

Hap Ki Do

“The principles expressed in the martial arts make up the backbone of my philosophy.”
-Cha Sok Park, 8th Dan Hap Ki Do

These words, spoken by Master Park more than 35 years ago, help define a journey that has spanned almost as long for me. While I had been involved with other martial arts before meeting Master Park, he defined my art with his Hap Ki Do.

Hap Ki Do, often called The Way of Coordinated Power, is primarily the study of using minimal force to deflect, turn, and channel the antagonistic force of an attacker to his or her disadvantage.

Master Park studied many different arts and taught them as separate and combined arts. Over the years, his art evolved and changed as his understanding grew and changed. I also have studied other arts in an effort to gain greater understanding while applying the art. The study and practice of the principles of Master Park’s Hap Ki Do have become the backbone of my art. Thus, I continue the teaching lineage of Master Park, interpreted by my years of practice experience and seasoned by the influence of other arts.

I believe that the benefits and principles of Hap Ki Do can be a guiding practice through life, and I teach my art as it has been handed down to me. The training is aimed at improving the whole person—building physical strength, speed, and coordination while simultaneously embracing the historical, academic and philosophical principles of the art.

The deeper your commitment to the study, the richer will be your reward from it. The discipline and skill gained from regular practice is just the beginning. Greater confidence leads naturally to stronger friendships and ease of wellbeing. As each individual grows, so does the whole culture of which he or she is a part.

How you grow is up to you. My role as your teacher is to facilitate your growth in the art of Hap Ki Do.

Dr. Scott Muzinski
6th Dan Hap Ki Do

Brief History and Meaning of Hap Ki Do

Like all martial arts, Hap Ki Do traces its origins back to the earliest existence of life on earth. All animals, including man, have strong instincts to protect and defend themselves. When attacked, one naturally dodges, crouches, runs away or counter attacks to protect the vital parts of the body. The basis of Hap Ki Do is derived from variations of these passive

self defense postures.

The principles of Hap Ki Do were developed in China approximately 3,000 years ago. Hap Ki Do was introduced to Korea during the Silla Dynasty (about 1,400 years ago) as a means of protecting the country's ruling class and was practiced on a limited and private basis until the early 1900s. During this period of limited practice, Hap Ki Do remained a little known art until the 1970s, when it was collaterally introduced to Europe and the United States. After considerable refinement and modification, Hap Ki Do has developed into an extremely effective martial art that develops both mind and body.

The words "Hap Ki Do" are translated as follows:

- Hap - together, unifying or harmonizing
- Ki - universal power combining both mental and physical power
- Do - way

Hap Ki Do training affects a student's physical fitness, self confidence and self control. An integral part of Hap Ki Do training is Chi, Cho Jee or Ki development. Ki development requires the pinpoint focusing of mental and physical power and is essential in the development of balance, self control, self confidence and concentration. Hap Ki Do techniques use soft, circular motions and avoid confronting power with power, making Hap Ki Do known as the gentle martial art.

The principles and techniques of Hap Ki Do are practiced in order to develop a reflex action; to be able to perform without thinking. Practice teaches the student inner peace through control.

The most important part of Hap Ki Do training is the ability to harmonize with your opponent and with yourself. Harmony is accomplished by practicing the three principles of non-resistance, circular motion, and water principle. These three principles are learned and cultivated through complex, multi-layered study, development and expression. A brief description of each of these three guiding principles follows:

- Non-resistance- Avoiding direct force-to-force encounters by moving, blending or harmonizing with the attack.
- Circular motion- Circular motion permits a continuous flow of countering movements and techniques.
- Water principle- Flowing like water, all penetrating, gentle and simultaneously powerful. Shapeless yet able to assume any shape. Water is the most important principle of Hap Ki Do.

The art of Hap Ki Do developed with these principles as the foundation of practice. Force is met with minimal force. Blending, circling and flowing change the momentum of the attack.

A foundation of gentle strength gives the student a path to physical fitness, self confidence and self control. Concurrent development of concentration and physical and mental balance enable the student to attain calmness through control, and the ability to coordinate power through technique.

Practice is an eclectic blend of fitness - calisthenics and stretching, coordination, strength, technique and skill training. Some of the practice is devoted to examining habits in physical movement or thought and cultivating beneficial habits. Other practices are devoted to martial conflict and resolution.

Students can learn a reasonable and effective form of self defense early in the experience of Hap Ki Do training. Master Park used to say, "After 6 months of practice, a Hap Ki Do student will lose to a Tae Kwon Do student, but after one year of practice, he will never lose again." While skill attainment is dependent on student commitment and other factors, the practical value of Hap Ki Do can be gained with dedicated practice in a short time.

Hap Ki Do is intended to provide the student with a practice that can develop and change over time. The depth of meaning of the practice and techniques can change, providing new insights and developments as the student's life changes. Hap Ki Do practice can provide an avenue for focusing life energies.

This is the essence of the meaning of "Do" or way in Hap Ki Do. A life that has direction is grounded in the reality of movement and facing one's fears. A philosophy of life that is expressed in action. Through practice we learn to trust our power and see the heart that lies behind our minds, thus giving us a path to personal development. Ultimately, the practice of Hap Ki Do is the practice of refining one's self.

A Brief Word about Courtesy

Courtesy is the soul of the martial arts and must be observed at all times. The warmth of concern for others is the essence of courtesy; it is not enough to simply follow rules. The example set in martial arts training is reflected in others with whom we interact on a daily basis. The basic courtesies in Hap Ki Do class are an outline that must be followed from the heart.

The class begins and ends with a show of mutual respect between instructor and student. The Bow is a primary way of showing respect in martial arts. All martial artists show respect for their opponents and the danger implied in training and practice. In the simple bow done in Hap Ki Do, the instructor will lead and the class will follow. It can be done sitting or standing. If standing, posture is straight, arms at sides and heels together. Bend head 45 degrees; body (waist) 15 degrees. If sitting, kneel with toes pointed and bend body at waist, not lifting weight off heels, and head almost to ground.

Upon setting foot on the mat, bow standing to face the flags. Be respectful at all times toward the instructor and high-ranking students, also toward friends. Use proper language

and terms of respect (“sir”, or “Ma’am” for instance), especially to instructors. Do not smoke or drink inside the studio and always maintain the proper attitude.

Maintain high standards of cleanliness, both in mind and body. Always wear a clean uniform in good condition. It is disrespectful to yourself, your instructor, your school, and your class to do otherwise.

The martial artist is respectful, generous, and tolerant towards others in all situations. Martial artists lead by maintaining harmony.

Respect your opponent. In class, promote harmony and understanding for the progress of all; give your attention to your opponent and communicate clearly when necessary to prevent accidents. Show deference to higher-ranking students, patience and assistance to lower-ranking students.

Examinations and Promotions

Promotions and examinations are not the essence of Hap Ki Do and ultimately are of little consequence in one’s life. But in our modern society testing and skill development are established methods for guiding a student’s development. A standardized training method allows the student to set goals and see and achieve objectives among peers. Promotions are not dependent on competition or sparring, rather, they are a result of the student’s ability to apply skill, knowledge and technique.

Grading will be based primarily on these points

- Understanding of the basic techniques appropriate for the testing level.
- Spontaneous movement and response appropriate to the given attack.
- Ability to adapt movements to the force given.
- Concentration and awareness during testing.
- Continuity and coordination of movement as opposed to speed of execution.
- Confidence in ability and skill.
- Cooperation in being both attacker and defender during testing.
- Ability to take proper falling technique.

Techniques should be demonstrated continuously and flow together. Movements to the inside and outside of the attack should be demonstrated. Defense to both right and left sides is required. Falling is required as part of the attack/defense sequence. A willingness to be both attacker and defender must be demonstrated.