

The Black Belt Book of Life - Topic #39

Price & Sacrifice

As the greatest gift exacts the greatest price,
the greatest accomplishment
exacts the greatest sacrifice.

Spiritual development requires great sacrifice.
Saint Sawan Singh

*Sacrifice, which is the passion of great souls,
has never been the law of societies.*
Henri Frédéric Amiel

*Great achievement is usually born of great sacrifice,
and is never the result of selfishness.*
Napoleon Hill

*Present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy,
acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.*
Bible: Romans - 12: 1

Everything in life has its price. In spite of what some people may believe, nothing is free, nothing. We simply must pay for everything we get in life. There are no free rides, no free gifts, no free admissions, no free drinks. Free "whatever" may be the appearance, but eventually the bill will come due and we will have to pay it.

Gifts have their prices, and the most expensive gifts bear the most expensive prices.

Accomplishments have their prices, too, and *as the greatest gift exacts the greatest price, the greatest accomplishment exacts the greatest sacrifice.*

Sacrifice is surrender, a giving up, a renouncing, a relinquishing of something we value. The things we value the most naturally demand the greatest sacrifice . . . if we choose to surrender them. If we desire to achieve great things, we must be willing to pay the appropriate price and in doing so sacrifice greatly—of our time, effort, sweat, blood, tears, mind, comforts, luxuries, money.

Martial arts provides a worthy paradigm for continuing achievement and learning the lessons of price and sacrifice. If one wants to achieve an advanced beginner rank of Orange belt, for example, its achievement will involve a limited amount of sacrifice. Its value is relatively small from a martial arts perspective. However, if one wishes to achieve a Black Belt, its achievement will involve a much greater amount of sacrifice because it bears a greater price, a greater worth, a greater recognition. That price is years of dedication, devotion, determination, discipline, commitment, courage, consistency and so forth.

The greatest of the great understand this relationship between price and sacrifice. Do we not think that Abraham Lincoln was aware of the enormous sacrifice he was making in his service to his vision of a United States of America? Do we not think the great humanitarian, Albert Schweitzer, was cognizant of the price of his sacrifice in performing missionary work in Africa? And what about Mother Teresa? What of her sacrifices? Do we not think she was aware of them? And then there are the mystics and saints throughout history: Christ, Buddha, Mohammed, Guru Nanak, Kabir, Ravidas, Dadu, Tukaram, Swami Ji Maharaj, Charan Singh and others. These were souls of the highest order who not only understood the relationship between price and sacrifice but taught it, and more importantly, lived it.

It is true, as Henri Frédéric Amiel states, that sacrifice is the passion of great souls. Napoleon Hill confirms Amiel's statement with his own: *Great achievement is usually born of great sacrifice, and is never the result of selfishness.* Famous 20th Century Saint, Sawan Singh, instructs us that *spiritual development requires great sacrifice.* Without a doubt, if we want to achieve anything in this life that is associated with the term *great*, then we must be willing to endure the great sacrifice necessary to realize it. One does not buy a diamond ring with a dollar.

To this end we must not fool ourselves. True sacrifice is surrendering the things we value most. If we don't value something, there's no sacrifice in giving it up. If we don't like chocolate cookies, for example, and we say we're going to sacrifice eating them to loose weight, what kind of sacrifice is that? It's no sacrifice at all. It's pure self-delusion because we place no value on chocolate chip cookies. On the other hand, if we say we're going to give up eating meat because we want to lead a more spiritually compassionate life valuing all living creatures, even though we love eating meat, then that is a true sacrifice. It is a living sacrifice—living not only because the concept lives in us as part of a *living life philosophy*, but also because it supports the right of all living beings to live their own lives without the interference or predatory behaviors of others.

It does no good to fool ourselves by making false claims of sacrifice or in thinking we're sacrificing something when we're not. Others may be fooled but God won't be. So why go there? Why create illusions, let alone live in them? It's a useless and dangerous charade. We need to be honest with ourselves and then our sacrifices will also be honest, and in our quest to achieve, even become great or do great things, we will undoubtedly come to know the truth that *as the greatest gift exacts the greatest price, the greatest accomplishment exacts the greatest sacrifice.*

~finis

© 2026 Richard Andrew King, the Karate Institute of America and Kiado-Ryu Martial Arts.

The post The Black Belt Book of Life - Topic #39- Price & Sacrifice first appeared on www.Kiado-Ryu.com. Kiado-Ryu and The Karate Institute of America are trademarks of Richard Andrew King.