

**Thomas E. Kirk - 1st Gup**  
**Lititz World Tang Soo Do – January 2000**

## **Integrity**

I chose to write about the first tenet of integrity because I believe that all the other tenets are either closely associated with integrity or are meaningless without it. The dictionary describes integrity as “the quality of being honest and trustworthy.” In Matthew 5:37, Jesus admonishes us to “let your ‘yes’ be ‘yes’ and your ‘no’ be ‘no’.” What I speak and what I do should reflect this simple, but profound tenet, and is at the heart of my commitment to integrity.

Without integrity, there is no need to “**concentrate**” on the physical fundamentals of Tang Soo Do. My training would be weak.

Without integrity, there is no need to “**persevere**” in the mental aspects of the art of Tang Soo Do. I would have no solid foundation on which to base my beliefs.

If I do not have integrity, I would have no “**respect**” for myself and would not be able to offer heartfelt respect for others. Any “**obedience**” that I would give to others would be feigned and shallow.

If I do not have integrity, I have already shown that I do not have “**self control**.”

I believe that true “**humility**” can only come through an honest evaluation of myself and how I am seen by the eyes of God, and therefore, it too is an integral part of integrity.

An “**indomitable spirit**” means unconquerable. I hope to exemplify that the indomitable Spirit in me is the Holy Spirit of God which is truly unconquerable. God’s Spirit is perfectly honest and trustworthy. It is my desire that His Spirit will control my mind and emotions and every other aspect of my being. As I allow this to happen on a daily basis, I will truly be able to walk in integrity.

I choose to study Tang Soo Do for a few different reasons. Aside from an early interest in the martial arts that was based on a wrong desire, I became interested at the age of 42 when my son Adam showed interest. I knew that the self defense techniques I would learn would be beneficial if I ever needed them although the biggest reason was physical conditioning. After determining that it would be potentially good for the back problems I had, as well as a great way to stay in shape, I decided to give it a try.

I continue to study Tang Soo Do because I enjoy it. It has helped strengthen my back as I had hoped, and I have had only a few minor problems with it since I starting training. I enjoy the discipline and the comraderie with the other students. I’ve gotten into better shape overall, and I’ve been able to learn the basics of self defense and fighting techniques. I would like to continue learning and earn my Black Belt.

As I have told many people, as long as I can afford it and I’m still having fun, I expect to continue my training for a long time. Tang Soo!