

test question:

“How does one teach Karate from the perspective of a mature practice?”

## Mature Practice

A list could be made of attributes flowing from a mature Karate practice: physical skill, toughness and strength, energetic and spiritual connections and understanding - but any of these aspects can be developed without genuine maturity. Time in practice is a prerequisite, but maturity does not occur automatically with experience.

A mature practice is full and complete, strong and consistent, and not based on attachment to power or control. Power is available, but is recognized as not personal. Mature practice is characterized by gratitude and devotion, rather than pride and competition. In other words, a mature practitioner does not “own” the benefits of the practice. Perhaps the fundamental quality that defines a mature practice is authority without an inflated or destructive ego.

## Teaching Karate

A teacher working from the perspective of a mature practice surrenders certain desires - desire to control and manipulate, desire to be respected and honored - and, at the same time, fully accepts the responsibilities teaching demands. The two directions that ego can pull us - self inflation or self denigration - are recognized as impediments to teaching.

Teaching from the perspective of a mature practice can be understood to be a devotional practice, a service to the student, to the dojo, and to karate. The mature teacher acts as a conduit to the teaching available in karate, a link in the lineage, and as a guide away from destructive, fear-based activities, and towards full-hearted practice.

Ken Read