



Chris Natzke's **MIND OF A** CHAMPION



“Top Ten Big Ideas to Become a Black Belt Leader”.

By Chris Natzke, 7th Degree Black Belt, Master Instructor

Over the past 40+ years of my martial arts and personal development journey, I have witnessed literally thousands of students and clients thrive and consciously create happiness and success in their personal and professional lives. I have also witnessed (and experienced personally) times when results are less than desired. Although largely experienced in martial arts training, the following concepts of success clearly carry over into everyday life. The beauty of this is that one does not need to train for years in martial arts to utilize these techniques for success. Rather, it simply requires a commitment to “self-leadership” and following through on these principles in an effort to realize our desires. These strategies are listed below in what I call the “Top Ten Big Ideas to become a Black Belt Leader.”

- 1) **Purposeful Vision** – I have often heard it said that “without vision, the people will perish”. We can experience many visions in our lives; some serve us incredibly by supporting us to be the highest expression of who we were meant to be; while others can hinder our growth and expansion when we allow our own fears to cloud our vision for our true life purpose. Black Belt Leaders understand that “what we focus on expands” and that true life champions focus on purposeful and powerful visions to create the lives they wish to live and support those we lead and serve.
- 2) **Be the Change** – We live in a society that focuses much on what we *have* and what we *do*. While what we *have* may support us and what we *do* may inspire us, real change, both in our personal lives and in those with who lead, is most impacted by how we show up *being* in world. Black Belt Leaders understand that we may not always be able to control the circumstances of our lives, but we can always control how we respond to them and how we lead during times of challenge.
- 3) **Integrity** – Black Belt Leaders understand the power of their word. They also understand there is a key distinction between “keeping” their word and “honoring” their word. Keeping one’s word may prove difficult in today’s busy world, however, being proactive to correct our errors and/or taking responsibility for when we do not follow through on what we have committed to serves as a guiding force for success and flow in our lives. When one is in integrity, there is a congruence which exists within that serves as an incredibly strong foundation for how we show up in our life’s many roles. When we hold true to our integrity,

we take part in a daily practice of expanding ourselves and positively impacting the lives of others.

4) **Conscious Persistence** – In martial arts, we have a saying, “practice doesn’t make perfect, perfect practice makes perfect”. Black Belt Leaders understand that in order to thrive we must be adaptable and be persistent in the practices that move us forward and discard the practices that no longer serves us.

You don’t need to be a Black Belt to know that if you were to form a fist with your fingers wrapped over your thumb and struck a target that there is a good chance that you would break your thumb. If you would practice that technique a thousand times, what would you get good at? Breaking your thumb, of course 😊.

Holding onto old practices, just because it has always been done a certain way is counter-productive. In order to thrive, we must identify best practices and be committed to them in a conscious and intentional way.

5) **Flexibility** – While physical flexibility is necessary to the martial artist to execute powerful techniques, flexibility in our mind, thoughts and beliefs can be one of the greatest tools of the Black Belt Leader. A rigid mind that is not open to change or acceptance of others can serve to be a detriment to our happiness and personal expansion. On the other hand, a flexible and open mind can lead to not only personal growth but the access of creative solutions to problems that may arise. Black Belt leaders understand that having an open mind can be one of their greatest assets.

6) **Balance** – A martial artist, who relies too much on a particular skill in the ring, may find this strategy eventually leads to their defeat. For instance, a practitioner who is a skilled kicker but neglects the development of his punching techniques may find this imbalance leads to him telegraphing his intentions and falling victim to the effective counter-attack of his opponent. In this case, a strength can actually become a weakness. When we allow imbalance to impact our lives we can become stressed, unhappy and ineffective. Black Belt Leaders understand this and strive to maintain balance in their personal and professional lives as a means to allow life to flow naturally and provide overall happiness and health.

7) **Expansion** – Black Belt Leaders live by the tenet of **C.A.N.I.** – Constant and Never-Ending Improvement. Interestingly enough, most of our inability to expand to our greatest heights comes as a result of the limiting beliefs we hold about ourselves and others. Black Belt Leaders embrace this challenge to expand by identifying, healing and letting go to the beliefs that no longer serve them and replacing them with empowering and powerful ways of being and thinking.

8) **Compassionate Service** – Esteemed author, William Arthur Ward once wrote, “We must be *silent* before we can *listen*. We must *listen* before we can *learn*. We must *learn* before we can *prepare*. We must *prepare* before we can *serve*. We must *serve* before we can *lead*.” Black

Belt Leaders embrace this challenge by sharing their gifts in the world with a strong dedication to positively impacting the lives of others. The true sign of a champion is one who uses his/her skills, strengths and talents to up-level the world around them. The humble yet powerful warrior understands that a commitment to serve is at the heart of foundation of strength.

9) **Acceptance and Surrender** – Acceptance and surrender can sometimes be seen as a sign of weakness. However, a Black Belt Leaders understand that to accept and surrender is simply a yielding to something greater. It is not “giving in” but “giving up” what no longer serves us so we can be the most power expression of ourselves.

10) **Inspired Action** – The legendary Napoleon Hill once said, *“The most brilliant concept in the world is only a dream unless you take action. Even a mediocre idea that is put into practice is far more valuable than a flash of genius that languishes in a fallow, undisciplined mind.”* Black Belt Leaders understand that in order to make change, get the results we seek and transform our own lives and the lives of others, we need to take action. I have often heard said that, “God meets us at the point of action.” Black Belt Leaders become the leaders they seek to be by taking the action their spirit leads them to take, despite the fears that may show up as they choose to move out of their self-imposed comfort zones.

Meet Chris Natzke

Chris Natzke is a 7th Degree Black Belt and former United States National Taekwondo Champion. In sharing his “***Mind of a Champion***” principles as a martial arts master instructor, keynote speaker, life-leadership coach and author of his book *Black Belt Leadership*, he has impacted the lives of thousands across the country with his message of hope, inspiration and personal empowerment. To learn more about Chris and his keynote speaking and life-leadership coaching programs, contact him at www.ChrisNatzke.com .