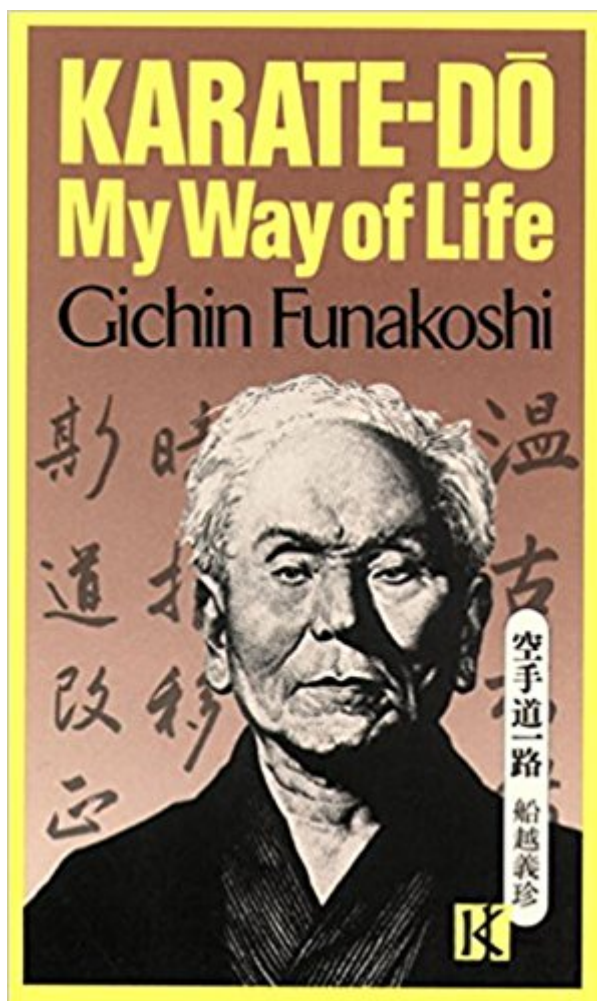


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Karate-Do: My Way Of Life



Synopsis

Linking the time when karate was a strictly Okinawan art of self-defense shrouded in the deepest secrecy and the present day, when it has become a martial art practiced throughout the world, is Gichin Funakoshi, the "Father of Karate-do." Out of modesty, he was reluctant to write this autobiography and did not do so until he was nearly ninety years of age. Trained in the Confucian classics, he was a schoolteacher early in life, but after decades of study under the foremost masters, he gave up his livelihood to devote the rest of his life to the propagation of the Way of Karate. Under his guidance, techniques and nomenclature were refined and modernized, the spiritual essence was brought to the fore, and karate evolved into a true martial art. Various forms of empty-hand techniques have been practiced in Okinawa for centuries, but due to the lack of historical records, fancy often masquerades as fact. In telling of his own famous teachers--and not only of their mastery of technique but of the way they acted in critical situations--the author reveals what true karate is. The stories he tells about himself are no less instructive: his determination to continue the art, after having started it to improve his health; his perseverance in the face of difficulties, even of poverty; his strict observance of the way of life of the samurai; and the spirit of self-reliance that he carried into an old age kept healthy by his practice of Karate-do.

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Customer Reviews

Text: English, Japanese (translation) --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

GICHIN FUNAKOSHI is world famous as one of Karate's great masters. Born in Shuri, Okinawa Prefecture, in 1868, he studied Karate-do from childhood and organized the first public demonstrations. He was trained in the Confucian classics and was a schoolteacher early in life. After training for decades under the foremost masters in Okinawa he was elected president of the Okinawa Association for the Spirit of Martial Arts. He was chosen to demonstrate Karate at the First National Athletic Exhibition in Tokyo in 1922, which led to the introduction of the ancient martial art to the rest of Japan and subsequently to the rest of the world. Among his writings are Karate-do Nyumon: The Master Introductory Text, Karate-do Kyohan: The Master Text, and Karate Jutsu: The Original Teachings of Gichin Funakoshi. Master Gichin Funakoshi died in April 1957.

Absolutely love that book. Although I'm attending the classes myself for more than half a year already and had a lot of philosophy related discussions by now - most of the stuff gave me totally new perspective to The Art and made me re-think what I do and how I even approach the classes. Also gave a great insight into the different cultural world. Will definitely return to it from time to time.

Every practitioner needs to read this remarkable story of this Master, regardless of your style. The hardships and disciplines truly make a difference in traditional Martial Arts. Great read!!

Highly recommend to those who study any form of martial art, not just karate.

Having practiced karate for just under two years, I thought this book would help me better to understand the true meaning of karate. I knew that commitment, respect, endurance, strength, etc. were all values, but after reading this book about the life of Gichin Funakoshi, it has really opened my eyes to what karate really is. First and foremost, this is an autobiography. It isn't an action book full of stories of fighting and taking down the bad guys. It's a foray into his life, how he feels about karate, and what it has meant to him and his family. He tells of his successes and failures, tips for healthy living and longevity, and most of all, what karate means to him. Gichin Funakoshi was responsible for bringing karate to mainland Japan, which allowed it to spread throughout the world following World War II. In this book, he brings new meaning to all of those sayings and phrases that you see pasted throughout dojos all over the country, like spirit, tranquility, and respect. I think anyone involved in any martial art, especially karate, should read this book. I'm glad I did, and it is definitely something I'll read again in the future.

This is a very short book by Funakoshi, the founder of Shotokan Karate. It covers how he got into training in Karate, covers some of the history of how Karate came into Okinawa/Japan, and has some fun and interesting stories about some of the Masters that Sensei's love to quote (Matsumura, Itosu, etc). I have trained in Shito Ryu for a long time, not Shotokan, but the history goes back to the same Masters, which makes for an interesting read. This book won't make you a great fighter, but it will give you some insights into the mind of the Masters and give some interesting history in the process.

Highly recommended book. A copy of this was given to one of my fellow students years ago and he said he was at first disappointed to see it was an autobiography until he read it. Years later I finally read it myself. After I read I bought two copies for my two highest ranking students. This book is a must for those who are serious of living the way.

This is one of Funakoshi's best books. As a practitioner myself there are several lessons in this book that I believe anyone studying martial arts can learn from. It's well written and the story's shared in it pages are also quite entertaining. Definitely worth the read.

Funakoshi is remarkably humble and offers repeatedly his philosophy behind karate, which prohibits its misuse. I would like to see more of this communicated in martial arts organizations in America today. On the other hand, he also shows how this philosophy is connected to Buddhism, which I don't subscribe to, but the explicit discussion about the connections help a student understand and evaluate some of the principles passed down in bits and pieces to our schools today.

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