

# Signature Achievement

## The Guardian Martial Arts

Soke Scot Conway

Choosing a Signature Achievement was not overly difficult even though other things competed. I was the first person in my family to earn a college degree. I was the first to earn a graduate degree (my law degree) and the first to earn a doctorate. Certainly it would qualify, and only 4% of the population is likely to finish a graduate level degree, but that still numbers in the millions. The Amazement Goals, by their very nature, are pretty impressive (and an incredible amount of work - as it should be), and I turned 40 in the best shape of my life. Everyone who knows much about my relationship with Wendy knows that we have an impressive marriage, but we hope that many others will have marriages of similar quality.

At the end of my consideration, many of those other things ultimately were be relegated to Personal Triumphs. Even if I get a book published - it only takes one trip to a library or book store to see that thousands upon thousands of people have had a similar accomplishment - so that, too, will be a Personal Triumph. If I can get Agathos Ministries launched into a full blown church, that will also be a Personal Triumph. As all the things I have done or am trying to do were sifted and considered, I settled on the Guardian Martial Arts as my Signature Achievement.

I was torn for a short time between choosing something duplicatable or not duplicatable. Ultimately, I concluded that the duplicatable things are more appropriate for Personal Triumphs while a Signature Achievement may or may not be duplicatable. If someone were to compete in the Iron Man Triathlon in Hawaii, the would be duplicatable by anyone with enough drive and ability to do so, but it would be so truly impressive as to be the sort of thing that could be a defining moment for someone. Creating the Guardian Martial Arts is not duplicatable in that I would never expect anyone to try to copy the achievement - so it is a signature, but not truly leadership except in what it represents.

I have already invested more than 15 years in creating and honing the Guardian Martial Arts. It took ten years to finish the foundation art of Old School Guardian Kempo. Then, over the next five years, I broke out themes of skills and made Guardian Karate, then Guardian Kobujitsu and had to learn more to finish Guardian Jujitsu. As I wrap up those three arts and submit the hundreds of pages each to evaluation, proof reading and reconsideration, I am getting ready to do my rework on Guardian Kempo in two four year cycles. At this time I am even toying with a possible Way of Guardian track for the senior Black Belts, but it is only a tentative consideration. I would not make a final decision until the core structure of the new Guardian Kempo is finished. Hopefully by the 20th Anniversary of the Guardian Martial Arts I will have the new Kempo finished, I will have accepted my 8th degree Black Belt, and I will know my answer. Also, hopefully, I will be able to name a Soke Inheritor - but that may take until the 25th Anniversary.

Soke Karl William Marx, founder of Keichu Do, says that his pet peeve is “masters” who “create their own art” by merely cutting and pasting pieces of other arts together. He has seen many people who are supposed masters of their own martial art style that didn’t create anything. What they did was earn a couple of Black Belts, mix and match the forms and a few techniques, and call it something new. Soke Marx believes that a new martial art should really be a new martial art - not a repiecing together of other people’s work.

Master Floyd Burke wrote a wonderful article for *Black Belt Magazine* when the new craze was making new martial arts. Everyone wanted to be the master, and everyone thought their way was best. A key thing Master Burke said in his article (besides motivation questions) is “What new thing are you bringing to the martial arts community that does not already exist?” That’s an important question. If you are going to make something new, it should be new. If you are going to

make a new martial art, it should fill a void. It must be about more than just being the master. It has to be about creating a new value.

## **MAKING SOMETHING NEW**

Creating a new martial art requires a great deal of knowledge, a great deal of skill, and/or a great deal of natural talent. I had a great deal of talent - which, unfortunately, is also in direct conflict with my role as Sensei. A teacher needs insight, and I was hamstrung as a teacher by my talent. When I learned, I could watch, sometimes needing some minimal explanation, and - very often - I could do the skill well enough to practice it correctly. Some skills remained beyond me, but, for the most part, I could fairly easily pick up those skills I wanted to include in my style. This made it difficult for me to teach because most people do not have the same talent mix. It would be like a gifted, talented, natural musician picking up an instrument and playing it - and then trying to teach me - who has no musical talent or skill at all. I was blessed with that difference early on - though it did make my job difficult. Certainly I found out how much I had been relying on my talent and physical attributes.

It was laid bare how little I actually knew about what I was doing. Fortunately, I had company in such a famous person as Musashi Miyamoto, perhaps the greatest swordsman in Japanese history. He said that he turned 30 just realizing that even though he had always won - that he really didn't know the Way. With no less an example to follow than the most famous swordsman in Japanese history, I set about to try to learn and understand what I was doing and why it worked. Too often I found out that it only worked because of my build relative to the build on my partner. I also found out that many things only worked by attributes - and that I was clearly missing a great deal of insight into how to make it work for others. It is no secret that I am still learning. I am still trying to figure things out.

Bruce Lee established Jeet Kune Do when he was only 24. Who knows what insights he might have had if he lived to be 44 and could have built his art for 20 years. I established Guardian Kempo when I was 24, and if even I have learned so much, what he would have figured out is a great loss to the martial arts community. Still, with his example, with Musashi's example, and with a belief that I am doing my assignment from God, I kept moving forward to make my art better.

I am fortunate in that I have been given so much time. I have certainly needed it. I needed the years to learn that talent is as much a hindrance as a help. I needed the years to truly understand the impact of attributes and how having them can sabotage good technique. It has taken me years to develop the character, the insight, and the wisdom to have enough understanding of what I'm doing that I can be trusted in my mastery. So much of what I thought were my greatest assets in the beginning turned out to be my greatest obstacles along the way. So much of what I could do best hurt me in growing to do what I should do well. I got trapped at Sensei when I should have been working on Renshi, and I received the rank of Kyoshi having never developed well in the station below that - almost entirely due to my own neglect.

It is an interesting path to have created this style. At the same time it can be both heady and humbling. I could not have done it without the work of many masters before me. I could not have done it without those from whom I learned as my mentors - even though I learned from them mostly through their writings, video lessons, audio lessons and seminars. I could not have done it without the talent and attributes gifted to me by God, nor could have I done it without being humbled by how those blessings became obstacles as I worked. So much has been required - and nearly everything required was beyond my ability to produce. The one thing I truly brought to the Guardian Martial Arts is tenacity. I started, and I did not stop. If I see this project through to completion, it will truly be a marvel to behold - as much for what it has forced me to become as a man as for what it is.

## **In the Beginning...**

I remember sitting on the front steps of Skyline Church at the corner of Skyline and Jamacha on December 31, 1989. The 1990s were just about to begin. I was a law student at the time. I was marginally involved in ministry leadership at the church - and heavily involved in training. I was teaching Kara Ho Kempo and a member of the National Board of Directors, and I was the Regional Director for the Western United States. I remember asking God for guidance that night. I remember asking Him to show me what He wanted me to do with my life - what course should I walk?

That year, through a series of circumstances far beyond my control, I started Guardian Kempo.

December 31, 1990, I was sitting on the same steps praying in the New Year again - starting a new tradition in my life. I asked God for guidance again. I asked Him what He wanted me to do. Did I have a unique assignment from Him? I told Him that I would do whatever He would have me do - if only He would reveal to me what He wanted from me.

That was when I realized that He already had. The Guardian Martial Arts was it. Through it, He grew me as a man. Through it, He grew me as a leader - even a pastor. Through the Guardian Martial Arts I found Wendy, and using the principles from the Art, we built our marriage. In more ways than I can name, the Guardian Martial Arts have crafted the life we have, and, therefore, I mark it as my Signature Achievement.

## **THE HISTORY OF THE GUARDIAN MARTIAL ARTS**

The Guardian Martial Arts has a specific history of influences from many other styles. What follows is a brief history of the arts and masters that contributed to the Guardian Martial Art systems.

### **KARA HO KEMPO, KAJUKENBO, CHINESE KEMPO CHUAN SHU**

In the late 1940s, Professor William Chow and Master James Mitosi met in Hawaii. William Chow was a master of Chinese Kempo Kung Fu under his father, a Buddhist monk. James Mitosi was a master of Japanese Kenpo Karate. They met and worked together to develop the art that would spawn a dozen different martial arts styles under the general headings of Kenpo and Kempo. Most modern Kenpo and Kempo styles came through those two men.

Among Professor Chow's top students, and ultimately his highest ranked student and system inheritor was Sam Kuoha. Sam Kuoha also mastered Aikido under a variety of instructors, notably Shihan John Damian, and incorporated many advanced Aikido principles into the Kempo system he now headed, giving rise to an art known to much of the Kenpo/Kempo community as Kara Ho Kempo Aikido. Sam Kuoha is one of my instructors from whom I earned a Black Belt and for whom I first taught lessons. With Grandmaster Kuoha, I traveled to Mexico City and Cody, Wyoming to train Black Belts in his art, with my highest ranked seminar student the 4th dan master of the school in each case.

From earlier in Professor Chow's teaching career was a man named Adriano Emperado. Master Emperado later joined forces with other masters, notably Junior Ulangca, and they combined their knowledge of Karate, Jujitsu, Kenpo, and Boxing to make an art that became known as Kajukenbo. The techniques that would be incorporated in that system were decided simply by the masters of each fighting style going into a locked room and fighting - then sorting out the techniques that worked from those that did not and building the martial art from the knowledge gained from that fighting. One of Adriano Emperado's and Junior Ulangca's top early students

was a young man named Julian Generalao who had already trained in martial arts extensively for decades and learned Kajukenbo from Masters Emperado and Ulangca.

The lineage of the Hawaiian arts and those arts that came from the orient through the islands were often harsh arts to learn. It was common to be beaten up in your training, and injuries were common. Hawaii wasn't a state, yet, and it was a bit like the Wild West but with martial arts fights rather than gunfights. Almost every young man would end up in fights, and so the training was brutal to prepare the young men for the near certainty of real fighting.

I have a first degree Black Belt from Grandmaster Sam Kuoha, the system inheritor directly from Professor Chow. I have a sixth degree Black Belt in Chinese Kempo Chuan Shu from Professor Generalao, and now a seventh degree Black Belt in Kajukenbo from Professor Generalao (with the promotion recognized and authorized by half a dozen local and regional masters since the rank is within one of Professor's rank).

### **SHIHO KARANO, MUKASHI KINDAI RYU**

Other arts that flow into Guardian Kempo include Shiho Karano Kenpo Jujitsu from Soke Clement Riedner, the master and developer of that system. I have a first degree Black Belt directly from Soke Riedner. In another art, Mukashi Kindai Ryu Karate Jujitsu, developed and lead by Soke Rick Boyer, I have a second degree Black Belt directly from the headmaster of that art as well. The jujitsu aspects of each of these arts flows from Japanese Jujitsu, which is mostly a stand-up grappling art using joint locks, throws, holds, takedowns and off-balancing techniques. That, in turn, came from the original Yuwara arts practiced by the samurai during the Togukawa Shogunate, one of the "Bugei Juhappan" or "Eighteen Martial Arts."

The Kenpo aspects of Shiho Karano and the Karate aspects of Mukashi Kindai Ryu also flowed from the Japanese arts of the same name. Japanese Kenpo emphasizes linear motion, including a guard, and rapid fire hand techniques. Chinese Kempo, on the other hand, largely uses circular motions, but also uses rapid fire hand techniques. Karate focuses more on perfection of technique, traditional stances and physical development.

### **KEICHU DO**

I also have a third degree Black Belt from Soke Karl Marx (yes, that's his real name). He started as a street fighter in the bayou of Louisiana and learned boxing and judo by formal training and a little knife fighting on the streets. Over the years, he became an expert fighter. He used a karate method of codifying his fighting style so he could teach it. Over time, he started to compete in tournaments, but the martial arts tournaments in the 50s and 60s would only admit practitioners of oriental martial arts, so he named his style Keichu Do Karate Jujitsu and competed with his students. Over several decades, the art developed to a complete martial art and Karl Marx became a recognized master after just over 30 years of refining his style of fighting. From Soke Marx, I have a 3rd degree Black Belt, and Grandmaster Marx was the master that promoted me to "Soke - above rank" which, technically, means that he recognizes me as higher ranked than anyone who is not the head of his own system. However, I still pursue traditional rank advancement to solidify the respect for Guardian Kempo in the martial arts community at large.

### **SUPPLEMENTAL ARTS: Wu Mui Kung Fu, Small Circle Jujitsu, Yamaue Aikijitsu**

Other masters from whom I learned, but did not earn a Black Belt, include Grandmaster Wai Ming Chau of Wu Mui Kung Fu. From Wu Mui, I enhanced our Defensive Screen and Offensive Screen, and gained some continuous motion principles, bounce principles, and pass by techniques. Grandmaster Wally Jay founded Small Circle Jujitsu. We use some of his finger locks, small joint locks, and even throwing techniques. Grandmaster Jimmy Yamaue of North

Shaolin Kung Fu and Yamaue Aikijitsu gives us some of our more advanced blending techniques and pressure point concepts.

## **Aikido**

In the earliest years of the 20th century, there was no Aikido, but an art called Daito Ryu Aikijitsu. The man who would later be known as O-Sensei (great teacher) Morihei Ueshiba originally learned that art, but then built a softer, gentler version that became Aikido. From him, four senior masters headed in different directions with their training, with several offshoots of Aikido from their students and other students of O-Sensei. One of the top masters was Koichi Tohei, who emphasized the use of ki principles. Through that line of Aikido, Shihan (master) John Damian trained, as well as Sensei Marty Katz. That's where we get the basics concepts of our Ki Principles and some of our applications of Aikido principles, both of which I met and trained with through Sam Kuoha. Supplementing that is the Aikijitsu information from Jimmy Yamaue and more Aikido exposure from Master Dong Thong Phong, both of whom I met through Karl Marx.

## **Brazilian Jujitsu**

Japanese Jujitsu made its way to Brazil in the earlier parts of the 20th century, and among the early students was a young man named Helio Gracie. However, Japanese Jujitsu essentially focuses on the techniques that start from a standing position and result in the opponent going down. Helio Gracie recognized a need for something that worked on the ground to complete the needs for Brazilian culture. He started from the traditional Japanese techniques and built an art that applied those principles and expanded on them for purposes of fighting on the ground. The ground fighting technique he started was known as Gracie Jujitsu, and his teaching gave rise to a whole branch of Jujitsu known as Brazilian Jujitsu. Helio Gracie and later his sons wished to show that their art was truly effective, so they left an open challenge to anyone who wanted to come fight to test their skill. For more than 30 years, Gracie Jujitsu was virtually undefeated. Helio Gracie only lost once to a Japanese Jujitsu master that outweighed Helio by 65 pounds. The combination of skill mastery and greater weight and strength was just enough for the Japanese master to beat him. From more than 50 other matches, Helio was undefeated.

His sons left that challenge open as they came to America. It would be years before they would be beaten, and even then it would be by someone who was trained in Brazilian Jujitsu from another lineage of the original Gracie art. When I was developing Guardian Kempo, I wanted the grappling skills to be more complete, and since the Gracies had almost never been beaten and my own ground fighting training was limited (some judo and aikido was essentially it), I accepted their challenge back in 1991. I lost, of course, but in so doing I learned a lot about how a skilled grappler can neutralize a striker. I learned more of Gracie Jujitsu in the following years, trained with a wrestler and earned Black Belts in the combined Karate Jujitsu and Kenpo Jujitsu systems to develop the Guardian Kempo counter grappling and strike grappling skills.

One of the first Brazilian Jujitsu instructors in the San Diego area was Roy Harris, originally a student of the Gracie Brothers in Torrance, and later under Joe Moriera. Among Roy's top students is Preston Rawlings, who taught Brazilian Jujitsu at the Conway Academy. Working with Preston helped me refine some of the pure grappling skills in Guardian Kempo, modified for the fact that we are training for universal principles, we are assuming our opponent will want to hit us, and we are assuming that the groin is an open target. Between Preston Rawlings, the Gracie Family, a video series from Wallid Ismail, and Brazilian Jujitsu from the Master Class program, I enhanced my grappling skills enough to finish making Guardian Jujitsu.

## **Judo**

I also have a mild background in Judo. It was the first art I studied when I was six. I

trained more with some friends on my High School track team - two of whom were Judo Brown Belts and whose older brother was an Olympian. I also trained with a 6th dan in Judo who was the former coach for the Mexican Olympic Team. I was only marginally proficient in Judo, but the background helped me understand the principles that lead to our throwing skills.

### **And More...**

Besides all the masters and instructors already mentioned, I've had the privilege to learn some principles from Stephen Hayes, the highest ranked ninjitsu master in America. I've also gained some insights from seminars by other masters, including Fumio Demura of Karate, Mike Swain of Judo, Jhoon Rhee of Taekwondo, Joe Lewis of Karate Kickboxing and others. Limited exposure to several other masters and their writings and videos have also been of some assistance in building this system. In addition, crafting Guardian Kempo has also taken a lot of thought, sorting through a lot of sometimes-conflicting principles, and years of refinements and adjustments.

### **“The best from every art...”?**

From all of this, there is an important point that I should make clear. The common misconception about Black Belts from multiple arts making their own arts is the idea that someone could take “the best from each system and discard the rest.” First, one does not learn “the best from each system” without really mastering the details at advanced levels, a process that one might expect to spend decades doing. Since I don't have advanced Black Belts in all those systems, I don't know “the best” from those martial arts. What I know are principles that can be used in Guardian Kempo. “The best” parts of those arts would take me many more years to learn. Armed with only 1st degree to 3rd degree Black Belt knowledge in four arts, less than that in a dozen or so others, and master level rank only in two, I cannot say that I know the best parts of most of them. My training base is sufficient, however, to do what I have done, to take fundamental principles from each and integrate them into the comprehensive Guardian Kempo.

### **More than just physical**

The ancient masters saw the combat skills from their physical training as only a small, small part of their mastery. For them, health, fitness, balance, strength and agility were just as important. Beyond the physical, they saw the philosophical and psychological insights they gained as more important. Even more critical to them was their sense of spiritual growth and development. True martial arts mastery, in the traditional sense, must extend into areas far beyond just the details of the physical skills of the art. Otherwise, it's just about fighting.

That's why I am also educated. I earned a bachelor's in Criminal Justice Administration with supplemental graduate study in Sociology and Social Psychology. I earned a juris doctor in Law and was a practicing attorney for a decade. I earned a Ph.D. in Christian Martial Arts (part-Physical Education, part-Martial Arts, part-Bible). I've taught martial arts instructors, taught a college course, and I've taught a number of seminars on a variety of subjects. I've taught Adult Sunday School, Elementary School Sunday School, and ages in between. I've written articles on a variety of topics for several different magazines and co-authored the ACMA Instructor Certification Journal (a martial arts instructor training manual to teach instructors how to teach safely and effectively - used by more than 7,000 instructors).

All of this history, experience, training, education and supplemental learning pours into what I teach. My learning is not nearly complete. One of the hallmarks of a true master is a growing awareness of what does not yet know and what cannot yet do. It never ends. While I may have chosen to walk down the path of knowledge and insight farther than the average person, there are a great many things I still want to learn, and a great deal of personal growth still to do.

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# Ten Personal Triumphs

Soke Scot Conway

For Personal Triumphs that involve mostly or entirely Prior Accomplishments, I am folding them into major categories. It would cheapen the purpose of Personal Triumph in the Ultimate Guardian to quickly fill in all ten Personal Triumphs with past accomplishments. Since half of Personal Triumphs may be individual events, I using the individual event slots for Prior Accomplishments and focusing my attention during the program on doing 5 significant Personal Triumphs.

## TRIUMPH 1. MARRIAGE

**Breaking the Ten Barrier.** On a scale of 1-10, Wendy and I often reported having a 10 marriage. We kept working to figure out if there was something more. We figured out that the answer was “yes,” and we would try to do it. The actual technique can be difficult to understand, and if you don’t already have an excellent marriage, it can actually ruin it. The basic idea is that I do my very best to keep contributing meaningfully to my marriage, and I savor and amplify everything Wendy does to contribute whether now or in the past. The danger is that because you are “paid” so well for everything you do, there is a natural, human tendency to do less. To break the ten barrier, you need to accelerate into it and build a whole new level of habits.

**No Arguing.** Wendy and I disagree a lot. I’m an Entrepreneur; she’s a Manager. I look forward; she looks back. I see opportunities; she sees obstacles. I shoot trouble; she spots trouble. I’m positive; she’s negative. I solve problems; she sees problems. If we wanted to, we would have enough ammo to fight every day for the rest of our lives. OR we could appreciate the fact that our perspectives complete one another, we can listen to understand, define our family terms, and we can move forward as the Conway Team, doing more together than both of us could do apart. We chose the latter. After all, as in our martial arts training, We Are Partners, Not Opponents.

**Spectacular Vacations.** Something to which many men aspire is to take their wives and/or families on some spectacular vacations. I’ve gotten to do that. Wendy and I had a 30 day honeymoon with a couple of nights at Paradise Point, five days in Honolulu in a condo a block from Waikiki Beach, a one week cruise around the island, a couple of nights at the Hilton Waikaloa, and a night in Hilo. We saw white sand, black sand and green sand. We climbed Diamond Head, helicoptered Kauai, and did a lot of great things. We’ve been to Las Vegas many times and stayed in some great places, seen Siegfried and Roy, Lance Burton, Steve Wyrick, Melinda, and Wendy was even on stage with David Copperfield. We’ve seen Circe de Soliel shows, music shows, variety shows, and comedy shows. We’ve been to Orlando, stayed in condos there, been to Universal Studio, Islands of Adventure and everthing in Walt Disney World. We’ve cruised the Bahamas and stayed there. We’ve been on an Alaskan Cruise. We have gotten to have some truly spectacular vacations, and, as a husband, I consider that a terrific personal triumph. As a Past Accomplishment, although it will keep repeating, I make them all part of one Personal Triumph.

## TRIUMPH 2. MARTIAL ARTS

**9th Dan.** I was awarded by 9th degree Black Belt 11 years early by the International Black Belt Association. Due to my age, I may only accept 7th degree Black Belt - the rank awarded to me in 2002. It will be 2009 before I accept my 8th degree Black Belt, and 2017 before I accept 9th degree Black Belt.

**7th Dan.** 7th degree Black Belt: Kajukenbo from Master’s Board

**6th Dan.** 6th degree Black Belt: Chinese Kempo Ch'uan Shu from Professor Generalao

**3rd Dan.** 3rd degree Black Belt: Keichu Hoshin Ryu from Soke K.W.Marx

**2nd Dan.** 2nd degree Black Belt: Mukashi Kindai Ryu from Soke Rick Boyer

**1st Dan.** 1st degree Black Belt: Shiho Karano Kenpo-Jitsu from Soke Clement Riedner

**1st Dan.** 1st degree Black Belt: Kara Ho Kempo from Grandmaster Sam Kuoha

**Boards.** American Council on Martial Arts. Martial Arts Teachers Association. Martial Arts Professional Magazine (legal editor). Christian Martial Arts International (dormant). International Black Belt Organization (Board of Legal Advisors). Former: National Board of Directors for Kara Ho Kempo, Regional Director for the Western United States.

**Conferences.** I was an instructor at the National Association of Professional Martial Arts Conferences in 1998, 1999, 2000, and 2001. At the time, this was the biggest professional martial arts conference in the country. Since then, it competed with and subsequently was bought out by the Martial Arts Instructors Association and their conferences were folded together to MAIAs Las Vegas Conference which I have attended, but at which I have not taught.

**Competition.** I have competed in more tournaments than I remember and won more trophies than I've counted. I think I won somewhere between 30 and 50, but that's mostly based upon how many are still intact after years of having trophies broken and thrown out.

**Writer.** I do not know exactly how many articles and columns I have written, but I have written for Martial Arts Professional Magazine, Martial Arts Success Magazine, Black Belt Magazine, Karate/Kung Fu Illustrated, Martial Arts Training, Martial Arts Illustrated, Inside Karate and Inside Kung Fu. I am also the writer who did the most work on the ACMA Instructors Certification Manual.

**Teacher.** Besides teaching my own students, I have also travelled to Mexico City to teach and train Kara Ho students and instructors. I had a similar role in Cody, Wyoming. I have also taught seminars for various instructors at their dojos in my earlier years as a martial arts instructor.

**Next Level Guardian.** Although for me it is obviously not required, I did the Martial Artist, Christian Disciple and Leader programs anyway. I am also doing the Ultimate Guardian Program - and again, it is not required for me. I do this almost entirely as a matter of Leadership. It's a good program. I want others to do it. Therefore, I do it.

### **TRIUMPH 3. EDUCATION**

**First to Graduate College.** In my family on both sides, I was the first to graduate from college. In 1988, I earned a Bachelor of Science Degree from San Diego State University. My major was Criminal Justice Administration. I also did some graduate work in Sociology.

**First with a Graduate Degree.** After college, I went to Law School at Thomas Jefferson College of Law (back then it was called Western State University). I graduated with my law degree in 1991.

**First with a Ph.D.** In 2000, I graduated from Great Plains Baptist College with a Doctor of Philosophy Degree in Christian Martial Arts from their Physical Education Department. The degree is a combination of Bible, Ministry Leadership, Physical Education and Martial Arts.

## **TRIUMPH 4. CREDENTIALS**

**Bar Exam.** I passed the California Bar Exam in 1991.

**Broker Exam.** I passed the California Real Estate Broker Exam in 2004.

**Boards.** I am on the Board of Del Rey Academy, the Board of the American Council on Martial Arts, the Board of the Martial Art Teacher's Association, and I am the Legal Editor for Martial Arts Professional Magazine.

**Clergy.** I am officially the Senior Pastor of Agathos Ministries. I did my first wedding in August, 2005.

## **TRIUMPH 5. MINISTRY**

**Christian Education.** I am the Chairman of the Board for Del Rey Academy, a Christian Homeschool Co-op. I helped incorporate the organization that has been running for more than ten years. I also arranged the 501(3)(c) tax exempt status. I was elected the Chairman of the Board in 2004.

**Christian Ministry.** I am the Senior Pastor for Agathos Ministries, a 501(c)(3) tax exempt religious corporation. I began my ministry with a 16 month Relationship Course that ran from early 2004 to the middle of 2005. Then we did a five month Leadership Course. I am also started a d20 ministry through Agathos.

**Sunday Schools.** Over the years, I have taught Sunday School for Skyline Church, Peace of Christ Church, and Grace Fellowship. I have done Chapel for elementary aged kids, taught Elementary Sunday School, Junior High School, High School and Adult Sunday School. Professor Rita Cartwright asked me to assist her in her Tough Minds, Tender Hearts intellectual Christianity class, and then I substituted for her, then it became my class until we wrapped it up before the wedding.

## **TRIUMPH 6. AMAZEMENT GOALS**

The first Amazement Goals were set in 2004, and therefore they are a Past Accomplishment, but I am going to fold the 2004 Amazement Goals in with the 2005 Amazement Goals as a single Personal Triumph even though, frankly, it really does easily warrant its own listing. Since the program only calls for Ten Personal Triumphs, I do not want to keep using up slots with Prior Accomplishments, and I think this makes the Personal Triumph category even more worthy. Thus the 2004 and 2005 Amazement Goals are listed as a single Personal Triumph. For the record, if anyone else does Amazement Goals, you should list them separately. It is worthy of that.

An Amazement Goal essentials mean a goal that is not possible for who you are today. Amazement Goals should require you do more than you know you can do - so you need to learn, you need to grow, and that means you need to be teachable and changeable. It is a stretch of your thinking, a stretch of your action, and Amazement Goals should leave you a different person than you were when you began. If they don't, then they weren't really very Amazing. In fact, I would go so far as to say that the stated goal - the objective accomplishment (money being one of the easiest to measure because it's all math) - isn't *really* the goal at all. The real goal is personal growth. The objectively measured goal is merely the byproduct of the real goal.

**Amazement 2004.** In 2002 Wendy and I had a massive financial upheaval. At one point in the month, we were \$65,000 ahead. We would have money enough to pay off any and all debts, obligations, buy new cars, finance major improvements in the dojo, and we had a possible down payment on a home. By the end of that month, we were \$45,000 in debt. Such is the nature of risk in business and investing. We set a goal to dig out in two years. Those who knew of the mess and the plan thought that two years was awfully aggressive - but if you don't at least try, how do you know if you can? It was aggressive, but we hit the ground running and focused on massive value production to the best of our ability at the time. We investigated a lot of things that wouldn't work for us, tried a few things that didn't work for us, and we got going on some things that did work. The long and short of it is that 18 months later - we were done! I thought it was impressive, but while Wendy was certainly relieved, she didn't seem to be very impressed. It took only a little pondering to realize that I hadn't really accomplished anything meaningful... I had survived something. If I wanted my wife to admire me, I had to accomplish something that left us ahead of the game. Thus, Amazement Goals were born.

The first set of Amazement Goals was a mere \$40,000 in four months. I knew I already had half of that in the pipe, so I had to figure out how to earn the other half. We had plans to acquire \$60,000 of value in the form of a new car, a timeshare, investments, education, and miscellaneous things - and to finish the year out of debt. I earned the money mostly with legal work, and we produced some extra money through the dojo, but, ultimately, I was coming up about \$15,000 short. I solved that with some high risk, high potential investments that paid off quickly. We bought the car, bought the timeshare, paid for school, bought what we needed, and we took a very, very nice vacation at the end of the year in our new timeshare. We even took the time and money to reroof the house and I spent a lot of time helping others for no pay. Still, we won!

#### **Amazement Goals 2004 - Done!**

Ultimately the investment fell apart. 85% was lost shortly after we closed out the Amazement Goals, but we were out of debt and business was going well. 2005 was shaping up to be our best year, yet in business. Our Karate program was running well. Kobujitsu was going strong. I had just finished making Jujitsu (yes, a pretty insane goal to be doing at the same time as the Amazement Goals, but it was part of the personal growth), and that program was going well. We even added a second Kobujitsu class as our late class got full. All in all, the business was going to have such a good year that if it kept up, we would need to expand.

We were also looking at having the best year of travel ever, too. Wendy would go to Peru on her first mission trip for two weeks and work as a dental assistant. For pure vacation, we went to Orlando for a week using two free airfare certificates that were given to us by former students, and we stayed in an incredibly nice condo with an accomodation certificate that got us the condo for very little money. In short, it was probably the nicest trip to Orlando we had so far, and it was very inexpensive. A client who I had worked for at no charge now had money and gave us a one week cruise in Alaska to the Hubbard Glacier. We also planned to return to Las Vegas for another Christmas. All in all, we would have three weeks of fabulous vacation, and Wendy would have two weeks of missions work in Peru.

**Amazement 2005.** It started in July. Wendy and I talked about how great a year we were having and had planned - but there was a challenge: We weren't getting ahead. We were doing well, no doubt about that, but not so well that we would be significantly on our way to a home and a family. So we set new Amazement Goals for 2005: \$60,000 by the end of the year. Last time we did \$40,000 in four months, so \$60,000 in six months sounded reasonable. This time I had nothing in the pipe, but with more time and now a Real Estate Broker license, I thought I might be able to figure out how to do it.

Then we attended a seminar by Tommy Lee and decided that we should probably put more money in the dojo if we ever wanted to be free of it without killing the Guardian Martial Arts in the process. We would need better systems, better, more independent instructors, and we would need a dojo that could support a payroll. So we agreed to put \$30,000 of the Amazement money into the dojo. But I ran some numbers and realized that the plan would not work. We needed to fund our children's marriage and education accounts. We needed a second car and planned to write a check. We had obligations to pay off. Of course we needed to tithe. Totalled, we would need \$40,000 to cover the plan, so that only left \$20,000 for the dojo.

In retrospect, I suppose it would have been easier to say "Then we'll put \$20,000 in the dojo." Instead, I offered to up the Amazement Goals by *adding* the \$30,000 to the \$60,000, and so long as we were so close to \$100,000 anyway, I added \$10,000 for a One Million A.O.K. party if we won the race to one million acts of kindness. So the 2005 Amazement Goals quickly became \$100,000 in six months. *Now* I was over my head.

But I went to work. I found possible deals, possible opportunities to sell homes, and I worked those opportunities. I had deal after deal fall apart. I had farmed all my contacts for opportunities and I had managed to get nearly \$200,000 of possibilities on the table, and every single one rolled off. It took less than two months to run out of options. I made some money by cashing out some remaining investments and doing some legal work, but that got me \$5,000 by early September. 1/3rd of my time was gone. I was 5% there. It got worse in October when we agreed to pay a \$2600 Social Security problem for Wendy's grandmother.

I did have a deal on the table, though, and it looked solid enough. The problem had started off as someone else's mess in June. I worked diligently with them in June and July to try to untangle the insanity. Then, just as I was nearly done at the beginning of August, the whole thing just fell apart. At one time it had the chance of earning me as much as \$45,000 in fees, probably more like \$30,000, but there was no money in it if the deal did not go forward. At about the same time the whole thing fell apart, a provocative, creative opportunity appeared. Suggested by a consultant, I worked on the numbers to see what it would take for me to actually buy and sell the property. Then I went to work with an offer and I got access to some funds to do it. Suddenly I went from no deal to a possible deal - but the mess was still there and the situation was still very fluid.

PERSONAL TRIUMPH 7.

PERSONAL TRIUMPH 8.

PERSONAL TRIUMPH 9.

PERSONAL TRIUMPH 10.