

Home > Chennai > Getting his Kicks

Getting his Kicks

May 22, 2015

0 27



Besides self defence, master Younggeun Yang hopes to teach discipline of the mind through Taekwondo

At the risk of sounding absolutely stereotypical, I must say that master Younggeun Yang was nothing like I imagined. When you're going to meet the most popular Taekwondo master in town (he has called Chennai home since 2010), one does tend to expect a ripped, very serious, mildly intimidating character, clad in a dobok. Instead, we're welcomed by a smiling South Korean in jeans and a T-shirt, at the Inko Centre, Boat Club, on a Saturday evening. It's only when he gives us a quick demo of the way you're supposed to kick, that we realise this is a man you don't want to mess with.

All in the mind

"Bend your knee," he says, adding, "It gives more power when you kick." But this is not the first lesson Yang teaches his students at the Inko Centre, American International School and the Hyundai Welfare Centre. His 150 students, aged between five and 50, learn discipline first. Every martial arts teacher approaches teaching differently and Yang says that his aim is to teach discipline of the mind through Taekwondo. "You must also learn to respect first, before expecting it in return," says the black belt six dan holder (the highest dan for Taekwondo is nine), who learnt from a grandmaster in Massachusetts. "Learning," he quickly clarifies, explaining, "Age keeps catching up, so one must keep practising continuously." Surprisingly, Yang insists that it takes just one hour's practice every day, provided you are focussed.



Stretch factor

We being Taekwondo dummies, Yang patiently explains that one does not need any sort of preparation to sign up for his classes. Of course, it does help if you have been following some form of fitness regime like running or jogging. "Stretching is very important. You need to take a lot of time to stretch or you can damage your bones," cautions Yang, who also ensures that his students do a lot of meditation post their training. We did hope to get a couple of lessons in self defence from Yang, but alas, he has to take his wife and baby home, and we call it a day, before he rides away on his Honda Activa.

Classes on Tuesday, Thursday and Friday at Inko Centre. Rs 4,000 for two months. Details: 24361224