

A Message from Master Rob Simpson (Yuan Xiang)

The Christmas Holiday and New Year are good times to consider the less fortunate and to consider how we can better ourselves, in the future. We have three principal relationships: with ourselves, with other people and with the omnipotent. How we choose to be in our lives (at this time and beyond) will impact on these relationships, we should therefore seek: to be the best we can be in all areas of our lives; to be true to ourselves; and to treat others as we would, ourselves, want to be treated.

You may think, at Christmas and New Year, a statement 'to treat others as you would like to be treated', reflects the sense of the season and, for some, it may seem hollow and insincere at other times of the year. However, a person who is truly good, sincere and well meaning is not controlled by the 'sense of the season' - they act, without conscious thought, to do good and to be the best that they can be - this is our essence - it should be unmistakable in intent, action and behaviour. As a martial artist we have a duty to be morally correct, at all times. We should embody all the principles of morality and prize morality as the highest virtue.

The One Community Project and its aims and ambitions remind us of our duty to provide children and young people with an opportunity: to train; to learn; to appreciate; and to understand that they can be productive members of society, despite disadvantage or disaffection. It is central to this mission that we are accepting of all members of the community, and as a principle welcome them with an appreciation of diversity and an unconditional tolerance of difference. In managing this principle, take the example of the martial artist who engages in unarmed combat, for they are never without their weapons. And armed with this principle understand that if it is not the right thing to do, then do not do it; and if it is not the truth then do not say it. Guard against impulsive behaviour and recognise that every action undertaken, even the haphazard or seemingly purposeless might have unintended outcomes or consequences which may require (or demand) further action.

The end of the year is also a time of reflection, a time to look back on the accomplishments of the past twelve months and to celebrate success. All those of you who have participated in these events: the athletes who have trained hard and taken time out to represent both their school and country; the coaches who prepare our athletes to make them the best they can be; and referees and official who work so diligently to ensure that these events are successful - thank you. We have, yet again, made great strides this year; but cannot rest upon our laurels. It is a time to also reflect on what has not gone so well and to learn from these experiences.

Next year (2008) we have a number of national and international events. We had planned to host an International event in the United Kingdom, in May, but this has been overtaken by other events, so our next event in the UK will now be in May, 2010. There will be the regular national events in which we will both participate and officiate and international events to attend. It will be a busy next few years. We need to prepare ourselves to ensure that we are ready and able to meet the challenges that we will have to face: for now, enjoy the holiday and I will see you again, in January, if not before.

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