



# Dojo Etiquette, Code of Conduct, and Dojo Kun for Adults

Jin Sei Ryu Karate-Do is a Japanese art and follows traditional Japanese martial conventions for showing respect to the space, to teachers, and to others.

## **Respect to the Space:**

A *dojo* is a space for studying martial arts. It can be our space on North Clark St, your living room, or an outdoors space – wherever you’re taking class. Before we enter the dojo ‘space’, we want to make sure we’re fully prepared to train. We should be fully dressed in uniform, and our mind open and ready to learn. When we enter the space, we do our best to set aside the worries of the world. Before entering the space, and before any time we leave the space (even for water), we always bow towards *shinzen* (‘heart of the dojo,’ representing the space) and say “Osu!”

## **Respect to the Teachers:**

Anytime you are in a *karate* context (i.e. right before or during class or in karate-specific communications such as email or text/phone), call your *karate* teachers by their title and first name (i.e. Sensei Amy and Senpai Kyren). This is in part a gesture of respect, but more importantly it is a reminder to us of our responsibility to you as our students. Whenever we are *not* in a *karate* context, we ask that you use just our first names (Kyren and Amy). When we first see our teacher(s) or fellow students in a *karate* setting, we bow and say “Osu!” before saying hello. Anytime a teacher asks us to do something in class, we respond with “Osu!” to acknowledge that we understand. If we don’t understand or need further explanation, we say “Osu Senpai” or “Osu Sensei,” first, and then ask our question.

## **Respect to Other Students:**

In the spirit of community-building, introduce yourself to other students and ask when you forget someone’s name (don’t worry, we all do it!). When you partner with someone in order to train, make sure you know their name & pronouns and remind them of yours if you think there’s any chance they don’t remember (hint: if you don’t remember their name, they probably don’t remember yours, either)



## Student Code of Conduct for Adults

**Treat the physical space as if it were sacred to your or another person's religious faith.**

1. **Remove shoes upon entering the space**
2. **Refrain from using profanity**
3. **Refrain from gossip or idle speech about people's personal lives**
4. **Start with the Golden Rule.** If you are still in doubt as to whether certain behavior is appropriate, ask yourself if you would feel embarrassed or ashamed to say or do it in front of your parents or grandparents, religious advisor, mentor, holy person, or divine being

**Treat others in the space with civility.**

Creating a community of safety, respect, inclusivity, and kindness requires focus and intentionality. You don't have to like everyone in the space—but you *are* expected to treat everyone with kindness and respect. Any time we bring diverse people together (and often when we bring similar people together), tensions and/or conflict will eventually arise. We see it as part of our karate practice to learn to handle conflicts and tensions with respect, strength, and kindness. Refer to the [Rights and Responsibilities for Adults](#) (below), and our [Complaints Procedures](#) (available from our website or upon request), or reach out to Culture of Safety/Jin Sei Ryu staff for support.

1. **No discrimination will be tolerated.** No discrimination on the basis of sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, race, religion, ethnicity, age, physical or mental disability status, immigration status, or other assumed traits or characteristics of any person will be tolerated.
2. **No mean or hostile behavior will be tolerated.** We expect all people who enter our space to be at minimum civil to every other person. You have the right to your feelings; you have the responsibility to treat others with kindness and respect, even when you are upset or feel hurt. If you find that you are unable to be civil in a given moment, you are expected to leave the space until you can engage in civil behavior. Behavior includes electronic or in-person communication, body language, and actions outside of the space that impact the safety of the space for any individual.
3. **Assume positive intent from others;** And accept that impact of our words and actions matter more than our intent.
4. **Assume that forgiveness and peaceful conflict resolution are possible** and commit to addressing, rather than avoiding, conflict.



## Rights and Responsibilities for Adults

These rights and responsibilities are specific to Jin Sei Ryu Chicago and Culture of Safety. As a member of Jin Sei Ryu Chicago, it is your responsibility to abide by these guidelines; it is also your right to be treated in accordance with these guidelines.

1. **Respond to conflict with empathy and compassion.** Conflict is natural and unavoidable. It is everyone's responsibility to respond to conflict with empathy and compassion towards both yourself and the other person.
2. **Ask for what you need from others.** When someone does or says something that bothers you, it is your responsibility to talk to that person in-person directly as soon as you are able. As Brené Brown says, "Clear is kind. Unclear is unkind." Name the behavior, say what you need. Assume that the other person *will* be receptive to your request.  
Note: If it doesn't feel safe for you to ask for what you need for any reason, you are expected to reach out to Jin Sei Ryu staff to support you.
3. **Listen actively when someone else asks for what they need.** Ask clarifying questions, thank them for speaking with you, and make changes.
4. **Ask for help with conflict if needed.** Forgiveness and peaceful conflict resolution can be difficult, but there are resources. Ask Culture of Safety/Jin Sei Ryu staff and we'll connect you with people, books, podcasts, videos, etc. that can help.
5. **No secret intimate relationships** There should never be a secret relationship between you and another person at Culture of Safety/Jin Sei Ryu Chicago. We know that intimate relationships can sometimes develop between training members, and that it can feel like something that is between consenting adults and thus "none of our business" (see next page about special considerations for teens). However, we take our responsibility to create a culture of safety for our students extremely seriously, and the hierarchical and martial nature of karate training creates vulnerabilities that have historically been too often exploited. We value and respect our members' privacy, and will not disclose relationships to others upon request. The line between a casual and intimate relationship can be a fuzzy one, we ask you to use your judgement. However, we consider even casual sexual relationships between members to be, by definition, intimate.



## Special Considerations for Teens

1. **Teens are special.** Teen training members often train alongside adults. As with any unequal power dynamic, you as the adult have the greater responsibility to ensure teens' physical and emotional safety, and to enforce boundaries to keep them (and you) safe. If you're not sure about a situation, let the head instructors (Sensei Amy & Senpai Kyren) or your Student Protection Officer know and they will help you navigate the situation.
2. **No secrets.** You should never ask anyone under 18 to keep a secret with you or for you. There should never be a secret relationship between you and another person (regardless of age) at Culture of Safety/Jin Sei Ryu Chicago (see above, "no secret intimate relationships").
3. **You should not**
  - a. Ask for gifts from anyone under 18
  - b. Give gifts (with the exception of something like a birthday or congratulatory card) to anyone under 18.
  - c. Give gifts (even cards) to someone under 18 that you do not also give to others in the same situation
  - d. Spend time alone with anyone under 18, except in rare cases when there is no other option. All of these cases should be communicated to the minor's responsible adult (parent/guardian) and to the head instructors as soon as possible

*\* These guidelines do not apply to individuals who you have outside relationships with, for example family members*



## Jin Sei Ryu Karate-Do Dojo Kun

In addition to the rules of etiquette and Code of Conduct that we ask that Jin Sei Ryu Chicago students follow, Jin Sei Ryu International (our parent karate organization) has published Dojo Kun, or “Dojo rules” that it expects all Jin Sei Ryu Karate-Do students to follow, and that all Jin Sei Ryu Karate-Do students can expect of their instructors and fellow students. Many of these are mirrored in our Code of Conduct, but the Dojo-Kun goes further, and reflects the “do” or path/way of Jin Sei Ryu Karate-Do.

- I/we practice karate-do seriously, with a strong spirit, pure heart and open mind
- I/we act with kindness, honesty, respect and patience
- I/we accept others regardless of their age, physical capabilities, gender or personal beliefs
- I/we strive to overcome our personal challenges and wholeheartedly support others through theirs
- I/we apply what we learn during our training to other areas of our daily lives
- I/we honor our families, serve our communities and wider society
- I/we pursue self-improvement tirelessly and humbly regardless of our age, rank or experience.