

A photograph of two children, a boy and a girl, in white martial arts uniforms with purple and red accents. They are standing on a blue mat in a dojo, facing each other and bowing. In the background, there are black punching bags, one with the word 'master' and another with 'POWERLINE' and 'Training Equipment' logos. A purple protective pad is on the floor between them.

# Respect

## The Martial Arts Code of Conduct

by Dr. Terrence Webster-Doyle

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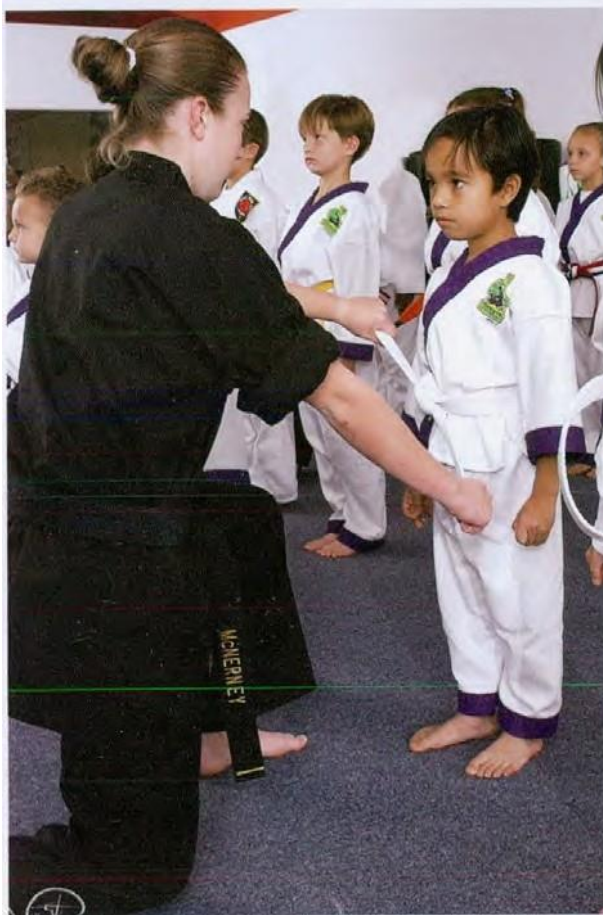
## The Martial Arts Code of Conduct

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Special thanks to our photographer, John Seberg (Seberg Photography, Inc., on the web at [www.seberg.com](http://www.seberg.com)), and to Damon and Kimber Hill and the students of the Modern Martial Arts Academy, DeLand, Florida.

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Today at our martial arts school we are learning about Respect. Respect is the foundation of the Martial Arts Code of Conduct.



Respect means acting like a gentleman or gentlewoman. It means respecting our parents, teachers, and friends. Respect also means caring for ourselves, taking care of our bodies by keeping them healthy and clean. It means eating healthy foods and getting enough exercise and thinking healthy thoughts.



The Martial Arts Code of Conduct is a set of rules to live by. Our teachers tell us that a "code" describes a way of behaving that makes a better life for everyone. It is how we act, what we do every day that allows us to live peacefully and happily with one another.



Studying the martial arts teaches us how to stop a bully from hurting us. But it also teaches us to respect the bully because a bully is just someone who has been picked on too, someone who has been hurt and feels angry. This is a part of our Code of Conduct: to act with kindness even to those who want to hurt us.



Our teachers help us understand how other people feel and how everyone just wants to be liked. They tell us that kindness-treating people like we would like to be treated-is an important part of the Martial Arts Code of Conduct.



We need to be kind to people, especially people who are less fortunate than us. If someone is very old or sick or has a disability, it may be difficult for them to do the ordinary things that we can do. We need to be kind to all living creatures. Being kind to our pets means feeding them and making sure they are not hurt in any way.





Our teachers tell us that the Martial Arts Code of Conduct is like a map. When we travel, a map shows us how to get to where we want to go. The Martial Arts Code of Conduct gives us directions to follow as we travel on the road of life, and shows us how to get along with people we meet on the way.

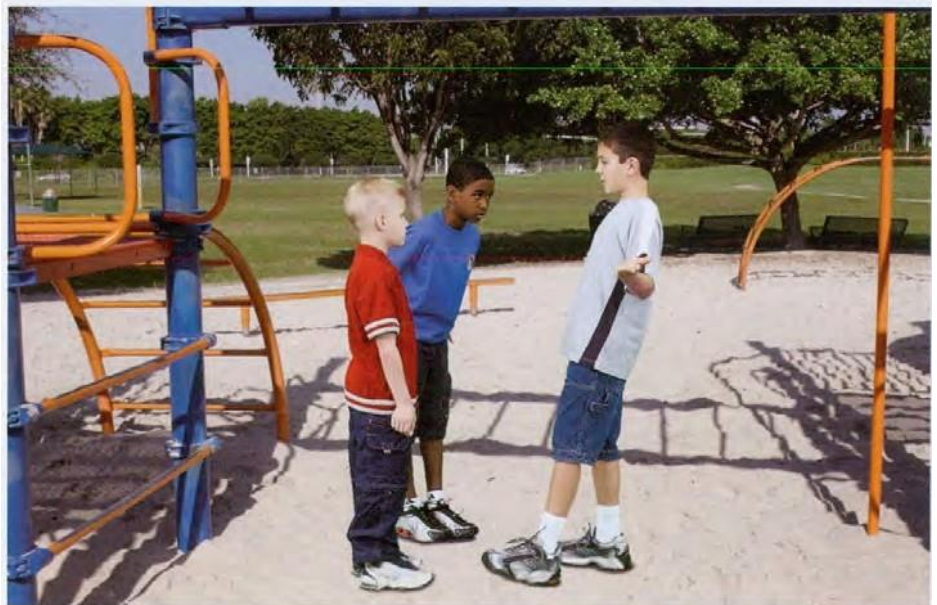
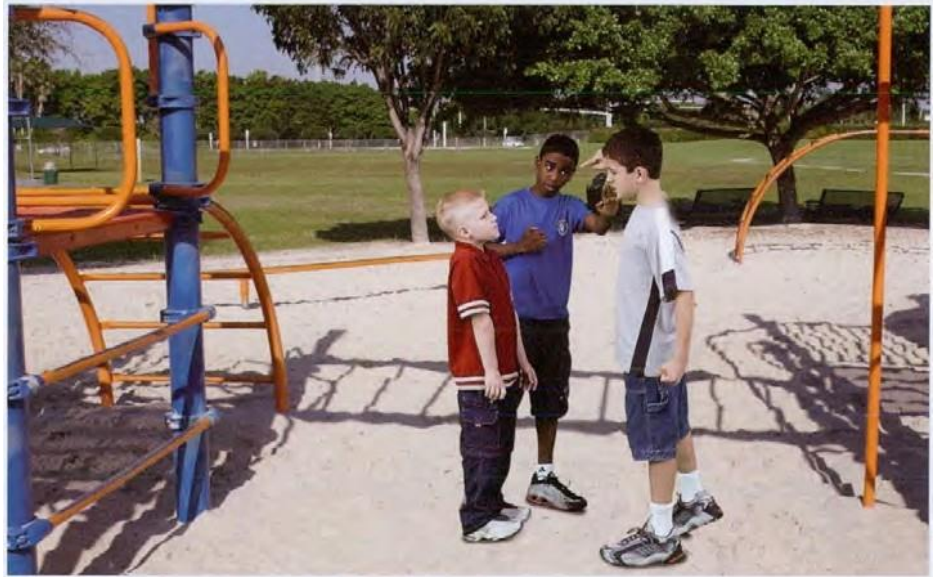


Courtesy is also part of the Martial Arts Code of Conduct. Courtesy is being polite, like saying, "May I" or "Please" when we want something and "Thank you" when someone does something for us. If a new student comes to our school it is polite to say hello and to make him or her comfortable being in a new place with new people. Courtesy is really just being nice.



The Martial Arts Code of Conduct tells us about the importance of being honest. Being honest is telling the truth, to others and to ourselves. It is also acting honestly, doing what we believe is right and not doing what we know is wrong. It means treating people fairly, as we would want to be treated.

The Martial Arts Code of Conduct tells about the importance of courage. Having courage means being brave enough to stand up for what is right. If a bully is picking on someone it will take courage to make the bully stop. We also need to be brave when we are sick or lonely or bad things are happening.



Our teachers tell us that life is full of challenges and that we need to be brave to meet them with a strong spirit. We need to have courage to live the Martial Arts Code of Conduct even when others around us are being disrespectful.



Our teachers tell us that life is a test of our character. Having character means living by the rules of the Martial Arts Code of Conduct. Having character means being strong even if we feel weak inside. Having character means treating people with kindness even if we don't feel like it.

Our teachers tell us that because we are human we will make mistakes. They tell us not to judge ourselves harshly, not to think that we are bad. They say that if we make a mistake, if we are unkind or disrespectful, we should forgive ourselves and just keep on trying. As long as we are trying we are doing the best we can.





Another important part of the Martial Arts Code of Conduct is order. Order means keeping ourselves and our lives organized. It means keeping our rooms neat by putting our things in their proper place. It means doing the jobs we are asked to do by our parents and teachers, and being on time.



In our martial arts school we create order when we line up our shoes and put away our clothes and schoolbooks in our lockers. We are taught to fold our martial arts uniforms neatly and to keep them clean. When we line up in class we are asked to stand up tall, form a straight line, and look to the front. This creates order in our group and helps us to work together as a team.

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