Northern Shaolin Kung Fu Essay, Research Paper

Northern Shaolin Kung Fu

What is Kung Fu? Kung Fu also known as Gong Fu, Gung Fu, and Wushu, means martial art. Why Northern Shaolin? Northern Shaolin Kung Fu is the original martial art in which all other styles were descended from. Shaolin means Young Forest, hence big things start off small(Nguyen, 1995). Northern Shaolin originated back in the day about 4,000 years ago in a Shaolin Buddhist temple. It was developed by monks whose goal was to achieve self defense from those who would take advantage of their peaceful manner. In time it has been proven to be one of the most effective techniques for self defense. Yet it would be nothing if it were not for the attitude accompanied by it.

The philosophy that Northern Shaolin Kung Fu is comprised of is very simple. The keys to be successful in it are hard work, patience, and perseverance. You must be able to rise above it all. Kung Fun is a very graceful yet extremely powerful art. The whole concept deals with if you cannot be hit, hence you cannot be hurt. The goal is to avoid conflict. Kung Fu teaches you to avoid confrontation, which is to the contrary to what most people would think. As a last result Kung Fu is used as self defense.

Thus the keys to self defense are first and most notably, avoid fights and confrontations whenever possible. Thus allowing you to resolve the conflict before it turns violent. Then if the situation turns ugly you’ll be prepared to nullify the situation quickly and decisively with no theatrics. These methods have been time proven to be extremely efficient.

Northern Shaolin Kung Fu has another aspect to it as well. It’s been known to soothe and calm oneself when faced with stressful situations. Meditation is a very important part of Kung Fu. It gives you concentration to help you see things before they happen.

There are many forms in which Kung Fu is practiced but there are five basic ones, they are: Bare-hand, Weapons, Set Sparring, Group Exercises, and free sparring. A bare-hand category includes “long-fist” in which the goal is to achieve full extension of the limbs in order to sustain balance and power. This Shaolin style is esteemed for its acrobatics that serve up devastating blows. The weapon’s category has four basic weapons used which are: staff, spear, a broadsword, and straight sword. As you advance in technique, you use more complicated weapons such as nine section whip, three section staff, and double halberd. Set sparring category deals with sparring in sets such as: Bare-hand vs. Bare-hand, Bare-hand vs. Weapons, and Weapons vs. Weapons. Group Exercise’s category is comprised of synchronized movements with or without weapons. Free Sparring consists of free combat duels between two fighters according to fixed rules. This type of form is used in tournaments.

There are many benefits that are attained once you have decided to commit yourself to Kung Fu. It refines your combat skills, concentration, will power, as well as your health. It keeps you at the top of your game and then some. Norther Shaolin style is best fitted for someone who is agile, very flexible, and has a considerable amount of endurance and speed. If you do not posses these qualities, Shaolin style allows someone that desires these traits to achieve them. Shaolin style promotes self defense, good health, and happiness. What more could anybody want?

One of the aspects that can even be considered a downside to Kung Fu, is the time and energy you must spend on it. This should not be taken a negative, for the more time you spend perfecting your technique the more benefits you acquire. Mentally Kung Fu prepares you to face everyday trials and tribulations.

So how might I become a Northern Shaolin Kung Fu student? You might ask. Well the task is not as easy as you might think. You must be willing to give what it takes, you must make sacrifices, and in the end it will all pay off. As stated by the Dragoon Moon Martial Arts Association, “You must realize that just because you have signed up at some martial art school does not mean you are a student, you are merely a customer” The difference between student and customer is very distinct. A customer thinks “What can I get from Kung Fu,” where as the student thinks “What can I give to Kung Fu.” A student does not think of himself, but he thinks primarily of the teacher, and secondly about the other students. A customer always seeks recognition and rank, contrary to the student which just seeks to be the best practitioner, for the style. If you decide you are a student then you are most definitely a customer, for only the teacher knows who is who. Thus your aspirations should be that some day your teacher considers you his student and not simply a customer.

Now all of you might be thinking, “I see it all on tv and in the movies, it looks easy.” Well-let me tell you that a lot of the things you see on tv and in the movies is often exaggerated and glamorized. Special effects are used, and routines are choreographed by stuntmen. In real life situations you won’t catch a bullet with your hand while jumping in the air and kick somebody’s head off. It just doesn’t happen, and contradictory to what Kung Fu stands for. Yes, there are some people who keep it real. Movie stars like Jet Li and Jackie Chan both use Northern Shaolin Kung Fu. Yet I must remind you that they are very skilled practitioners who have about 20 years of experience each. Bruce Lee also studied Northern Shaolin Kung Fu and later developed a method of his own called Jeet Kune do. This goes to show that Northern Shaolin Kung Fu has produced many of the best martial artists then, as well as now.

Now in all this rambling I hope you have learned something. That Kung Fu is not merely a sport. It has historically and culturally been regarded as the greatest of all martial arts(Nguyen/Lam 1995). Through this art you can enhance both your body and mind in ways never dreamed. You will have one of the most efficient self-defense techniques known to man and you will develop a positive attitude that will help you in all aspects of your life. To think this all came to pass, because some monks in a Shaolin temple 4,000 years ago just wanted to protect themselves.

Bibliography

References

Nguyen, Vu Q., & Lam, Sifu Wing (1995). Northern Shaolin Kung Fu. Boston:Regal

Unknown Author, (2 Oct. 2000). “Chung Shing Kung Fu”. Electronic Text. (1999) 3 par.

Available http://www.xmission.com/~tpleary/pages/kfhtml/kf.info.html

Unknown Author, (7 Oct. 2000). “Zhon Yi Kung Fu Association” Electronic Text. (2000)

3 par. Available http://www.zykungfu.madison.wi.us/intro.html

Unknown Author, (2 Oct. 2000). “Dragon Moon Martial Arts Association:Articles”. Electronic Text. (2000) 3 par. Available http://www.dragonmoon.org/article2html

Unknown Author, (4 Oct. 2000). “What is Wushu?”. Electronic Text. (1999) 4 par. Available http://www.uswushuacademy.com/Wushu%20History.htm

Unknown Author, (4 Oct. 2000) “What is Jeet Kune Do.” Electronic Text. (1999) 10 par. Available http://home1gte.net/jettek/page3.html