

Master Steve Abbate's
Cobra Kai Kung Fu



BY
GRANDMASTER STEVEN G. ABBATE
10th LEVEL BLACK SASH

(Revised May 2010)

COBRA KAI KUNG FU CLUB

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We dedicate this training manual to the
memory of

Grandmaster Steven G. Abbate

1946 – 2007

**Whose Courage We Honor
Who's Memory We Cherish
And Whose Spirit We keep Alive At
Cobra Kai**



Grandmaster Steven G. Abbate



Grandmaster Lo Kwang Yo

To the Sifu from America from the Grand Master

“Look into the flame of the candle. Concentrate... search for its center. Now, calm your spirit. What do you see, peace or discontent?”

“I see both, Grand Master.”

“What you see my son, is your own heart.
Train yourself harder, like an incessant storm.
You tell your American students to seek peace always,
but that they must first find peace themselves.
If you do as I say, you will have true power and
the flame will reflect only content!”

Professional Credentials of
Grandmaster Steven G. Abbate, 10th Level Black Sash

Grandmaster Steven Abbate started his career in the Art of Kung Fu at age 16 in Chicago's Chinatown. In 1962 he formally trained under Master Fu Lun Cho from Hong Kong, studying the arts of Tai Kit Kuen (Grand Snake Fist Style) and Northern Shaolin 7-Star Praying Mantis.

In 1964, after graduation from Elmwood Park High School, Grandmaster Abbate joined the United States Marine Corps. Master Cho left Chicago to run his school in Hong Kong.

In 1965, while serving as a recon scout with the 4th Marine Brigade out of Kaneohe Bay Hawaii, Grandmaster Abbate was sent to Vietnam, where he was part of the original Marine landing at Chu Lai. During his tour he was highly decorated and med-evac'd in late 1966.

After his honorable discharge in 1968, he joined the 24th Marine Regiment stationed in Waukegan Illinois, where he taught hand-to-hand combat and guerilla jungle warfare. He went on extended active duty and became a recruiter for the Marines. He also went through Green Beret school and advanced Jump School training.

In 1969, Grandmaster Abbate became a police Officer with the Rolling Meadows Police Department. He was also introduced to Grandmaster Chi-Yuan Tsai, with whom he trained in Northern Shaolin Chuan Fa Kung Fu and who formally trained him for his ring-fighting career. He competed on the international circuit, fighting full-contact in Hong Kong, Taiwan, Okinawa and the U.S., winning many titles in 10 years.

Grandmaster Abbate was also introduced to and studied with Kwong Ming Loy, a Master in the Northern Shaolin 7-Star Praying Mantis system, and a direct student of Grandmaster Fu Lun Cho. He also studied under Master Wu of the Mei Wah system (Plum Flower Combat Tai Chi), and attended seminars and trained with Ed Parker, Bill Wallace, and Bruce Lee.

Grandmaster Abbate won over 300 awards for Full-Contact Kickboxing, and Sport Karate, taught thousands of students, and given innumerable seminars and demonstrations. He was the Midwest representative for Chuck Norris' *Kick* (Karate International Council of Kickboxing) and taught and trained under Grandmaster Chi-Yuan Tsai until 2007.

In September of 2002, Grandmaster Abbate received his 10th Level Black Sash from Grandmaster Tsai in an award ceremony at his school, attended by pioneers of Kung Fu and Karate, such the late Ken Knutson, Joe Ganghi, Bob Schirmer, Tom Saviano, Tom Heriaud, and others from Florida to California.

Grandmaster Abbate also held black belts in Kenpo Karate, Gong Yuan Kung Fu and Cobra Kai is associated with the American Karate Association, World Kuoshu Republic of China, Chinese Kuoshu Martial Arts Federation, Tsai's Kung Fu International, Thai Boxing Commission, Midwest Circuit, and Grandmaster Abbate was the President of the American Martial Artists. Grandmaster Abbate passed away on August 19, 2007. He died as he lived, with a heart of gold and the soul of a warrior.

PART 1 – BEGINNING

“In the harmony of the universe, sometimes the ending is merely the beginning.”

- Anonymous Student of the Shaolin Temple

This manual is meant to aid a student, while taking formal instruction from a qualified professional teacher of the martial arts. We will be discussing our particular style, but most martial arts training utilize the same principals. It is the approach that may be different. Remember that though that Kung Fu cannot be learned from a book alone. It must be experienced.

Most manuals for the martial arts start out by giving a definition explaining “What is Kung Fu?” or “What is Karate?”. We will get to that, but let’s set the stage first. Let’s talk about training and the *Cobra Kai method*.

There is no replacement for a “*Kwoon*” (school) or a dojo. A new student needs the atmosphere, discipline and coordination that a school offers. Physical principals must be practiced with a partner. Therefore, the best training manuals serve merely as a written guide.

Training in a school consists of three major categories: *the mind, the body and the spirit*. We’ll start with the mind, for a proper attitude. Motivational conduct must be achieved to sustain the physical. Development of the mind and body leads to spiritual fulfillment. These three major aspects of training, once accomplished, then becomes the art.

TRAINING

The aim of training, to the student, is to acquire new skills needed to accomplish a goal set forth by that person. These skills are acquired through and according to the dictates of a curriculum set forth by a qualified teacher. The novice sacrifices time and energy to gain the knowledge needed for success. When training becomes a close involvement of the mind and body, it becomes an art form.

Art becomes the aesthetic foundation of the acquired skill. The deep psychic and physical experiences a student of the martial arts witnesses through training reveal to the practitioner that training, and expressing ones self through training, can become a highly emotional and satisfying experience. Therefore, what at first appears to be strenuous and merely physical becomes truly philosophical and satiates the student’s search for ability and inner vision.

Training cannot be a part-time endeavor. To reach their goals, a student must practice each and every day. At first, we suggest a student take formal classes two times a week. Then on off days, do a light workout at home. After the muscles are accustomed to the strenuous exercise, say about three months, we suggest going to the school for every class, if your schedule allows it.

It is unbelievable how much you can miss in just one class. Because there is so much to learn and the classes differ in what is being taught each day, it is important to be at as many classes as possible. However, we must add a word of caution. Plan your classes around your physical capabilities and try to pace yourself correctly. Ask your teacher about your progress and what he or she thinks. We have seen many overzealous students start out like gangbusters, only to burn themselves out in a few months.

Another word of caution, a student should be wary of guaranteed rank programs. Some schools offer a black belt in one to two years! This is not realistic, as only the basics can be taught in the first year and then time is needed to improve the techniques and the mind to a black belt level.

To become a qualified black sash (black belt) should take anywhere from three to five years or longer. Any Style that offers a black belt in a year, or even two years, is prostituting the art.

Just as there are a great many qualified instructors, there are just as many “fly by nights”. A serious student of the martial arts should be quite cautious of becoming involved in schools that offer such claims. We challenge any “one to two year black belt” prove their proficiency against any of our lower ranking students. Quality takes time. To become a qualified martial arts instructor will require patience and a lot of “time in”.

The road to understanding is not easy and is often times accomplished in spite of great obstacles. It is good that this is the case. If it were not, we would all have embroidered legs and flowery fists. An artificial flower may look as attractive as a real one, but the first knows its worth is not that of the second. To become a Master without first overcoming the obstacles would be to lose sight of reality.

After each training session, let the student, returning to themselves, consider their aim being with all that is without or simply beyond themselves. Let the student wander through the remote providence of nature and consider all the things as they are in the harmony of the spirit. Then let the student, returning to themselves, set a true value on all that is now within themselves.

BASIC CHARACTERISTICS OF KUNG FU TRAINING

1. Kung Fu training is an excellent healthful means of physical conditioning, since we use all the muscles of the body and stress isometric bodybuilding.
2. Kung Fu develops deep concentration and aids in the development of a moral code of conduct, which is in harmony with mankind and nature.
3. Kung Fu develops poise, self-confidence, speed, strength, humility and self-control.
4. Kung Fu is a proven and effective method of defense against all attacks, teaching the development of "Chi Kung" and has lasted for over 4000 years as an art of boxing.
5. Kung Fu can be learned by anyone, even by persons with disabilities.
6. Kung Fu brings out hidden senses and strengths.
7. Kung Fu represents a high degree of accomplishment in the martial arts and symbolizes special qualities that give a person a great feeling of satisfaction and worth.

THE COBRA KAI KUNG FU EXPERIENCE

It begins with TRAINING!

Through training one develops:

Self Defense

Physical Conditioning

Mental Control

From these aspects one attains **ART**. Through art one discovers *the TAO, or The Way*, the philosophy of Kung Fu. When one discovers the **TAO**, then one is on the road to success. Life takes on a new meaning. So, let us define what we mean by Kung Fu. The words themselves mean "**Skilled Man**". There are many variations of the words, which also mean **Mastery Of**, and it has been used as a title to denote mastership. The great philosopher Confucius was given the title of "Kung Fu Tsu", meaning Master Statesman. Kung Fu, in a modern sense, refers to the Chinese art of boxing and culture. There are two major divisions of Kung Fu, usually associated with the geographical location of their origins in ancient China. The **Nei Chi** or **Internal School of Thought** is usually associated with Southern China and "**Soft Styles**" of

Kung Fu such as Tai Chi Chuan. The *Wei Chia School of Thought* is usually associated with Northern China and the “*Hard Styles*” of Kung Fu. *Cobra Kai's Tai Kit Kuen Kung Fu is an offspring of the Northern Style*, which we will discuss later in detail. Many styles use both hard and soft techniques. In our system, you will see the effective use of both Northern and Southern techniques.

Let us now study where we came from, what moments in history have influenced the art of Chinese Boxing and, in particular, the development of the *Northern Shaolin Kung Fu style of Tai Kit Kuen*, which is the mother of the *Cobra Kai Kung Fu Club*.

THE SHAOLIN TEMPLE

*The five peaks of North Mount Shao-Shih, soaring thousands of meters into the clouds.
At its foot, the Yellow River, rushing like a white ribbon,
a tiny mound, seen from the distant Loyang City.
Unending zigzag paths circling into awe-inspiring heights.
A boundless sphere before it, so far from the mundane world, it seems.
It's here that spirits of Heaven and Earth give birth to heroes of the past and present.*

This poem, written by Hsu Wan of the Ming Dynasty, gives a vivid view of the Sung Mountains of the Hunan Province of China. The western part is called Mount Shao-Shih (little cave) and the eastern part, the Tai Shih (great cave), as recorded in the book “Records of the Travel to the West” by Tai Yen Choi. The names are given to the two parts of the Sung Mountain, located seventeen Chinese miles from one another, because there are two natural cones inside the mountain.

The Shaolin Monastery was built on the slope below one of the five peaks of Mount Shao-Shih, which gave it protection from the south. The monastery was erected by the order of the Emperor Su Wen of Wei of the northern dynasties, in honor of the Buddhist Master Bhadra. It is recorded in the Chapter of the Annals of Buddhism and Taoism, in the history of the Wei Dynasty. It was also written the Emperor Kao of Wei adored the Buddhist Master Bhadra, so he gave orders that a monastery be built at the slope of Mount Shao-Shih to lodge Master Bhadra, with food and clothing to be supplied to him. This record can be traced to the twentieth year of Tai Ho in the reign of Emperor Kao of the Northern Wei Dynasty. *What you have just read was told to Grandmaster Abbate, in past, by Grandmaster Chi-Yuan Tsai, as passed down to his teacher in Taiwan.*

It is believed that there were forms of Kung Fu being practiced 2000 years before the birth of Christ. For anything to last that long it must have some very sound and basic roots. A giant redwood can stand tall and lasts only because of its tremendous root system. Pull up the roots and you will pull up half the forest with them. So it is with Kung Fu. The root is the Tao or the Way.

The Tao is the eternal flow of the universe, believing opposites complement one another and that all life works in harmony with the universe. Yet, even this is not a good definition of the Tao. It becomes personal and is different for each person. We suggest that all new students read the *Tao Te Ching of Lao Tzu* as translated by Gia Fu Feng and Jane English. Then the student will find his or her own interpretation. There is no way to teach the Tao. You either accept it as a profound philosophy or not. *One thing stands true about the Tao, it conflicts with nothing.*

HISTORY

History is an important facet of training that many Black Belts leave out of the training session. As is the case in much of ancient Chinese history, many of the facts and dates are controversial.

However, we will proceed to the major influences in Chinese history that have had a direct influence on our particular style.

Two thousand five hundred years ago Buddhism was founded in Nepal, spreading to India about 2100 years ago. Approximately 1500 years ago, an Indian monk called Boddidharma traveled to China and brought with him the teachings of Chan Buddhism.

206 B.C. – 220 A.D.: The Han Dynasty

The Han books of warfare were written

1. Government Aspects of Occupation
2. Battlefield Strategy
3. Principals of Nature
4. Fighting Skills of Shaolin Yu Ching (This fourth book included empty hand fighting, arm and leg exercises, and the use of weapons, especially the sword)

206 B.C.

A student of Dr. Huo To, *Cheung Sam Fung*, who was a soldier and mercenary on one of the Emperor's royal ships along the Yangtze River in middle China, completed 20 years of study at Mount Song. Legend tells that at a pass on the Yangtze River called Mo Hap (the Devil's Gate), the ships came within inches of the rocky shoreline. At this point, wild apes would often attack the ship's men. Being Proficient in the style of Yi Ching, the mercenary, Cheung Sam Fung, could easily kill the apes, but only one at a time. He felt that more was needed in his art. He returned to the Shaolin Temple in Hunan Province and there, in the mountains, while meditating,

observed many battles between White Cranes and Cobra Snakes. He compiled their movements, added them to the Shaolin forms of the Tiger and Dragon and created the style of Tai Kit Kuen or Grand Snake Fist. Tai Kit Kuen became a popular style and was taught to the military and the palace guards above all other styles, because of its aggressiveness, speed and swordsmanship techniques.

495 A.D.

The Shaolin Monastery was built in Hunan Province. The first Abbot is “Bato”. Bato received the land at the foot of the Shao-Shih Mountain from the Chinese emperor to build the monastery. The name Shaolin comes from the Shao-Shih Mountain and from the forest that surrounded it. The Chinese word for forest is “Lin” and for temple it is “Su”. Thus, Shao Lin Su = Shaolin Temple.

527 A.D.

Boddhidharma (his Indian name) or Da Mo, as he is called in Chinese, arrives in China. Da Mo is very influential as he is bringing the teachings of Chan Buddhism to the Shaolin Temple. Chan is known in the west mostly through its Japanese form of Zen Buddhism. Chan and Zen have the same roots, but developed into different philosophies over the centuries.

Da Mo found the monks at the temple in poor health. He introduced four forms to improve their health:

1. Yi Jin Jing (Chi Kung) – muscle and tendon washing form
2. Xi Xue Jing (Chi Kung) – bone marrow washing form
3. Lohan Shi Ba Shao (Kung Fu) – 18 Lohan movements from which develop the 18 movement Lohan form, later the 54 movement Lohan form and then the 108 movement Lohan form develop from the original 18.
4. Wu Xing Shao (Five Animal Kung Fu Forms): Dragon, Tiger, Leopard, Crane and Snake.

Da Mo starts a new lineage at the Shaolin Temple. His disciple becomes the next abbot:

- Huike (487 – 594 A.D.)
- Sengtsan (Died 606 A.D.) – Very little was written about him, probably due to the persecution of Buddhism during his life.
- Taohsin (580 – 651 A.D.) – Leader of the “East Mountain School”.
- Huineng (638 – 713 A.D.) – An illiterate woodcutter, he was hugely influential and his own life story is considered a sutra. He was the first abbot to write down the principals of Chan Buddhism.

- With the death of Huineng, a new lineage of monks starts at the Shaolin Temple. The first generation of this lineage is Fuyu.

1ST GENERATION FIGHTING MONK

Fuyu is credited with establishing the Shaolin Kung Fu System, as we know it today. Over the course of 3 times 3 years, Fuyu invited Martial Artists from all over China to the Shaolin Temple to demonstrate their skills. During this total of 9 years, all different styles and methods were studied. The most useful techniques were integrated into Shaolin Kung Fu.

34TH GENERATION FIGHTING MONK

Shi Yan Ming was born in the “Year of the Dragon” and grew up at the Shaolin Temple in the Hunan Province of China. He is the founder and abbot of the USA Shaolin Temple in New York. Shi Yan Ming taught authentic Shaolin Kung Fu, Chi Kung, Tai Chi, Meditation and Chan Buddhism.

THE 1900’S

The Boxer Rebellion – a secret society of boxers (Kung Fu military men and swordsmen mercenaries) united and attempted to harass and drive out all foreigners from China. Many U.S. Marines stationed at the U.S. Embassy were students of Tai Kit Kuen and ended up having to fight their friends and teachers.

1912

With the Boxer Rebellion crushed – the Republic of China was formed. At this time Kung Fu flowered and was initiated in all areas of Chinese culture and learning. Tai Kit Kuen was again taught to U.S. Marines in Peking.

1917 – 1927

A Warlord Period – China once again became a land of devastation and pillage and was torn among a list of warlords, each proclaiming their right of leadership based upon the power of their boxers. The art of Tai Kit Kuen broke into two factions and took on two separate sets of characteristics.

- The Northern Style, with its Manchu influence, was a hard style and studied techniques only for war.

- The Southern Style was more interested in the aesthetic parts of Tai Kit Kuen and used the exercise sets to promote good health more than to learn fighting methods. This split in Tai Kit Kuen remains in effect, even today.

1928

The war arts are renamed. Wu Shu or war arts, combining many Northern styles, was now called Kuo-Su, meaning National Arts.

1940 – 1955

A famous practitioner of Tai Kit Kuen and 7 Star Praying Mantis styles, the prominent Lo Kwang Yu rebels against the Japanese invasion of China, taking his students into the hills to raid upon the Japanese in guerrilla fashion. One of his students, Fu Lung Cho, took control of Tai Kit Kuen upon Yu's death in 1955.

1955 – 1963

He meets Master Cho in Chinatown before departing for Vietnam.

1963 – 1964

Master Fu Lung Cho immigrated to Hong Kong and opened a school of boxing in the Kowloon District. It was there that he met and taught U.S. Marine Sgt William J. Walker.

1964

Sgt Walker is stationed in Kaneohe Bay, Hawaii and opens a small school for the members of the 3rd Force RECON. While observing the Marine Boxing Team at a championship bout, he noticed that the lightweight champion moved like a martial artist. He asked the young Marine if he would like to study Shaolin Boxing and that Marine, who eventually became his senior student, was Steven G. Abbate.

1965 – 1967

The Viet Nam War – Steven Abbate practiced the art of Tai Kit Kuen and combined his skills with that of basic Karate and boxing. In 1966, while manning a forward listening post in the jungles of Chu Lai, South Viet Nam, a group of 18 Viet Cong attempted to dislodge Cpl Abbate from his position, to expose and attack the main body of Marines, some 300 yards behind. Out of ammunition, alone and severely wounded, Cpl Abbate, armed only with a knife and his knowledge of Kung Fu, successfully held his position after a severe hand-to-hand fight with

seven of the remaining force. He was awarded the Silver Star Medal for Gallantry in Action and was transferred to Taipei Taiwan to recover from his wounds.

1967 – 1971

Steven Abbate is promoted to First Level Black Sash on June 10, 1968 by Sgt William J. Walker. During this time training with Master Cho, Steven Abbate went through a grueling five-day testing period and was formally promoted to First Level Black Sash and became a direct Disciple of Master Cho. This event secured Steven Abbate's place in the lineage of the art of Tai Kit Kuen Kung Fu. After spending a year with Master Cho, he returns to Chicago, Illinois, becomes a police officer and sets up a small class of self-defense in Rolling Meadows, Illinois. In 1969 Steven Abbate wins the California State Championships and is introduced to Master Bruce Lee. Abbate attends private lessons in advanced sparring under Master Lee for 2 months. In 1971 Sgt Walker is listed as "Missing in Action" while fighting communist forces in Cambodia. Steven Abbate assumes the title of head instructor of the Cobra Kai Kung Fu Club and returns to Hong Kong to be promoted to Second Level Black Sash by Master Cho.

1971 – 1973

Steven Abbate opens the first American school of the Tai Kit Kuen style. In 1971 he meets Master John "Chi-Yuan" Tsai and begins formal training in the Shaolin Temple Kung Fu System of Shaolin Chuan Fa. Master Tsai promotes Abbate to Third Level Black Sash in 1972. In 1973 he forms an organization called the American Martial Arts Association, a fraternal organization dedicated to the highest principals of the martial arts by qualified American Black Belts. At that same time, his rank is recognized by the American Karate Association under Master Tadashi Yamashita and the International Council of Black Belts under Master Jessie Gallagos and he becomes a board member of the World Martial Arts Federation under Master Chi-Yuan Tsai.

1974 – 1979

Steven Abbate now teaching full time in his Kwoon and to the members of the 24TH Marine Regiment of Waukegan, Illinois and the Green Berets of Arlington Heights, Illinois. He earns the title of Sifu and is promoted to Fourth Level Black Sash. In December of 1974 he promotes his senior student, Frank Trapicchio, to First Level Black Sash, thereby firmly establishing his Shaolin Style, an offspring of Tai Kit Kuen. He competes in and wins the World Full Contact Kickboxing Championships held in Hong Kong in 1979.

1996

Although Grandmaster Abbate had continually taught and competed into the year 2001. In 1996, he regained his title of Senior Full Contact Champion on the International Circuit by defeating the reigning champion from Bangkok, Thailand in a ten round bout. Through age 55, he still competed in the prestigious Midwest Circuit in forms and sport Karate and was also an active kickboxing coach. Some of his teachers had been Kwon Ming Loy of the Northern Shaolin 7-Star Praying Mantis style and the well known Chinese Grandmaster Ku Cong Wu of Wai Lun – Plum Flower Style of Combat Tai Chi. Grandmaster Wu also awarded Grandmaster Abbate a

ceremonial Shaolin sword for his years of dedication to the art of Kung Fu. Having completed over 39 years of training, competition and study, Grandmaster Abbate was awarded his 9TH Level Black Sash on November 1, 1996 by Grandmasters Wu, Loy, and Tsai.

2000

In February of 2000 Grandmaster Abbate was diagnosed with esophageal cancer and myelodysplasia leukemia. Both of which were later related to napalm and agent orange which he had been exposed to during his time in Vietnam. He would eventually go thru countless surgeries and blood transfusions to stay alive. With his children and students behind him, he would be quoted by his son that he would always have something to live for. Suffering day in and day out with pain and nausea, he never let his diseases get the best of him. With his discipline from Kung Fu and Marine mentality he pressed and continued to teach his son and students the ways of Tai Kit Kuen Kung Fu.

2002

On September 9, 2002 Grandmaster Tsai promoted Grandmaster Abbate to 10TH Level Black Sash or “Grandmaster” in a ceremony attended by many prominent martial artists from around the country. His rank and achievements have been sanctioned and recognized by many old institutions in Hong Kong, the Shaolin Temple, and here in America by such illustrious martial arts leaders as the late Tom Letuli of the Midwest Circuit, Shihan Joe Gangi and Grandmaster Tom Saviano, to name a few.

2003 – 2008

Grandmaster Abbate closes his commercial school in Roselle, IL to be closer to his son and two daughters. Student loyal to Grandmaster Abbate follow him to Rolling Meadows and train at his townhouse and in the park next to the house. Classes continue on in the same tradition as they have always been in Tai Kit Kuen and the Cobra Kai Kung Fu Club. During this time, Grandmaster Abbate promotes five more of his students to First Level Black Sash much in the same fashion that he went through in his formal promotion with Master Cho. This is in the same tradition all of Grandmaster Abbates Black Sashes have been promoted. This is an important fact because this is a tradition that will never change in the Cobra Kai Kung Fu Club and Tai Kit Kuen. During this time Grandmaster Abbate also promotes Dave Nordin to 7TH Level Black Sash or “Master”, and David Apple to 6TH Level Black Sash or “Junior Master”, thereby securing the future lineage of Tai Kit Kuen and the Cobra Kai Kung Fu Club. Grandmaster Abbate was also an active Kickboxing Coach, gave what would be his final Tai Kit Kuen seminar, and performed in his final Self Defense demo at a Kickboxing event held in Schaumburg, IL. On August 11, 2008 Grandmaster Abbate in what would be his last promotion of his students, promoted one of his junior students to Green Sash, one adult student to Blue Sash and one of his Black Sashes, Jon Tertel to 4TH Level Black Sash. On August 19, 2007 after a long bout with leukemia, Grandmaster Steven G. Abbate passed away due to complications from an infection, with his family and students at his side. Grandmaster died as he lived, with a heart of gold, and the soul of a warrior.

AUGUST 2007 to the PRESENT

After the passing of Grandmaster Abbate, the Black Sashes of Cobra Kai met and discussed the future of the “Cobra Kai Kung Fu Club” and Tai Kit Kuen Kung Fu. It was decided that training would continue the way Grandmaster Abbate would want us to. In 2007 the “Cobra Kai Kung Fu Club” moved to Mt. Prospect, IL and is managed by 4th Level Black Sash Jon Tertel (Chin Bao). Also in 2007 3rd Level Black Sash Jennifer Wallace (Ki Shu), opened a school in Lakemoor, IL that moved to McHenry. In March 2008 2nd Level Black Sash Don Walker (Li Lun) took over the “Roselle Martial Arts Academy” in Roselle, IL from another former student of Grandmaster Abbate. Training at all of these locations is overseen by 7th Level Black Sash (Self Defense Master) Dave Nordin (Shao Chuan) and 6th Level Black Sash (Forms Master) David Apple (Tao Chon) and is the same as Grandmaster Abbate taught. Nothing has changed, the training is still the hard core physical, mental and spiritual training as it’s always been with an emphasis on the ultimate in street self defense. The traditions of the “Cobra Kai Kung Fu Club” and Tai Kit Kuen Kung Fu are be carried on the way Grandmaster Abbate and his teachers before him have passed them on to us, insuring that Tai Kit Kuen Kung Fu live on for generations to come.

SECRETS OF SHAOLIN BOXING

These poems were found in the ruins of the Shaolin Temple and were written by Monk Pan Hui after training for twenty years. They were unearthed in 1925 but were written during the Han Dynasty, around 200 A.D.

Chi goes from the naval part, Strength centers in the palm heart.
In the substantial your strength is found.
Exhale air while making a sound.
Upward pushing is necessary,
Pressing with a horse step is primary.
Remember attacking, pushing, and exhaling as blowing forcefully,
The bones near your pulses going.

Advance with the winds speed,
Withdraw after the violent deed.
Go ahead again with body sidelong,
Don't mind a little pushing on.

Shoot a power palm while exhaling,
For effectiveness a shout entailing.
Like a Dragon move here and there,
To win is a moments affair.

Engaging, edging and dodging need sharp eyesight,
You must move fast to left and right.
To dodging, edging owes,
From the unreal the real goes.

A mountain slide you may escape,
By engaging ahead through the gape.
Flinch not at actions furious,
To beat the great with the small is truly curious.

THE FIVE SHAOLIN STYLES

There are, according to ancient manuscripts, 170 actions in the five styles:
Dragon, Tiger, Mantis, Snake and Crane.

Man has five essences:

Spirit, Bone, Strength, Chi and Sinew.

These essences must be merged into one. Included within is the basis of hard and soft, internal and external, substantial and insubstantial.

No fighter can be truly powerful until all 170 actions and the five essences work in harmony.

THE DRAGON

The Dragon Style represents the cultivation of spirit and wisdom, in short, the philosophy of the art of Kung Fu. Strength is not used, but rather the mind flows. In throwing your strike or kick, it should move without energy. Speed will result as the body releases and the mind is clear of other thoughts. The study of the Tao as you meditate will bring wisdom, the precept of the Dragon which is a passing of time.

THE TIGER

The Tiger Style represents the training of the bones. Brace yourself and practice firmly. Hand conditioning and solid body exercises represent the strength and the ferocity of the Tiger.

THE MANTIS

The Mantis Style represents patience. The control of body and mind is essential. Control your emotions. To understand your training you must be patient. Kung Fu is like a tree – it grows unnoticed.

THE SNAKE

The Snake Style represents rhythmic endurance and cultivation of Chi. In the Snake, you must move swiftly, but low to the ground, drawing strength from the Earth. Movements of hands should be as fast as the bite of a Cobra.

THE CRANE

The Crane Style represents gracefulness, balance and sinew changing. In this system, all movements become balanced and in harmony as a continual flow.

PART II – THE MIND

In Kung Fu we have a saying: the mind cannot be developed until the body has been disciplined. We are going to go from the beginning of your training to the philosophy of our art right away. We believe that a student must develop a proper attitude before physical skills can be taught. The philosophy of Cobra Kai is simple: Accept what lies ahead or in front of you without wanting the situation to be other than it is; weather it be a difficult task, a hard to understand rule, a combative situation, or the world and nature itself.

A student should accept and study the natural order of things and work with it rather than against it. To try and change what is not within his power to change is foolish. Nature provides everything without requiring payment or thanks and she provides for all without discrimination. Therefore, a student of Kung Fu must present the same face to all others and treat them as equals. In the clarity in a still and open mind, truth will be reflected. Not wanting to rule, but only to teach what we learn, we rule our mind and body to teach the philosophy of peace. In the next few pages we hope to offer to those of you who are martial arts students and practitioners, as well as teachers, the guiding force of Cobra Kai.

THE TEN COMMANDMENTS OF THE SHAOLIN TEMPLE

These regulations were established by Monk Cheuh Yuan after abuses began to creep into the temples from teaching to more than just men interested in Buddhism. They were meant to put an ethical, moral and physical code on the students, so that discipline would improve.

1. A student should practice without interruption.
2. Boxing must be used only in self defense.
3. Courtesy and respect must be shown all teachers and senior students.
4. A student must never display acts of jealousy or unkindness to others.
5. When outside the temple, a student must refrain from showing his art to the common people.
6. A boxer must never start quarrels.
7. Liquor must never be used.
8. Lustful desires are not permitted.
9. Boxing must never be taught until you have reached the level of understanding at the disciple stage.
10. A boxer must be courageous, but never show greed, egotism or an arrogant attitude.

ATTITUDE

A proper attitude is essential for proper progress. People who think they know everything usually know nothing or just enough to get themselves hurt. To study Kung Fu, a student must practice patience, courage and above all else, humility. A student must start slowly, and not expect success overnight. If a student goes too hard, too fast, and does not attempt the gradual change of body and mind, injury could result. Many injuries result in a student's display of muscle or impatience. Many new students want to be like Bruce Lee, but few have the perseverance to

attain such a skill. If a student persists in a daily program, lightly at first, they can attain some success in three years, and possibly become a great fighter in ten years. Surely it is worth the effort, for skill brings health, happiness and confidence. And remember, no student can become an expert without first learning how to behave.

TRAINING

A good walker leaves no tracks.
A good speaker makes no slips.
A good listener forgets nothing.
A good strike never misses its mark.
A good technique never requires explanation.
A good student seeks none.

“The Tao Te Ching of Lao Tzu”

UNCOMMON TREASURE

I have three treasures in Kung Fu.
The first is mercy, from which comes generosity to others.
The second is humility, from which comes honesty.
The third is courage, from which comes leadership.
Strange Treasures?
Without such wealth, how could you purchase art?

“Grandmaster Steven G. Abbate”

THE ANCIENT MASTERS

The ancient masters were subtle, mysterious, silent, profound and responsive.
Watchful, like men crossing a winter stream.
Alert, like men in a jungle.
Courteous, like visiting guests.
Yielding, like melting ice.
Simple, like uncarved wood.
Hallow, like caves.
The ancient masters were aware that the flesh dies away and is soon forgotten,
but the spirit remains forever.

“Tao Te Ching”

OPPOSITES

Under Heaven all can see beauty as beautiful, because there also exists ugliness.
All can know good as good, only because there is evil.
Therefore, having and not having arise together.
Difficult and easy can compliment one other.
Long and short contrast each other.
High and low rest upon each other.
Voice and sound harmonize.
Front and back follow each other.
Thus, the student who succeeds realizes the importance of opposites.

“Grandmaster Steven G. Abbate”

LIFE AND DEATH

A man is born gentle and weak.
At his death he is stiff and hard.
Green plants are tender and filled with sap.
At their death they are withered and dry.
Therefore, the stiff and unbending is the disciple of the earth.
The gentle and yielding, the disciple of life.
Thus, an army without flexibility never wins a battle.
A tree that does not bend with the wind will break.

“Grandmaster Steven G. Abbate”

POWER

In pursuit of true power, a student must reach deep within the mind.
No longer with human weakness, you identify with the power of the tiger through the flow of
Chi or Life Force
To accomplish this, you must meditate, strengthen the muscles and bones, and read the Tao.
To be at one with all nature, you must be at one with yourself.
True power is a combining of psychic and physical principals that are attained through hard
training.

“Grandmaster Steven G. Abbate”

THE TAO

The Tao cannot be defined by words. Any words used are one-sided and therefore misleading.

Tao is merely a word given to the nameless source of the universe.

The universe is the mother of all things, visible and invisible.

When you have ceased judging things by their relationship to you, you see the visible.
But visible and invisible are only words that are different by definition; in essence they are the same.

This mystery is a shadow within absolute darkness. Here is the doorway to truth:

All things are one! The Tao smoothes the rough surface of life like gentle rain.

“Grandmaster Steven G. Abbate”

“The Perfect Way” – Tao is without difficulty, save that it is picking and choosing.

If you want to get the plain truth, be not concerned with right or wrong.

This conflict is a sickness of mind.”

“Monk Seng-Ts’an”

One dog barks at something and a hundred bark at the sound.

“Chinese Proverb”

Contentment, even in poverty, brings happiness. Discontent is poverty, even in riches.

“Chinese Proverb”

One can tell for oneself whether the water is warm or cold.

“I Ching”

Man differs from the animal little; most men throw that little away.

“Confucius”

CAUTION

You may have been taught many things. To reveal them before you fully understand them would bring failure.

“Grandmaster Steven G. Abbate”

PROMOTION

When you stand in the Kwoon of Cobra Kai,
It is time to face the truth.
Truth is light.
Fear is darkness.
And it is too late for fear when you are standing here.

“Grandmaster Steven G. Abbate”

THE PARABLE OF THE FOX AND THE CAT

A fox and a cat were sitting under a shade tree discussing the increasing problems of survival in the forest.

The fox said to the cat, “I never have to worry because I have a thousand tricks and ways of outsmarting my enemies. We foxes are very clever.”

The cat replied, “How very lucky you are. All I can do is climb up this tree.”

The fox began to brag about his prowess and just as he was talking, a pack of wolves fell upon them.

The cat rushed up the tree to safety, while the fox, attempting to figure out which clever trick to use, was torn to shreds.

“Grandmaster Steven G. Abbate”

A hoodlum does not have the patience for Kung Fu. He would rather buy a weapon than develop one.

“Bruce Lee”

Strength by itself is not equal to wisdom and wisdom by itself cannot replace physical training. But, combine the two and one receives a strong mind and strong body.

“Grandmaster Steven G. Abbate”

Falling hurts least those who fly low.

“Bruce Lee”

Seven days without Kung Fu makes one weak.

“Grandmaster Steven G. Abbate”

VICTORY AND SUCCESS

Victory and success are only granted when there is sacrifice.
To reach near success in this system of combat, a student must develop equally, courage and
humility.

Both virtues are, in reality, one and can be called the elements of sacrifice.
For what real value can be assessed on victory or success without these elements.

“Grandmaster Steven G. Abbate”

The object of Kung Fu in combat is to send your opponent to the nearest hospital in the shortest
amount of
time. This is called: A maximum amount of anguish, with a minimum of movement.

“Bruce Lee”

Harmony of body and mind is achieved when students understand the extremes of peace and
violence.

“Grandmaster Steven G. Abbate”

Correct hitting is invisible, an enemy should fall without ever seeing your hands.

“Bruce Lee”

Leave the outside world outside the training school.
Make the school your life and the outside world will hold no dangers.

“Grandmaster Steven G. Abbate”

Respect those who are your superior – respect also those who are your inferior
– for each in turn conquers the other.

“Grandmaster Steven G. Abbate”

The more you sweat in peace,
the less you bleed in war.

“United States Marine Corps”

In peace
One must be willing to preserve life.
In war
One must be willing to abolish life.

“Grandmaster Steven G. Abbate”

To be Master of your will, you must free the slavery of your soul.

“Grandmaster Steven G. Abbate”

Students – Remember that a skillful person will meet, at one time, another yet most skillful.

Therefore –
Be on good terms with all, as far as possible without surrender.
Use your skill for defense in combat, not in conversation.

“Grandmaster Steven G. Abbate”

The man who can defend himself
Has nothing to prove.
The man who cannot defend himself
Can prove nothing!

“Grandmaster Steven G. Abbate”

The feeling of Chi or Life Force comes from within and reaches outward.
But to develop Chi, a student must work from outward to inward.
For a hole in the ground to be of use, something must first be taken away.

And what is Chi?
Can it be defined?
No!
Can it be felt?
No!
Can it be seen?
No!
Can it be witnessed?
Yes!

Therefore, Chi becomes the unseen power of a warrior’s soul.

“Grandmaster Steven G. Abbate”

We have done so much for so long with so little, that now; we can do anything with nothing at all.

“Marines on An Ton Bridge, Viet Nam, 1965”

No man can answer for his courage who has never been in danger.

“Grandmaster Steven G. Abbate”

If I had but one wish,
I would wish all men studied the Tao.
For if they do,
Some will find their way.

“Grandmaster Steven G. Abbate”

Kung Fu should become as natural as breathing.
Your movements should be as natural as taking a walk.
Striking your target should be as natural as snapping your fingers.

“Grandmaster Steven G. Abbate”

Master Bruce Lee was taken from us in his prime and we are all saddened,
but remember that with each ending begins a new beginning.
How can we be sure that Master Lee now is amazed that he ever clung to life at all?
The depth of our bond with Master Lee is now truly realized.

“Grandmaster Steven G. Abbate”

Death is never the final lesson. If you are true to the spirit,
We will meet again at the temple of Shaolin in the House of the Seven Gods.
And we will bolt the sky like golden clouds on the wind.

“Grandmaster Steven G. Abbate”

Does Kung Fu work?
Can you hear the ancients laughing? Surely they must, whenever someone asks this question.
I have never heard of something surviving over 4000 years that did not work.
Aside from self defense, hasn't Kung Fu given you physical fitness?
Has not Kung Fu given you strength, poise and self confidence?
Has not Kung Fu given you peace and harmony?
Has not Kung Fu changed your personal philosophy of life?
If not, it is not Kung Fu that does not work. It is you!

“Grandmaster Steven G. Abbate”

THE DRAGON AND THE WIND

In the garden of the king were some beautiful flowers. These were the most beautiful flowers in all the land and the king was very proud of them. So valuable to the king were these flowers that he placed a fierce dragon at the gate of the garden to protect them. No man dared pass into the garden for fear of the powerful dragon.

One day as the king was bragging to the dragon that now no one could look at his flowers, a wind came down from the North, distracting the king, blinding the dragon and destroying the flowers.

“Grandmaster Steven G. Abbate”

CHI SING

I am Chi Sing-
I am what has been, what is now and what will always be.
I run over hills and the tallest trees.
I am the soft and the hard, the warm and the cold.
I am the fingers that move the surface of the waters and make the waves chase one another.
I cannot be grasped, conquered or understood.
I am the dust of truth that swirls and seeks it's own cracks of entry.
I am here and now there.
No man can follow me, but all feel my breath.
I touch all things and go on to the other.
I receive my orders from the gods and embark my will upon the earth.
I am the right hand of nature and sit at the table of the five elements.
I am Chi Sing-
The Spirit of the Wind.

“Written by Steve Abbate for Master Fu Lung Cho's 65th birthday”

THE MUSCLE CHANGE CLASSIC

The Shaolin warrior stands with dignity before the enemy, waiting for the battle to begin.
He raises his weapons to the sky in honor of the gods of war.
The battle begins.
He pushes forward and against all sides.
The enemy is great in number and the Shaolin retreats momentarily.
He pushes down against the enemy and draws courage for the final assault.
Surrounded, he lifts his spirit to the sky and falls on the enemy like rain from the heavens.

“Ancient script on ‘Lifting the Sky’ isometric exercise”

THE HARMONY OF NATURE

In meeting, which prevails, ice or fire?
You would probably say fire and you would be correct.
However, in dying, does not the ice turn into water that will kill the fire?
This is the harmony of nature.
Each element in turn of importance conquers the other.
That prevails which recognizes the power of the other.
Conquer your spirit, discipline your mind, and train your muscles and limbs to move gracefully.
Correct your attitude and be aware of the power of Kung Fu.
If you do as I say, you will also prevail.

“Grandmaster Steven G. Abbate”

THE ANCIENT WARRIOR OF SHAOLIN, CHEUNG SAM FUNG

Cheung Sam Fung was a man of simplicity. Yet, what is often simple is seldom simply understood.
He was a man who did not concern himself with time or any appointments.
Time was measured in moments and his only appointment was the natural order of his destiny.
He did not adorn himself with bright colors, ornate jewels or gold.
He wore only what was necessary and brandished himself with brass and steel for combat.
Cheung Sam Fung never worried about storing riches and accumulating wealth.
These were excess weight and added baggage and have no place in the field of battle.
He did not attempt to comprehend or understand kings or politics.
He followed the flow and accepted all things for what they were, and therefore,

was able to adjust easily to change.
He believed and lived by all the now forgotten virtues and worked in harmony with nature.
He was at peace with himself and never needed numbers to feel secure.
He knew true strength and could do battle honorably.
He had no fear of death; therefore, death was no threat.
Cheung Sam Fung asked nothing of anything and was very close to life.
He was a brother to the wind and a friend of the gods.

“Grandmaster Steven G. Abbate – A Tribute to My Ancestor”

THE COBRA KAI SHAOLIN FIGHTERS CODE OF CONDUCT

We the Warriors of Cobra Kai Swear:

- To devote ourselves towards the development of our lives, spiritually, intellectually, and physically.
- To be constantly aware of the respect that should always be given our Sifu and Masters of Kung Fu.
- To meet with fortitude and courage, any and all obstacles, which may hamper the attainment of our goals.
- To be courteous, honest, and practice the virtue of modesty.
- To avoid all unnecessary incidents and to use our combative skills only when all other means of preservation have failed.
- To live as an ancient warrior, keeping my head low, my spirits high and my life clean.
- To always show respect to women, older persons, children and to defend them to the death from any harm that may come to the innocent.
- To strive for perfection of my character and my art form.
- To always show the highest respect for our Grandmaster and the traditions of the Kwoon of Cobra Kai Shaolin Fighters.
- And, to seek peace in all situations, respecting every man’s right to practice non-violence, but remembering that if our soul is threatened, we will let the soul become a warrior.

“Grandmaster Steven G. Abbate”

PART III – THE PHYSICAL

As a Marine fighting in Viet Nam, I realized that what gave us their keen edge over the enemy was our stamina and strength. In any physical endeavor a person succeeds only if they are in shape.

In many styles of Kung Fu, especially the soft styles, the exterior of the body is not conditioned properly. We are Americans, we are built differently, we eat differently and our life styles are different than the Chinese. Therefore, it is my belief that we must continue to do exercises that have proven effective for our culture.

Naturally, proper diet, sleep and the absence of alcohol, drugs or tobacco will make you physically fit. This proper living style, combined with a solid body exercise routine and Kung Fu training, will bring any person to peak condition.

Below is a list of daily exercises at Cobra Kai:

- 25 Jumping Jacks
- 25 Push-Ups on Knuckles
- 25 Sit-Ups
- 3 Sets of Isometrics
- 25 Four Count Leg Lifts
- 25 Master Sit-Ups
- 25 Chinese Push-Ups
- 500 Finger Flicks*

ELEMENTS OF SUCCESS IN BATTLE

1. Surprise Moves
2. Intelligent Thinking
3. Speed and Aggressiveness *(wiche includes Emotional Content)
4. Violence Throughout the Action
5. Perseverance and Endurance

SURPRISE MOVES

No fight, conflict or sparring match is ever won without surprise action. For a person to be able to defend against an attack, they must be conscious of the technique. A student should practice quick, unorthodox movements.

INTELLIGENT THINKING

A student should be aware of themselves, their art and the world around them. Knowledge is an important asset, knowing what you can do and what you cannot do.

SPEED AND AGGRESSIVENESS

Not enough can be said of these two elements. First of all, the faster your technique is, the sooner it will hit its target and the sooner you can return your technique to shift position and strike again, if necessary. Speed is velocity. The more velocity, the more power. Speed is what enables a small person to defeat a large person. Like Admiral “Bull” Halsey would say in World War II, “Hit hard, hit fast, hit often.” No technique, even the most sophisticated, is truly effective without aggressiveness and **emotional content** in the movement. Master Bruce Lee was a firm believer in **emotional content** of the technique. He believed as we do, that unless you feel the motion from deep within yourself, it will lack force.

* This being said, Emotional Content is very important. When applying Emotional Content it is important not to let your emotions effect you in a negative way. Think of what happens when you are angry and/or determined, those emotions can drive you to have the utmost focus, concentration and strength. This is the type of emotion that will help you succeed.*

VIOLENCE THROUGHOUT THE ACTION

On this subject, a great number of people disagree with our philosophy. However we want to make something quite clear. When we talk about violence, we refer to self-defense as a violent situation, not a sport, sparring or non-contact sparring arena. No would-be attacker ever went down from a passive technique, unless it was choreographed for an audience. This violence throughout the action must be controlled by an intelligent mind. If you are attacked, combine all your training into a vicious defense, “firm, violent and final”. Return to peace when the deed is done.

We do not believe in the “gentle way” when it comes down to fighting. There is nothing gentle about an assault. As a former police officer, Grandmaster Abbate saw a lot of people get hurt, because they did not want to hurt back. The gentle way is fine, if you are in a temple, surrounded by flowers, candles and incense, but it will not help in the street. We are against violent people, not violent defense.

PERSEVERANCE AND ENDURANCE

There are times when the winner of an encounter is the one who can “outlast” their opponent. A student must persevere through the action and have the endurance, which is physical fitness to succeed in the conflict. The ancient Spartan could run 5 miles, walk 50 miles in a single day and still fight a pitched battle. The Apache Indians could run 10 miles and then run down deer or buffalo. The Zulu warriors of Africa are known to run up to 60 miles to battle. The training session at Cobra Kai is hard and strenuous. The more perseverance you display, the more you will be able to endure.

THE ANCIENT SHAOLIN METHOD OF RELIEVING STRESS AND TENSION

Webster's International Dictionary defines the terms "Stress" and "Tension" as follows:

Stress: A factor causing mental or emotional strain.

Tension: Mental or emotional strain due to worry, an uncomfortable feeling. Can also be physical.

Stress and tension are probably the most common everyday events in one's life. Hardly a day goes by without a hint of these feelings taking control over a person at one time or another. Stress can be more than an uncomfortable feeling and can cause additional problems. Many crimes are committed due to overly stressed minds, temper flare-ups and mistakes in judgment, usually the result of the mind and body being under stress and tension. The ancient monks of the Shaolin Temple had many hours of arduous mental and physical work in their daily lives, which can easily lead to stress. They knew that they had to find a safe way of relieving such things, without the dangerous use of drugs. They came up with an exercise designed to promote good health, relax the body and ease the mind. Listed here is the exercise that was studied 4000 years ago, and still is, in the Shaolin Temple.

Step 1

Find a quiet place.

Step 2

From a standing position, move the left leg to the left, until feet are shoulder width apart.

Step 3

Bend slightly at the knees, keeping the back straight and the head up.

Step 4

Let the arms hang at the sides of the body, with the palms of the hands facing up.

Step 5

Slowly and without tension, bring the hands with the palms facing upward, to the front of the abdomen and then up to chest level, inhaling deeply through the nose throughout the movement.

Step 6

As you exhale through the nose, push your hands, with the palms now facing downwards, to the abdomen.

Remember not to force the movement of the hands and to exhale through the nose. After these six steps, repeat the set 10 times.

RANKING OF STUDENTS

Traditionally, most Kung Fu styles do not have a regulated rank system. Many simply award titles. At Cobra Kai, we award a colored sash after a rigid testing period. The Black Sash promotion is a three-day ordeal, including an all night meditation and the keeping of a candle burning to our Grandmaster. Upon reaching Black Sash or Disciple Level, a student is given a Chinese title, usually a name synonymous with the student's character. At each level of progress, the training becomes more complex and there is more responsibility placed on the student.

SASH LEVELS AND AVERAGE TIME OF TRAINING

White – Gold: 1st year of training

Green: 2nd year of training

Blue: 3rd year of training

Brown: 4th year of training

Black: 5th – 6th year of training

LEVELS OF BLACK SASH ARE REGULATED AS FOLLOWS

2nd Level: 8th year of training

3rd Level: 12th year of training

4th Level: 15th year of training

5th Level: 17th year of training

6th Level: 19th year of training

7th Level: 22nd year of training

Master: 25 years in the Art.

TECHNIQUES

Listed below are the movements a student must master before the Black Sash level.

* See full technique list at the end of the manual*

STRIKES

1. Dragon Head Fist (Long and Short Range)
2. Snake
3. Tiger
4. Bear Hand
5. Palm (Willow Leaf Pushing)
6. Back Fist and Back Hand
7. Leopard
8. Crane
9. Praying Mantis
10. Hammer Fist
11. Spear (Thrust and Jab)
12. Phoenix Eye Knuckle
13. Ridge Hand
14. Tiger Mouth
15. Bent Wrist
16. Round House Punch
17. Elbow Strike (5 types)
18. Knife Hand (5 Types)

KICKS

1. Front Snap
2. Cobra
3. Side Snap and Thrust
4. Rear Snap and Thrust
5. Hook
6. Crane (Reverse and Crescent)
7. Double Crane
8. Round House (3 Types)
9. Dragon Tail (spinning hook)
10. Stomp
11. Double Front Snap
12. Combination Kicking

All kicks must be performed with precision movement and control of the body. A kick can guarantee success in self-defense, when it is advantageous to stay at a distance from your opponent. Also, a leg technique is at times much more unorthodox than a hand technique and can catch your opponent by surprise.

BLOCKS

It is our belief that, after you have advanced yourself to a certain level of expertise, a block is a wasted movement. If you can make contact to block a strike, you can also attack instead. However, for the beginning and intermediate levels of training, some basic blocks are necessary to provide protection against a surprise attack.

1. Crane Block
2. Hook Block
3. Snake Block
4. Trap Blocking
5. Tiger or Pushing Blocks

STANCES

1. Snake
2. Cat
3. Crane
4. Horse
5. Bow
6. Dragon
7. Twisting Horse
8. Individual Fighting Stance

Stances are designed to give a student better mobility in combat. One important thing to remember is that a stance must be natural and relaxed, so that one can change directions quickly. Stances also give one an aesthetic appreciation for the beauty of the martial arts movements.

IRON PALM TRAINING

The Iron Palm is actually a separate art form of Kung Fu. At Cobra Kai we study the hand conditioning of Iron Palm to make the hand an unbelievable weapon. Iron Palm is serious training and must be followed to the letter. The Iron Palm can be a killing art and emphasis on self-control and maturity is essential. Because it is so serious, we will not teach “The Way” of Iron Palm to a beginning student. Anyone who thinks they can study Iron Palm without the guidance of a qualified teacher is inviting their own doom.

* Those of you who do Iron Palm training or Iron Forearm etc. must always use Dit Da Jow medicine. There are no exceptions. Doing this kind of training without it can cause injury to the body.*

BASIC TRAINING IN THE SELF DEFENSE SETS

Following are 10 of our self-defense sets. They cover a variety of attacks. There are an infinite number of self-defense sets in Tai Kit Kuen however; these are some of them written out for

students to practice on their own. These and many other sets are taught by our Black Sash Instructors as a guide of how our techniques work and flow together in an attack situation against single, multiple and weapon attacks. Practice of the sets with a partner will insure success. The movements provide a well-balanced defense, but must be practiced hundreds of times, so they will become natural and can be employed in an attack situation without hesitation.

All elements of self-defense must be unleashed at the same time in an attack and with emotional content yet not anger. Therefore, defend yourself calmly, but deeply involved psychologically and physically. An attack represents possible injury or death. You must end the battle in an instant of martial action.

Naturally, the more time you dedicate to the art of Kung Fu, the more proficient you will become. Master Cho used to say to Grandmaster Abbate, that physical action should be like an arrow. The mind should be like an arrow in flight, it cleaves the air, but in its path it leaves air unbroken. Its journey's end is sharp and direct and this is technique. A true bowman is calm with spirit, firmly resolved and intent on his target.

Set 1 - Defense from a right hand punch

1. Step into a right horse stance toward your opponent. Be sure your right leg is near or toward the middle of your attacker's body.
2. Block his stride with a right hand trap block. Be sure to trap with the palm of your hand between your attacker's wrist and crook of his arm.
3. Switch your left hand to opponent's wrist, grabbing his arm and holding.
4. Strike at opponent's head with a right back fist and KIAI, the verbal explosion of force from within the tantien of the body.
5. Strike your opponent's rib cage with a right elbow strike.
6. Throw your opponent to the ground with a right leg sweep. Finish*

The word "Finish" refers to completing self defense techniques according to the dictates of your mind and the situation to stop any further movement from the attacker.

Remember that once you are committed to defend yourself you must make sure that your opponent cannot continue an assault on you. In advanced training you will learn pressure point techniques that require great skill and timing to employ on your opponent. These advanced techniques will take the will to fight out of your opponent.

Set 2 - Defense from a left hand punch

1. As opponent strikes, take a step backwards with your left foot so that you are in a high horse stance or fighting stance with your right leg on an angle facing your opponent's right leg.
2. Block the strike with a right outside hook block to opponent's wrist. Grab tightly.
3. Kick attacker's rib cage with a right side thrust kick.
4. Step down with right leg so that you are in a low horse stance with your back against opponent's middle.
5. Strike backward and with KIAI hit opponent's chest with a rear elbow strike.

6. Grab both sides of opponent's head and throw over your right hip
7. Finish.

Set 3 - Defense from a right hand punch

1. Step to your left as punch comes at you.
2. Block with a right hook block and grab.
3. Kick attacker while holding arm with a right round house kick to face, then to groin, then to chest.
4. Kick again with a right side thrust kick to opponent's rib cage, stepping down into a high horse stance.
5. Strike back of opponent's neck with a downward right knife hand strike.
6. Circle your right hand into a palm heel strike to opponent's groin.
7. Then an upward palm heel strike to opponent's chin.
8. Leg sweep.
9. Finish.

Set 4 - Defense from a left hand punch

1. Step toward opponent as he strikes with your left leg into a high horse stance.
2. Block strike with a left hand trap block.
3. Strike opponent with a left back fist to face.
4. Strike opponent's rib cage with a right dragon head fist punch.
5. Spin on left foot clockwise so that you strike opponent's chest with a right rear elbow strike. Kiai.
6. Grab opponent and hip throw
7. Finish.

Set 5 - Defense from a right hand punch

1. Step into a left bow stance block inside of attacker's punch with a left hand trap block.
2. Strike forward to opponent's chest with a right long range dragon head fist punch.
3. Strike face with a right short range dragon head fist punch.
4. Grab with both hands the sides of opponent's head his face down into a right knee kick.
5. Twist and throw opponent to right or left.
6. finish.
- 7.

Set 6 - Defense from a right hand punch

1. Step into a high horse stance with right leg.
2. Trap block opponent's arm with right hand.
3. Switching hands on opponent's arm strike the side of his neck with a right snapping knife hand strike.
4. Bring opponent's head down into a right knee kick.
5. Twist and throw.
6. Finish.

Set 7 - Defense from a left hand punch

1. Step into a right horse stance toward opponent.

2. Trap block with right hand
3. Strike chin of opponent with a left palm heel strike.
4. Strike opponent's rib cage with a right short range dragon head fist punch.
5. Strike with a left elbow strike to same spot.
6. Left back fist to the face and throw.
7. Finish.

Set 8 - Defense from a front kick

1. As the attacker kicks step into his with a left bow stance.
2. Trapping leg with left arm strike forward with a right palm heel strike to opponent's chin.
3. Step in with your other leg behind attacker's other leg.
4. Sweep your leg back toward yourself, throwing opponent down.
5. Punch down with a dragon head fist to opponent's groin, KIAI.
6. Finish.

Set 9 - Defense from a right hand punch

1. Side step to your left.
2. Hook block opponent's arm with your right hand.
3. Kick opponent's knee cap with right stomp kick.
4. Kick opponent's face with right round house kick.
5. Spin and kick opponent off his feet by a spinning leg sweep.
6. Finish.

Set 10 - Defense from a left hand punch

1. Side step to your right.
2. Grab opponent's arm with a left outside block.
3. Strike kidney of opponent with a sweeping bear hand strike.
4. Step in and strike rib cage with a right elbow strike.
5. Hit same spot with a sweeping right dragon tail kick.
6. Throw.
7. Finish.

SIFU'S DRILLS

The following are some drills that will help you learn and improve on many skills that are part of the foundation of Kung Fu. You can do all of these drills without a partner and they will help you improve rapidly.

1) DRILL GOOD FOR: Hip movement, pivoting, hand techniques, flowing, circular movement, protecting Center

Practice moving and using your hips. Stand in a horse stance and practice any hand or elbow techniques you know. Exaggerate your hip and foot pivoting to get your body used to the motion. Make sure to keep your knees slightly bent, do not be flat-footed.

Start with knife hand system throwing right then left alternating between the 2 hands while using your hips and pivoting on the balls of your feet. You can then add any other techniques you wish. Relax and let your body flow and move as one.

When you feel comfortable then move your feet to a right fighting stance and start again throwing techniques with both hands keeping in the right stance. Then switch and do the same with the left stance. Remember to keep protecting center and to practice good circular movement when you practice.

2) GOOD DRILL FOR: Learning combos, speed and flowing movement

Get some index cards or some kind of paper. Write down every hand and foot, knee etc, technique you can think of 2 times, each on a separate card (cut them down if needed). Start by pulling out three cards after shuffling and do the techniques in the order you pulled them. Start slower doing one technique with each breath and slowly going faster as you get comfortable until you can do it with one breath or KIAI. Then start over with 3 new cards.

This is a good way to gain speed and fluidity as well as challenge yourself to put combos together you normally may not do.

Variations:

Switch the cards around after doing the 3 techniques you pull to try them in a different order.

Pull more than 3 cards or add a card when you are comfortable to gain longer combos.

Do all the techniques you pull on one side, then the other side, then with alternating sides.

3) GOOD DRILL FOR: footwork

Place 80-90% of your weight on your rear leg and practice stepping w/front foot and dragging with the rear to follow. Imagine you are fencing (like Zorro etc.) when you move your legs, keeping your torso straight up and down. Then practice the opposite and go backwards retreating w/the rear leg first and following with the front. Then practice switching from going forward to backwards. Also practice going forward a few times w/right side and switch to left, then right etc. as well as the same going backwards.

When you feel comfortable with these exercises try throwing hand and leg techniques as you are moving forwards and backwards. You can also switch from left side to right side as your moving.

Next try moving backwards and throwing a kick as if you had an opponent in front of you. Make sure there is little or no shift in your body while throwing the kick. You should be able to shoot it up without shifting your weight to the rear.

Now try changing direction to the side or at an angle as if to move in to defend/attack as you are moving forward and backwards. Learning how to shift directions on a dime is essential to survival when being attacked rapidly from the front and you feel overwhelmed. You cannot allow your attacker a tactical advantage due to size, force, speed or forward movement.

4) GOOD DRILL FOR: Strengthening legs, arms and horse stance

This is a simple one. Sometime in the evening put yourself in a horse stance. While in your horse stance do these exercises:

Lifting the sky 3-times (make sure you feel them from the ground up through your hands)

neck Rolls

Push palms, back of wrists, fingertips, neck, forehead, grab wrists

stretch wrists in all directions you can for Chin Na

Finger flicks - 125 each way (500 total) split them up if your arms are tired

Isometric punching -10 to 20 sets, alternate between fists and knife hand

Do them slowly and controlled and give it your all, you should be tired and sweating when you're done. If you complete these exercises without coming out of your horse stance you should have been there for 8-10 minutes. You'll be tired but will feel relaxed and ready for bed :)

Variation - You can also work on your horse stance by standing in one during the commercials while watching TV - Sit during program, horse stance during commercials. During an hour show you'll get 10-15 minutes minimum.

5) GOOD DRILL FOR: Learning your weaknesses and improving on all your techniques.

This one works best if you have a bag at home and a camera that records video. Set up camera on tripod or other object so you can record yourself at practice. Time and record yourself for about 2 minutes while doing one of the following:

2 minute round on the bag doing whatever comes natural

2 minute round shadow boxing in the air if you have no bag

doing footwork and hand drills coming towards and away from camera, or from side view

any of the other drills above

Anything else you may want to work on

Playback and learn. This may be a good way for some of you to ask questions in class on things you may need to work on that you were unaware of.

While pre set combinations are also good to practice and observe, being spontaneous without thinking of specific techniques will help you see how you move naturally, which is more probable of how you would react in the street.

6) GOOD DRILL FOR: Flowing and learning how to relax and move

Relax and stand in a horse stance or fighting stance on either side.

Slowly start throwing hand techniques from both sides of your body. Do this very relaxed and with almost an exaggerated hip and body flowing movement. Let your body do most of the movement.

Do not try to throw them hard or too fast, the key is to flow and learn to do it almost lazily so that your body learns how to throw them completely relaxed. This helps the movements become more natural and flowing.

You should feel like a whip in slow motion while executing the techniques.

Now concentrate on turning the hand (or snapping the fist) at the last possible moment to finish the technique.

Once you start flowing comfortably you can speed up and concentrate on adding more torque into your hip and body movements.

You can also take this drill to your heavy bag etc. - Do not try to strike hard, let your body do all the work within the strike and relax as much as possible.

Once you start flowing comfortably you can speed up and concentrate on adding more torque into your hip and body movements.

If you are not sure what I mean ask me in class to show you.

Tiger and Crane Form

1. Bow in, sweep hands down on pants, raising hands over head while looking in triangle pattern, slowly slap hands to side of legs.
2. RIGHT Crane
3. Step over to RIGHT
4. to RIGHT head to knee slam,
5. RIGHT Elbow strike.
6. RIGHT Sweeping Crane (right hand forward w/palm down, left hand up in fist up over head)
7. Right Twisting Horse
8. RIGHT Crane

9. RIGHT Hook kick to
10. RIGHT Twisting Horse sweep away (right hand extended, left hand to left side of body).
11. LEFT Bow,
12. RIGHT Palm heel strike to groin,
13. LEFT Knife hand to nose,
14. RIGHT Bear hand to head.
15. RIGHT Front snap kick, turn into
16. RIGHT Bow, jump and clap hands to
17. RIGHT Crane (palms out to cranes beak)
18. RIGHT Twisting horse (left hand high, right low).
19. LEFT Bow,
20. RIGHT Tiger Claw,
21. RIGHT (KIAI) on Dragon fist,
22. turn to Right,
23. circle blocks with left hand low, right hand high.
24. RIGHT Crane
25. RIGHT hook kick
26. to Right twisting horse sweep away
27. Rotate 180 to LEFT into HORSE stance
28. slap left hand on left thigh, right hand on right thigh,
29. Slap hands on chest (right over left crossing hand).
30. RIGHT Dragon fist.
31. Sweep RIGHT leg over to RIGHT
32. Sweeping Crane.
33. RIGHT Elbow,
34. RIGHT Tiger mouth, clap hands over head to left and right cranes beaks
35. Standing to LEFT Rear Crane (left hand low pointing to right and right hand high pointing to right, palms up)
36. turn to RIGHT Bow, take 4 steps to RIGHT (KIA! on)
37. Dragon fist
38. LEFT Rear Crane,
39. turn to left in Horse,
40. RIGHT Elbow
41. Thrust, reach hands over RIGHT shoulder to simulate head flip,
42. strike down with RIGHT (KIA! on) Dragon fist,
43. RIGHT Crane
44. Left Bow
45. LEFT hand circle block
46. Right Dragon fist.
47. Right Crane.
48. Right Double Crane to
49. Right Twisting Horse sweep away.
50. Left leg over to Horse Stance (hands in front).
51. Right Crane.
52. RIGHT BOW to LEFT Dragon Fist.
53. Rotate 180 to left, feet to together with left hand low and right hand high in front of face with palms out
54. Right stomp
55. Right Hook

56. Right Round House
57. Right Bow
58. Right Sweep
59. Crane
60. lace palms together in front of face while standing up
61. Bow out

Suggested Reading

1. The Zen in the Martial Arts by Joe Hayms
2. The Wisdom of Kung Fu by Michael Minick
3. The Medical Implications of Karate Blows by Brian C. Adams
4. Secrets of Shaolin Temple Boxing by Robert W. Smith
5. The Tao Te Ching: A New Translation by Gia Fu and Jane English
6. Tao of Jeet Kime Do by Bruce Lee

A Final Word

Now you have the basics. The training manual has given you the framework you need to develop skill at becoming a Shaolin Warrior.

Remember that no one can become a true fighter until you learn how to behave.

Proper manners and good conduct are essential elements in Kung Fu.

The basics, if practiced, will enrich your lives. The physical aspects promote good health and the philosophy gives you peace of mind. If Martial Arts training does just this alone it is worth the endeavor. We never know what the future holds in store for us. Who would have thought that 6 months after I graduated from high school I would have to defend my life with my bare hands in the jungles of Viet Nam. At that time I only had 2 years of Martial Arts training. But those 2 years saved my life.

You cannot control your destiny but you can control yourself

Remember too~ that this training manual is meant as a guide along the way of training through a qualified teacher. If you just read through the pages, you will remember for a short time and the art will be lost. If you share it with your teacher then both of you improve and the art is retained through skill forever.

Practice the virtues of humility, patience and courage.

Think of this: The world is made of men who tell themselves many things and give themselves many titles and profess to have wisdom. Such incompetence and unintelligent leadership we must endure. I wonder how much longer the world will not see the truth of such men.

True wisdom is a coming of time and is rooted in the soul and not in titles.

And what is truth? Is it what I say? Or in what you say? Trust is not always truth.

Being only human how can we decide what truth is without human prejudice?

Once I had a dream that I was a tiger.

Then I awoke and I was me,

or was I a tiger dreaming I was a man?

A hill remains, the seasons change,

The streams flow, the sun rises and sets,

*The winds come and go and carry their message
to your heart.*

Am I still dreaming?

Relax.

Am I a tiger or a man?

For no one can understand it all in a single day.

Or am I both?

Who can say?

Grandmaster Steven G. Abbate

10th Level Black Sash

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Tai Kit Kuen Kung Fu

**NOTE: I have added some information to Master Abbate's Manual. These excerpts are Marked with * and end with **

-Sifu