

cut out and save for a martial artist you know

### A MARTIAL ARTS EDUCATION

**Tony Annesi, head instructor,  
BUSHIDO-KAI, 92 Blandin Ave., Framingham  
Sure, Self-development, but HOW? 1**



In my book, *The Road to Mastery: The Benefits of Budo* (available at [www.bushido-kai.net](http://www.bushido-kai.net)), I suggest a number of angles from which martial arts training addresses self-development. It would be difficult to give an adequate summary of the book in the remaining few lines. Instead, let me offer a few simple ways in which traditional martial arts can positively influence the student's mind while training the student's body: (1) by direct lecture and lessons (accomplished by



adhering to the art's traditions, presenting strategic or tactical philosophies, respecting the cultural heritage of the art and the teacher's personal interpretation of the teachings), (2) by analogy, (3) by life-lessons. The second and third are indirect methods. All three occur in the traditional martial arts dojo.

*More next week.*

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Sure, Self-development, but HOW? 2**



How does the martial arts teach self-development through physical training? **Analogies** allow the student to draw intellectual lessons from physical examples. Blocks that bat away an attacking strike may teach us to oppose non-physical aggression in our daily life; those receptions that deflect or evade an attack teach us to side-step non-physical aggression. Stances teach us that a foundation must be strong if we are to build skills upon it; they also teach us that mobility is as important as stability to effectuate those skills. Variations of technique show us that there is more than one way to defend—they teach us to "think out of the box." **Life-**



**lessons** occur when the student faces personal challenges in order to achieve goals. Preparing for more and more difficult exams offers some of the most important life-lessons: one must be more organized, have more discipline, learn to communicate & cooperate better with training partners. One faces one's own ego, one's desire to achieve, and simultaneously one's fear of failure. One learns to build oneself up but not get too cocky. Preparation for exams is an invaluable instructor of understanding and facing oneself. And that, of course, is what self-development is all about.

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