

A Healthy Dose of Self-Confidence

One of the most important outcomes parents would like to see their children derive from traditional martial arts study is: “A Healthy Dose of Self-Confidence”.

Self-Confidence is the sufficient emotion of being at ease with oneself. We are actually born with confidence; we just need to maintain it throughout our lives.

Improving self-confidence is essential for success. Self-assurance and trust in one’s own abilities to achieve is the one trait that successful people possess. Those who are self-confident display courage and are more willing to take calculated risks in order to reach their goals and ultimately reach their full potential in life.

Proper martial arts training can help build our self-confidence in a number of ways.

Karate teaches us how to protect ourselves by learning:

- A. Physical Skills: Blocking, Kicking, Striking, Throwing, and Techniques
- B. Mental Skills: The knowledge of how and when to use the Physical self-defense skills and the self-control to keep a level head when provoked.

Learning how to protect ourselves makes us feel safe and secure, which builds our self-confidence.

In the Dojo, each time we learn a new Karate technique and practice it over and over, that technique improves and that improvement increases our self-confidence.

Karate teaches us how to overcome our fears by doing exactly what it is we are afraid of doing. If you are afraid of public speaking, your instructor will gently guide you to stand in front of the class and explain, demonstrate, and lead the class in a stretching exercise or kick technique, If you make a mistake, your instructor will correct the mistake and encourage you to try again and again until successful.

Each time we try, we'll improve, teaching us to conquer our fears with actions and to never give up; which increases our level of self-confidence.

The precise movements of kata training, the accuracy of makiwara practice, and the partner self-defense and sparring drills all help develop excellent eye contact and body posture and spirit shout; which all once again boost our self-confidence.

Another way to build self-confidence is by setting goals for yourself and taking the action steps to achieve those goals. Your instructor may ask you to set a New Year's goal. Start with little, short term goals such as: attending class regularly or earning the next rank promotion. Work hard and stay focused on your goal. When achieved, write the date the goal was accomplished and give yourself a little reward to celebrate the accomplishment. Achieving short-term goals are very important as they are the stepping stones to the really big goals that we want to achieve.

A quick way to boost our self-confidence on a daily basis is to look in the mirror and start each day with a gigantic smile!

Miss Felenczak