

## Disciplines to Observe for Black Belt Testing

The point of Black Belt testing is to put ourselves through rigorous trials that transform our identity. It is not about the belt but about who we become in pursuit of the belt. By holding ourselves to a higher standard for 12 weeks, we permanently re-write within ourselves our self concept of what is possible and who we are. This requires great discipline. This is why the goal of Black Belt is special.

The following disciplines must be maintained for the next 12 weeks in order to achieve your black belt rank.

**Focus:** Be consistent. You must make all your classes. You must make every black belt prep class and every testing session. Keep up on your daily log and required activities. Make sure you are moving toward your goals everyday.

**Effort:** You need to demonstrate that you can push yourself and give 100% effort every time you train. It is time to up your standards. Anyone should be able to walk into the school and see that you are busting at the seams to earn you black belt.

**Respect:** Respect yourself and others at all times. Make respect a habit and a way of life. Do this by doing one thing for your family each day and by practicing one random act of kindness each day. Do this by thinking through all words before you speak and make sure they are not harmful to others.

**Be sharp:** As a black belt people will look up to you. You are a role model and you lead the culture in the school. Make sure you are in a clean uniform with all your gear every time you set foot on the mat. Make sure your demeanor is sharp and crisp.

**Commit:** Once you decide to go for it, nothing can stop you. Commit to following through with this test no matter what. Don't let anything distract you or dissuade you. Try to do everything to the best of your ability. This can be one of the most remarkable experiences of your life if you commit. Trust the process and you will transform yourself. Follow through with this worthwhile goal.

**Be well:** Health and fitness is central to being a black belt. Work out everyday. Eat well everyday. Track your nutrition everyday. Each candidate is invited to attend the Total Body Fitness program for extra attention to nutrition, strength training, and cardio development. Do your running, push ups, and sit-ups consistently. Don't wait until the test and try to cram it in at the last minute. Organize your life and eliminate time wasters so you can focus on being well and being fit.

**Be purely positive:** I am going to ask you to go on a purely positive diet. I want you to stand guard at the door of your mind. We are not going to let fear, anger or negativity get the better of us. Instead we are going to control our emotional states by controlling our thoughts, speech, and physiology. Only let positive words pass your lips. Use the morning and evening questions and journaling to direct your focus toward the positive. Use your workout and awareness of your body and breath to change your emotional state.

**Be a team:** You are not on this journey alone. We are walking this path together. It will take team work to be successful. If you want to be on a winning team you need to be a good team member. That means being there for your team mates with encouragement and support. It means keeping each other physically and emotionally safe. It means being excited for each others victories.

**Read:** Seven Habits of Highly Effective People or Seven Habits of Highly Effective Teens

I freely and fully commit to these disciplines in pursuit of my Black Belt rank at TCMA

