



Grandmaster Kim Soo conducting a white-belt class at the University of Houston.

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## The Necessity of Training

by Grandmaster Kim Soo, 10th. Dan & Founder, Chayon-Ryu Martial Arts

I would like you to consider that life is a journey, not a destination.

Think of this journey as a ship on the ocean encountering many obstacles. If you are brave and determined you will conquer all the ocean can throw at you. If you are weak minded and uncertain of your actions you will surely be lost at sea. Where does one learn how to cope with the many obstacles that will confront us through our journey of life? The answer is Chayon-Ryu.

People spend many years at school getting a formal education. Some continue on to university and graduate study, with the intent of finding a better job. However, there are no guarantees in life.

I have seen many homeless people near the Downtown dojang since 1968. Many of these "bums" were doctors, lawyers and teachers. Although they had outstanding formal education, they lacked the ability to see their dreams through to fruition. They had nervous breakdowns or bankruptcy and lost their families. When an obstacle arose before them they withered rather than standing up to it. For all the years of formal education, they learned very few "life" skills.

To put your education to work for you takes a positive attitude and common sense. Common sense could be described as the ability to make good decisions. With your common sense you can see through the facade of tricksters preventing yourself from being fooled, perhaps avoiding trouble altogether. Chayon-Ryu helps you avoid the pitfalls of adult life by teaching you wisdom, common sense, and above all, a positive attitude.

Chayon-Ryu is an investment in your future. Chayon-Ryu gives you the strength and courage to overcome these obstacles. If you find yourself in a difficult situation, your training gives you an attitude of invincibility. This positive attitude will see you through the greatest hardships. You may not succeed with your problems the first time, but ag

your training comes to the fore. Patience. Repetition. You know you will succeed if you keep trying.

Professional businessmen and women need Chayon-Ryu to fight the stress in their daily lives. I have spoken before about your inside and outside enemies. The outside enemy is the obvious physical attacker that you may encounter once or twice in your whole life. Your inside enemy is the stress, worry, and self-doubt you encounter all day, every day. This is your biggest enemy. The body's response to stress is "fight or flight" - i.e., physical activity. Therefore, to defeat stress you need to fight your imaginary opponent every time you come to class. This way you beat stress by using the body's own mechanism, fighting it.

Chayon-Ryu is taught in six Houston area colleges. Many students take the class, but very few join the school after their course is over. Why is that?

College students are trying to improve their life through education, but they must feel that Chayon-Ryu does not add to that education. So what was their motivation for taking the class? Many students take martial arts classes for fun and fitness, to learn self-defense, and lose weight. These may be reasons to start, but students should realize they get much more from their training than these superficial benefits. The list is endless, but starts with learning how to strengthen and control their minds, self-discipline, confidence, and a positive attitude.

These benefits can be summed up in the system patch. The system patch has a new symbol before *In*, "patience" and *Nam*, "enlightenment." The new symbol means "mind", and the combination of these symbols mean that patience and enlightenment both come from the mind. If students are only seeing the physical benefits of their training they are missing the most important point. Chayon-Ryu is not just about physical skills; it is about mental and spiritual growth. It is to help you realize your potential as an independent person. Help you realize your responsibilities at home, at work, and at the dojang. Your patience also gives you indomitable spirit, and an understanding that through repetition there is nothing you can't achieve. This is what you must take from your training and apply to your life. Whatever your dreams

they can only be realized by shooting for the stars with confidence, patience, and a positive attitude.

Many different types of people need to train for different reasons. School children need to learn self-discipline and respect for others. Chayon-Ryu also teaches them coordination, balance, and movement skills. In particular, high school and college students need the influence of Chayon-Ryu in their lives. These years are very trying for rebellious teenagers and their parents. Peer pressure is perhaps greatest at this age because of the desire to fit in and be popular. Quite often, teens are left "home alone" because they are considered responsible. However, without parental guidance, teens are less likely to make mature decisions concerning their future. There are so many attractions for teens. Gangs, drugs, and sex are all pervasive in their worlds. They see no further than their immediate pleasure, much less that their behavior may lead them to prison, addiction, or unwanted parenthood! They need Chayon-Ryu to keep them on the safe path, avoiding all the traps that can destroy their future.

I have heard many excuses why people don't need Martial Arts. Examples of these and explanations why you need Chayon-Ryu include:

I am young and strong	That will soon pass and then you will be weak in mind and body.
I am too weak	You have all the power you will ever need if you learn to harness it.
I don't have good coordination or balance	Training will improve your coordination and balance.
I am wealthy	Then you had better learn how to keep it.
I can't afford it	At around \$5 a lesson (less than the cost of a burger, fries, and a drink) it will be one of the best investments of your life.
I have a gun	Then you had better understand when to use it.
I don't have time	Is 3 or 4 hours a week too much time to improve the quality of your life?
I don't want to fight	The best way to avoid trouble is to learn how to be safe.
I am too shy and embarrassed	By training you can overcome your shyness and improve your life.

It's too far	People travel from around the world to train here. You are lucky to live in the same city where I have taught for over 30 years.
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I am reminded of a Korean saying: There are 108 excuses, the last one being "I don't know why -just because." Any excuse is already a negative attitude and for this reason alone you need to train. There is always a reason to train, whichever ways your life or personality can be improved, these are the ways that Chayon-Ryu could help.

How do you find the true benefit of your training? I wish I could tell you it was glamorous and exciting. With the right attitude it can always be exciting, but it is hardly glamorous. The most important aspect is patience. You won't find the benefits overnight. It may take a couple of years before you really understand. However, your understanding keeps growing from that point.

Training is exciting if you look for the Basic Principles. I see many students (even high ranking) who know the movements but don't understand principles such as body shifting and turning, balanced motion, focus on abdomen and proper breathing. In order to maximize your training experience I would like you to do one thing. Don't just look on the surface at what you are doing. Dig deeper and try to understand the real meaning. I guarantee you will be amazed at the treasures you will discover. Training is the process through which you find it - whatever it is you are looking for. The color of your belt or the number of stripes doesn't mean anything. It is the process of training that is important.

Training is your journey. The destination is up to you.