



Fun. Fitness. Empowerment.

Student Handbook

5669 NORTH ORACLE ROAD, SUITE 2105
TUCSON, AZ 85704

TKDWELLNESS.COM

520-419-7837

MASTERTORRES@TKDWELLNESS.COM

CONNECT WITH US

FACEBOOK.COM/TKDWELLNESS

| INSTAGRAM.COM/TKDWELLNESS

LAST REVISION: 08.13.2024

Table of Contents

Fun. Fitness. Empowerment.	1
Student Handbook	1
Introduction	4
Welcome Message from Dr. Yoendry Torres	4
Taekwondo Wellness Mission	5
Meaning of Taekwondo	5
Taekwondo Wellness Memberships	5
Rules & Regulations	6
Dojang Rules at TKD Wellness	6
Competition Rules	6
Gear Requirements	6
Taekwondo History	8
Taekwondo Philosophy	10
The Five Tenets of Taekwondo are:	10
Poomsae: Forms	11
Kyukpa: Board Breaking	15
Basics of Board Breaking:	15
Kyorugi: Sparring	16
Taekwondo and Psychology	18
Awareness	18
Stress Management	18
Motivation	19
Grit	20
Growth Mindset	20
Deliberate Practice	20
Goal Setting	20
Self Talk	21
Imagery	22
Reframing	22
Mindfulness Meditation	23
Energy Management	24
Confidence	25
Handling Pressure	26
Handling Adversity	27
Mental Health First Aid	27

Major Depressive Disorder	28
Stress & Anxiety	29
Taekwondo Pedagogy/Curriculum	32
Taekwondo Wellness Curriculum	32
Promotion Test Requirements	33
Taekwondo Wellness Belt Ranks	33
Long Term Athlete Development Framework (LTAD)	34
Taekwondo Terminology	36

YOENDRY TORRES
DOCTOR OF PSYCHOLOGY 4TH DAN
TAEKWONDO WELLNESS
TUCSON ARIZONA

요엔드리 토레스
심리학 박사 4단
태권도 웰니스
투손 애리조나

Introduction

Welcome Message from Dr. Yoendry Torres

Welcome to Taekwondo Wellness where the goal is to promote healthy living through psychological education and to teach a modern sport that has evolved from ancient martial art over time. By deciding to join Taekwondo Wellness, you have joined millions of practitioners across the world striving to improve themselves physically, mentally and spiritually through the art of Taekwondo. This handbook will be your guide to Taekwondo rules, requirements, history and philosophy, sport psychology, and curriculum. I hope that you will find the information within this handbook useful for your development as a Taekwondo student and/or competitor.

It is worth mentioning that research has shown that martial arts schools that focus only on competition (i.e., fighting) solely increase aggression while tradition martial arts schools that teach its martial arts history, philosophy, meditation, self defense, sparring, as well as competition decrease aggression overtime in addition to aiding in stress management, helping manage weight, lowering anxiety, promoting self-esteem and confidence, improving concentration and increasing self-reliance and optimism.

I look forward to sharing what knowledge I have learned from my personal training, coaching and education and I hope one day that you too will continue the legacy of Taekwondo by sharing what you have learned with future generations. Please feel free to ask me or one of our coaches any questions that you might have after reading this handbook. You may also email me directly at: MasterTorres@TKDwellness.com. Let me know if there is anything I can do to better your Taekwondo experience.

Sincerely,

Yoendry Torres, Psy.D.

(AKA: Master Torres; AKA: Dr. Torres; AKA: Sir; AKA: Coach)



Taekwondo Wellness Mission

Our mission is to improve the mental, physical, social, and emotional health of our community through teaching Taekwondo, fitness and psychological education from toddlers to olympic athletes and to everyone in-between.

Meaning of Taekwondo

Taekwondo comes from the three Korean words: Tae: meaning foot or striking with foot; Kwon: meaning fist or striking with hand; and Do: meaning the way or the art of. Thus Taekwondo means the art or way of striking with the feet and hands.

Taekwondo Wellness Memberships

- **USA Taekwondo** is the national governing body of Taekwondo for the United States Olympic Committee and thus an official member of World Taekwondo. World Taekwondo is the international federation governing body for the sport of Taekwondo and it reports that a total of 209 member nations are part of this federation. World Taekwondo oversees the rules of the sport, which include sparring, poomsae, and board breaking. Taekwondo Wellness is a local member of USA Taekwondo that is committed to promoting healthy, active and joyful lives among youth, adults, and families through training in Taekwondo.
- **Kukkiwon** is the World Taekwondo Headquarters for instructor education and dan certification. Kukkiwon sets black belt promotion test regulations and dan certificates are recognized internationally & required for Olympic competition. Taekwondo Wellness black belts will be obtained through Kukkiwon and as a result be recognized internationally at any Olympic sport Taekwondo school.



Rules & Regulations

Dojang Rules at TKD Wellness

Please review and follow the rules for your safety and to remain loyal to Taekwondo culture. It is important for parents to review these rules with your children to ensure proper understanding of the rules.

1. Respect masters & instructors (aka coaches) and follow their directions. Demonstrated by:
 - Responding "Yes/No, Sir, or Ma'am" in conversation with instructors.
 - Bow when entering and leaving the training area (e.g., mats).
 - Face away from the Instructor and flags when tying belt or fixing your uniform.
 - Ask permission to enter or exit class if student arrives late for training or needs to be excused to go to restroom or leave early.
2. Respect fellow students and parents. Demonstrated by:
 - Have fun but avoid unnecessary conversation.
 - Do not talk while instructors are talking or running training drills
3. Respect yourself. Demonstrated by:
 - Maintain a clean uniform and good hygiene as it is a reflection of the student's pride.
 - Use positive self talk and be encouraging and kind to yourself.
4. Report all injuries to the Instructor.
5. Students are to use martial arts skills learned in Taekwondo Wellness for protection only.

Competition Rules

Taekwondo Wellness is a proud member of USA Taekwondo, which means that Taekwondo Wellness students will learn and are required understand and follow USA Taekwondo rules and regulations when competing at USA Taekwondo sanctioned tournaments. Competition can be fun and a great way to build confidence and put to test the skills learned. The USA Taekwondo specific rules for competition can be found at worldtaekwondo.org/rules/.

Gear Requirements

Parents, please note that children's uniform and gear should fit them well and not be oversized with excessive material, particularly the uniform pants as it creates a tripping hazard. Gear and uniforms can be purchased at TKDWellness.com/proshop and/or by filling out gear order forms found in the dojang. The following are the gear requirements for Taekwondo Wellness students by rank:

- **White Belt:** Beginning students are not required to purchase a uniform if taking classes just for fun or for fitness; however, if student decides they want to promote up the Taekwondo ranks then a white v-neck uniform is required. Sparring gear is required for

teens/adults who are interested in attending sparring classes. White belt children are not allowed to spar until they obtain a yellow belt rank.

- **Yellow & Green Belt:** Yellow belt children are now allowed to spar and will need to purchase sparring gear in order to participate in sparring classes. However, note that sparring is not a required part of the rank promotion curriculum until Green belt rank is obtained. Green belt students will continue to use a white v-neck uniform. Sparring gear requirements include: Head protector, foot/shin protector, hand protector, Trunk protector, cup, and mouth guard are required.
- **Red Belt & Recommended Black Belt:** Students who are red and recommended black belts require a poom (red/black) v-neck uniform and will continue to use same sparring gear as purchased as a green belt.
- **Black Belts:** Students who are black belts require a black v-neck uniform and will continue to use same sparring gear as purchased as a green belt.
- **Competition & Demo Team:** Yellow belts students and above will have the option of joining the competition & demo team. Students who choose to be part of the competition & demo team will be required to sign a team agreement and obtain and maintain an annual USA Taekwondo athlete membership as well as attend special events throughout the year to showcase their skills at public demonstrations. In addition, team members will get extra conditioning and training seminars to prepare them for competitions and demonstrations. Students who choose to compete in USA Taekwondo tournaments will also be required to purchase sanctioned equipment that includes sparring gear for sparring athletes and a competition uniform for poomsae athletes. To purchase sparring gear online, please visit TKDWellness.com/proshop or gear can also be purchased onsite at TKD Wellness.



Taekwondo History

Much to my surprise, the history of Taekwondo is actually a controversial topic with officials from Kukkiwon and many others stating that Taekwondo dates back to the Three Kingdoms period (over 2000 years ago; discussed below) while others argue that Taekwondo was first derived from Japanese karate around the time of the Korea liberation from Japanese colonial rule. To be honest, I am not a historian nor do I claim to be an expert on this topic. So to be fair, I will offer both points of view to the best of my ability.

According to Kukkiwon, “Korean martial arts faded into obscurity during the late Gojoseon Dynasty, the first state on the Korean peninsula, B.C. 2333 and developed during the Three Kingdoms period.” The three kingdoms period consisted of:

1. Silla Kingdom: Silla, which was founded on the Kyongju plain in 57 B.C., was credited with spreading martial arts throughout Korea. During this kingdom, martial arts was mainly used as a sport and recreational activity.
2. Koguryo Kingdom: Koguryo, which was founded in the Yalu River Valley in 37 B.C, is the birthplace of martial arts and Tae Kyon is considered the earliest known form of Taekwondo.
3. Paekche Kingdom: Paekche, which was founded in the southwestern area of the Korean peninsula in 18 B.C., favored barehanded fighting as a fighting art.

Hwarang-Do warriors were martial arts trained warriors who became known for their bravery and fighting skill. Also, they soon supplied the leadership to defeat both the Paekje and Koguryo kingdoms and unify Korea into one country known as the Koryo kingdom. The guiding principles of these warriors were loyalty, filial duty, valor, and justice. The Warriors education was based on the 6 codes of conduct:

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. Loyalty to your country | 4. Respect your teachers |
| 2. Faithfulness to your spouse | 5. Indomitable spirit |
| 3. Respect your brothers and sisters | 6. Finish what you begin |

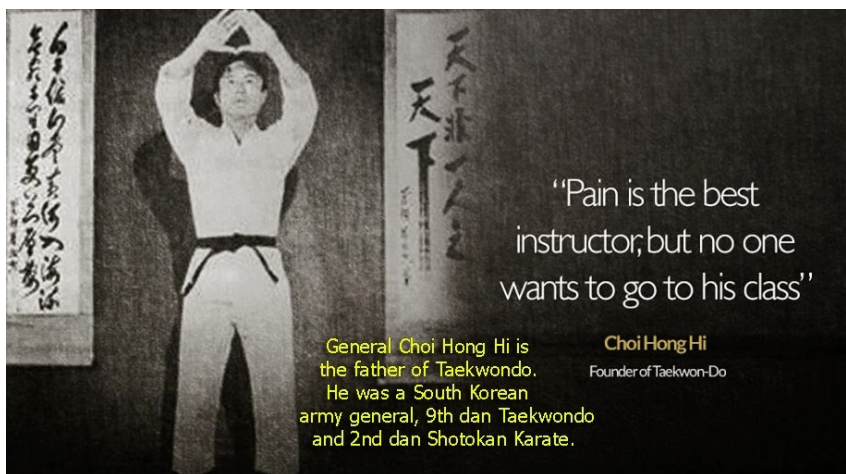


The Koryo Dynasty (918 AD to 1392) was a time for growth and development for martial arts. During this kingdom, unarmed combat gained great popularity and Tae Kyon evolved as new kicking techniques developed and was designed as a fighting sport. The soldiers learned and practiced these forms of martial arts, and throughout their travels throughout different kingdoms

they spread the study of these martial arts.

The Yi Dynasty (1392 AD to 1910) experienced a change from following Buddhism to Confucianism. This change brought about a change to martial arts as people began to lose interest over martial arts. In fact, the study of martial arts, including weapons, was banned except for the military

After the Yi Dynasty, Japanese took control of Korea and during Japanese control, only the military could practice martial arts. Japanese combat techniques was introduced to Korea at this time and it became popular. Moreover, due to the peace treaties between Japan and Korea, Japanese education and martial arts were introduced into Korean schools. Once again, martial arts began to flourish in Korea and Japan and Korea began to exchange combat techniques. In 1945, Korea was freed and Korea could now practice its form of martial arts.



During the 1960s after Korea got independence from Japanese control, modern Taekwondo was born, influenced by Japanese Karate at the very least. Dojangs appeared, such as Chung Do Kwan, Songmuguan, Mudukguan, Joseon Yeonmuguan kwonbubbu. Moreover, the Korea Taesudo Association (the name was later changed to Korean Taekwondo

Association) was founded on September 16th, 1961.

During the 1970s, Kukkiwon was founded as the KTA central dojang on November 30th, 1972. Kukkiwon devotes itself to spread Taekwondo culture, spirit and history worldwide, increasing the best competitive power of Taekwondo as a martial art in life. Kukkiwon preserves Taekwondo's roots and development, controls Dan testing and Dan testing requirements, and promotes the study of Taekwondo all over the world.



In 1973 the World Taekwondo Federation was officially established at the Kukkiwon. During the 1980s, Taekwondo started becoming popular in universities as a major or a study. Taekwondo later became a demonstration sport in 1988 during the 24th Seoul Olympics and then became an official Olympic sport at the 103th IOC Assembly in Paris, France. At the same time, the Korean language became the official language for the olympic Taekwondo games. Taekwondo

made it first Olympic appearance during the Sydney 2000 Olympics. According to World Taekwondo, as of 2017 the global membership for World Taekwondo stands at 209 member nations across five continents.

Taekwondo Philosophy

The philosophy of Taekwondo represent the principles of changes and movements in human beings. It can be explained in several ways but here we will explain it simply with the principle of “Sam Jae” (three elements) and that of “Eum” (Negative or Darkness) and “Yang” (the positive and the brightness). “Sam Jae” refers to “Cheon” (the heaven), “Ji” (earth), and “In” (the human). In oriental countries, the philosophical principles of Taekwondo are recognized as the central principle that explains changes of everything in the world.

The Five Tenets of Taekwondo are:

1. **Courtesy (Ye Eui):** Courtesy is behavior that demonstrates consideration, cooperation, respect, and generosity towards others and towards oneself.
 - **Examples:** Bowing at beginning/end of class; Saying thank you; Doing chores; Greeting parents/teachers; Positive self-talk; Maintaining good/positive physical/mental hygiene.
2. **Integrity (Yom Chi):** Integrity is being able to define right from wrong, stand incorruptible and have the conscience, if wrong to feel guilt and apologize. Integrity also applies to being honest with ourselves.
 - **Examples:** Not cheating; Not lying; Not stealing; Avoiding self-deception; Admitting to self when upset; Admitting wrong/mistake; Apologizing.
3. **Perseverance (In Nae):** Perseverance is the ability to persist in pursuing something in spite of obstacles or opposition and to have the patience to do so. Moreover, having perseverance is having a belief that traits can be developed with effort and hard work (growth mindset) and grit (passion + perseverance = grit).
 - **Examples:** Never giving up on your passion; Persisting through difficulties; Continuing training even if you are tired; Refusing to quit even when there are difficulties/obstacles.
4. **Self-Control (Geuk Gi):** Self-control is the ability to control our responses to our emotions as well as having control of body. Self-control is also exercising restraint over one's impulses, also known as self-discipline.
 - **Examples:** Thinking before acting; Not hitting or yelling at others or self out of anger or frustration; Maintaining focus during meditation; Performing techniques with proper execution and accuracy; Practicing poomsae with coordination, balance, power, speed, etc.
5. **Indomitable Spirit (Baekjul Boolgool):** Indomitable spirit, commonly referred to as courage or bravery, describes a spirit incapable of being subdued or overcome and is associated with being modest and honest. It persists in spite of fear and hesitation to demonstrate courage.
 - **Examples:** Telling parents about problems; Seeking help; Telling someone how you truly feel; Competing in a tournament; Saying no to friends; Acting with integrity when others do not or when no one is looking.

Poomsae: Forms

Poomsae is an integral part of almost every martial art as it was the way the art/style itself was passed down from one generation to the next. Poomsae includes great theory of offense and defense mentally and physically and unifies the essentials of the spirit of Taekwondo. The overall purpose of poomsae is to control the breathing to be synchronized with actions, and to maintain the center of gravity and balance while executing techniques requiring great speed and power.

In order to standardize the practice of forms in Taekwondo, World Taekwondo developed a set of forms called the Taegeuk 1-8 Jang Poomsae. When these forms were being created, all of these movements, techniques and projected meanings were based on the 8 Trigrams, with each one of the Taegeuks representing a different Trigram. To practice the Taegeuk forms properly and to convey their intended meaning, it is necessary to combine both the physical and mental aspects of the Taegeuk forms.

When practicing poomsae, strive for:

- Stance: Elegance and stable line, pattern of poomse
- Gaze: Offense and defense direction of movements
- Balance: Maintaining good connection of each movement
- Velocity: Control for speed of all movements
- Intensity: Control for strength of all movements
- Direction: Memorized for pattern of engagement
- Breath: Internal and external energy
- Expression: Mentally, physically, emotionally

Taegeuk, the spirit of Taekwondo, is derived from the words “Tae” meaning largeness and “geuk” meaning eternity. Moreover, the idealisms of Taegeuk are: Pacifism, Unity, Creative spirit, Future spirit and Eternity.

Taegeuk poomse follows different theories and implements them into methods of attack, defense, forward movement and retreat, control of the speed of the movements, and the intensity of the actions. A couple theories include the Yin Yang theory, the destructive theory, the great absolute theory, and the Ohaeng theory. The destructive theory claims that fire melts metal, metal cuts wood, and the earth blocks water. The “Yin Yang theory” (the law of nature) describes the negative and the positive, and the male and female. Another theory claims that the elements of metal, water, wood, fire, and earth are believed to help each other to be produced; fire from wood, wood from water, water from metal, metal from earth, and earth from fire.

Palgwe represents the heaven and sky, water (lake, marsh etc.), fire, sun, light, thunder, wind, wood, water (springs, streams), mountains and hills, and the earth. It also represents the eight cardinal and the inter-cardinal directions (North, South, East, West, Northeast, etc.). The 8

symbols of “Gwe”, originating from Taegeuk/created from the male and female which is the root of all creation, represents the direction and lines of movement. The other “Gwe” were created from other direct creations of Taegeuk. The 8 symbols of “Gwe” (Palgwe): Keon, Tae, Ri, Ji, Seon, Gam, Gan and Gon.

Poomsae	Palgwe (Gwe)	Meaning	Definition
Taegeuk 1: Il Jang (18)	Keon	“Heaven”	Keon is the powerful, the mother of all, the pure Yang, the father, and the initial molding force that guides the future actions and outcomes in forms.
Taegeuk 2: Yi Jang (18)	Tae	“Lake”	Tae is the state of mind (serene and gentle yet firm). The movements mainly show that even though there are boundaries that control our actions, we can overcome them.
Taegeuk 3: Sam Jang (20)	Ri	“Fire”	Ri is meaning of warmth, enthusiasm, and hope. Since fire is important for survival but can cause catastrophes, the techniques of this form should be done in a rhythmic way with occasional outbursts of energy.
Taegeuk 4: Sa Jang (20)	Ji	“Thunder”	Jin means fear and suggest we should act calmly and with courage when facing danger. Since thunder reaches down to the earth in a hurry and seeks the shortest route when reaching the highest point, this form should be performed by seeking the shortest path to the desired goal but not losing the ability to react to surrounding influences.
Taegeuk 5: Oh Jang (20)	Seon	“Wind”	Seon can be as gentle as a breeze and as destructive as a raging storm. Since the wind (predominantly Yang) can be both gentle and destructive, this form should be performed with elegance while containing the ability to cause mass destruction with a single movement.
Taegeuk 6: Yook Jang (23)	Gam	“Water”	Without it, nothing can survive. As with water, we can overcome all difficulties with confidence and persistence. We can bend, but not break, flowing continuously. This form should be performed in accordance with the dual nature of water.
Taegeuk 7: Chil Jang (25)	Gan	“Mountain”	The mountain show us when to proceed and when to rest. It shows that it is important to eliminate wasted energy and motion. Since all mountains (predominantly Yin) share the same grandeur and majesty despite the physical dimensions, this form should be performed with the feeling that your movements should receive highest praise and esteem.
Taegeuk 8: Pal Jang (24)	Gon	“Earth”	Life exists because of the earth and the earth nourishes and eassures us with the patience of the mother. This is the completion of one cycle and the higher forms. Gon is pure Yin (the end of the beginning, the dark side, the evil element of all that is good), but even in a state of complete darkness there is still light to be found and should be performed keeping this in mind.

Black Belt Poomsae	Definition
Koryo (Korea) -30 moves 1st Dan Poomsae	Poomsae Koryo, a name of an ancient dynasty (AD 918-1392) in Korea, is one's posture of cultivating himself in which he may follow the wisdom and unyielding spirit of the man of conviction.
Keumgang (Diamond) – 27 moves 2nd Dan Poomsae	Since the most beautiful mountain in the Korean peninsula is named Keumgang-san and the diamond (the hardest know substance) is named Kuemgange-seok, Keumgang in Taekwondo means movement based on spiritual strength that is as beautiful as the mountains (has a sharp and majestic spirit) and as hard as the diamond.
Taebaek (Mountains) – 26 moves 3rd Dan Poomsae	Since Mount Baekdoo is the loftiest and grandest mountain in Korea, and the word "Taebaek" has the meaning of light and is being looked upon as sacred by the Korean people, every motion of this poomse should be in accordance with these principles.
Pyongwon (Plain) – 25 moves 4th Dan Poomsae	Since the plains give us food but at the same time gave us a feeling of majesty, the core of this poomsae is to be found in the potential strength and flexibility as well as in the majestic spirit of the vast plain.
Sip Jin (Decimal) – 39 moves 5th Dan Poomsae	Sip Jin, a master form; largest form, represents the "Sipjangsaeng", the longest living things (the sun, mountains, water...) and is based on nature worship, and the decimal system that makes eternal numbers. It has various changes (slow action and moderation are necessary). It is also important to devote the power slowly within the 1st, 3rd, 9th, 23rd, and the 27th movements. When executing horizontal Twin Side Punch (Chetdari Jireugi), practice carefully because it consists of two kinds of stances, the Forward Stance (Apkubi) and the Back Stance (Dwit Kubi) Sipjin Poomse consists of 31 Poom and 39 movements.
Jitae (Earth) – 37 moves 6th Dan Poomsae	Since the Jitae (earth) is the place to find peace for all life, it symbolizes desire and the coming out of the earth. The use of hands and blocking is emphasized in this Poomse. Devote power slowly within the 2 nd , 4 th , 8 th , and the 10 th movements. The Diamond shape Front Punch (Geumgang Apjireugi) blocks strikes to the face, and simultaneously delivers a punch. The 21 st movement requires a long period of time and practice to learn. Execute the Side Kick (Yeop Chagi) so that the foot lands in it original position, and at the same time execute the Wrist Low Section Block (Palmok Area Makki) then assume the Crane Stance (Hakdari Seogi). Maintain even balance of power. There are 28 Poom and 37 movements

Cheongwon (Sky) -38 moves

7th Dan Poomsae

Cheongwon symbolizes the meaning of the sky (is the origin of all life) and slow action and moderation are important for this Poomse. New movements include: The Spread Off Wing (has the appearance of an eagle flying through the air). The Double Knuckle Fist Spring Strike (Bamjumeok Soseum Chigi). The Push Mountain Shape (Taesan Mllgi). Devote the power slowly within the 5th, 7th, 24th, 25th, 26th, and 27th movements when executing the Side Punch (Yeop Jireugi) while pulling the opponent after executing the Hugh Section Block (Eolgul Makki) 23rd movement. A high jump must be made prior to the 360-degree turn to the left, then the Right Target Kick, and the Diamond Shape Side Punch may be executed. Consists of 23 Poom, and 38 movements

Hansoo (Water) – 33 moves

8th Dan Poomsae

Hansoo represents water (creates life and allows growth, may be stronger and more dangerous, is extremely adaptable, formless and flexible). New movement includes: The Arc Hand Neck Strike (Akeumson Mok Chigi). There are 23 Poom and 33 movements

Ilyo (Oneness) -29 moves

9th Dan Poomsae

Means that the mind (spirit) and body (material) are the same. Follows the philosophy that mind and body are as one. This philosophy is emphasized within the 3rd, 9th, 10th, 14th, 16th, 17th, 20th, and 21st movements. Ilyo Poomse consists of 23 Poom and 29 movements. When Side Kick (Yeop Chagi) within the 19th and 23rd movements, flex the balance leg toward the kicking leg



Kyukpa: Board Breaking

Taekwondo is also known for its demonstration of speed, precision and power through board breaking. At Taekwondo Wellness, board breaking is practiced as a measure of a student's power, accuracy, focus, courage, technique and speed. Board breaking is also a requirement for rank promotion tests (see Taekwondo Pedagogy/Curriculum for specific board breaking requirements by rank). It is important to remember that students are breaking real wooden (usually pine) boards, which can cause bruising, swelling, or even cuts/bleeding. Regardless of that fact, many students find board breaking fun and exhilarating and a source of great pride.

Board breaking is also a competitive sport called “creative breaking competition.” Students of all ranks can register for creative breaking divisions at USA Taekwondo sanctioned tournaments. For USA Taekwondo creative breaking competition guidelines, please visit: <https://www.teamusa.org/USA-Taekwondo/V2-Events/Competition-Rules>. Additionally, TKD Wellness' competition and demo team members will get additional practice breaking boards with advanced techniques and performing them during live demonstrations.

Basics of Board Breaking:

1. Learn the proper technique. Then drill, drill, drill to master it.
2. Perform strengthening and speed exercises to build appropriate muscles and conditioning.
3. Practice techniques on heavy bag, other conditioning equipment, to build strength, timing and accuracy.
4. Aim for the center of the board and plan on going through the board rather than stopping at the front of the board in order to easily demolish boards.
5. Ki-hap (yell!) simultaneously as you strike the board and tense your muscles at impact.
6. Practice techniques on re-breakable boards starting with the easiest one first.
7. Remember to be confident in your technique after putting in all that hard work and effort.

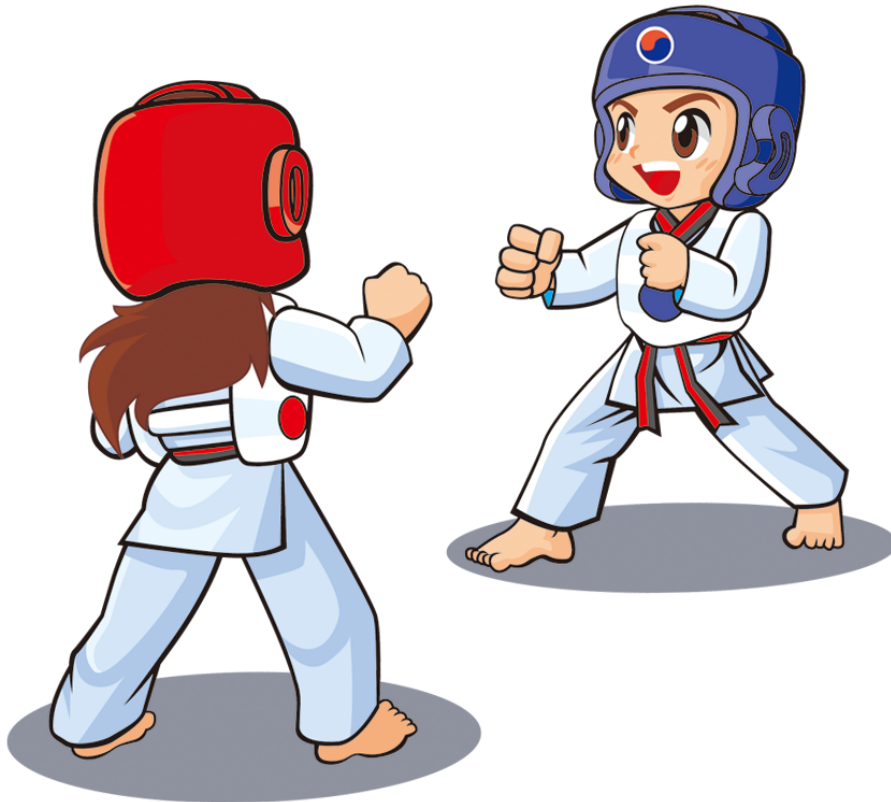


Kyorugi: Sparring

There are several styles of sparring in Taekwondo from one-step (or two or three or instinct) sparring, to no contact or light contact free sparring, to competition sparring using appropriate gear, to full contact. At Taekwondo Wellness, one-step sparring and light contact sparring (green belt rank and above) using necessary gear is required for promotion tests. For students interested in competition, sparring typically consists of light to moderate contact using all appropriate gear, following USAT competition rules and with the focus of scoring points without getting scored on. For complete USA Taekwondo sparring competition rules, please visit: <https://www.teamusa.org/USA-Taekwondo/V2-Events/Competition-Rules>. Below are a few basic sparring rules taken directly from their rules manual:

1. Competitors must wear v-neck uniform in good condition.
2. Competitors must wear approved protective gear including trunk protector, head protector, groin guard, gloves, forearm protectors, shin/in-step protectors and mouth guard. One competitor wears red trunk protector (Hong) and the other blue trunk protector (Chung).
3. Contestants are not allowed to wear any kind of metallic articles or hard objects, such as rings or eyeglasses necklaces, watches, bracelets, earrings, etc.
4. All competitors must maintain the highest standard of personal hygiene, keep their nails cut short, and groom their hair neatly. Pony tails must be tucked inside the headgear
5. Permitted techniques include straight punches using knock part of a tightly clenched fist and foot techniques using any part of the foot below the ankle bone.
6. Punches and kicking techniques are permitted on the areas covered by the trunk protector but not on the part of the spine. Only kicking techniques are permitted to the head.
7. The valid points are as follows:
 - One (1) point for a valid punch to trunk protector
 - Two (2) points for a valid kick to the trunk protector
 - Four (4) points for a valid turning kick to the trunk protector
 - Three (3) points for a valid kick to the head
 - Five (5) points for a valid turning kick to the head
 - One(1) point awarded for every Gam-jeom (penalty shall be counted as one (1) additional point for the opposing contestant)
8. Prohibited acts: The following acts shall be classified as prohibited acts, and “Gam-jeom” shall be declared:
 1. Crossing the Boundary Line
 2. Falling down
 3. Avoiding or delaying the match

4. Grabbing or pushing the opponent
5. Lifting the leg to block or/and kicking the opponent's leg to impede the opponent's kicking attack, or lifting a leg or kicking in the air for more than 3 seconds to impede the opponent's potential attacking movements, or aiming a kick below the waist.
6. Kicking below the waist
7. Attacking the opponent after "Kal-yeo"
8. Hitting the opponent's head with the hand
9. Butting or attacking with the knee
10. Attacking the fallen opponent
11. Following misconducts of contestant or coach:
 1. Not complying with the referee's command or decision
 2. Inappropriate protesting of officials' decisions
 3. Inappropriate attempts to disturb or influence the outcome of the match
 4. Provoking or insulting the opposing contestant or coach
 5. Unaccredited doctor/physicians or other team officials found to be seated in the doctor's position
 6. Any other severe misconduct or unsportsmanlike conduct on the part of a contestant or coach



Taekwondo and Psychology

There are several benefits specific to our physical, mental and spiritual wellbeing that can be achieved through regular Taekwondo practice. In this section, we will discuss how Taekwondo Wellness practice can aid in stress management, teach healthy coping and life skills, and learn about other important topics in psychology such as “grit,” “growth mindset,” “goal setting,” “negative self talk” and “deliberate practice.”

Awareness

Being able to know what one is feeling or thinking at any given time or about any given topic are examples of awareness. Awareness is essential for success in and outside of the dojang. For example, not being aware that you are tired and sleepy and as a result distracted in class will undoubtedly negatively impact your performance. However, having the awareness that one is distracted because they are tired can lead someone to do something about it. For example, taking a nap or getting to bed early to get the needed rest will likely result with better focus and intensity in training and ultimately better performance.

Awareness is a mental skill that can be improved like any other physical skill by training it. The more you practice a skill with intention, the better you will get at it. Awareness is no different. Here are a few strategies to help increase awareness:

- Journaling about what you are feeling, thinking can help bring your thoughts and feelings to the forefront. Once these thoughts and feelings are on paper, you will be able to see trends or thoughts and feelings that may not be helping you achieve your goals and you can choose to do something about it.
- Meditation is a practice discussed below that can help increase awareness by simply paying attention to the present moment. More specific instructions on how to practice meditation below.
- Ask yourself throughout the day, “what am I feeling now?” or “what do I think about this/that?” Asking yourself these questions can help increase awareness. For example, asking yourself how am I feeling before a sparring match can help identify if you are feeling scared, which may translate to your muscles being tense/tight and thus lessening your ability to perform at your best.

Stress Management

Stress management is our ability to deal with the day to day stressors and challenges as well as our resilience to bounce back from a crisis. In other words, the term stress management is used to describe strategies people incorporate into their lives to cope with daily stress and acute stressors. Taekwondo, and other martial arts for that matter, are a great way for people to manage their stress because traditional training methods include rigorous physical exercises, stretching and meditation. All three of these training methods have been shown to help reduce stress and maintain our wellbeing.

It is important to mention that there are two general ways of maintaining wellbeing. There is coping as an intervention and as a preventative lifestyle. Coping as an intervention is when one uses a specific strategy to reduce intensity of emotions when experiencing an acute

stressor. While, coping as a preventative lifestyle are the many activities we do on a regular basis that promote resilience and wellbeing. Here are some coping strategies that be used as either an intervention or incorporated into your lifestyle to manage stress:

- Physical: Exercise, yoga, hiking, biking, skating, climbing, gardening, Taekwondo, stretching, etc
- Artistic: Drawing, painting, coloring, computer art, crafts, playing musical instrument, singing, dancing, etc
- Social: Talking with friends, parents, partners and/or teachers, texting, playing with friends, laughing, etc
- Psychological: Positive self-talk, imagery, meditation, journaling, gratitude, reframing, sorting, etc

Motivation

There are three types of motivation: external motivation, internal motivation and A-motivation.

1. External motivation is training/playing Taekwondo for outside rewards like money, recognition or a gold medal.
2. Internal motivation is training/playing Taekwondo for the joy and satisfaction of playing the sport or for the personal growth or a personal sense of accomplishment.
3. A-motivation is the lack of interest in playing a sport. A-motivation is usually associated with burnout.

Internal motivation is what allows us to train and/or compete at higher levels otherwise one will unlikely be willing to put the time and effort needed for sustained training/competition. External motivation/rewards can be motivating but this type of motivation is usually more difficult to sustain for longer periods of time. Both can co-exist but having internal motivation is essential for long-term success in Taekwondo and in many other areas of our lives.

Having awareness of the reason we play the sport of Taekwondo can help increase motivation to participate in sport and thus lead to more focused and effective training and learning. Something worth noting is that each player needs to have their own motivation for playing. Although the player's reasons to play might align with their parents reasons, a player is likely to burnout if they are feeling pressured by parents to participate in a sport they have no motivation to play.

- Questions to consider: What is your reason for training in sport Taekwondo? Is it an internal or external motivator? Will your reason help you do what it takes to achieve your goals?

Lastly, it is well known in the sport psychology research literature that athletes who focus on the rewards/medals (i.e., external motivation) rather than focusing on the day to day continual improvements (i.e., internal motivation) are worse off (e.g., lose motivation, feel depressed, blame others) when they lose at an event. On the other hand, athletes who focus on the day to day continual improvements have been found to be much more resilient in bouncing back from a loss with more grit and determination and then make the necessary improvements in their training to come back better than before.

Grit

Grit has been defined as the combination of perseverance and passion. In other words, grit is when someone is so passionate about something that they do not give up. Grit has been shown to be a factor that separates those people who go on to accomplish great things compared to those who do not because they gave up. Grit is about cultivating the courage to stick with problems, mistakes, failures, etc that ultimately leads us to success. Martial Arts is about personal improvement, achievement and often involves failing, self evaluation and trying again, which are vital pieces for success. This in turn teaches students about grit. Setting goals is also an important part of grit as is growth mindset and the other psychology topics discussed below.

Growth Mindset

Taekwondo and growth mindset go hand and hand. In that, the thought is that every Taekwondo class is an opportunity to improve ourselves and get stronger than the previous one. However, growth mindset is about seeing failures, mistakes, errors, loses, etc as opportunities to learn, grow and get better. Growth mindset theory states that there are two types of mindset: fixed mindset and growth mindset.

1. Fixed mindset is the belief that ability is a fixed trait (e.g., you're born with it).
2. Growth mindset is the belief that traits can be developed with effort and hard work (e.g., drilling leads to improvement).

A fixed mindset discourages students from taking up a challenging task as students believe that success is attributed to talent and intelligence or some innate ability. Thus, any lose or error is an injury to their ego and negatively impacts self confidence.

Taekwondo is a form of martial arts that is structured on the basis of incentives (belts) that are associated with performance and effort. This promotes growth mindset in students because it teaches students that success can be achieved through hard work, positivity, perseverance, and by learning and getting stronger through failures.

Deliberate Practice

Deliberate Practice is what many masters and experts at the top of their fields attribute to their success. Deliberate practice is “the how” or “the process” to learn from mistakes when we have a growth mindset. In other words, when we identify a mistake and are able to perceive it as an opportunity to learn, then we practice deliberately the skills needed to improve that weak area. Deliberate practice is an active process that involves both quality and quantity to achieve success. Thus, it is not enough to just practice or like that saying goes: “practice makes perfect.” Instead, we can refine that saying by stating that “deliberate practice makes better.” Thus, as a person striving for excellence with constant practice and learning from their failures is what leads them to develop skills above the rest and eventually lead to exemplary success.

Goal Setting

Goal setting is a crucial skill that helps us determine if our deliberate practice is having an impact. Let me explain, in Taekwondo, smaller goals (learn round kick or obtain a yellow belt) are set in place to help the students achieve a larger objective (black belt). In Taekwondo, we set goals (the series of belts) in order to achieve the highest goal. There are even smaller

goals such as the belt strips for basics, poomsae and application of techniques. However, when setting a goal, the student must establish why they set a particular goal or why (this is the passion part of the grit equation) they want to attain the black belt. Having this “why” helps students overcome challenges easier, put immense effort, and become more motivated and demonstrate grit. Goals come in different sizes as we saw above: Low, mid and high ambitions.

1. The high ambitions can be considered like the end goal.
2. Mid goal are the steps to get to the end goal.
3. The low goals are all the daily activities such as sufficient rest, daily stretching, practicing poomsae 5 times a week, etc that will help us accomplish the mid goals.

Interestingly, working towards goals isn’t easy but it teaches people how to be “gritty.” When setting goals it is also important to focus on goals/steps that are within your control and that will help you move towards your larger goal. For example, if your larger goal is to go to USAT Nationals then you may want to get enough sleep every night, train TKD 3 times per week, stretch middle splits 3 days a week for 20 minutes, do 100 front leg round kicks 3 times a week, etc.

Self Talk

There are three main types of self talk: Negative, positive and instructional self talk.

1. Negative self talk is often experienced as self criticism, usually following a mistake, such as “I’m dumb” or “I’ll never be able to do that” or “I’m the worst” to name a few. These negative thoughts are not helpful nor productive in helping students achieve their goals not to mention the decreased confidence which is associated with poorer performance or the drastic impact it could have on our self-esteem or mental health. Luckily, there is an antidote, positive self talk, if you have enough awareness to realize when you are experiencing negative self talk.
2. Positive self-talk is about recognizing the truth, in situations and in yourself by simply not believing the first thought that comes to mind. Thus, positive self-talk is the ability to counteract negative thoughts in your life with thoughts that are either positive, instructional, or at least neutral. Positive self talk replaces a negative thought by simply changing a negative thought (e.g., “I’ll never get it”) with a positive thought (e.g., “I got this”). A neutral self talk would be something like “I’ve done it before” while an instructional self talk would be like “chamber my kick” or “loud kihap.” Positive self-talk helps students maximize efforts, reduce anxiety, improves confidence, and helps with focus which in turn improves the student’s performance. Positive self talk can and should be practice throughout our daily lives and not just in the dojang. In Taekwondo Wellness class, negative self-talk is often challenged and replaced by positive self talk that expresses a growth mindset for example, by saying “I’ll practice my poomsae five more times because I don’t have it memorized yet.”
3. Instructional self talk can also serve as a tool for improving performance. For example, while practicing poomsae one might notice that they are not fully chambering their blocks and thus to improve performance of their poomsae, poomsae athletes can tell themselves “chamber my blocks” why they perform their poomsae. This type of instructional self talk can lead to better performance in poomsae, sparring and other areas in our live.

Imagery

The human brain is amazing! Did you know that if you are able to recall a happy memory in great detail, then those same brain regions activate in the present moment recreating the same feeling. Isn't that amazing! This means that the brain cannot tell the difference between a mental image/memory or an actual live event. This means that if you are able to visualize in your mind yourself performing a specific activity like poomsae in detail, then the same brain regions activate as if you were actually performing that activity. Thus imagery is a technique used to practice mentally and refine our skills in poomsae, sparring, flexibility strength, etc and is an important skill used by many olympic champions. So try visualizing yourself perform your favorite kick, poomsae, or even board break in as much vivid detail and you will be literally training and improving that skill. There is even research that has shown that imagery can result in increase muscle growth without actually lifting a single weight!

Imagery can also be used to bring up desired emotions (e.g., happy, excited, etc) or state of minds (e.g., calm, relaxed, etc). For example, if you are aware about feeling nervous about an upcoming sparring match, you can practice imagery to help calm your body by simply remembering in vivid detail a time when you felt very calm. This will trick your brain in creating the calm state of mind that you want and that would be most helpful for your upcoming performance.

Here are a few other ways to use imagery to improve or maintain performance:

- For mental training: Practice imagery to help you prepare or practice what reaction you would want to have after a mistake (e.g., during a poomsae or sparring match). Practicing imagery can also help you prepare for an upcoming training session/class by imaging the intensity, energy or focus you want to perform with during the class. Practicing imagery also to help you prepare how to respond to a judges or referees decision that you don't agree with.
- For physical training: Practice imagery to help you perform a specific technique better by vividly imaging yourself doing the technique or watching a video of someone else performing that technique and imaging yourself doing it like them. Practicing imagery can also help you with improving your flexibility by imaging yourself at the desired of flexibility.
- For relaxation: Practice imagery to help you relax the night before a tournament so you can get your sleep or a few minutes before your performance to help relax your body so you can perform at your best. Practice imagery to help feel happy after a loss or when in a slump to help your body experience a sense of joy or happiness.
- For training during injury: Practice imagery to help maintain or even improve your performance while you are unable to physically train because of an injury. Just visualize yourself training the specific skill vividly and your brain and body will respond as if you are actually doing it! This mental practice will help maintain your skills.

Reframing

Albert Ellis, Ph.D. was an American psychologist who developed a cognitive therapy called Rational-Emotive Behavioral Therapy (REBT), which targets beliefs as a fundamental course of treatment. The REBT intervention uses an ABC model that helps explain why beliefs or our perspectives are so important for our mental health.

The main idea of the ABC model is that (A) stands for **A**ctivating event, (B) stands for your **B**elief about that event, (C) **C**onsequence and there was also (D) for **D**isputation of beliefs and (E) for new **E**ffect resulting from healthier beliefs. Thus, the goal is to increase awareness about what our belief or perspective is about an activating event to help us reframe that event with a different belief or perspective so we can have a healthier response to original activating event.

For example, imagine that during a promotion test a student makes a mistake at the beginning of the test (Activating Event) and an unhelpful belief (Belief) that they “will never get it so they will not pass the test.” The consequence of such a belief might be increased nervousness and tension in the body, which will lead to poorer performance and higher likelihood of more mistakes. However, the student can dispute (Disputation) that unhelpful belief by telling themselves that “they have done this before and they can do it again.” This new belief will likely lead to a different performance (new Effect), which would allow the student to feel more relaxed and confident about their performance during the promotion test.

Mindfulness Meditation

Meditation is another mental exercise that has been taught and practiced in both traditional and sport Taekwondo schools across the world. Meditation has also been featured in countless martial arts movies such as The Karate Kid and USA Taekwondo has written articles about “Clearing Your Mind Using Meditation.” It’s important to know that there are various styles of meditation but “mindfulness meditation” is the style taught to students at Taekwondo Wellness.

“Mindfulness means paying attention in a particular way: on purpose, in the present moment, and non-judgmentally.” ~ Jon Kabat-Zinn.

Thus, mindfulness meditation is the practice of intentionally paying attention to the present moment without judgment or criticism. Mindfulness can be practiced both formally and informally. Formal practice is done by setting aside a specified amount of time (e.g., 5, 10, 30 minutes per day, etc) to practice mindfulness while informal practice is done throughout one’s day by simply paying attention at various moments during one’s day (e.g., while eating, showering, walking, training, etc). Mindfulness meditation is practiced at the end of every Taekwondo Wellness class.

How to Practice

1. For formal practice: Get into a comfortable position. Can be sitting with legs crossed, sitting in a chair or even laying down. For informal practice simply do steps 2-3 throughout your day for moments at a time.
2. Close your eyes and inhale. Focus your attention on your breath. Notice if your shoulders, chest, or abdomen move as you inhale or exhale. Continue to breathe in and out at your natural rhythm.
3. You will soon notice that our mind naturally begin to wonder and experience all sorts of thoughts and feelings and our senses are heightened. For example, you may notice sounds that were in the background that you hadn’t noticed before. This is normal. The task is to simply notice your experience without judgement or criticism and return your attention to

your focus of attention (usually one's breathe but can also be to other things like our sense of sound).

Reasons to Practice

1. Relaxation is a major benefit of this sort of meditation practice. Sport psychologists have shown that anxiety decreases performance in their research. Thus, if you're nervous before a promotion test, a competition or even a challenging drill in class, meditation is the antidote!
2. Meditation helps regulate our energy levels. Research has also found that people have an optimum level of energy where they perform at their best. However, if one's energy is too high, it becomes difficult to concentrate whether it is poomsae, sparring or breaking. Meditation practice lowers our heart rate, which in turn lowers our energy levels allowing us to concentrate and perform better.
3. Focus is another added benefit of a regular meditation practice. Let me explain, in how to practice step 3 above, the mind wanders and the task is to return to our chosen focus of attention without judgment. This exercise of being distracted and returning attention, followed by being distracted and returning attention gives us the power to focus our attention to what we choose rather than what the brain wants to experience at that moment. This is vital whether it is in a self defense situation or a competition as one would want to focus on the actions that will lead to the desired outcome rather than on emotions such as fear that may leave us frozen in place.
4. There are many more evidenced-based benefits to mindfulness, just see this article by the [American Psychological Association](#). For example: Reduced rumination, stress reduction, boosts to working memory, focus, less emotional reactivity, more cognitive flexibility and relationship satisfaction are benefits demonstrated through research.

Energy Management

Energy management is the concept that people, or Taekwondo Athletes in this case, perform at their best when they are at their "optimum" level of energy. The idea goes that someone with excessive energy is having racing thoughts, might be jittery and have just too much energy to focus and attend the task at hand. Whereas, someone with too little energy is sleepy and lethargic and also unable to perform the task well. Thus the best performance may be achieved at the "right" level of energy. Not surprisingly, the right level is a bit difference for everyone but it's usually not at either extremes but somewhere closer to the middle. Our heart rates can regulate energy levels as can our thoughts. Thus, the goal with energy management is for one to discover what energy level they perform best and proactively regulate their energy so that it stays within their "optimum" level. Below are a few ways to up-regulate or down-regulate:

Up-Regulate: Use when energy level is too low.

- Increase heart rate by doing some exercise like jumping jack, running, dance etc.
- Practice "dragon breath" or fast rhythmic breathing to evaluate your heart rate.
- Listen to fast beat music to help increase mood.

Down-Regulate: Use when energy level is too high.

- Decrease heart rate by stretching,
- Slow your heart rate down by practicing deep slow rhythmic breathing.
- Listen to slow calming music to help calm mood.
- Use imagery of a calm/relaxing time to help calm body.

Confidence

Confidence is the belief that you have a skillset related to Taekwondo that helps you be successful in Taekwondo. Confidence has peaks and valleys, no matter how talented an athlete you are.

Confidence is gained in the everyday activities done to improve your skills not just in winning a medal at a tournament. This is because another way to think about confidence is that you perform better when you have confidence but confidence is also a result of success. However, success is not only defined by winning the final match at a tournament. Success can also be defined by accomplishing all the small steps and processes you set for yourself to do everyday with the intention to improve your skills. For example, when you focus on the small accomplishments during regular training sessions (e.g., completed 10 crisp techniques in poomsae or hit the kicking target 10 times during pada chagi drills or gave 100 percent effort and 100 percent focus during practice). So, please keep in mind that you do not have to wait for a gold medal to gain confidence.

With that said, confidence does play a role in winning. It is important that you realize that the others players are also struggling with their confidence too. Your opponents also experience their own self doubts and they are also competing against you and your confidence. Note that your opponent evaluates your confidence levels against their own and the higher your confidence is, the harder it is for your opponent to match your confidence.

Tips for improving confidence:

1. If you lack in confidence in a specific skill, identify the specific skills and do deliberate practice. This will help you improve your skill but also increase your confidence in that skills! For example, if you feel like you do not have a fast round kick, practicing 50 round kicks that are fast and explosive will help you build your skill and confidence in that specific skill and as a result overall.
2. If you lack in confidence because your conditioning and fitness is not as good as it needs to be to be competitive, you will likely benefit from training these specific exercises that will have a direct effect on your fitness weakness and thus increase not only your fitness but also increase your confidence too.
3. Focus your attention on the small daily wins like showing up to class or giving 100 percent effort. This intentional focus on these small successful actions will build your confidence and in turn impact your competition performance.
4. If you lack in confidence because of mental skills or other mental health issues it may be helpful to speak to your coach or a psychologists. It is perfectly OK to ask for help and

often it is really hard to see the simple solution to a problem when you are so close to it. So having an outside, objective, perspective is usually very helpful in improving our mental health.

5. Focus on things within your control because doing the contrary is usually a waste of energy. Think about it. Do you have much if any control over what a judge scores your performance or any control over how much harder a competitor trained? In short, we don't have control so our energy is better spent focusing on those things within our control (e.g., sleep, nutrition, amount of personal training, deliberate practice, managing stress, etc)

Handling Pressure

The question that most people want answered is how do they better handle or even avoid pressure (commonly referred to "choking"). So how do we handle pressure successfully? It is important to first explain that pressure is all in our mind or to be more precise it is all in our perception about a specific situation. For example, the skills needed to score points at a major competition are the exact same skills needed to score points at a local small tournament or even sparring at your dojang. In other words, a round kick is a round kick, a clinch is a clinch and a side step-counter is the same whether done at a tournament or at your dojang. Pressure is the anxiety or nervousness experienced during a certain situation. thus pressure comes from within. This is good news because we can control and change our perceptions (see reframing and other mental skills above).

Signs for pressure:

- Physical: increased heart rate, tension
- Mental: inability to focus, thoughts of dread, worry
- Emotional: anxiety, fear, nervousness, irritation, stress
- Behavioral: acting odd to usual, hurrying, tantrum, skipping routines

Common causes of pressure:

1. Feeling overwhelmed or stressed
2. Trying to prove self to coach or teammates
3. Family history of success in sports
4. Not wanting to let them know
5. Expecting achievements will get you award or fame
6. Trying to make travel team or
7. Low self esteem - identity tied to winning or losing

Strategies to handle pressure:

1. Awareness about our beliefs and how they impact our performance.

2. Confidence in our skills.
3. Focus on goal. Think about a baby who doesn't give up when their goal is to learn how to walk. Babies just keep getting up and trying to walk.
4. Don't overthink. Thoughts can get in the way. Let your body respond and do what you've been training to do.
5. Develop ideal mindset for competition. Train mind to not experience pressure by visualizing failures and how you would handle them.

Handling Adversity

Adversity can come in many ways. One common example of adversity is when one suffers an injury that takes you out of competition or sometimes even out of regular training. Other examples include experiencing a death of a family member, your own health issues, losses, slumps, and fear of reinjury.

Ways to prepare for and overcome adversity:

1. Build and maintain a resilience mindset. Resilience is our ability to bounce back from adversity. Having a resilience mindset allow us to bounce back from adversity. A growth mindset is a resilient mindset that allows us to look at adversity as opportunities to train your emotional and mental toughness. Practice growth mindset regularly to improve your resilience mindset and as a result improve your ability to overcome adversity.
2. Manage your stress to help prevent injuries and other adversities such as health issues, losses, slumps and fear of reinjury.
3. Awareness is very important factor that can expedite one's ability to identify the problem and the solutions.
4. Practice other mental skills described above such as visualization, reframing, mindfulness meditation, goal setting, etc to help overcome adversity.
5. Get back to the basics, fundamentals of our sport can help one overcome slumps.
6. Tap into your support system that can include your family members, friends, teammates, coaches, etc. Our support system can help point out things that we can not see ourselves or simply remind us about what is important or that we are loved unconditionally.
7. Seek professional help from a counselor, psychologist or sport psychologist to help overcome adversity.

Mental Health First Aid

Mental health first aid is much the same as regular first aid when someone bruises a muscle or gets a cut. We've all been taught what to do in those circumstances but what would you do if you identify someone experiencing depression or anxiety? Hopefully, this section will help you learn not only how to identify these symptoms/disorders but also teach you what to do to help.

Everyone, even athletes, are susceptible to all sorts of mental health problems. However, the most common mental health problems athletes tend to struggle with are depression, anxiety and eating disorders. A brief review of depression and anxiety follows below because it is good

to know what the symptoms of these disorders so 1) you can identify them in yourself or 2) identify them in others. This awareness of mental health symptoms is called “mental health first aid” when combined with taking action to help yourself or others.

Major Depressive Disorder

Major Depressive Disorder is one of several mood disorders and is different than bipolar, dysthymia, and other mood disorders. Major depression is a treatable illness but, like many illnesses, it can require ongoing maintenance. Major Depression is a common mental health illness in the US and around the world and may begin at any age and may be caused by any number of triggers such as bullying, parental or marital conflict, sense of isolation, loss, seasonal causes, etc.

Symptoms of Major Depression:

- Sad or depressed mood most of the day, almost every day.
- Anhedonia, which is loss of interest in previously enjoyed activities.
- Sleep problems, usually hypersomnia but can also be insomnia.
- Weight gain or loss not due to diet or exercise.
- Low of energy or fatigue even with sufficient rest.
- Psychomotor agitation or retardation, which is usually moving or talking slower.
- Poor concentration or ability to think.
- Feeling of worthlessness or excessive guilt.
- Thoughts of death or suicide, which could be the most serious of all the symptoms and must be taken seriously even in children.
- Thoughts of helplessness
- Thoughts of hopelessness
- Isolation
- Changes in appetite
- Irritability
- Crying
- Decrease in sex drive

Treatment for Depression:

Treatment for depression begins with an evaluation by a licensed mental health professional to determine severity of depression, to rule out other possible issues, and to refer for appropriate services. Thus, if you identify depressive symptoms in someone else, you would want to express concern for them and ask them if they have talked to someone else (e.g., parent, coach, therapist) about what they are experiencing. Encourage them to seek talk to them and

seek professional help if they haven't. If it is a child, speak to their parent or guardian and let them know about what you observed.

Tips to Ward Off Depression:

1. **Exercise Regularly** as it has been found to be fantastic not only for managing stress and preventing physical problems but also at reducing depression and anxiety.
2. **Be Present** is where people often report being happy while being in the future can create anxiety and being in the past can lead to feelings of regret, guilt, and depression. Focus on being more mindful about how you are feeling right now rather than how you felt weeks or years ago.
3. **Seek Support** from licensed mental health professionals, friends, family and even animals, whom can be helpful. Surround yourself with people that are positive and validating.
4. **Know the Signs** of depression so that you know when you or someone you in your life needs help.
5. **Know your Depression** and be proactive. If you know that you happen to be extra susceptible to depression during the winter months, prepare for it by scheduling regular activities or seeking extra support during this time.
6. **Get Outside** because sunlight can be helpful and so can nature. Experiencing the grandeur nature can help put one's problems into perspective and when our problems seem small they don't bother us as much.
7. **Find Meaning** or a reason for living as it can be a powerful motivation to keep living. One's meaning can be their partner, children, or even a cause.
8. **Sleep** is vital to good health and mental functioning. Avoid sleep problems by having a regular bedtime even on weekends, keeping distractions from the bedroom (e.g., TV), and creating a bedtime that is conducive for relaxation.
9. **Visit Your Primary Care Doctor** regularly to prevent, catch, or treat medical illnesses early that can create depressive symptoms.
10. **Eat Healthy** meals to improve physical, mental, and emotional functioning. Eating unhealthy foods erodes your physical health, impairs cognitive functioning, and also impacts how you feel about yourself.
11. **Respect your Emotions** rather than stuffing them. Bottling your feelings can be toxic to your body while expressing how you feel can be very relieving especially when your feelings are validated.

Stress & Anxiety

According to the National Institute of Mental Health about 18% of adults in the United States experience an anxiety disorder while only 37% of those receive treatment. Meaning that about 63% of adults affected do not seek out services for treatable anxiety disorders. There are many triggers that increase stress and anxiety such as relationship conflicts, financial hardship, and school or work demands. The first step to wellness is becoming aware of your physical and

psychological reactions to stress and anxiety. Below are some common signs of stress and anxiety:

- Headaches or backaches
- Muscle tension and stiffness
- Diarrhea or constipation
- Nausea, dizziness
- Insomnia
- Chest pain, rapid heartbeat
- Weight gain or loss
- Skin breakouts (hives, eczema)
- Loss of sex drive
- Frequent colds (impaired immune functioning)

Furthermore, scientific evidence suggests that stress impacts your physical health. Many medical conditions are caused or exacerbated by stress, including:

- Chronic pain
- Migraines
- Ulcers
- Heartburn
- High blood pressure
- Heart disease
- Diabetes
- Asthma
- PMS
- Obesity
- Infertility
- Autoimmune diseases
- Irritable bowel syndrome
- Skin problems

Treatment for stress and anxiety:

Treatment for stress and anxiety begins with an evaluation by a licensed mental health professional to determine severity of stress and/or anxiety, to rule out other possible issues,

and to refer for appropriate services. Thus, if you identify stress/anxiety symptoms in someone else, you would want to express concern for them and ask them if they have talked to someone else (e.g., parent, coach, therapist) about what they are experiencing. Encourage them to seek talk to them and seek professional help if they haven't. If it is a child, speak to their parent or guardian and let them know about what you observed

Tips to ward off stress & anxiety:

1. **Know yourself** – Understanding how you experience stress is a vital step towards identifying what is causing you stress and preparing for or preventing it in the future.
2. **Identify causes of stress** – Knowledge is power. Once you know what your triggers for stress or anxiety are, you can take steps to minimize its effect.
3. **Eat healthy** – Good physical health promotes good mental health and vice versa. Stressed people tend to overeat or make unhealthy nutritional choices, so choose healthy foods and eat in moderation.
4. **Be proactive not passive** – Don't just sit with your hands crossed waiting to feel better, cope with stress actively by engaging in healthy stress relieving activities such as exercise, art, music, or dance.
5. **Get plenty of Zzzzzz** – Poor sleep hygiene can leave you tired and cranky in the morning making you more susceptible to stress, so get the recommended 8 hours of sleep on a regular basis.
6. **Laugh, it is good for the heart** – Laughing produces feel-good brain chemicals that relief stress and promote wellbeing.
7. **Live in the now**: Many people experience anticipatory anxiety for something that hasn't happened or ruminate over past events not realizing that in the actual moment there is nothing stressing them.
8. **Social support** – The ability to seek out and have social support has been associated with resilience, the ability to bounce back from stress. There is a reason why humans are social beings.
9. **Seek professional help**: When symptoms persevere and begin to impact functioning in other areas of your life such as school or work, therapy has been shown to help.

Taekwondo Pedagogy/Curriculum

Taekwondo curriculum is the “what” we teach while Taekwondo pedagogy is the “how” we teach. Taekwondo curriculum consists of teaching striking and blocking techniques, Korean terminology, poomsae, one-step sparring, free sparring (green belts and above), and board breaking. Taekwondo is typically taught to students in developmentally appropriate aged groups sometimes in separate classes, other times within the same class. Training pedagogy at TKD Wellness incorporates periodization training blocks that include a rotating curriculum so that students focus on developing one curriculum skill (e.g., basics, poomsae, application) per month and then switch to a new skill each month. It is important to note that at Taekwondo Wellness we continue to review all skills, while spotlighting one, because a strong foundation is essential for any martial artist. TKD Wellness pedagogy also includes learning by repeated practice and observation, positive reinforcement, encouraging internal motivation, and by keeping learning fun by “gamifying” whenever possible.

Taekwondo Wellness Curriculum

- **Relaxation:** Exercises such as neck rotations, deep breathing, or static stretching can be used at home to relax and release tension
- **Stretching:** Stretching not only improves a range of emotions, but it also been found to have physical and stress relieving benefits such as improve circulation and promoting relaxation
- **Body Awareness:** In order to treat stress, one must be able to be aware that they are stress; Through the practice of stretching and mediation, one becomes aware if they are stressed or not
- **Deep Breathing:** It helps relax the body by controlling one’s breath and in turn lowering one’s heart rate and blood pressure in addition to helping one regulate their mood
- **Meditation:** Meditation has many psychological benefits including stress management, pain reduction, improve attention and mood management
- **Exercise:** In addition to strengthening one’s muscles and cardiovascular system, exercise has been shown to reduce anxiety and depression as well as helping in general stress management
- **Poomsae:** Helps improve power, speed, and balance while striving for self-refinement
- **Sparring:** Helps develop good sportsmanship, coordination, balance, self-control, and self-reliance
- **Self defense:** Helps increase confidence and sense of personal security by learning the application of techniques learned.
- **Board Breaking:** Helps overcome fear to achieve feats of strength and build confidence
- **Mental Skills:** Teaches how improve focus, confidence, motivation, goal setting and other important life skills to help increase self esteem and achieve their goals

Promotion Test Requirements

As the saying goes, “A black belt is a white belt that never gave up.” It is important to know that it takes a lot of dedication, sweat, and passion (aka “grit”) for personal development in order to promote up the Taekwondo ranks. The focus of training should not be only to obtain a black belt instead the focus should be on the daily steps/efforts taken on your journey towards growth, excellence and personal improvement.

Promotion tests are by invitation only but all students and their friends and family members are invited to come support students who are testing. The instructor will invite students to test once they have demonstrated proficiency of belt level requirements and earned their three belt strips. The belt stripes are monthly tests of proficiency to make sure that students are learning the skills required for their promotion tests and thus allowing for deliberate practice on the skills needing improvement. Belt stripes are as follows:

- White - 1: Focus (staying focused in class consistently; meditation for at least 1 minute; not distracting others for 1 month),
- Blue - 2: Respect (consistent saying sir or ma'am, bowing at the right times, keeping hands off of other students, being kind/good attitude for one month),
- Green - 3: Terminology
- Yellow- 4: Basic techniques
- Black- 5: Poomsae
- Red- 6: Application - Board breaking/sparring.

Promotion tests are conducted once per quarter (4 times per year) that way all students have opportunities to promote even if they start half way through a training block. If the student does not pass the belt strip test on their first try, he/she should not be discouraged and instead consider what they can learn that can help them improve even more. Thus students should practice more and take a makeup test prior to the promotion test in order to be considered for rank promotion. Students are also allowed to retest until they pass. Moreover, one important thing to remember is that 3 belt stripes are required before being invited to the promotion test.

Taekwondo Wellness Belt Ranks

Below are the belt meanings and the specific promotion test requirements can be found attached at end of this handbook:

- **White belt** (9th Kub) Meaning: Purity and Potential. The Seed is hidden under the winter's snow.
- **Yellow Belt** (8th Kub) Meaning: Warmth of the winter sun melts the snow and allows the seed to germinate; birth of conscious and purposeful action.
- **Orange Belt** (7th Kub) Meaning: Same meaning as yellow belt.
- **Green Belt** (6th Kub) Meaning: Color of the new sprout; represents the spring when there is growth and activity.

- **Blue Belt** (5th Kub) Meaning: Color of youth, ambition, and rapid growth. The plant grows rapidly towards the sky.
- **Purple Belt** (4th Kub) Meaning: Same meaning as blue belt.
- **Brown Belt** (3rd Kub) Meaning: The seedling is reaching maturity it will soon be harvested
- **Red Belt** (2nd Kub) Meaning: Represents the summer's sun that swelters with the intensity of the flowering arts.
- **Deputy Black Belt** (1st Kub) Meaning: Represents the twilight of fall's sun.
- **Black Belt** 1 Dan Meaning: Combination of all colors. This completes a cycle that now begins again.

Long Term Athlete Development Framework (LTAD)

Long Term Athlete Development (LTAD) is a vehicle for change and provides a framework that identifies an optimal pathway for excellence in Taekwondo and a road to the olympics or life-long involvement in Taekwondo. LTAD was developed by Sport for Life, a Canadian organization and takes into account the physical, mental, emotional and cognitive development of children and adolescents. The Long-Term Athlete Development Framework is as follows:



Stage Name	Age Range	Description
Active Start	Ages 3-5	Provides an initiation to fundamental movements by exploring Taekwondo skills
Fundamentals	Males 6-9, females 6-8	Continues to develop movement skills, and introduces motor skills involved in balance, agility, and coordination
Learn to Train	Males 10-12, females 9-11	Provides window of accelerated adaption for motor skills and coordination.
Train to Train	Males 12-16, females 11-15	Provides opportunities to enhance physical factors depending on growth and maturation, and to consolidate sport specific skill

Train to Complete	Males 16-18+, females 15-17+	Provides opportunities to optimize fitness and strength, refine skills and tactics, and begin to emphasize consistent performance in competition
Learn to Win	Males 18-21+, females 17-19+	Provides opportunities for the athlete to gain international experience against senior level competitors
Train to Win	Males 21+, females 19+	Enables athlete to focus on consistent performance in international competitions
Active for Life	All ages	Fosters lifelong involvement in Taekwondo

LTAD states that there are 10 Key Factors Influencing Long-Term Athlete Development:

- | | |
|--|-------------------------------------|
| 1. Physical Literacy | 6. Periodization |
| 2. Specialization | 7. Competition |
| 3. Developmental Age | 8. Excellence Takes Time |
| 4. Sensitive Periods | 9. System Alignment and Integration |
| 5. Mental, Cognitive and Emotional Development | 10. Continuous Improvement – Kaizen |

* The complete LTAD Long-Term Athlete Development Framework can be downloaded for free at: http://sportforlife.ca/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/LTAD-2.1-EN_web.pdf?x96000

Taekwondo Terminology

Taekwondo terminology is an important part of learning Taekwondo, as Korean is the official language for Taekwondo at the Olympics, allowing students to train and compete across the world regardless of the language spoken in the host country. Here's commonly used terms:

The Basics:

Master: Kwan Jang Nim	Uniform: Do Buk	School: Do Jang
Instructor: Sa Bum Nim	Belt: Ti	Black belt grade: Dan
Thank you: Gamsa Hamnida	Blocking: Makki	Color belt grade: Kup
Attention: Charyut	Punching: Jireugi	Begin: Sijak
Bow: Kyung Neh	Kicks: Chagi	Stop: Geu Man
Ready: Joon Bi	Forms: Poomse	1-Step Sparring: Hoshinsul
Yell: Ki Hop	Strike: Chigi	Sparring: Kyorugi

Numbers:

1.Hana	11.Yeol Hana	30. Soreun
2.Tul	12.Yeol Tul	40. Maheun
3.Set	13.Yeol Set	50. Sheen
4.Net	14.Yeol Net	60. YeSoon
5.Tasot	15.Yeol Tasot	70. IlHeun
6.Yosot	16.Yeol Yosot	80. YuDoon
7.Ilgob	17.Yeol Ilgob	90. AHeun
8.Yudol	18.Yeol Yudol	100. Bak
9.Ahop	19.Yeol Ahop	
10.Yeol	20.SeuMool	

Stances: Seogi

Parallel stance: Naranhi Seogi
Ready stance: Pyonhi Seogi
Walking stance: Ap Seogi
Forward stance: Apkubi Seogi
Back stance: Dwikubi Seogi
Horse riding stance: Juchum Seogi
Tiger stance: Beom Seogi
Twisted stance: Koa Seogi

Hand Strikes: Jireugi, Chigi

High punch: Olgul jireugi
Middle punch: Momtong jireugi
Low punch: Arae jireugi
Reverse punch: Baro jireugi
Lead punch: Bandae jireugi
Knife-hand strike: Sonnal chigi
Turning Elbow: Palkup dolly chigi
Choke Strike: Khaljaebi
Backfist: Deung ju-meok chigi

Blocks: Makki

Low block: Arae makki
Inside middle block: Momtong an makki
Outside middle block: Momtong bakkat makki
High block: Olgul makki
Knifehand block: Sonnal makki
Palmhand block: Momtong batangson makki
Mountain block: Santeul makki
Scissor block: Kawi makki

Foot Strikes: Chagi

Axe kick: Naeryo Chagi
Back kick: Dwi Chagi
Crescent kick: Bandal (bakkat or An) Chagi
Front kick: Ap Chagi
Hook kick: Huryeo Chagi
Push kick: Mireo Chagi
Roundhouse kick: Dollyo Chagi
Side kick: Yop Chagi
Spinning hook kick: Dwi Huryeo Chagi

Notes: