

## SENSEI

The word "sensei" in addition to denoting the meanings of teacher or instructor, literally means, "One who has preceded you" In relation to karate training, this does not necessarily mean chronologically, but rather that your sensei has been along the path of karate learning before you, and now makes his or her long experience and guidance available.

At times, sensei will be mother, father, sister and brother rolled into one. He will make what appear to be impossible demands on your mental and physical powers and at other times, will seem to ignore you-but his eyes never miss you. He will shout, harass, plead and cajole into a desired level of performance-for which you might receive a comment of "Not bad". He will ask you to reach for mountain-high standards, to be dissatisfied with only satisfactory performance.

He will correct and correct, until you both feel like giving up-but He never will. He will be your friend, yet never your friend, because a sensei cannot truly be your friend, and a friend cannot truly be your sensei. He will endure the pain of your anger, of your ingratitude or even apathy and come back for more. He will appear to think of nothing but karate to the point of almost being inhuman. He will demand a fierce loyalty to the association and to all other students.

He will preach method, theory, and concept and then tell you that these things will pass in your quest for "MU NO KOKORO", which is the mind without conscious thought. He will demand respect not for himself, but for what his rank represents. He will give of his knowledge and yet give nothing, for in the end you can walk the path. Each student becomes part of HIM and He is part of each student. He will watch one out of 800 students achieve black belt ranking, and feel sorrow for the 799.

He is subject to criticism, doubt, misunderstanding, and even ridicule each time he speaks by those who know little or nothing. Yet still he speaks. Karate is his life. He is at the dojo while you pursue your career. He is at the dojo while you take a vacation from everyday worries and pressures. At times, he is working at the dojo even when you are sleeping. He is at the dojo when he is sick or tired. He is and will remain many things not listed here. But one thing he or she will always remain...

*SENSEI*