

# What Soo Bahk Do means to me . . .

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Soo Bahk Do began as something I could share with my kids while we learned self-defense skills. The more I learned about Soo Bahk Do, the more I found myself wanting to know and understand its history. I also found the Moo Do Values align closely with my own, specifically **Philosophy**, especially the 8 Key Concepts and 10 Articles of Faith, coupled with the **Discipline and Respect** that is embedded in the art.

The emptying of the mind is something I have always found challenging as I tend to constantly juggle work, family and any other responsibilities that come my way as a means of keeping on top of life in general. In doing so, I often fail to take time out for myself. When I practice Soo Bahk Do, the focus required to apply myself forces me to forget about everything that constantly demands my attention. It provides me an escape, much like reading a good book, however, it also provides the physical benefit of exercise. Soo Bahk Do is my 'me time'. Until Soo Bahk Do, I have never found much satisfaction or enjoyment in exercise, if any. When I practice Soo Bahk Do, both inside and outside of the dojang, I experience a sense of satisfaction and freedom. After spending time trying to master a single technique or a combination of techniques, the sense of satisfaction and achievement that comes when it finally comes together is priceless. As a self confessed perfectionist, I am driven by the satisfaction of hard work paying off.

There have been many times where I have had long days and reach the end with little or no energy and I have forced myself to attend training. By the time I reach the end of the training session I find I am reinvigorated and ready to face the world again. In many ways, practicing Soo Bahk Do is a form of therapy with the added benefits of developing a skillset I can use to defend myself, should I find myself in a bad situation, as well as getting some much needed exercise.

Soo Bahk Do means being able to learn how to protect myself while still upholding my own morals and principles. It means taking time out to look after myself physically while doing something I enjoy. It enables me to justify taking time out for me and still maintain the satisfaction of achieving something for myself. I love the symbolism of the belt colours representing the progress, as you grow in the art, especially the fact that the belt is midnight blue rather than black at Dan level, indicative that there is always room to improve. This is something I believe is true in every aspect of life. Soo Bahk Do enables me to continually improve on my own physical and mental strength and ability.

After relocating from Darwin to the Gold Coast training has been more challenging, as there are no Soo Bahk Do dojangs in Queensland. Over the past 18 months I have had to prepare for my Cho Dan Shim Sa through self-motivation. This has forced me to ask myself why do I want to do this? Once I have achieved my Cho Dan, what then? While I want Soo Bahk Do to be a day-to-day part of my lifestyle, I

need a goal, a purpose bigger than myself to work toward. Returning to the Gold Coast was always something we planned to do, so in the back of my mind I have always considered the possibility of opening a dojang. As a person who plans everything, where possible, I was expecting to have already reached my Cho Dan and achieved a level of instructor certification so I would be equipped with the tools necessary to be a good teacher of the art. To date, I have found it hard to see how I can balance family, work and a dojang with current family and work demands. While I know this is what I want to do, I am choosing to focus on and enjoy the journey to Cho Dan, and as a number of work and family elements change in the coming year, with the support of my family, I will begin to explore dojang possibilities.

While *Soo Bahk Do* began as something my daughter wanted to do, it is now a part of who I am and an art I am proud to represent.