

Sometimes courage means standing out, speaking up, and putting yourself out there. Other times, courage means having the strength to hold back, be gentle, and be HUMBLE. Humility and confidence go hand in hand, in fact, you could say they almost have the exact same meaning.

The word “humility” comes from the same root word as “human”. They both mean “coming from the earth”. To be humble is to not place yourself as more important than anybody else. It ALSO means not to place yourself as less important than anybody else.

A humble and confident person does not feel the need to brag about how awesome they are in order to feel good about themselves, because they understand that other people are just as important as they are. Not more or less, just equal. They realize that everyone is just on different parts of the same path, and they don’t let those differences affect their sense of self worth.

Sometimes people mistakenly think humility means you have to put yourself down, but this is not true at all. Humility simply means you are able to keep learning. In kung fu, we call this the WHITE BELT MENTALITY. Remember when you were a White Belt? Your mind was like a brand new, empty cup. You had to pay very close attention to every small detail in order to learn, and catch every drop of knowledge into your “cup”.

It is very easy to be humble as a White Belt because you’re expected to know nothing at all. But, as you climb through the ranks gaining knowledge and skill, it gets much harder to be humble. After all, it feels nice and comfortable to feel like you know something! It takes amazing amounts of courage to be able to admit that you do not yet know something. The higher your rank, the scarier it is! However, if you are able to be humble, you will be confident in the fact that learning is a never-ending process that looks completely different for everyone. Whether or not a student has a WHITE BELT MENTALITY is often the difference between someone who makes it to Black Sash, and someone who does not.



Which do you think takes more courage? A White Belt saying he does not know? or a Black Sash saying he does not know?

After every class, it is important to “empty your cup”, so to speak. This doesn’t mean you have to forget what you learned, it simply means that the next time you appear before the instructor, you want to bring a completely empty cup, or an empty mind, ready for learning.

If a student brings a “full cup” or a full mind to class, acting as though they have already mastered the technique and therefore do not need to pay attention, then it is a sure thing that the student will not improve or have any fun.

When your “cup” is empty, it is easy to trust the instructor and enjoy learning things, even if you’ve learned them 10,000 times already!! There is a reason why the very highest sash is the White Sash. It is symbolic that the highest level of mastery means realizing that there is no such thing as perfection of technique, and there is always room for improvement, or a different way to understand something if the student will ALWAYS approach learning with a White Belt Mentality. Students who wish to train to a high level of skill will never say “I already learned this before!”. **YOUR ASSIGNMENT IS ON THE BACK ---->**

COURAGE ASSIGNMENT #2

Name: _____

Complete the assignment to earn 1 homework stripe on your belt.

HUMILITY JOURNAL

Your assignment is to keep a log of 10 ACTS OF HUMILITY. Half of them can be from the past, but AT LEAST 5 of them need to be done AFTER receiving this assignment. An example of HUMILITY could be saying that you are sorry to someone you wronged, or admitting you were wrong after a fight. It could be resisting the urge to brag after winning a game, or it could be complimenting someone after you lose a game. It could be letting a friend or family member take the credit for something good you both did. It could be listening to an opinion you don't like WITHOUT arguing! A fun challenge might be attending a Lower Level class with an "empty cup".... There are many ways to practice humility in everyday life. If you need help identifying them, ask for help from your Instructors or a parent. During Leadership circle, share one ACT OF HUMILITY that was particularly difficult for you and why.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____

