



AOMA Ju Jutsu *Character of a Martial Artist* *by Janet Dewey*

Humility : **Knowing one's place amongst mankind.** For the martial artist, the first and most important quality is that of humility. Humility at its simplest is freedom from pride and arrogance. Without humility, growth, learning and development of a community spirit are hampered. At higher levels, humility is choosing to make one's needs and desires secondary to the training at hand and the needs of the larger community (your partner, your dojo, your martial art and your family). Humility enables us to grow as a community.

Awareness : **Conscious cognizance of one's surroundings.** For the martial artist, awareness comes in the form of (i) the workings of the human body, (ii) technical excellence, (iii) the effects of one's actions upon others, (iv) the developmental needs of oneself and others, (v) the intent of those around us, (vi) our environment and our situation, and consequently, (vii) opportunities for growth as an individual and a community. Without humility there can be no true awareness of self or others. With awareness comes a zest for life, because one cannot help but see the opportunities in any situation.

Rectitude : **A sense of, and strict adherence to, the correct.** A martial artist should always seek the truth and to discover what is correct and do what is right. There should be a sense of correctness in body, mind, spirit, action, training and technique. Rectitude encompasses the more specific qualities of honor, and diligence. An appropriate sense of rectitude is dependant upon both humility and awareness.

Mission : **1. A goal or plan of action.** As a martial artist, one should always have a view to the task at hand. A goal is a fulcrum without which neither movement nor growth can occur. There should be a specific goal for each action, each training session, each rank, each stage of development in life. **2. Ministration.** A martial artist is, at all times an envoy. The martial artist has a calling much like that of a guide, and an errand to faithfully discharge. As martial artists we pass on all that we are and all that we learn. We must choose that behavior and knowledge which is appropriate to discharge to others and then give, give, give.

Order : **1. Organization of mind, self, action; conformity to standards and rules.** A martial artist is governed by order and discipline. We bow, we sit properly, we show respect to each other and our instructors. This, in and of itself, is not enough. We must also learn to discipline our minds, our bodies and our spirits. Through the self discipline and self confidence that rectitude and order bring, we develop indomitable spirit. As we achieve self discipline we re-organize ourselves according to our ideal self image and open the door to true self respect and self esteem. **2. Rank in society.** We bear the rank we wear, and if we give anything less at any time in our daily lives, then we are not fulfilling our mission. Others in our ranks look to us for direction and assistance; we owe them our respect, attention to duty and our very best performance. The external community looks to us as representatives of a brotherhood of martial artists and therefore our behavior as individuals reflects upon the whole community. A martial artist who does not live up to their rank both inside and outside the dojo is a detriment to all. **3. Brotherhood.** We are a brotherhood of martial artists and have a responsibility to the order, each other and our martial community. A martial artist's individual code of conduct is a measure of how responsible he/she feels to the brotherhood. The greater the debt of honor, the greater the conduct should be.

Nascent : **Coming into existence.** Growth and development are an integral part of being a martial artist. At the same time, the martial arts promote the development of order in life, and are also a pathway to the liberation from the prison of the body and the past. Once the martial artist becomes aware of how he/she is nascent, the martial artist can begin to achieve the ideal state of being.

Yielding : **1. Bending, being pliant under external stresses, giving precedence.** A true sense of humility, awareness, rectitude, mission and order give the martial artist a sense of perspective in life. There are times to fight and times in which giving way and going forward is the positive action to take. When we achieve a state of yielding to our own growth, we have conquered our greatest enemies: our own inadequacies and weaknesses. **2. Making an offering.** A martial artist offers his inadequacies before the world and if he/she is humble and aware, is given growth in return. A martial artist offers strength of character and is given respect and trust in return. A martial artist offers what he/she has learned, and in return learns from both his/her students and instructors. **3. Producing results.** Apart from the obvious increase in skill, the final outcome of the diligent martial artist who perseveres is grace, efficiency, a community of well being, an increased sense of self worth and a tendency toward a life of

Harmony.