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# Introduction

## Is It Possible?

For some teachers, the thought of getting students to practice outside of class is like trying to get my three yr. old to eat a tuna sandwich instead of a peanut butter and jelly sandwich.

Some of you probably want to give up even before you start. After all, isn't this just like trying to get kids to do homework for school? Some do their assignments without much coercion, while others need threats of punishment, the promise of reward, some pleading on both the part of the teacher and the parent(s), with a healthy dose of natural consequences (grades on the report card or being held back) thrown in.

**So, is this an impossible task?** No, not at all.

In fact, armed with the proper ammunition —the tactics from this book and your own plan of action, you may find that **you actually enjoy** teaching your students to be self-directed as they develop self-discipline.

As you see them practice more on their own, without the prodding by you, their martial arts instructor, you will feel a sense of accomplishment. As their skills improve, you will share in their pride — almost like a proud parent.

Let's get you started.



## Creating a Plan of Attack

Goals goals goals. It's always about goals. In this case, you need a goal for your student(s):



- \* Do you just want your students to practice, anything, outside of class?
- \* Do you want them to practice specific techniques on their own?
- \* Do you want them to practice basic punches and kicks?
- \* How long do you want them to practice?
- \* Is it more important for them to practice a little bit every day, or do you want them to have an intensive session once a week?



You need to ask yourself questions of this type before you start molding your students into **mean, lean practice machines**. Maybe reading these tips will help you decide on some worthwhile goals.

Once you have those goals, you'll need a plan of attack. Which of these tactics fit your personality? Which would work in your particular set of circumstances? Which technique would you like to try first?

This first round (serious attempt) of teaching your students to actually practice outside of class will be the hardest. As you keep trying tech-

Some of the techniques won't work. You will discard those. And some of the tips will need a bit of **tweaking**, in order for them to work with your students.

You will develop your own bag of tricks. Eventually, your techniques will be so strong, that you will be able to get almost all of your students to buy into your methods.

They won't have a chance — or according to **The Borg**, on **Star Trek**, “resistance is futile.”

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You will be able to deal with students who:

- \* don't have the time to practice
- \* are too lazy to practice
- \* practice for 5 minutes before class only (cram session)
- \* don't have a practice partner, don't have a workout area, etc....



# 1

## The Art of Selling Your Students on Practice

Getting your students to practice outside of class can be a struggle, or it can be easy. If you have a choice, take the easier route. And one way to do that, is to **have your students buy into your logic or emotions**.

If you convince them that your reasons for outside-of-class practice are valid, and you get them emotionally charged about practicing for improvement, you will get them to improve by leaps and bounds.

So, how do you get them to believe in your reasoning enough to actually go out there and practice?



## Getting Them to Come to You First

I am not sure you can plan it — maybe you can, but you will be infinitely more successful on a one-to-one basis, if your student approaches you first.

In this instance, **you don't try to get the entire class to practice**, but rather you convince a lone student that a bit of outside practice would be in his/her best interests.

**Bill Stark**, my mentor for high school teaching, told me that he was a 100 times more successful turning a failing kid around, if the student approached him asking for help. It almost never worked out, when he identified the problem and went to the student.

If you are ever lucky enough to have a student come to you begging for assistance, then you have an ear to bend. **This would be the perfect time to start the student practicing some specific exercises outside of class.**

The student is practically pleading for help. You are offering a solution. You are offering hope. Hope by practicing — **outside of class**. And if the practicing pays off — wow. You may just have convinced someone on the merits of self discipline for a lifetime of improvement. Again, I say — Wow!

So, remember; if a student has a problem, teaching him/her to practice might just be the perfect solution. Consider it.



## What To Do When You Aren't So Lucky

Having all of your students come to you first would be the ideal. Unfortunately, you can't wait around for this to happen. It's just a nice gift, when it does.

What do you do, when you have to approach the individual, or you have to try to convince an entire class to practice?

The answer is **salesmanship**. (Could I really get away with saying "salespersonship"?)

Think about it. You are trying to convince your students to **buy into your suggestions**. The key word is **buy**. So, who are the best convincers? Who can get folks to buy?

**Yes. Salespeople.**

Salespeople offer hope. Salespeople list features of their product. They link these features to benefits. They get you to crave those benefits.

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Example: You have a way you want your students to practice punching at home. You want to develop their speed punches.

So, the feature you offer is to be able to punch **ten times in one second**. Some students will make their own connections to benefits. They will draw their own conclusions as to why theyÖd want to learn to punch ten times in a second.

Other students need it spelled out for them. Link the feature of being able to punch with a benefit or two.

ÒIf you practice this exercise at home, I think you will be able to punch ten times in a second very soon. Most of you will be able to accomplish this within a month. You will be able to punch this fast, so you can hit your attacker ten times before he/she throws the first technique.

You won't even have any need to block hits or kicks. Why? Because you will land a whole series of blows before your opponent has time to finish their first technique.

I always try to link **features** with **benefits**. Salespeople say that **features tell, and benefits sell**. I think benefits do the initial selling, but features are the convincers. You need both.

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## Where Do You Find Features And Benefits?

Glad you asked. First, look within. What got you excited about the martial arts? What did you really want to learn how to do? What were the **super powers** that you wanted to develop? (You know what I mean.)



Could you imagine any of your students having the same desires? Would they be willing to do what you did to acquire your skill?

Next, I have a slick suggestion for you — tap into your students' unique desires. **Find out what gets them to drool, and you have it made.** What ads do they read in, and cut out of, martial arts magazines?

Look to those advertisements. They will offer you a wealth of features and benefits. What your students want to learn from buying those products, is also what they want to learn from you. You just have to figure out what gets them going.

### Example:

Kerwin Benson Publishing uses a few of the feature and benefit combinations in their ads for my book **Wrist Locks: From Protecting Yourself to Becoming an Expert**.

Note: Even the title of the book combines features with benefits. Why learn wrist locks? If you learn wrist locks (the features), the benefit will be that **you will learn to protect yourself**. You get an added benefit that, by reading this book and practicing the exercises, **you will become an expert**.

You see how features and benefits go hand in hand? Here are some examples of chapter titles linked to benefits from one of their ads:

### Chapter

1. **Practice For Fast Improvement and Great Results**. These tips will guarantee that you'll be wrist locking successfully in no time at all.
2. **What's In a Name? Make Sense of all of the all the styles that incorporate wrist locks**, so you can discuss wrist locks confidently with other experts.
3. **Getting Out of Unfamiliar Locks By Feeling Where to Go** — no lock will ever surprise you ever again. You will react skillfully to any attempted lock.

4. **A Dozen Super Techniques to Promote Thought** — Start wrist locking immediately. Some of these locks are so easy, that they barely take any practice. And the ones that require practice will automatically teach you important principles that you will be able to apply to other martial arts situations.
5. **Expert Responses When Someone Grabs You.** You will actually smile, whenever someone grabs you. Why? Because these responses are clever. They are fun to do. And they work.
6. **Patterns: The Secret of Learning to Flow.** How would you like to be able to counter your opponent's wrist lock, by flowing into another one? That's right — you can learn to flow effortlessly from counter to counter, matching your opponent's every move.
7. **Generalizing to Different People and Situations.** You will learn to make these locks work on anyone, no matter how strong or how big. These won't be techniques that only work in the dojo. You can make these locks work in a variety of circumstances.
8. **Always React With The Best Lock Possible** -- you will learn to react automatically, without thought. And you will react with a great technique. You learn how to eliminate the dangerous paths, and emphasize the techniques that leave you in a strong position for a follow-up.

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And on it goes -- through all **fifteen chapters**. Were you able to separate the benefits from the features?

The features are the specific components of each chapter. The benefits are the emotions behind the features. They are the **why** of each chapter. I offer confidence. They can appear to be an expert. With these techniques, they can take on opponents of different sizes. And so forth.

Now, if this book is popular -- **it is...** and if your students are buying it, as a result of reading ads, or reading the inside jacket in a bookstore, then it's safe to assume that **something they are reading is convincing them to buy**, right?

If you can figure out what is getting them to part with their money, you may have the perfect tool to get them to practice at home. Just create exercises, where they will see improvement in the areas of their desires. **Help them to fulfill their goals.**

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Note: Small pitch -- if you can't figure out exercises to promote the benefits from the book, I have an idea. You know what's coming, right? **Nod nod, wink wink.**

Buy the book, **Wrist Locks**. After all, it teaches the exact features you might be trying to emulate.  
(<http://www.kerwinbenson.com/?practice>)

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Please don't limit this technique to my one book. Look at lots of ads. Find out the emotional triggers of your students.

Do they want to get faster? Stronger? Do they want to win tournaments? Which ads are they reacting to?



# 2

## Beyond Selling

To some, the thought of selling doesn't appeal. Even if it's to try to get your students to buy into practicing outside of class. That's OK. You can convince them without relying on overt sales techniques.

There are other ways to reach your students. You can still get them to buy into the idea of outside practice. There are some time-honored methods....



### Impress the Snot Out of Them

That's right. Show them what you can do. Link it to practice. In other words, tell them how you got to that level. Really impress them.

Then start them on their way. As a form of encouragement, **teach them a secret little tip to help in the practice**. Also, keep them going by telling them that, as soon as they are ready (they have practiced enough), you will teach them another secret of practicing to get them to the next level.

This is a great way to get them to practice the boring stuff.

You show them an impressive combination. Then you break it down into its basic components. **Each element of the sequence is nothing more than a basic technique**. So, you have them practice the basics, with the promise of recombining the elements into the super-impressive sequence.

Breaking it down into individual parts has an added benefit. It lowers the technique out of the clouds, and puts it into the realm of possibility.

You see, sometimes we impress our students so much, that they think, **"I could never learn to do that. I'll never be as good/quick/skillful as my teacher."**

When we break it down, and get them successful component by component, we make the whole learning process more manageable. It's an easier pill to swallow.



## Getting Students To Track Their Own Progress

Another way to convince them of the benefits of practice is to let them see the results for themselves. Have them chart their own improvement. Once they see results on a consistent basis, the data may convince them to keep going.

You can have them graph their results. This is great when you are building quantity -- like number of punches, kicks in a row, etc....

Other than quantity, you can have them measure results. They can record how flexible they get. Or how high they can kick (not one of my goals). Anything that is quantifiable or measurable works well.



## What about non-measurables? Like a sequence or a form?

You could have each student buy a video tape. You set up a camcorder in a separate area. Each week the student comes in, pops in his/her tape, and performs the same sequence. Over time, they will have a tape that shows their progression -- their improvements.

They should especially study the difference between the **first time the sequence was recorded** and the **most recent**. There should be a dramatic difference.

If you don't want to tape, could you use blackbelts in the school as judges? They score the students at the beginning. Then after a couple of months, they score the students again -- maybe more frequently if your students' attention spans are anything like the attention spans of mine.



## Piddly Practice

**This is a great technique for getting your students to practice.** It works especially well, if they aren't practicing at all outside of class.

Just have them practice **1,000 punches a day**, every day, between classes. If they did this, they'd build up stamina for doing a ton of punches, right? So, after making the assignment, you should be able to tell, whether or not they are actually practicing outside of class.

So, if they are not practicing, break it down.

I mean really break it down. **Reduce the number of repetitions to a number that is so small, that it's laughable.**

How about **six** punches a day? Or maybe **seven**? The number isn't important, as long as it's **really really** small.

You then explain to them that any fool could do six punches a day. You plead with them. You tell them that you aren't asking for the world -- **you just want six honest punches from them** on a daily basis.

You don't want 36 punches the day before class. You want six punches a day. That's it. You explain that they have to be honest about it.

Maybe suggest that they do them at the same time each day -- link the action to another action, like brushing their teeth. Every day, when they rise in the morning to brush their teeth, have them do their six punches. Emphasize the importance of doing them each and every day.

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Now, here's the kicker. **Don't increase the number of repetitions for awhile.** Maybe even a month. Seriously. As you'll see in the section on creating habits, having them do the punches daily is much more important than the actual quantity.

You just want them used to the idea of punching every day. You don't care how many punches they actually do. You want them to develop the habit of punching daily.

Later, you build. You can either use the Interval method -- see the e-report on The Three I's. Or you can build the punches up in class.

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I did both. I had students who got wiped out after **fifty punches**. So, I built both in class with sets and out of class with pure interval training.

Along the way, I upped the number of reps at home, by increasing the **piddly factor**.

ÒGuys. We have been punching 1,000 reps, in sets of 200, in class. Yet, at home, you guys are still only punching six lousy punches a day. What would be a resonable number for you to do at home?

Ò1,000,Ó yells one.

ÒFive hundred punches,Ó offers another.

After they settle on **700**, I step in.

ÒHow about**100** a day? Could I count on you guys for that?Ó

ÒBut Pascal,**100** is too piddly....Ó

Bingo. I win. A little over two months before, they couldn't do fifty in a row. Now, double that is ... **too piddly**.

I keep building. At a certain point, some of my students break the rules. One of my students just couldn't stand my low numbers [giggle giggle]. At home, he started doing 1600 a day!

Others stayed lazy to the core ... until it became embarrassing to do so. It became the in thing to practice punching at home.

Am I getting your creative juices flowing? What, besides punches, could you break down to a piddly amount? Do you have the acting skills required to pull this off?

If you do, your students will reap some impressive benefits, don't you agree?





# 3

## **Intrinsic vs. Extrinsic Is Not As Difficult As It Sounds**

Huh? What? What are you talking about?

I am referring to **student motivation**. What is motivating your students to learn?

**If you can tap into what really motivates them, you can use this knowledge to really get them to improve.** And they improve by practicing.

Do they seem to have an inner drive? Does their desire come from within? If so, they are **intrinsically** motivated.



I talk about learning as the exercise. How they approach the learning process is as important as the goal. After all, I also want to teach them to learn in a more efficient manner.

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Note: I have had a lot of formal education. I tell this to my students. I also tell them that I remember a small fraction of what I learned in high school, and even in college during my undergrad. studies.

The point wasn't to memorize information. I was there to learn how to think. I was learning how to learn. Sure, I remember what's important to me. We all do. But learning to learn efficiently is much more important, wouldn't you agree?

Can you draw a parallel between that and studying a martial art? What can you tell your students about practicing difficult techniques?

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When they are particularly frustrated, I give them the **if it were easy to learn, then everyone would be doing it** speech.

ÒIf it were easy to learn, then everyone would be doing it.

Just think, you are developing a skill that only a handful of people can do. that's impressive.

And it's worth a little sweat now -- just think of the payoff later. Blah blah blah [convince, convince, convince].

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Keep in mind, it's easy to get frustrated while learning martial arts. It's OK for you to be coach, when needed.

You want to get them over their plateaus, right? And one way to do this is to get them to practice at home. That means they are going to have to stay motivated, even when you aren't around. Start getting them to motivate themselves now.



## Getting Flexible Takes Time

Along with my **not all learning is easy** speech, I have in my hip pocket a **not all practice will be immediately noticeable** speech.

In other words, I have had to deal with a lot of impatient students. They want results, and they want results now. Well, not all results show up after just one practice.

So, **we talk about stretching**. It's a great example. And it's one of the best things they could do during their practice sessions.

We talk about how it's important to stretch every day. Skip one day, and you won't improve, but if you skip two days, you'll actually become less flexible.

Of course, this isn't instantly apparent. It shows up over time. In just six months the loss of flexibility can be incredible -- which reminds me, **Keith, practice what you preach, practice what you preach!!**

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You also don't see a ton of fast improvement with stretching. It takes time. So, with stretching, it takes time to get good, and it takes time to get bad. **The students have to practice on faith**. They don't see immediate results one way or the other....

**Which is great**. Usually, after our talk, just a couple of students start stretching out on their own. After a month or two, it becomes very apparent who has been stretching daily and who hasn't.

When I call attention to this fact, we usually get some renewed enthusiasm for stretching.

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Note: I am mainly talking about stretching for health. Our system doesn't kick high. Although we do practice fighting against high kicks -- so somebody has to do the high kick on the good guy. So, we all stretch -- we take turns being the bad guy/high kicker..

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By the way, I have a hard time convincing people to stretch to prevent injury, until they themselves have been injured by failing to stretch out

properly. Then they are all ears. I wish I could successfully warn them ahead of time. Sometimes, it takes a kick in the seat of the pants -- or a tweaked ligament.

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So, are you getting some ideas for your students? Are there some principles or techniques that you'd like to try?

Or are you at a loss? Are you getting bogged down by principles? Do you want something more concrete?

Here are two Super Tips on motivation and rewards....



# 4

## Two Super Tips for Motivating

### Super Tip #1

Create a token economy at your school. Print up some cards with a catchy little reward phrase on one side:

For Being A Good martial Artist

JKD Card

Gold Card

Pascal's Fighting Arts

Reward Card

They don't have to be big. You could print two per business card. Then have the print shop cut all of the business cards in half.

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Each time a student does something good, pop a card on him/her. **They write their name on the back, and drop it into a box.** Depending on the quality and quantity of prizes offered, you could pull out some cards either weekly or monthly.

You could offer promotional posters that you get in the mail -- they make great prizes.

You could offer coupons for fast food.

You could offer them an 8 x 10 of you posing with a famous martial artist -- unless you are the famous martial artist.

If you're the celebrity, you could give them an autographed 8 x 10 of you -- "It's great having you as my student. best Wishes -- Steve Golden." **(OK Steve, now you know what I want for my birthday.)**

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When I taught at **Marshfield High School**, they offered good news notes to the students. They handed out these notes all over the school. Then they had drawings. The prizes were donated by businesses in the community.

When Marshfield stopped doing good news notes, I continued in my classroom.

I went to the video store and asked them to donate old posters of the students' favorite movies. I also got my buddy to donate cassette singles and promotional items from the music store where he worked.

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You could also offer a few intangibles. How about a few private lessons with one of your blackbelts? **How about one private lesson with you?** The grand prize could be **free lessons for a month.** You have to determine if you can afford to make such an offer.

Make sure you offer variety at first. You want to know what really entices your students. You want them to work for the reward -- or the

possibility of reward, since you will only draw a limited number of tickets.  
Pay attention

### **A few hints to make the ticket system work:**

- \* Spread the wealth. Give everyone a chance to get cards. This way, everyone has a chance of winning, not just the best -- with the most cards in. Even someone with only one or two cards has a chance of winning the big prize.
- \* Get the cards printed on quality stock. You don't want anyone forging cards. If this happens, you'll have to start numbering the cards ahead of time. To save on costs, you could even have them cut into thirds.
- \* Have some booby prizes mixed in. It's fun to watch someone win three pencils. It's better, if the pencils have something martial artsy printed on them.
- \* Throw in a few candy bars or health bars. Get enough prizes going, that a lot of people will win something.
- \* Set a maximum number of prizes that one individual can win in any given month. Maybe a two or a three prize maximum. Once they max out, they can't win anymore, even if their ticket is drawn on the grande prize. That's the breaks! This really does guarantee that you will spread the wealth.
- \* Use the cards to shape behavior. Don't let them cause undesirable behaviors to occur. In other words, no begging for cards. Personally, I don't even want them to suggest a card, when they do something good. My reasoning has to do with intermittent rewards (see the section on rewards in this report).

Try using these cards as rewards. Give them out, when they practice at home. They work. You'll be surprised. Even adults get into the game of it all. And if some balk at the idea -- they don't work for dog biscuits, you say...

ÒFine. You just keep working for the sake of learning. IÕll hand them to you, when you deserve them, anyway.

Instead of keeping them, why donÕt you write someone elseÕs name on them, and then pop them into the box. This way, you are helping someone else out.Ó



Aren't I sneaky. They feel good about doing a mitzvah (good deed) for one of their peers. Feeling good is a reward. Whether they know it or not ... whether they believe me or not ... they work harder to get the cards, so they can give them to someone else.

They really do work harder, even if it is on a subconscious level.

Mission accomplished.



## Super Tip #2

Skeptics Beware! If you gloss over this tip, without trying it, you could be missing out on creating **habits for life** in your students. I challenge you to give it a try. This really is a powerful technique. Yet it's very subtle.

**Super Tip #2** is all about **learning to pay compliments**. Teach your students the art of congratulating. If done properly, this technique can have a snowball effect on improvement. Don't skip this technique! It will really take off in your school.

If you don't believe me, read the following little story. It's 100% true:

If you have read any of my writing, you know that I have taken lessons from **Steve Golden**. He was an original **Ed Parker** student, and he was an original **Bruce Lee** student.

Anyway, to get into his class I had to wait for years on a waiting list. I really wanted in.

When I finally got in, it was even harder. It seemed that each and every student had multiple blackbelts in a variety of styles. I was an amateur compared to them.

I felt that I was always struggling.

I was having difficulty with a particular exercise. It was a **lop-sao** pattern from **Wing Chun**. It involved trapping each other's hands over and over again.

Every time I came to class, it seemed that I did something incorrectly. Steve suggested that I practice outside of class. I didn't.

After awhile, he made the same suggestion. This time, I gave it a try. Then, about a month later, I was doing the exercise in class with another student -- someone much better than I. And I was holding my own -- with this one exercise.

Steve paid me a compliment. For those of you who study with him on a regular basis, you know why this was an event worth remembering.

I beamed. And I went home and practiced that one exercise like crazy. I practiced every single day. I bruised my arms practicing. I practiced with anyone willing. And I practiced every variation I could think of.

Then it happened.

After about six months of practice, I was in class one night, and .... Steve grabbed me as his practice partner for this lop-sao exercise.

No biggy -- he practices with everyone.

But this time it was different. He got faster, and I got faster. He changed sides. So, after showing him that I didn't have a weak side, I changed him back.

I kept pace with him. Of course, I was struggling a bit to keep up, while his movements seemed almost effortless. Later, he told me that he really had to work at it.

Funny, he didn't look winded.

As we stopped, I noticed that the whole class was watching.

Outloud, so everyone could hear, he said, "Good job, Kip (my nickname). Pretty soon I will really have to struggle to keep up with you."

Well, after a compliment like that ... I was determined to become the lop-sao King. I looked in books. I practiced. I observed others closely. I made it a point of doing lop-sao with all different sorts of people. I wanted to feel different energies.

Can you see the point I am about to make?

**Just a couple of compliments made me work my butt off outside of class** to develop a new skill. I even started out as a lazy bum with this exercise. It was definitely not my friend in the beginning. In fact, I loathed practicing the exercise.

Now, after all of these years, I still like it -- I like it a lot. And I make sure all my students can do it well too.

I wish I could be as successful with an exercise called **chi sao**. Oh well. I guess, I need to keep practicing.

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Now, let's generalize this a bit. What do you think would happen, if you explained the principle to your students?

You tell them that they are going to start looking for the good in their classmates. You teach them how to pay compliments. Real compliments.

They will have to learn to look for the good in others. By the way, it won't work if they joke around and pay false compliments. No, you don't want them paying false compliments....

Note: If you have read Dante's Inferno, you probably know where he sent people in Hell who did false flattery while living.

They went to a special swimming pool in Hell. The pool was filled with ca-ca. And you were swimming in it.

And you couldn't go over to the sides, because the swimming pool was surrounded by demons with pitchforks. They poked you back into the center of the pool.

Not only that, but you had open sores on your arms. And you tried to scratch them with fingernails that were loaded with feces. Not a pretty sight.

No, false compliments are out. Make sure they are sincere. Oh, and sorry, for getting so graphic in detail -- but you should read this great piece of literature in the Italian; it's even more descriptive.

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Teach them to congratulate each other on wins. A pat on the back after a sparring session is pretty cool too.

And **have them look for improvement in each other**. If they see each other struggling with moves, words of encouragement can work wonders. Then when they see some improvement, they can reinforce the practice sessions with some nice compliments.

And as I said before, the snowball effect of this technique is amazing.

One other recommendation: You may have to teach your students how to accept compliments. Some of them will get downright embarrassed when others point out something that they did well.

Their esteem may be in the gutter. You never know. So, teach everyone how to accept praise. They can say thank you -- or they can say thank you. May I please hear that again (thanks to the Natural Helper Program® for those two suggestions).

You will find that these flowers will blossom as they learn to allow praise to become a reward.



## Bonus Tip

Combine the two previous **Super Tips** into one. When you hand out a card to someone, make a small note as to **why** they got the card. And **you** jot their name down.

This method takes a bit more time, but you get an added benefit. When you draw their name out of the box, **you can announce to everyone why the individual received the card**.

So, you get to pay them the compliment again. This also makes a stronger link between the original behavior and the reward. It reminds them. It offers them yet another chance to feel good about the technique practiced, the deed well done, the kindness shown, etc....



# 5

## Creating Habits

I have been talking throughout these sections about creating habits in your students. By now, many people have read about **Psycho-cybernetics** by **Maxwell Maltz**.

I read his book back in the 70s. I wanted to created good habits. In his book, he suggested that I try just one habit. I picked making my bed each morning.

He wanted me to do this for 21 days, in order to make it a habit. I tried, and it stuck. To this day, I make my bed every day. The longer I practiced the habit, the more of a habit it became.

Now, I am at the point in my life, that it really bugs me to have my bed unmade (when I am not in it, of course). The habit has become that strong.

Over the years, I have incorporated other habits -- always having a clean car interior, typing on my books just about every day, answering e-mail withing 30 minutes, if I am at the computer (no, I don't spend my

whole life there), etc.... My life isn't completely regimented. It's just that I have needed a few nudges along the way. You understand, don't you?

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I have also created martial arts habits -- I punch most days. I did the first form from Wing Chun daily for lots of years. I will probably come back to it.

I preplan almost all of my martial arts classes that I teach. I make them good, strong classes.

The exception to this is when they occasionally are in a different mode. I may plan a left-brain class, when what they really need is a right-brain class.

Maybe they have had a hard week, and drills wouldn't be the best. Rather than having them listless, I sometimes change the plan. It makes for a stronger class. So, occasionally, you do have to punt.

I practice techniques when I am just standing around alone. I fill dead time with a little practice. All of these little practice breaks add up.

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To create strong habits is why I wanted them to punch every day in the **Piddly Practice** section. I want to create the habit. Even though Maltz suggested 21 days, I teach my students to take it month by month. They pick a habit, and they try it for a month. If they like the results, they make a commitment with themselves to try it for another month.

It's not cut and dry. **Some habits take longer to develop.**

I also teach my students to reward themselves for habits well practiced. It's no secret -- I teach them about reward schedules, finding the right reinforcers, etc.... I am trying to give them an edge in this world. And building good lifetime habits certainly qualifies.



# 6

## Secret Suggestions

Sometimes, you collect tips that you are just reluctant to share. Why? Because you are afraid that someone will take them and get better than you at your own game.

Well, some of these suggestions have been in my bag of closely guarded teaching tips. I used them for a dozen years + in the high school classroom. Now, it's time to share some of them with you.

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I reserve the right hold onto some of my suggestions for future books, OK? I have a ton to share, but these will get you started.

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Here are some that I have either already applied to, or want to try out in, a martial arts context. **Following just one of these tips could be worth the price of the entire e-package.** See if you don't agree:

## Posters to Inspire

I thought up this idea at the **First Annual, By Invitation Only, Bruce Lee Memorial Seminar**.

At the Seminar, all the participants were hounding the original Bruce Lee students and Bruce Lee's wife and daughter, **Linda** and **Shannon**. All of the participants wanted autographs from all of the celebrities.

The participants had these celebrities sign anything -- their programs, pieces of paper, business cards, even napkins.

My wife, Kate, and I went one better. We didn't ask for a single autograph. Not one. Instead, we waited for each celebrity to be alone, before we approached.

In some cases, we had **Steve Golden** introduce us.

Then we struck up conversations with these folks. At the end of our conversations, **we politely asked if we could take a photo with them**. Then, back in Eugene, we had the photos developed ... and enlarged (my wife, the photography buff, cringes whenever I say "**blow up**" a picture).

We had the photos of us with the celebrities enlarged to 13" mini-posters. **Now, here is where the genius comes in.**

The next year, at the **Second Annual Seminar**, we brought our posters with us. And we brought fancy gold and silver pens -- the kind that write on photos.

You guessed it.

At the appropriate time, we had the folks autograph the photos to us. Of course, the photos reminded them that they had met us the year before. And they were impressive mini-posters. They liked seeing themselves.

As an added benefit, we never had to ask them for autographs again. We are becoming better acquaintances with some of them each year -- they don't have to run from us as we approach.

We are just there to talk, congratulate them on some recent accomplishment, etc. We don't want them to sign anything.



**So, why have I put this in this e-book? To brag? No.**

**These posters have an energizing effect.** Every time I look at them, I feel like practicing. They show me with some very famous martial artists. It inspires me.

You visual folks will immediately understand how powerful this concept can be. Those of you who don't learn as well visually, auditory and kinesthetic learners, may have a harder time perceiving its value.

Here's another example of the same principle. The librarian at a high school where I worked put up posters of the faculty **reading**. She got photos of the teachers, cooks, custodians, and administrators, and she went to her local copy shop to have them blown ... I mean enlarged.

She slapped a transparency that had the word **"read"** on it on top of the photo and made a copy poster size. She use a light word **"read"** on dark photos, and a dark one on light photos. Then she laminated them.

**As an added touch, she made an extra copy to give to the subject in the photo.** She got photos of folks reading everywhere... reading on top of mountains, in front of computers, with children, etc....

Now, think about this. Rather than having just a few small photos of you or your students at tournaments, seminars, or pic nics, wouldn't it be cool to have some small posters of your students doing well at various martial arts activities?

Catch them practicing. Make them look impressive.

Maybe you could even borrow the transparency idea, and put phrases on the posters:

\* All It Took Was ... Practice!

\* Practice Means Kicking Butt!

\* I Love Martial Arts

\* I Love Kung Fu

\* Someday, I'll Be The Master

\* How Do I Do It? Practice!

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You get the idea. make the student feel great. Then put a copy on the wall of your martial arts studio. It doesn't even have to be a student-of-the-month type placement. you could put posters in various spots around the school.

### Let the posters inspire.

Be sure to get the added benefit -- **make an extra copy for the student to take home**. After being shown off to family and friends, it can take its place on a wall, and start inspiring from home.

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Note: You could also use a scanner and a computer printer. Figure out an economical way to make them look classy. Even an 8 x 10 photo would be impressive.

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### Mini-Suggestion

Could you have a **Wall of Practicers**? What would it take to get one's poster on this wall? Would you have several criteria or just one criterion, like practicing five days a week for three months?

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## Make Learning Fun

And equally important is to **make reinforcing the learned material fun**. This is one of my secrets from the classroom. I made my students want to be there. They actually looked forward to class. Even the students who weren't into high school said that **they didn't mind** my class.

And guess what? **Not all of the learning was fun**. Some of it was really hard. So, I made the practice -- the reinforcement of the learned material fun. Whenever I could I made both the learning and the practicing fun.

I felt sort of like **Mary Poppins**. And you can too. You make boring activities, like cleaning one's room, interesting and exciting.

If you figure out ways to make repetitive exercises more interesting, you will have a much easier time getting your students to practice. And they will practice more enthusiastically too.

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I tend to **make games out of boring activities**. I challenge myself. How well can I do it? How fast can I do it?

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I have also found **adding an element of fantasy helps**. **Steve Golden** and **Sean Madigan** also seem to use this technique.

It definitely ups the adrenaline level (and the interest level), if you have to defend attackers from getting through a doorway to your family.

Or the driveway is the top of a tall building -- getting knocked off the driveway is like plunging to your death thousands of feet below.

Isn't an active imagination fun? And fun gets them to practice, right?

[illegible]

# Boys Will Be Boys

And maybe girls will be girls too. I have taught a lot of males martial arts. My wife has more experience teaching females, than I do. I have noticed that boys, and many men, like to horse around.

They playfully spar. I use this to my advantage. I pose some sort of limitation. Can they fight with their dominant hand behind their back? Can they fight on their knees?

My limitation is usually linked to a skill that I want them to develop. I have found them more likely to practice with a partner outside of class, if I pose a limitation.

If I ask them to spar for half an hour outside of class, they may or may not practice. But if I tell them to practice sparring with their legs tied, so their feet are only about two feet apart, they are much more likely to practice. Don't ask me why. But it's true.



## Challenge Them

Along the same lines as the above suggestion, **I challenge them:**

Who will be the first to be able to do 500 punches **while standing/ balancing on a bowling ball?**

Who will be the first to be able to do 300 crunches in a row?

Who will be the first to learn 10 stick take-aways?



Can you see how great this technique is to get them to practice? It is super strong. Careful how you use it.

Also, **don't always have a contest going.** Maybe have a couple going at once. Then, when they are over, **pause for awhile.** Let their desire for another contest build.

You want them chomping a the bit a little, so they will really practice the next time you offer a challenge.



Have you thought about offering a prize to the winner? It doesn't have to be something major. A mouthguard. A giant candy bar. A certificate declaring the winner!!



## Turn It Into A Multi-Step Plan

One of the reasons that I was fairly successful with in the high school setting, is because **I was up front with my students**. If I wanted them to improve, I told them so.

I also told them, that **we would follow a plan**. We discussed it. I made them a part of it. I didn't just implement it, without even mentioning what I was doing, the way so many teachers do.

I would tell them that **I had created a four-step plan** -- or whatever number for that particular situation. I would tell them about each phase. I'd tell them how we'd know, when they were ready for the next level. I might even make a poster of their progress.

We'd improve over time. I would also tell them when they would need to kick it up a notch, **by practicing at home**. I had them carrying flashcards. I even had them quizzing each other.

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I would often give percentages to the class.

ÒI want 100% of you to be able to conjugate any verb, from a list of 300, with 90% accuracy.Ó

We would pair the best students with the slowest learners, because even the slow ones had to demonstrate 90% accuracy.

Of course, if I had some special cases, I would adjust for the class -- maybe only 85% of the class would have to do the verbs with **95%** accuracy. But everyone had to demonstrate at least 50% accuracy.

Get the idea?

**So, how can we apply this to martial arts practice?** Easy. Break some aspect of your art down into components.

Will you have them learn 15 stick patterns?

Do you want everyone to be able to kick over their head?

Do they all need to memorize a particularly long sequence of moves?

Next, explain your goal to your students. Sell them on it. And start them on the first phase. As they get closer to the next step, reward them with praise. And prepare them to ease into phase two.

## Put Learning In Their Hands

You, as a teacher, need to realize that students learn more than just what you dish out on a platter. There are subtle lessons being learned all of the time. Once you realize this, you can turn some of the learning over to them.

**Have them teach themselves something at home.** Or give them an assignment -- **figure out five ways to defend against a spear or pole being jabbed at your stomach.**

All of your students bring their responses back to you. Analyzing them in front of the class can be a great learning experience in and of itself.

**Never make a student feel bad for contributing.** Or, they will stop contributing.

Criticize and correct nicely. Find some point that you did like about the response. If you can't, at least compliment them on their creativity.

One of the ways I avoid this awkward situation, is that **I give them multi-answer assignments**. Notice that I said, give me **FIVE** ways to take the job. The chances are, at least one of them is worth receiving a compliment, right?

I also **work from beginner to advanced**. The beginners get to go first. They have the more novice responses.

It also challenges the more advanced students to come up with different answers, if their answer was already provided by a beginner.

**This is one way I get even more practice out of them.**

Some of my more advanced students don't want to get caught having to say, **"I thought of the same one he did."** So, they practice like crazy, so they have ten to twelve responses ready and practiced.

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## Contracts

Another way I put learning in their hands is by having them practice and getting a witness, like a parent or spouse to sign for them after each session. They have to play honestly.

I give them a form with the homework assignment on it. This way the witness knows what he/she is attesting to.

I use this almost as a last resort. They sign a **practice contract** with me. We set up reward and consequence.

We both agree upon it. I explain why I am serious about it -- remember, this is for the real difficult cases. Sometimes, I just have to pound something into them. And this is the way.

It's sort of like the sheet that kids had to get their teachers to sign at school -- with a difference. Our counselors didn't make the best use of them. Half the time, the student didn't know exactly what it was for, except that it was punishment.

I make sure the student knows **why** we are starting the sheet. The student also knows exactly **what is expected**. The student knows the possibility of reward for success, and consequence for failure.

And the student knows that I am not punishing -- I am helping to get the student on track, in order to improve at an acceptable rate.

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## Super Secret Tip

I am saving a **super secret tip** for last. Bruce Lee always seemed to do more than one thing at a time. He would bench press one of his children, while reading martial arts books. He would punch, while writing a book. And there are many more examples.

I am not Bruce Lee. I don't practice that way. Neither am I advising that you do the same. **For some of us, we need to focus on one thing at a time.**

But reading about his habits did make me aware of something. **Many of us waste a lot of time.** I was determined to waste less of it. So, I found a big time waster.

Yep, you know this is coming .... TV. No surprise, right? But would it surprise you, if I told you that **watching TV can be good for your martial arts training?**

**I am talking about commercials.** Sure, we could all watch TV, while practicing punches or kicks, like some of us do, while walking or running on a treadmill. But commercials offer another advantage.

We can learn to form a good habit, by watching commercials. I teach my students to use commercials as their queue. When their favorite program pauses for a break, I want them to get up and start practicing.

If we are building punches, they have to punch as long as there are commercials on. The second their shows come back on, they are to stop. But as soon as another commercial pops on the screen, they are to pop out of their seats and start punching again.

The more TV they watch, the more practice they get. Cool?

I have some of my students tell me that this has become a lifelong habit. They use it for practicing magic, studying a foreign language, and even ... practicing martial arts.





# 7

## Conclusion

Well, I hope you are eager to get your students practicing. Just think of the advantage your classes will have over those who only practice in the martial arts studio or dojo. Impressive.

You should use this book in conjunction with the others in this package.

Learn how to apply practice to individual instruction, for example from [The Three I's](#).

Read about how to implement a successful program from [Secrets of Teaching Martial Arts More Effectively](#).

Maybe you would like to start getting your students to practice at the same time that you [Energize Your Class](#).

If you combine, experiment, and recombine elements from each of these e-books, you will turn out some skilled students. You will have a powerful program.

## Contact Information And A Request

If you ever need help, please write to me.

If one of these tactics works especially well for you (your students), **could you write to me?** I may be able to use it as a case study in the next edition of this e-book.

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Well, I am off to practice,

Keith Pascal

