, 8 of his 9 wins have come by way of knockout.

Le co-starred in the live-action Tekken film, based upon the popular martial arts fighting game, as Marshall Law, released November 5, 2009 for the American film market. Le had supporting roles in the science fiction film Pandorum with Dennis Quaid and Ben Foster, and Fighting, released in 2009 alongside Channing Tatum. He also starred in a Hong Kong martial art film Bodyguards and Assassins, which was released on December 18, 2009; his film was the first time he worked with and had a fight scene with Hong Kong martial arts superstar Donnie Yen.

He also appeared in a Vietnamese music show Paris By Night 99 - Tôi Là Ngãiviet Nam where he was interviewed by Nguyen Cao KyDuyen; this show also marked one of the few times Le has spoken Vietnamese on camera.

Le had a lead role in the 2012 action film Dragon Eyes, costarring Jean-Claude Van Damme and produced by Joel Silver. The movie is based on the Akira Kurosawa classic Yojimbo and is "MMA-themed". Also in 2012, Le played Bronze Lion in The Man with the Iron Fists, a film directed by RZA.