

## **Finding My Su Ryon**

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December 10, 2006

Su Ryon is an important concept in the growth and development of a black belt in Chayon Ryu. The definition given of Su Ryon is sincere martial arts training. There are many concepts involved to have a clear understanding of the point of martial arts. One important concept is giving back to the system. This point connects with the idea of Kong.

Kong itself is defined as credit or merit for achievements and is not given for doing the barest minimum. Achieving Kong requires many concepts to be grasped and learned such as leadership, contribution, participation, and humility.

Leadership is a must and a leader must be a good role model. Therefore, every higher-ranking belt should be a good role model to the lower ranking belts. For example, the higher ranked belts should not wait for the lower ranked belts to clean and prepare the dojang for class, but help them. Arriving exactly on time or late by higher ranked belts is not acceptable, because the lower ranked belts may perceive it as acceptable behavior. All students should arrive 15 to 30 minutes early with the work shared evenly and fairly with rank having no influence. Talking before, during, or after lessons by higher ranked belts is not a leadership quality. This is distracting and detracts from the lesson in progress. Lower ranked or younger belts may perceive this behavior as being acceptable.

Humility is very important in the development of Su Ryon. Intimidation during sparring or class implies conceit. A conceited outlook merely detracts from the learning experience of all. Students should be humble and not expect praise for their cleaning or participation in classes or events. One should not expect or try to impress their instructor, or Grandmaster Kim Soo. Another example of humility would be cleaning of the dojang by all levels of belts, without being instructed to do so. The purpose would be to complete the task for one's growth, not recognition or the benefits of others. The task is done as if it is a drink of water, it is merely to quench one's thirst.

Participation is required by all. Doing the minimum work required shows lower ranked belts that they too do not have to invest of themselves. Realistically, everyone should share in the work, not take it all upon themselves or delegate it all upon others. Ninety percent of events offered by the system, including teaching clinics, everyone should attend black belt class and rank tests, in the system. Time and effort must be dedicated to achieve the maximum benefit and knowledge from the lessons. By feeling that paying only the required dues and attending classes shows lack of commitment. In some instances, the lack of serious training is transferred to other students and can become a serious problem for an entire class. The class in general might become a discipline problem and learn or achieve nothing. Anger and frustration are a natural outcome. Serious students' progress

would be impeded; any problems or mistakes with forms or techniques could go uncorrected.

Another aspect of participation is to remain current on changes within the system. Ways to teach change, such as certain moves in forms, basics, practices, etc. are constantly changing to make them better, or more natural. For instance, the dojang hun was changed a few years ago, from “respect your elders” to “respect others”. This came from being in contact with the Chayon Ryu headquarters, and constant practice to remember to say it correctly. Individual schools can hold a special seminar to exhibit the current changes for students, to update them. All should attend the events for all the branches of the system. All small, individual schools and large, system wide events should be viewed with great significance.

Another means to achieving Su Ryon is to contribute to the system. Paying fees to maintain the system and schools is important for growth of the system and its students. It also encourages commitment to learning. Generally, when a person invests time, money and effort into their training they take it more seriously. They train with more honesty and sincerity. In return, students can give back to the school by performing demonstrations, holding classes outside of normal class time and recruitment of new students. Hanging Chayon Ryu flyers, or making public announcements or sharing information with friends and acquaintances is a way to invite closer inspection and raise curiosity about the system, making people watch a class for themselves to see if they want to join.

The Chayon Ryu website should be monitored for a schedule of upcoming events. A student should also remain in close contact with their instructor, for the location and time of certain events. To help students’ Kong and Su Ryon progress, the events must be attended. It is the student’s responsibility to remain updated on aspects pertaining to their specific training. The teacher also remain informed for their classes, so therefore must keep in communication with their instructor to stay informed on current events and changes. The website is a good resource to remain informed on certain subjects of Chayon Ryu. For example, one could learn who was promoted and when to black belt since the beginning of the system. One can see a few of the letters the Grandmaster has written on subjects like Su Ryon, the real meaning of martial arts, responsibilities of a Black Belt, etc. This helps assists a person to grow in their understanding of martial arts, and in their sincerity in training and why they do what they do. It is human nature to want to understand what one is doing and what he (or she) is striving to achieve, such as Su Ryon, Kong, or depending on their rank within the system, the responsibilities of a Black Belt.

A person should exhibit humility when they are promoted to a higher rank, and should become even more humble in their outlook and treatment of lower belts. Said person should not order people about, but should instruct the student how to fix a move, or to improve a technique, such as a kihop. The correction should not be demeaning, condescending or arrogant, but constructive and

instructive. For example, a suggestion of how to make a move look or feel better, so the student is not uncomfortable. It also helps the instructor or co-instructor to constantly monitor their technique, because there is always room for improvement in all aspects.

Responsibilities of a Black Belt tie in directly to the idea of Su Ryon. A person must be disciplined for both. The responsibilities are to show leadership, participation, punctuality, teaching, and cleaning. A person cannot be reliable if they are not punctual. No one would ever know if they would show up late, if they showed up at all. No one trusts in a person who is constantly late or a no show. Therefore, the person involved is a poor role model.

As people train longer and longer, their way of thinking changes regarding events and situations. Early in ones training, we must think about every little motion and movement. Later in one's training, when there is an unplanned situation, like slippery ice, one can react quickly and automatically to fall correctly on said ice. Falling incorrectly and hitting their heads with just enough force can be permanently damaging to people. Karate can and has saved people's lives. When people are lower ranked belts, they think of nothing but coming to class and making sure they pay the class fees on time. As they slowly advance their training different terms are understood, just as the movements are. Techniques are initially performed as do-as-you-see; instead of understand what you are doing. It is a lot easier to learn how to do a form when the motions are understood than when they are just being replicated. People begin to be true to what makes them grow in Su Ryon, and then know what they need to do to keep growing both mentally and physically. In the beginning it is also very hard to fix techniques and moves, because the movements are not understood, so there is not a concept of right and wrong.

As I have gone up in rank, I have noticed that my perspective on training has changed also. When I was a white belt, I copied what others performed and understood nothing of what I was doing. I knew I had to help clean the dojang, but did not know why. I knew there was a point to everything else we did, like basics, and practicles, but did not understand the point. As I slowly advanced through the belts, the knowledge came slowly, but I started understanding there was a reason why I was doing all of these things. There was more understanding when I achieved brown belt. I began to deep clean the dojang because I wanted to and did not have to. I started to understand why we did not talk during class, even though I did not back at the beginning of my lessons. For my second gup brown belt rank test paper, I had to write about Kong. That is what made me understand about one of the basic principles of Chayon Ryu—Su Ryon. I started to understand that I do this for myself, and I know not to even try to impress my instructor, because that does not work on anyone. I have realized that teaching helps me to learn too. It is a satisfying way to give back to Chayon Ryu. I get to help without being smug about it, try and help other students on their way to a deeper meaning of Chayon Ryu, and to set them on their way to being sincere in

their studies of martial arts. I now understand the movements of all the forms I do, and it is definitely a lifestyle, to join and go far in martial arts. I can say from my experience that I use the principles of this style everyday, from using deep breathing to calm my nerves and prepare for an important task, to falling correctly on very slippery ice without thinking about it. I now know to listen to my instructor and try very hard to fix something if it is wrong.

Su Ryon has made an impact, and should be part of every person's life, to help them be honest and sincere in the things they do, and so they understand the concepts and moves they do. Every person in Chayon Ryu should work hard during class, no matter how much energy they have, or lack thereof. Black belt is a great achievement, but the more power (or higher rank) someone gets, the more responsibility.