



Wiser Than Her Years!

Tammy Parlour

Tammy Parlour, 3rd Dan has studied under Master Gedo Chang for over twenty years. Chang's Hapkido Academy's senior UK Instructor, she regularly teaches both Hapkido and Ki Meditation classes in London.

TKD-KMA: Why did you choose to study Hapkido?

Tammy Parlour: I feel as though Hapkido chose me! I started about 21 years ago when I was 11 years old. I lived in America for half my life and at that time was close to where Master Gedo Chang (8th Dan) taught. As an adult I find Hapkido to be the most comprehensive system; but I have also realised that which art you choose is less important than who teaches you. I am honoured to be one of Master Chang's students.

TKD-KMA: Have you also trained with other Masters or in other arts - particularly, for instance, when you moved back to England?

Tammy Parlour: Traditionally, one chooses an instructor for life. When you have been taught by someone of Master Chang's quality to go elsewhere would be ridiculous. When I left America I was already one of Master Chang's Instructors. I am so grateful that he continues to support me by travelling to England to grade my students and give seminars. The loyalty I have for him is unquestionable.

TKD-KMA: Where do you teach classes; and can anyone join?

Tammy Parlour: I run classes throughout London, training Instructors from other styles, as well as those with no previous martial arts experience. One of my black belt students, Michael Watson, also teaches classes in Lincoln which I visit regularly. Everyone is welcome to join!

TKD-KMA: In your classes you encourage students to become 'experts', what does this mean?

Tammy Parlour: When an expert martial artist acts they are said to be in a state of mushin (no-mind) or empty mind. An empty mind doesn't mean void. If nothing were there this would be equivalent of death. An empty mind then, is one that has somehow been 'parked'. An empty mind means total concentration, the coordination of mind and body.

TKD-KMA: Do new students understand this?

Tammy Parlour: When students begin their martial arts training their minds often race around like flies; they think of so many things and settle in one place for only a short period of time. As the student progresses his mind begins to focus. He becomes conscious of the class, then of his techniques, then solely the technique that he performs, then the feeling of his muscle as he executes the technique... In thinking of less, he sees so much more.

TKD-KMA: *How is this state of total concentration on the moment achieved?*

Tammy Parlour: We must suspend our judgements. When faced with an opponent, we should not think that they are bigger than us, or we are better than them. Judgements act as the starting point for our minds to loose focus. To become an expert, we must train ourselves to suspend even the everyday judgements.

Putting judgements aside, we see things as they are

TKD-KMA: *How do we get rid of judgements?*

Tammy Parlour: Traditionally new Hapkido students were instructed to do menial tasks, cleaning floors, washing the Instructors clothes. Discipline helps to rid students of their attachment to ego. They realise that ego doesn't only mean, 'I think I am better', but means; 'I think I am'.

TKD-KMA: *So what would your 'top tips' be for becoming an expert Hapkido practitioner?*

Tammy Parlour: To be expert - put your judgements aside and be here; be in this moment only - not judging your actions, just doing them.

For more information consult the website. www.chang-shapkidoacademy.co.uk



