

CALLED TO BE GUNG-HO

Are you gung-ho ...

- For sports?
- For some hobby?
- For the beach or the mountains?
- For Jesus?

Do you even know what is meant by the phrase? The hyphenated words typically are used to mean *enthusiastic, excited or energetic*. But why do we say it?

Gung-ho is an Americanized version of two Chinese characters meaning, respectively, “work” and “together.”

A few Europeans managed to get into China as soon as westerners began to be tolerated. All such visitors were awed by the Great Wall and other public works constructed by human labor. Big projects still under way employed vast numbers of coolies, or Chinese laborers. At an overseer’s signal, they shouted “Gung-ho!” in unison in order to synchronize movements.



It became more popular in the West when it was adopted as a slogan by the U.S. Marines under Gen. Evans Carlson in World War II. Less than fully understood, the Chinese phrase for “work together” was applied to actions of enthusiasm. Gen. Carlson had picked up the phrase from his New Zealand friend, Rewi Alley, one of the founders of the Chinese Industrial Cooperatives.



Carlson explained in an interview in 1943: “I was trying to build up the same sort of working spirit I had seen in China, where all the soldiers dedicated themselves to one idea and worked together to put that idea over. I told the boys about it again and again. I told them of the motto of the Chinese Cooperatives, *Gung-ho*. It means ‘work together – work in harmony.’”

Later, Carlson used gung-ho during his command of the 2nd Marine Raider Battalion. From there, it spread throughout the U.S. Marine Corps, where it was employed as an expression of spirit, and into American society as a whole when the phrase became the title of a 1943 war film, *Gung-Ho!*, about the 2nd Raider Battalion’s raid on Makin Island in 1942.

(more)

The lesson for us?

The associates in Life Care and Century Park would be well served to get all gung-ho – not just in terms of enthusiasm for our mission, but for the spirit of unity and collaboration, working together to accomplish great things for our Lord, for our residents and for their families.

Let's choose to be gung-ho!

And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another (Hebrews 10:24-25 ESV).

– Beecher Hunter