

## Hapkido

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The first time I remember hapkido being introduced to me my instructor told me to grab him by his uniform so he could explain to me how important it is to learn how to fall in hapkido. When I placed my hand on his lapel, he reiterated and said, “No, grab my uniform”, and again asked me if I knew how to fall, and I said confidently, “Sure”. (I had been a wrestler, I figured, what was the difference.) After that I did not remember much except a quick glance of the ceiling, the wrestling mat a split second later, and then breaking my fall with my "third point of contact", my head. Finally, I found which way was up again to say, “ Thank you Mr. Morgan”.

After those few lessons I understood how practical this “hapkido” was. This is something I can use, and it actually works even if you are small, seemed quite outstanding to me. Except, I had better learn how to fall extremely well if I decided to keep doing this for a while.

Hapkido means something different to everyone, and that something is what makes people hold on to it, that is what makes them believe in it and trust it. Hapkido has definitely evolved one way or another over all of these years. Today, it is much different. The society is different, and at times, hapkido has had to change to accommodate those surroundings. I’m sure most of us see hapkido differently than what it was originally intended for. But I believe change happens for a reason. Hopefully it is challenging that new perspective in peoples’ lives for the better.

Hapkido and a person’s will are two important products of an equation that go hand in hand. Without the will, hapkido is ineffective, and without hapkido, the will does not reach its full potential. I believe a person’s will is their foundation for everything. Will is not practiced or taught, it is just there, instilled in everyone. I compare it to survival. An individual does not have to have experienced training or skills to survive, but it is the people that have the will to survive that make it out a live. All of the survival training in the world would not prepare them for the test of reality. The individuals with the will, past that test, and passing that test does not mean achieving success over someone else, it means staying a live when it is all said and done.

The training is just a tool to help make the will stronger, but the will must be the corner stone or nothing is able to be built from it.

Hapkido is that specific tool. Hapkido is one tool in my life that is used for many, different aspects. It is always there, and is never lost or forgotten. Hapkido is going to be with you for the rest of your life, whether this is a large or small part in your life. To myself, this tool is not about the aesthetics of it all. Hapkido is not about the color you have around your waist, it is not about the testing, or the attention, or the show. All of that is gone when you are truly tested. No uniforms, no belts, no rank, no strips, and most distinctively.... no rules. In this particular test, it is not graded, it is not critiqued, and you do not get a second chance.