

Welcome to BMAA at Nia NH and Yoga, Amherst, NH

I have collected some basic information for the beginner student and our school here at Nia NH and Yoga. Please feel free to ask sensei any questions you may have.

Etiquette and Protocol

In traditional martial arts, the dojo ("place of the way"; here at NIA NH and Yoga) is understood to be a special space, different from the other spaces of day-to-day experience. Dojo etiquette and protocol reflect our respect for tradition, our commitment to train together diligently, and our readiness to focus all our attention on the work at hand. It is important to learn these protocols, follow them, and contemplate their meaning.

To begin with

Be prompt. Arrive before class begins (we suggest 15 minutes. If another class is in session when you arrive sit quietly and be respectful; be ready to be on the mat at the designated time.). If you come in late, stand in front-position by the door and wait for permission to join practice.

Always bow when entering or leaving the dojo (this shows respect for your place of teaching). Direct your bow to the senior person present and acknowledge his or her presence with the greeting "Osu" (pronounced "Oos").

Junior students are expected to look to seniors for guidance, imitate their behavior, and treat them with respect and consideration. Sit and stand when your seniors do; always sit to the left of seniors. Kneel when your senior puts on or takes off his/her sash or belt.

Senior students are expected to set a good example for juniors, protect them from injury, help them learn, and treat them with respect and consideration.

Behave appropriately in the dojo (literally, "place of the Way"). Remove your shoes before coming onto the mat. Speak quietly and maintain an attitude appropriate for serious practice. Eating, drinking, chewing gum, and using cell phones are not permitted in the dojo. A complete and full uniform is expected at every training session; this will consist of a black gi (uniform), white sash, and appropriate system and school patches on the uniform.

Do not teach new techniques or kata to other students unless asked to do so by your teacher.

Never throw or drop your obi (belt/sash) on the ground, and never wash it. Your obi is a symbol of your spirit.

Never lose your temper during practice.

Pay attention; it is part of your training. Concentrate fully on Koshu-do (way of koshu) while you are in the dojo.

Practice your kihon waza and kata consistently outside of class, even if it is just for a few minutes every day. This is the only way to improve your skill and physical conditioning. Class is to learn; not to practice!

FORMAL OPENING OF PRACTICE

Sensei (teacher) stands before the kamiza facing the students. Unlike many dojos we do line up according to rank (so as to limit ego).

When the teacher assumes his or her place all students immediately assume their rightful positions to prepare for practice. Stand calmly and quietly in ready position. Posture is erect and balanced (centered).

The teacher says, "Line up." All render an opening formal bow; follow sensei.

FORMAL CLOSING OF PRACTICE

Assume the same positions as for the opening of practice.

As before, on the teacher's command, when told by sensei, "front position" and follow sensei's commands.

Optionally, the teacher may call for the class to form a circle to thank each other for training.

RANKING

Ranks are valid only as indications of one's current skill level, maintained through active training. Promotion or reduction of rank is a teaching tool.

Preoccupation with rank is understandable but misplaced. Anyone can buy and wear a belt. What matters are knowledge, experience, and character as demonstrated by conduct.

When returning to the dojo after a lengthy absence, or when visiting the dojo of another system, wear your uniform neatly and with pride. Follow our customs or the visiting schools, whichever ever demonstrates the greatest respect.

KYU (CLASS)

Ranks under black belt. BMAA uses white sash (a training time of 1-4 years) and brown belt (almost BB another 1-2 years typically).

DAN (GRADE)

1st dan Black belt with one stripe (red) or the option to continue to where your original white sash. Holds the title of sensei.

2nd dan Black belt with two stripes (red) or the option to continue to where your original white sash. Holds the title of sensei.

3rd dan Black belt with three stripes (red) or the option to continue to where your original white sash. Holds the title of shihan (master).

4th dan Black belt with four stripes (red) or the option to continue to where your original white sash. Holds the title of shian.

5th dan Black Black belt with five stripes (red) or the option to continue to where your original white sash. Holds the title of shihan.

KHY is only a 5 dan tier system. Soke, is the highest ranking in the system. Bashaw Soke's highest ranking is 8th dan awarded by TWMAHOF.

The hakama (divided skirt) may be worn by senior students only of any style or color, authorized by soke himself signifying senior students. An all black hakama is for BB's only.

The title of sensei simply means teacher. But anyone in front of a class, teaching is called sensei. Shihan means master, and soke (founder/ grandmaster). Titles are implied but never spoken except sensei.

When in doubt of etiquette, remember good manners and humility always prevails.

Tuition/ and other fees

Unlike many schools, BMAA does not have tests (unless soke desires it appropriate for some. All BB testing is tested over several days) or test fees. We have colored belt ranking similar to traditional aikido, white until brown, then black (we all know who our senior is regardless of colored belt).

In addition to the session tuition, due by the first date of each new session, students are responsible for purchasing a Black Gi (uniform), white sash (belts as indicated by advancement), school hombu patch (worn on right chest), system KHY patch (worn above heart) ,each \$8 a piece purchased thru soke>, as

well as weapons and sparring equipment as indicated (weapons: tai chi sword- wooden, jo staff, bokken with scabbard; sparring equipment: mouth guard, groin protection, mma gloves, head gear, and sparring foot gear). The BMA website has links where this can be purchased.

Note you will need to be certified as a Kokoro Ryu Reiki Master/Teacher prior to BB at an additional cost. It is also expected that students attend as many seminars as possible in martial arts (regardless of system), healing arts, tantra, and Shugendo Yoga in addition to their tuition and class schedule so as to improve their knowledge and skill base.

Welcome,

I am so happy you have come into the KHY family.

Chris Bashaw, soke

<http://bmaa.yolasite.com/>