



The Twenty Guiding Principles of Karate: The Spiritual Legacy of the Master

By Gichin Funakoshi, Jotaro Takagi

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Gichin Funakoshi, "the father of karate," once said that "the ultimate aim of karate lies not in victory nor defeat, but in the perfection of the character of its participants."

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Editorial Review

Review

"Whether or not you practice the martial arts, they make a great deal of sense, and will take you far, as a philosophy of life." -BookLoons Reviews "While focused on the practice and application of martial arts, this book's "pursuit of the way" has myriad applications for less physical forms of combat, work-related or otherwise" -Publishers Weekly "Filled with philosophical musings, fascinating historical episodes, and advice for anyone seeking a better way." -Rafu Shimpo "The Master insists on a training that involves both mind and body, to create a karate-do, a karate way." -Asian Week

From the Publisher

Gichin Funakoshi, "the father of karate," once said that "the ultimate aim of karate lies not in victory nor defeat, but in the perfection of the character of its participants."

To support this life-long stance and offer guidance to future practitioners, he penned his now legendary twenty principles. While the principles have circulated for years, a translation of the accompanying commentary has never found its way into publication--until now.

Master Funakoshi's approach stresses spiritual considerations and mental agility over brute strength and technique. Practitioners should not rely on technique alone--striking, kicking, blocking--but must nurture the spiritual aspects of their practice as well. Attend to yourself and the rest will follow, was the message he set for posterity over sixty years ago.

As axioms, Funakoshi's principles are open to various interpretations. "There is no first attack in karate" has occasioned endless discussion about its true meaning. Many of these ambiguities are clarified in the commentary, which is also filled with philosophical musings, fascinating historical episodes, and advice for anyone seeking a better Way.

Translated for the first time into English by John Teramoto, a karate practitioner himself, and accompanied by original calligraphy, this long-awaited treatise is a provocative read and, for martial arts enthusiasts, a long overdue godsend.

About the Author

GICHIN FUNAKOSHI (1868-1957) is one of karate's great masters. Born in Okinawa, the birthplace of karate, he began training in the secret martial art as a child. In 1922, at the request of the Japanese government, he demonstrated the still-secret Okinawan art of self-defence on the Japanese mainland, which led to karate's introduction to the rest of Japan and subsequently the rest of the world. Funakoshi devoted the remainder of his life to this traditional sport and wrote several classics on the subject, including *Karate-do Kyohan* and *Karate Jutsu*, as well as an autobiography entitled *Karate-do: My Way of Life*.

GENWA NAKASONE (1895-1978), between stints as a schoolteacher and a politician, was an editor and publisher of books on karate and martial arts, among them *Karate-do Taikan*, a ground-breaking compendium of karate texts and documents. Born in Okinawa, he was an early supporter of Funakoshi, and in an ideal position to compile accurate annotations of the master's twenty principles.

JOHN TERAMOTO was born in Los Angeles, California, and began karate training at the age of 13 under Tsutomu Oshima, reaching the rank of godan in 1990. Since 1998, he has served as the president of Shotokan Karate of America's Black Belt Council.

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