



Lakewood Budo Kai

Fujitsu, Karate, and Women's Self Defense

The First Class

The first time you enter the doors of a martial arts dojo (school), it makes quite an impression on you. From the people running around in uniforms, to loud sounds, to friendly faces and welcoming handshakes - once you experience it, it's hard to forget. Most of you probably remember your first day of martial arts class and the impression it made on you. Today, we would like to share with you what happened on our instructor's very first day of class and the impression it had on him.

Our instructor was 16 years old at the time and remembered reading a brochure mailed to him by the local YMCA. He looked through the brochure and saw that they offered a Karate class. He had always wanted to take Karate so he signed up.

When he arrived at the YMCA he found that there were eight to ten new students. He quickly found out that this class was the first Karate class taught at the school so they were the very first Karate students. Without any existing students, it must have seemed unusual for the instructors to have everyone working out in street clothes with no one, except the instructors, in uniforms.

Two instructors taught class that day, Joseph Holck, a fifth degree black belt, and his son Barry Holck, a second degree black belt.

That first day the students were instructed to refer to black belts as Sensei (teacher). They also received a brief introduction in the history of Karate. Our instructor remembered when Joseph Holck, Sensei opened up his right hand with his fingers together. He explained that "Kara" meant open and "te" meant hand. The two together meant open hand as in how Karate students hold their hand when they do a karate strike (shuto).

He enjoyed everything he learned that day and was so excited that he couldn't wait to learn more and attend the next class. When he received his martial arts uniform (Gi), he was extremely happy and felt like he was really studying Karate.

What he didn't know at the time was that he was at the beginning of a long road. Two years later he started studying Jujitsu and many years later was promoted to black belt.