



エトス

The Ethos of our traditional martial arts instruction

In recent week's there has been reason for me to share and explain to my deshi (students) the meaning of, "ethos" within our traditional school of instruction.

Well, first, what does "ethos" mean?

We can browse through the dictionaries of time to find several meanings, and here you will discover a basic description. For example; a set of beliefs within a group or family, moral nature, and character. I could go on forever, although I wish to talk about the meaning of "ethos" within our traditional school of instruction (our martial art). It is known in Japanese as; エトス Etosu.

When the student upon arriving, and stepping across the threshold of the dojo for the very first time, senses the "ethos" that warms the dojo, at that moment encompassing their being. Initially this sensation may be quite daunting to the new student. However, under the direction and encouragement of the Sensei and the other Karate Ka in the dojo, the sensation of uncertainty, is swiftly forgotten, and replaced by a sense of true belonging and harmony.

The "ethos" of our art is capitulated within the culture and philosophies of the art, forming a bond to our art, and members, a sense of belonging to a family, soon is felt. Therefore, as we train and study together, we experience the ideologies' that have been shared from a time in budo history long ago, these ancient philosophies are thus, preserved by us in the way we support each other, and how we give of ourselves to others.

To discuss "ethos" without mentioning our time-honoured code of honour, would be void of soul, the spiritual entity of our art. Our Dojo Kun, reminds us to be giving in our actions and thoughts unselfishly, therefore becoming our spiritual guide throughout our study and modest life-time, for this time will never come again.

May your life's journey, have steps of kindness, harmony and humility.

Yours in Kokoro, O'Connor Hanshi.