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What is Karate?

Karate is a martial art and a form of self-defense. It teaches students to develop themselves personally in character and in spirit. Practicing fast, powerful punches, blocking and kicking as well as learning skills in joint manipulation and throwing all contribute to making a well balanced, well mannered confident individual who does not attract conflict yet is ready to stand up for his/her values. To Steve Hartnett and several practitioners at Sherwood Park Karate-Do, karate is their Way of Life.

The fighting arts were first developed centuries ago by Buddhist monks in India to defend themselves from the bandits of that time and also to keep the monk's bodies and minds healthy. Literally "Karate" means "Empty Hand" in Japanese. "Empty Hand" refers to the ability of karate students to defend themselves without the use of weapons. Karate means different things to different people. Young people, for example, often take up karate because they want to learn how to defend themselves. Mature people, however, may only be looking for an interesting and fun way to stay fit. Parents often enroll their children in karate lessons to teach them discipline and to develop their coordination. At the children's level the karate class is designed to have fun and at the same time teach the child values such as courtesy, humility & respect. Whatever the reason may be, if karate looks like something you would like to be involved in, make sure you research the dojo you are about to commit to and then start having some serious fun.

Who are we? What is Shito-Ryu Karate-Do Kyokai? Local Instructor?

Shito-Ryu Karate-Do Kyokai karateka practice the Shito-Ryu style of karate taught to us by Master Fumio Demura. Our Canadian organization is currently comprised of 18 dojos throughout Saskatchewan and Alberta, including a dojo in Ontario & one in BC. Our current membership consists of approximately 1000 members. The director and chief instructor of the Shito-Ryu Karate-Do Kyokai system is Cameron Steuart, 6th degree, whose original dojo is located in Lloydminster, Alberta. All Shito-Ryu Karate-Do Kyokai instructors regularly attended seminars run by Master Demura and continue to attend special instructor training sessions run by Sensei Steuart to practice/improve both karate & kobudo skills.

Steve Hartnett began practicing karate in 1977 in London, England in the Wado- Kai system pioneered by Sensei Tatsuo Suzuki. In November of 1982 two years after he arrived in Canada, Hartnett was promoted to 1st degree black belt by Sensei John Montgomery. Hartnett opened Sherwood Karate-Do in the Fall of 1983. He also started clubs in Ardrossan & Beaumont. In June 1989, Steve Hartnett officially joined Shihan Demura's organization. In 2010 Hartnett was awarded Canadian Instructor of the Year by Sensei Steuart. Presently, Hartnett holds the rank of 5th degree black belt in Shito-Ryu Karate and 1st degree black belt in Ryuku Kobudo (weaponry).

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