



## KARATE RULES!

Everywhere you go, there are rules. At school, at work, when shopping for groceries, driving a car and we even have rules for social interaction. Some can be bent, and some must never be broken. In sports we have rules too. If you break them you might receive a penalty, a warning, or even be ejected from a match. At Wattie Karate we have five main rules.

### BE SAFE

Don't do anything to get yourself or others injured. This one shows up across the board in sports. Sometimes we're expected to hit our opponent, and sometimes we are called to just run past them and score the point. At times it can be difficult to discern which is best. However, wanting to do one, while showing control and doing the other can be far more challenging. We see these challenges throughout our lives, even in a situation as simple as choosing our words carefully.

### BE RESPECTFUL

Show respect to all – including yourself. Sometimes just being a good sport and shaking hands after a game, but often much more. Depending on when, where and who is present in a situation, your behavior may differ greatly. While there are many more, here are two helpful life lessons: "If you have nothing to say, say nothing" - "It's not what you say, but how you say it"

### DON'T MISS-USE YOUR KARATE KNOWLEDGE

Some parents are worried that by learning karate, their youngster is just learning to fight. Not so. The other side of the coin is that they are learning how to defend themselves. But don't forget the edge of the coin: you don't have to show up to every fight you're invited to. Sometimes we need to stand up and defend ourselves, and sometimes we need to know when to walk away... or run

### SLOWDOWN, CONCENTRATE AND PRACTICE

This is our method for developing ourselves. Generally, this works for nearly anything! Want to learn the piano, read another language, learn to dance or improve your relationships at work? This could be your go-to method! Sure, some things are best (or easier) when done faster, but that doesn't mean it's best to start fast. Slow down so that you have the time to concentrate while you practice.

### TRY

If you don't try then there are no new skills, no improving and no succeeding. There are different ways of learning and different ways of succeeding, but if you're unwilling to try, then you don't know your own limits – so you can never exceed them. We have students who are physically incapable of performing some skills. We find an adapted way for them to learn and to succeed, but if they just throw their hands up in the air saying it's just too hard – then they can never succeed. Remember what Wayne Gretzky said: "You miss 100% of the shots you don't take."

Throughout our path in karate, any other sport, or simply our path through life, we need to be mindful of what guides us and what keeps us on the path to where we're going. Maybe it's a trophy, maybe it's a black belt, or maybe it's a promotion at work. The rules that we follow act as guard rails along the road to help us. Learning how to navigate life is a challenge met well through sport – especially karate!