



Treasure Island

By Sabom Mark Newkirk as told by Grandmaster Kim Soo

The classic forms that we learn are a treasure island. They contain a lot of valuable information with hundreds of techniques and combat applications. Forms, if done properly, give you wisdom, health, and whatever you are looking for. Forms should be thought of as moving meditation. In order to get these benefits you have to be patient and persistent, repeating the forms many times, while thinking about the movements and applications. It takes a lot of work and commitment on the part of the student. You must practice with an attitude of Mu Shim. A form is one person's whole life, a masterpiece. It is not meant to be rushed through, memorized, and then move on to the next form.

Sometimes students are tempted to switch schools and follow fads, always looking for the next "secret" or revelation. They are looking outside for solutions instead of looking inside themselves and finding happiness from within. Our system patch has a symbol for the mind. All that we are looking for can be found in ourselves. The forms have everything you need. If someone is looking for a well for water, they don't dig in one place for a while and then move to a new place. You have to stay in the same place and dig for a long time to find results. Advanced students sometimes think they have learned all that they can at one school and look to move to a new system. This is a big mistake.

Bringing information from outside the system will only confuse people and move them away from the basic principles and philosophy of the original art. A monk or priest can't make their religion stronger by studying other religions because the result is a movement away from the original philosophy and the end result could be completely different from the beginning.

Everything that we need in the martial arts is in the classic forms. We just have to find "it" through diligent practice. When you go to a nice restaurant, to enjoy the food, you must eat slowly and savor the flavor. To eat quickly is pointless and wasteful, much like someone throwing away a watermelon because they only tasted the outside of it. You find happiness from inside. Looking around for it on the outside is fruitless. When you feel bored, look deeper inside the movements, concentrate on the basic principles. Remember, there are no shortcuts. Look for the answer in simple terms. The quest to find the solution in complex terms will lead you down the wrong path. The ultimate goal of martial arts is nam or enlightenment which comes from within.