

AMERICAN KARATE TECHNIQUES

By Sensei Greer Golden



Edited from his original typewritten
ISKF instruction manual

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Susan Golden Shares Her Thoughts About Her Husband's Karate Life

When he was an 18-year-old freshman at Ohio University, Greer stopped for the night at the Dream Land Motel on his way back to school from Florida. He was halfway to Athens, halfway through his first year of college, and very close to changing course. That evening, he wrote in his journal about his ambitions and whether he should complete college or enter the military.

“I am worried about becoming mediocre in life. I have set back my time for becoming successful to 30 or 35. Doubt if I can do it by 25.”

At the end of the year, Greer decided to enter the military. He was based in Korea and Japan where he was trained to be a Morse code operator. In his spare time, he devoted himself to the study of karate. On May 14, 1961, Greer earned his first-degree black belt in Japan, he had achieved success by age 25.

Greer spoke often about how training and teaching karate shaped his life. He was captivated by this martial art his entire life because the study of karate was not just a physical endeavor, but also an intellectual and spiritual pursuit for him.

One evening over dinner, Sensei Okazaki described how the first JKA classes he taught in the United States were conducted. This gave me an understanding of the rigors of the karate training Greer had experienced in Japan and the perseverance he needed to become a JKA shodan. Sensei Okazaki recounted his fashioning his Philadelphia classes after the JKA model. One class would be an hour of front kicking only, and the next class would be an hour of reverse punching. Karate students would begin as white belts until they reached the rank of shodan and were awarded a black belt. Sensei Okazaki lamented that too many students were dropping out of training. Instruction and promotion needed to be adapted to encourage American participation. That is why Sensei Okazaki felt teachers like Greer were vital to the development of JKA karate in the United States.

An expression Sensei Okazaki liked to use was “listen softly.” This meant really listen and don’t just politely wait for the student to stop talking so that you can make your point. Greer certainly mastered this technique along with his karate techniques. He worked to instill in his students the belief that despite different physical capabilities, each could find success. One of the beauties of life-long training was striving to be the best karateka with the skills and body type you have. He respected effort and dedication, not just talent and ability. He believed that the art of karate could enrich a life and was scrupulous about following the lead of his teachers, Masters Nishiyama, Okazaki, and Yaguchi, along with his training partner, James Field. Greer also emphasized teaching the proper decorum and attitude along with karate technique. I remember him practicing his bow over and over before the memorial service for Master Nakayama in Denver. Greer had an enduring respect for karate and an unwavering respect for his students.

When he turned 80, Greer received birthday wishes from students from all over the country. Cards arrived every day for a couple of weeks. He read them all, and they were placed on every available surface in our living room. Some students included messages and letters letting him know the impact his teaching and karate had on their lives. Greer had always felt fortunate that his career had taken him to arrestingly beautiful places, such as Japan and Alaska; however, he felt more fortunate to have such interesting, engaging, and dedicated students. Greer was proud that his Mid-America students had attained such high ranks and teaching expertise and that their students, in turn, would be able to carry on his legacy.

Greer Golden – A Cornerstone of Shotokan Karate in America

Many current Shotokan instructors, not only in the Mid-America Region, but also many who migrated throughout the country, began their training during their college years, under Sensei Greer Golden. Others from around the country were able to experience Sensei Golden's teaching at ISKF summer camps or other events in the past. Virtually all would agree that he had a way of motivating and connecting to college-age students that made him genuinely special. His students, and their progeny, perhaps numbering in the thousands, owe much of their current understructure for karate spirit, technique, and personal growth, to Sensei Golden. His history of courage and enthusiasm, and his legacy as an instructor are truly inspiring.

In 1956, Mr. Golden was stationed in post-World War II Japan. While stationed in Okinawa Golden saw Sensei Kobayashi conducting karate classes at the Air Force base. Mr. Golden began training with Sensei Kobayashi and Shotokan karate quickly became his passion. The Japanese were defeated but unbroken, and many were harsh on an American determined to master the skill and lifestyle of Shotokan. Golden persevered despite the difficulties, and extended his enlistment, allowing him to earn his shodan in Japan, as one of the first Americans to do so.



Sensei Golden at the ISKF headquarters in the early '80s.

Sensei Golden returned to the United States in 1961. He was invited by Master Hidetaka Nishiyama to train in his dojo in Los Angeles. In 1965 they were joined by a young assistant instructor from Japan, Master Yutaka Yaguchi, who had a major influence on Golden. In 1968 Master Nishiyama established the Japan Karate Association instructor training program in Los Angeles. Golden, Ray Dalke and Lester Ingber became the first trainees in the new program. They trained for six hours a day with Master Nishiyama and assistant instructor, Sensei Yaguchi. The three Americans became the first non-Japanese to complete the program and were licensed as instructors by the Japanese Ministry of Education.

Karate was becoming popular in the United States. Ohio University in Athens, Ohio, acting on students' wishes, was looking for an instructor to establish a karate club. Master Nishiyama recommended Golden, who was native to the area, and he accepted the position at Ohio University in 1970. He also started the club at Ohio State University in Columbus shortly thereafter, and created the Mid-America Region, which has since expanded to include Michigan, Kentucky, and Indiana.

The move to Ohio brought Mr. Golden closer to Philadelphia, where he began training and developed a relationship with Master Okazaki. In 1977, when the ISKF was created under Master Okazaki's leadership, Sensei Golden's students and the Mid-America Region were among the original members and have been loyal members ever since. Sensei Golden served for several years on the original ISKF Technical Committee and was instrumental in the organization and addition of the Alaska region to the ISKF.

However, Sensei Golden's lasting legacy may be the many students that went on to become national champions, Pan American champions, or members of the ISKF national team. Many of these students are now themselves certified ISKF instructors, such as Steve Pohle and John Pohle (East Coast Region), Bruce Green (Mountain States Region), and James Oberschlake and Martin Vaughan (Mid-America Region).

In most every successful person's life, there are notable leaders who have directly and positively affected their life's path. Greer Golden's contribution to the lives of his students, and the resulting impact on his students' students, as well as to Shotokan karate in general, is immeasurable.

To me, Mr. Golden is, and always will be, my sempai. He is a real sempai. A sempai is a person who helps his kohai and teaches him the right way to do things, both in manner and technique. He never holds back in helping the kohai, even if it is something that he himself needs improvement in. (For example, some sempai hold back showing techniques that they are not good at performing.) He never held back anything from me that he thought would help me.

I first met Sempai Greer Golden around 1965 or '66 in Los Angeles at Central Dojo. He had been in Arizona as the instructor there for a few years. He was one of the ranking black belts in the dojo.

In the beginning, I thought of him as being like the others, but found out he was quite different, even friendly. Of the group, Mr. Golden and Mr. Smith were the only ones who helped me by letting me know what I could do to improve myself. My sempai, Mr. Golden, was a special person to me. We would sit and talk, sometimes for an hour or 2, about what I could do to make my karate better. He also educated me on the history of Shotokan and the JKA lineage. (The ISKF hadn't been formed yet.) Mr. Golden was the only one that had trained in Japan at that time. He told me stories of most of the instructors that I had only heard about through the grapevine. He passed on to me a great deal of information about the JKA, its history and the people who made it. He also told me of a man I later came to know and admire very much, my instructor, Mr. Yutaka Yaguchi. Even now when I get to see him, Mr. Golden still tells me things that are new to me.

My Sempai, Mr. Golden, helped make me who and what I am today. He gave me the enthusiasm to want to learn more about the origins of karate and the path to follow to improve myself, a journey I continue.

Sensei James Field

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ATTITUDES OF AMERICANS ON KARATE

Due to the improper and partial presentation of Karate to the American public, they seem to have a very misleading idea of the Art. When shown on television or in movies, or in books, it is used to add drama or to enhance the powers of the hero of the story. Or, if seeing a demonstration, action must be shown to draw the public's attention. This situation is made worse by the fact that most Karate organizations in America must seek opportunities to demonstrate. They are often invited as entertainment, rather than to specifically give a "demonstration" of the Art of Karate.

A definition of Karate is: "It is a mental and physical discipline based on self-defense, and utilizing the scientific and rational use of the body." As mentioned before, Americans see only the self-defense aspect of the Art. Thus, it is difficult to give the American public a complete picture of Karate's true worth.

Making this even more difficult is the fact that Americans have very little, if any, concept of the conscious practice of self-discipline, let alone any thought of the variety of methods which can be used to achieve it. In other words, Americans, as will most people, try hard and force themselves to achieve a specific goal, but they do not think of practicing in order to sharpen their self-control or mental abilities.

Because of this lack of conscious self-discipline Americans do not look for it, and are not interested or impressed if they do see it. For example, they like to see a highly skilled Karate man perform or demonstrate, but are only slightly interested in seeing lower grade students practice.

Also the urban American public is not conscious of self-defense in stark life or death terms. The very poor, from ghettos and so on, live a life of physical danger, and perhaps a few other areas in America have a strong physical attitude about life, but the average American thinks in terms of inconvenience. He might think of robbery or loss of pride, but he does not imagine a situation of life or death. Therefore elaborate forms of Oriental style street fighting are often more attractive than highly controlled concentrated efforts to practice true Karate-Do.

Americans are greatly impressed with any Oriental philosophy or religion, as the Orient is, to most Americans, the area where mysticism and charisma originate. Therefore, there is something mystical about Karate, and they do not realize it is simply hard work, which the practitioner is able to do by the use of concentration and self-discipline. They wish to be shown the "way" to do these skills much in the manner one learns the correct way to do a puzzle.

These attitudes also carry over into the dojo, if an average American decides to practice. He shows great enthusiasm at first, as he is being shown the "catch" to Karate. However, as time goes on and training becomes repetitious, enthusiasm wanes. The student is learning nothing

mystical or exotic, and does not learn fast enough to show off any degree of proficiency. This effect is heightened by the proficiency of the instructor. Again, the student may not be aware of, or interested in the element of self-discipline.

Another aspect of Karate training is that when a student begins to train, discipline is required to enable him to master the basic techniques. When a student starts, he has concepts and ideas of his own, but by the time he is permitted to improvise and explore, this enthusiasm is dulled by the disciplined enforcement of basic fundamentals. This results in a loss of awareness of progress and so he loses enthusiasm to continue training.

So the American public is not very conscious of practicing conscious mental and physical disciplines. His culture and schooling and natural inclination are against it, so he must be continually encouraged until he has learned some of the deeper values that true Karate-Do has.

WHAT IS KARATE?

Karate is a Japanese Martial Art. Further, it is a method of unarmed self-defense, based on the most rational use of all body parts. It utilizes the various parts of the body in punching, kicking, striking and blocking.

In order to be able to effectively develop the body for unarmed self-defense, a great deal of conscious mental effort must be made. The serious practitioner of Karate must use concentration and intelligence to obtain his goals and thus, he must develop self-discipline, clarity of thought and an awareness of himself. By conscientiously practicing Karate, these attributes of mind and spirit are developed, and this is the significance of the term, "Karate-Do."

Almost all people are aware of three aspects of every human being. These are the mind, the body, and the spirit. In the Western world, in its attempts to understand mankind, these three aspects are often studied separately while in the Orient, they are more commonly accepted and examined together, conceding that we are not aware of the many subtle relationships inside the human entity. Karate, in one sense, is a physical thing, a form of physical exercise; however, it is realized that this brings into play the mind. Concentration, determination, self-honesty and many other attributes of the mind must be used to correctly train, even on a physical level. It is also noted that development of these mental and physical attributes also builds the part of the human mind and experience that is called spirit.

To talk about the human spirit is a difficult thing, and has many shades of meaning to many people, but everyone seems to realize its existence, and the fact that it is coupled with the higher ideals of human living.

Originally all fighting was on a primitive life-or-death basis. The next step was the practicing of the ability to fight well. The use of skill and technique was added as an aid to survival. However, it was noticed that no matter how skilled one became physically, the human emotions could often interfere. The desire for life itself often caused its loss. This awareness of human emotions and the attempt to control them, or to control your own emotions was the start of all martial arts.

So, if a person can control his emotions, cutting out bad influences to enable him to survive, he can apply this to his everyday life. The ability to free oneself from his own weaknesses and to go through life in a positive fashion is the true meaning of Martial Arts. Karate is one of the ways to this mental and spiritual freedom.

KARATE TECHNIQUES

Since Karate is a Martial Art, all techniques are based on the idea of self-defense. Karate technique is defined as any action designed for this purpose. When speaking to techniques, I am usually referring to one definite action or movement. However, one technique may utilize two or more movements done either simultaneously or in succession. For example, a short punch used as a fake, followed rapidly by a step-in punch, is considered one technique although it is composed of two distinct punching actions.

There are a great many components to any technique, but two factors common to all are balance and power. Although balance appears to be a simple physical fact, it can be broken down several ways. There is the simple ability to stay erect so as not to fall on your face. Although this seems simple if you are standing on one leg as in kicking, if the balance is poor, just the effort of kicking will cause loss of balance. More subtle, but of great importance, is balance in attacking or defending. If you execute techniques incorrectly, you are liable to orient your body in such a manner that you cannot quickly recover or shift, thereby giving your opponent a chance to attack. Another important factor of balance is to be able to maintain it in such a manner as to properly utilize your body while executing a technique. Because Karate uses the entire body to produce power, if your posture or balance is weak, the muscles of the body cannot be coordinated. This will keep you from generating concentrated, or focused, power.

Since Karate is used on the idea of self-defense, sometimes even from multiple opponents, we must try to develop as much power as is absolutely possible. Every person has the ability to increase his power to an almost super-human ability. Power can be analyzed in two basic ways. First, by the use of correct form. By form, I mean this correct use of the body according to physical dynamics. For example, in punching the correct posture must be taken to stabilize the body and absorb shock. Correct dynamics must also be kept in order to apply power most efficiently. A good analogy would be the correct method of hitting a golf ball. Care must be taken to correctly face the feet, hold the hands, etc. If this is done, good results occur with a minimum of power. If correct methods are ignored however, even a large output of effort will have negligible results.

The second necessary element for Karate power is the correct coordination of your muscles. Unless this is done, you cannot use your body to the full extent. If the body is coordinated properly, large amounts of power can be generated and when applied through the correct form, results in accurate distribution of force.

Almost any part of the body can be used in Karate; however, the techniques may commonly be divided into arm and leg techniques. The human body is designed so that the middle of the body contains large heavy strong muscles, and the extremities are lighter but more

variable. To put it simply, the hands and feet can be easily and naturally used. Different methods of applying power may be used, according to the target areas and that part of the body with which you wish to apply power.

The three main methods of applying power are by using body rotation, body shifting and body vibration. Any convenient part of the body may be used to apply power by one of these methods. Actual Karate techniques are almost endless since almost any part of the body can be developed to apply power.

Another important aspect of Karate techniques is distancing-timing. Distancing-timing refers to the ability to place yourself in relation to your opponent so that you may either defend or attack correctly. Without this ability, no technique, no matter how powerful, has any meaning. In other words, distancing-timing means the all-important ability to apply the physical techniques of Karate.

Although there is a great variety of Karate techniques, each technique must be regarded as complete in itself. In a self-defense situation, there is usually time or opportunity for only one technique. Therefore, the variety of techniques are regarded as convenient for application using the factors that are constant in any Karate technique.

COMPETITIVE KARATE

Competitive Karate is the competitive sport aspect of Karate. It is a sparring or “free fighting” contest between two opponents, using correctly executed Karate techniques to obtain a point or win. All blows, of course, are stopped so as to prevent injury to one of the participants.

Karate contests have many factors which recommend this aspect of the sport. The contests are an interesting spectator sport, and so help to propagate the art. More important, they are an excellent training aid to the student. Participation in a contest will motivate the student to train hard and correctly and to analyze his training methods. The contest itself is excellent, as the student can discover which techniques he can actually apply in a stress situation. Not only can the student increase his knowledge of techniques, but the excitement of a contest produces nervousness and strain and the ability to remain calm and control the emotions is excellent training. These attitudes should be practiced all the time, but a contest is useful for checking this part of training as it is for practicing physical techniques. Also in the same vein, the pressure of competition against a skilled opponent is excellent training for all actual self-defense situations. Also, any tendencies a student might have to test his skill at self-defense are directed in a constructive manner.

It should be remembered that Karate contests are only a part of Karate training. In order to have a contest, you must have rules, and these limit the action, whereas in other circumstances, no limitations need be placed on the student. In actual self-defense situations, there are many techniques that can be applied, which for safety’s sake cannot be used in a contest. Also, a self-defense situation might be under very different circumstances, such as time to prepare for an attack, number of opponents, defense from sitting, etc. or holding techniques.

Also many people take Karate for other than strictly self-defense. It is a very healthy form of exercise, and builds many mental and spiritual qualities.

Competition Karate is only one aspect of many that Karate has, but it is an interesting one, and is an excellent training aid for the development of the art.

PHYSICAL EDUCATIONAL VALUE OF KARATE

The subject of Karate and physical education is one of extreme interest. This is so for several reasons; first, perhaps the broadest base for Karate appeal is its overall physical educational value which also teaches self-defense, an aspect of life often neglected in America. If Karate enthusiasts are to propagate the art in America, they must not neglect the physical educational appeal, not only in schools, but to a sedentary and weight-conscious people. I think that almost all students who begin Karate have at least some interest in its purely physical content.

Conversely though, physical education helps the propagation of Karate. Karate is one of the very best possible means of attaining a good physical education. I think that at this point it is important to define just what is meant by physical education. There is the simple fact that any physical activity helps the body, and therefore the mind, and helps an individual to have a better life. But this is really recreation. True physical education consists of an awareness of the fact that any planned constructive physical activity helps to develop what are considered prime virtues in people: the building of a strong healthy mind and spirit.

Some of the values of Karate are that in almost all instances, mental fatigue comes before physical fatigue. Therefore, a physical activity which stresses the mind is of value. In Karate there are many points in which the mind is used. Karate increases the mind's ability to concentrate. Sometimes the student just tries hard, unfeelingly; sometimes he must think and analyze; sometimes he must learn to feel rhythm, muscles, balance, power, or how all these factors interrelate. Sometimes the student just relaxes his mind and enjoys the training situation. Not only are all these factors present but the very simple, but very important fact is that if mental fatigue leads, hard training will build the mind as well as the body.

In a strictly physical sense, Karate is a very valuable aid to physical education because in order to practice Karate correctly, the student uses all of his body in almost every technique, while at the same time training his body to specialize many times in a great variety of actions and combinations. Thus, the body is not only exercised completely, but the necessity to learn many systems leads to a highly developed control of the body.

Physical education today has a tendency, along with most education and scientific activities of the Western world, to analyze by dissection. By that, I mean there is a tendency to take apart and examine each factor available. Now, however, there is a coming recognition of the fact that the whole is often greater than the sum of its parts. There is an unknown factor which seems to enable a person to expand his abilities beyond the recognized limits. This is what Karate attempts to do.

Karate training has as one of its special points the making of connections between the mental and physical abilities of an individual. The mind starts or creates all physical actions, and Karate training builds this aspect of physical education. This is very important as it is now recognized that the mind and spirit are important to all human activities, all physical actions included. And the most important point of Karate training is that a strong mind and spirit builds the physical side of a person. The building of mind and spirit by attempting to build the physical is the major value of Karate to physical education.

BODY PARTS USED IN KARATE

In a self-defense situation, any weapon which can be used must be utilized. Therefore in Karate, almost all parts of the body are used to make attacking and blocking techniques. Obviously, however, the extremities, or arms and legs are the most convenient and practical parts with which to apply techniques. Due to the nature of the human body, the extremities are designed so they can be used for a variety of functions. Generally, when discussing these parts of the body, they are divided by anatomy; in other words, upper and lower body.

In the upper body, the hands and elbows are the most commonly used for attacking, as one of the criteria of attacking power is that the smaller the area upon which force is applied, the greater concentration of power. In defending, the lower arm is usually used, as this area is long and gives sufficient coverage, at the same time allowing leverage, distance, and quick motions. The most common hand weapon is the fist and if a hard compact fist is made, almost any portion can be used to apply power. For example, the first two knuckles are used in punching, and the back of the same two knuckles are used when doing back-hand. Also, the bottom of the fist can be used for striking, and due to the pad of flexed muscle, is used when striking hard parts of the body. The hand can be used when open and, again, almost any part can be used depending on the technique and the target.

Elbows, while not quite so versatile, can be used, and though the distance is short, much power can be applied because the application part is close to the body and it is therefore easy to apply body power.

Using the legs, basically the same areas are utilized. The knee and foot are the main application parts for attacking and the lower leg is used in defending. As in the hands, the same area can be used differently with a different technique. For example, the ball of the foot is the most commonly used portion of the foot, also it is strong, applies power in a direct line and can easily be used. This area might be used in a variety of techniques. Front thrust or snap kick roundhouse kicks, etc. Usually in the foot, the ball, side edge, and heel are used, though the instep is sometimes used in sweeping. The knee, much like the elbow, cannot be used in such a variety of ways, and the distance or range is short, but these techniques are very powerful.

If the Karate student has sufficient skill, almost any portion of the body can be used. For example, the head can be used if a person's hands or legs are held. Or, at extremely close quarters, the hip can be used. However, the areas usually used are those which allow the strongest dynamics, i.e. leverage small impact areas, easily application of power and ability to apply large amounts of power.

KINESIOLOGY AND KARATE

Kinesiology is the study of the dynamics of actions of the human body. It consists of muscle tissue and structure, skeletal structure and arrangement and the attachment of the muscles and how the body applies itself mechanically. The science of kinesiology is new and much is yet to be learned. It is also limited by the inability to make controlled experiments at all times, due to the individualism and irregularities of the human body.

Karate is a very ancient martial art, and was developed under circumstances different from the modern Western way of dissecting and analyzing processes. Karate, however, is an extremely efficient and highly evolved form. Comparing it with the modern techniques of kinesiology, we find that Karate agrees with the findings of the modern science. This is unusual considering the very difficult trial and error method of evolution under which Karate must have developed. By using kinesiology, we can find out some of the various “whys” or reasons that Karate is practiced the way it is.

One of the deficiencies of kinesiology, however, is that in common with many Western sciences, it has a tendency to dissect and also it deals with that which can be measured or controlled. It is, however, one of the basic tenets of Karate that the human mind or spirit is the leading or deciding factor in human physical actions. The human spirit is able to drive the body to feats which should be impossible and to develop the senses to the point where they allow the body to act in ways which cannot be measured or weighed. In any positive action, the human body is guided by the human mind, and as it is developed, it can make the body perform beyond the standards of science. This is one of the basic values of Karate: to enable the human being to expand himself in all dimensions.

While kinesiology does not go into these aspects of physical action, it is a valuable aid to assist the Karate student. A scientific study of the body cannot help but be a valuable aid, and kinesiology should help to expand the abilities of the Karate student.

KARATE STANCES

In Karate techniques, almost all techniques are applied from a specialized stance. These stances vary, each is designed and best suited for a special purpose but all have the basic points of balance and power.

The most basic stance is Natural Stance. This stance has many different variations. As the name implies, it is a “natural” or comfortable stance, used for convenience for whatever purpose the student has in mind. The most common variation of this stance, as used in regular training is to stand upright, with a feeling of relaxing, but able to shift into any position for more specialized action. Usually the student stands upright with his feet evenly balanced and his weight under him, and his arms in front, relaxed but with enough tension to be able to act quickly. Power can be applied from this stance, but it is difficult to brace against shock; therefore it is mostly used as a ready position.

The Front Stance is the most powerful stance for applying power in a forward direction. It is used for applying great power and enables a person to utilize all his body power, and will also absorb a great amount of shock. In this stance the main idea is that the body will face toward the opponent, with one leg braced behind to help generate power and as a strong brace to absorb it. The hips are a very important aspect of making power, so the back leg is not merely braced, but is actively pushing the hips and body into the opponent. The upper body is usually directly facing the opponent when attacking and turned slightly side body when defending, though this is not always the case.

The Kibadachi or Straddle Stance is designed for power to the sides. It is also used for making power to the front, but it is difficult to absorb shock from this direction. In this stance, the feet are about twice shoulder distance to the side with the feet facing in the front and gripping the floor. The body is then lowered and the knees pushed outward. If this is done correctly, the legs form an arch which is structurally strong and also puts great tension on the muscles of the legs. The tension of each leg braces against the other and makes a strong stance.

The Back Stance is a strong defensive stance. In this stance, the back leg is much the same as in Kibadachi, but the front leg, while partially supporting, is relatively free for kicking and shifting, and also allows the body to face toward the opponent. Thus, in a back stance, the student is strongly braced to absorb shock but can shift away from the opponent and has a position which allows him to use many techniques. Care must be taken in this stance that the back leg knee is braced so as to produce tension and that the body is kept erect with spine straight and hips tucked under.

Sochin is an outward tension stance with the main point of being braced in, and able to apply power to all directions. It is a very powerful stance as is, and since it produces great

tension, it can be for shifting as well. For example, blocking an attack in Sochin, then shifting into front stance to counter attack. This stance is much like Kibadachi stance facing to the front. The back leg is behind but bent with knee out to keep muscle tension, and pushing the hips forward. The front leg is also bent with tension and receives or breaks the forward action on the inside of the leg. The hips are twisted to the front in either attacking or defending position.

Sanchin Stance is an inward tension stance. In this stance, the tension on the legs is pulling inward, or knees trying to touch. This stance is higher than most of the outward tension stances. The feet are only about the length of the lower leg apart, with the feet facing inward, “pigeon-toe” fashion. The heel of the front foot is even with the toes of the back. The knees are pulled in strongly, as if a piece of paper were being held between the thighs. This stance is greatly helped by conscious breathing. When placing tension on the legs, the student should inhale, and then exhale and strongly lock the lower abdomen. This stance has value in that it can produce power from a high, or almost standing position, and it is very easy to shift from this stance, because when the tension is released from one leg, the body naturally wants to shift or move.

Hangetsu is an inward power stance also, but the positioning of the feet is about the same as Sochin. In fact, this stance is much like Sochin, only it uses inward instead of outward tension. This stance can make power, more so than Sochin, being lower, and is also easy to shift from.

Cat Stance is another inward tension stance and posture is much like Sanchin, but the rear leg carries almost all of the body weight, thus freeing the front leg for action or large stepping motions. Due to the fact that most of the body weight is on the back leg and the stance is high, it is difficult to absorb shock. However, the front leg is free and this stance is very active for shifting.

All Karate stances are very specialized for a certain purpose. Though they may be difficult to do correctly, a stance is the foundation upon which the body, and therefore all techniques rest, so their importance cannot be overemphasized.

BODY ROTATION

One of the main ways of making power in Karate is by body rotation. This is a very strong way of making power; it is also very commonly used in Karate, not only for just power, but for convenience of defense and attacking. In body rotation, it is not necessary to shift or step, the student can remain in position while blocking and countering. An example would be if you block an opponent's attack, you should have correct distancing to counter punch; there would be no need to shift or step. This allows you to counter very quickly and conveniently.

Body rotation consists of turning or rotating the body and using the movement to give power to your attacking or defending techniques. One of the most important considerations is posture. No matter what stance is taken, the body must be erect and the spine straight or a quick powerful turning motion cannot be done; you will be unable to make speed and power.

The feet are the base of foundation in any stance since they are the connecting link of your body to the floor. In rotating motions, especially as the motion of turning, they can tear you loose from the floor and thereby lose the power you have created. Therefore your feet must actually be gripping the floor, not just balanced on it. This is especially true in kicking as there is only one foot on the floor at this time, and it is quite easy for the body momentum to tear itself loose from the floor and the result produces a spinning action instead of a rotation with focus at the end.

In almost all stances, one leg is behind the body as a brace and it is this side of the body which you turn to make rotation power. The front leg helps, but usually the back leg is the main power.

Therefore, this leg has a double job: make power and then brace the body against shock impact. The front leg acts in most stances as a brake. In rotation power it also acts as a brake, catching the body and keeping the turning power of the body from going too far or spinning and losing power. The front leg also helps to turn the hip and adds to turning force. Also the front leg, especially the knee, must be braced so that the body can use this as a foundation or anchor, much like a fulcrum.

The hips are the part of the body that lead or activate the body in turning. By this, I mean if the hips turn, the body must follow and give power, but if the upper torso or shoulders move first and the hips follow, the whole body cannot be correctly used, therefore much power is lost.

To allow beginning students to feel the turning motion to be able to apply power this way is sufficient, but as soon as this is mastered, it is important to stress the feeling of the middle of the hips being the balance or fulcrum point and try and get them to turn their hips in this manner, rather than just turning or twisting the hips.

Even more advanced the student should feel that the activating or turning side should fold to the base side. I personally am working on this now and do not feel qualified yet to discuss it too deeply.

When turning or rotating, it sometimes feels stronger if the rotation is combined with body shifting. However, this will reduce the speed and effectiveness of the turning and impair the technique. For example, in counter punching from front stance, sometimes the body is shifted forward, this will slow the rotating speed and result in less shock power, even though it may feel comfortable or powerful to the student.

Another common mistake is changing height while rotating. For example, when roundhouse kicking, when the weight is put on the base leg, sometimes the student stands up. This not only puts the power generated from the leg in the wrong direction, it prevents an even turning motion and power is lost.

When rotating the hips, care must be taken not to turn too far. If this happens, power cannot be concentrated, and also it is more difficult to apply power through the correct technique. An example would be if in counter punching the hips are turned too far, the power cannot be focused and also the power will be turned to the side rather than through the punching hand into the opponent.

When using rotation power, you should try and start the motion quickly, as this gives more speed to the technique. If the hips turn or snap quickly, the technique will be quick.

In summation, rotating motions are quick, powerful and convenient. Care must be taken that the feet are gripping the floor, legs strong to make power and hips turn evenly and smoothly to apply power correctly and with focus. Shifting power of the body is one of the main methods used for Karate techniques. According to the laws of physics, "Displacement of mass produces energy" and so if the mass of the body is used, it can produce power.

The shifting of the body and applying it to a Karate technique give the technique power even if form and focus are missing from the technique. This power helps to cover an imperfect technique, which while not the most desired type of technique, can be used to cover deficiencies of beginning students or special situations, etc.

According to laws of physics, any object moving at a given speed the longer the distance traveled, the greater the impact. Therefore, by body shifting, the student can greatly increase his power.

There are three basic ways of using body shifting. By stepping, sliding or jumping. The first two methods are more common. As mentioned before, any movement of mass creates power and the methods can be applied to almost any technique. It should be remembered that continued acceleration produces the strongest power, and is an important law of physics when applying to Karate.

In many blocking techniques, the student is stepping away from the target, yet applying his force to it. This power is really a reaction or recoil power that is being used. However, it still utilizes the movement of mass for its prime source of power.

In Karate techniques, every action has two parts: the start and the next or continued action. Starting action is very important to Karate techniques. By utilizing this factor to the maximum, much of the speed and power of Karate techniques is obtained. Though this fact is easy to say, it encompasses so much, its value cannot be underestimated. The point to be made here is that shifting is one of the easiest methods to catch the opponent's reflection and start the body or make a starting motion.

This not only affects the power of a Karate technique, but also means the ability to react to an opponent, or to turn a reaction into action. If a person has the strongest techniques, but cannot respond correctly to his opponent, it does him no good. But by shifting, these two factors are positively combined, the catching of the opponent and making a correct start for strong power and speed.

The more advanced student of Karate must think of making small motions to make or produce big power; this is the essence of basic techniques. Shifting is an important part of this and one of the better ways to develop the starting motions. It is therefore important even beyond the fact that it creates power.

VIBRATION POWER AND KARATE TECHNIQUES

Vibration power is one of the easiest methods of obtaining power for techniques; however, it is complex from a point of view of dynamics. Correct vibration is the movement of a taut object by pressure on it. Karate vibration power is a slight variance from exact laws of physics. In physics, a vibration is this pressure on a taut object and it produces power at right angles to the line of the object vibrating. In Karate, the hips are sometimes at right angle to the line of force, and sometimes not. Therefore, the correct dynamic vibration by physics sometimes does not hold true.

In Karate, the vibration power is made by a short sharp snapping motion of the hips out of line and back to original position. The quick return or recoil of the motion gives power even though the distance of snap movement may be very small. Though this method of making power is not as powerful as rotation or shifting, it helps to make speed or fast techniques and, therefore, the power can be used. In addition it can be used when a very close distance from the opponent and unable to take the strong stance necessary for shifting or rotation.

Not only can this motion be used where the student is unable to make large body motions, the speed and easiness of the motion allow it to be used to make filler or covering motions between larger techniques. And in conjunction with this, the techniques may be made very quickly.

Vibration power can be used from almost any position, even in the air or lying on the ground. Due to these factors, ease and speed of technique power, amount of time and effort necessary for execution; vibration power can be used in conjunction with other power making methods, and in triple punching. Another example would be as covering between two stronger but slower techniques, as step-in punch with body shifting back hand with hip vibrations, and counter punch with hip rotation.

Another point in vibration power is as a training aid. As I have mentioned before, vibration power is a fairly natural method of making power and it is, therefore, useful to teach students to use their entire body as one unit. This factor is a necessary part of any correct Karate technique, yet in many instances difficult to learn. Practicing techniques with vibration power helps students to learn to use the body as a whole. It teaches them to grip the floor with the feet, thereby helping stance training, and the action comes naturally from the hips and helps prevent students from using incorrect power order, as in shoulder power.

Not only is vibration power easy to feel and utilize, Karate is one of the few physical activities which uses this motion to such an extent. This adds a new action system to the body and increases the general body capabilities.

REACTION FORCE OF BODY AND KARATE TECHNIQUES

When we speak of reaction power, we are referring to a specialized type of hip rotation or rotation power. The difference being that in the case of reaction power, the hips are rotated away from the target instead of towards it. The physiological and dynamics points necessary for making this action are the same as that of hip rotation. One important difference being that since the hips are rotating away from the target, body weight cannot be applied to the technique. To compensate for this, it is very important to use much hip speed. Although hip speed is always desirable, in this instance it is the only method of making power, and so is absolutely necessary if the technique is to have any power.

In many instances, reaction power is combined with body shifting. A common example of this would be to step back and down block. Body shifting is then continued with the reaction power to make a strong technique. Not only does this allow a strong technique, but the hips are set up or ready for a regular rotating motion, thus allowing very quick block/attack combination. Reaction power is the common method in basic Karate for making power to the power blocks. It also has the advantage of being a natural motion of the body, to turn away from the attacking object.

PUNCHING TECHNIQUES

Punching techniques are an important and commonly used offensive part of Karate. Although there are a great many punching techniques which can be used for many different situations by altering the application point, i.e. straight punch, one-knuckle punch, spear hand, etc., the basic power method is common to all the many different varieties.

One of the strong points of punching is that the attack is usually applied straight to the opponent. Not only is this quick, but it is efficient in applying power and is also very difficult to block or avoid.

Punching is a natural motion of the body, and is naturally very powerful and easy to apply. Thus, it is an easy technique for the student to learn. When punching, it is easy to apply power anywhere along the course or line of the punch. For example, the student can use a short punch, and if the opponent moves away, by simply extending the punch into a regular straight punch, he can still apply power. This works also if the student finds his opponent moving in, he can simply shorten his punch and still apply much power. Also, the most common method of punching is to the front and it is very easy to continue to apply power to the arms for continuous attacks or by switching the arms to another technique.

The same actions just described make punching very difficult to avoid or block. It is usually directly to the target, therefore using a short reflex time, and is very powerful.

In the technical sense, a punch is a straight motion to the target, much like stabbing, as opposed to striking, which is a type of circular motion. In its simplest form, punching is bending the arm and then straightening it, thereby creating an impact force. In correct punching, it is desirable to take a strong stance and lock the body on impact, so as not to lose the force of the impact. The dynamics of a punch are to generate power and then lock the body to allow all the power to be transmitted to the opponent. Because punching is a strong technique, the harder the blow the more impact there is, and this recoil must not be allowed to spray or disseminate from the target. If this happens, the blow will not be effective. This is especially true when attacking the abdomen of the opponent, as the body is not hard and shock is not easily transmitted through it. Technically Karate punching or a striking power is transmitting shock to the body of the opponent, and the soft parts of the body are spongy and resilient, so the force must be transmitted into the body and not allow the body to absorb or give with the power. If punching at the head, the skull has a tendency to transmit shock and so lock is not quite so important; however, it is as highly desirable from the aspect of generating power.

In any Karate technique, the idea is to use all the body together; in this manner enough power can be made. The body must move together as a unit with the correct alignment of muscular action. A correct stance must be used so that the body can use the ground or floor and

the hips must be correct so as not to disperse power. The midsection or hip area of the body is where the large power muscles of the body are located, so their correct usage is very important. Next, this created power must be given to the application point (usually the fist) and this is done by making sure that the elbow catches or picks up this power. If there is no connection between the elbows and the body, no matter how much power is made, it cannot be applied to the punch. The correct use of the body and arms as a unit can be helped if the student will concentrate on the muscles on the inside and front of his body. This greatly helps the elbow to collect the power of the body.

Upon punching the opponent, a strong stance is again important, as is body focus or lock, so that the shock of impact will not be lost. "Every action has an equal and opposite action" is a law of physics, and if this opposite action or recoil is allowed to disperse, the force of the blow will be lost. If, however, the body is locked and in a strong stance the recoil will travel through the body, and into the ground. Since in large measure, the ground does not absorb shock the power will again return and be applied into the opponent.

Punching is one of the strongest and most commonly used techniques in Karate. When properly applied, it is a very versatile weapon.

BODY EXPANSION AND CONTRACTION IN KARATE

Body expansion and contraction is very important to Karate techniques. If there is no flexibility, the muscles cannot move correctly to execute the techniques. On an even more basic level, if there is no body expansion and contraction, there is no movement because the muscles of the body must expand and contract to move at all. Expansion and contraction is the base of all movement.

In a more developed way, the use of expansion and contraction is used to make Karate techniques. The correct relaxing and contraction of the muscles of the body, and in the correct order, not only allow the body to move, but make the power of the techniques, which, when combined with physics dynamics, makes the technique. It is impossible for the body to move quickly if the muscles are stiff and hard, and it is impossible for the body to be strong and resist impact shock if the muscles are too soft or supple. By correctly using the extremes of expansion and contraction, the maximum use of the body can be obtained. In fact, this method can make power without dynamic movement of the body.

The next step in the use of expansion and contraction is in the correct connection of techniques. Technique-to-technique connection is very important in Karate training. The strongest, smoothest, most efficient handling of the body is the reason that Karate is a strong art. As the body contracts to make focused power, it must then relax or expand. By utilizing this relaxation or expansion and using it for the shifting into the next technique, technique-to-technique connection is made. To make this order occur correctly, it is necessary to have body rhythm. Conversely, rhythm will help develop good expansion and contraction. Kata training is very good for developing this rhythm.

Not only does rhythm help expansion and contraction and the correct application of expansion and contraction help develop rhythm, but from this develops timing which is the correct application of your body rhythm and its application to, or against, your opponent.

People who are studying Karate must make a very organized approach to expansion and contraction. The correct order of body expansion/contraction is very necessary. If it is not done in correct order, then the power and efficiency, the meaning of the movement is wasted. Not only must a minimum standard be developed, but it is by developing these principles of expansion/contraction that a student's techniques are developed to their potential. The study of the best method for improving this is the job of the Karate student.

Some very important aspects that help in this are the correct focusing upon a target, real or imaginary. As mentioned before, not only does correct expansion/contraction help make focus but the converse is true. Practicing focus helps develop expansion/contraction. Therefore, concentration of all body power on a target, one point in time and space helps build correct body

order and alignment. Another very important thing is correct breathing. This is something not often consciously practiced in Western cultures. Correct application of breathing greatly helps body expansion/contraction.

Correct training in body expansion/contraction is necessary for correct Karate techniques, and the continual training in this aspect is important to the development of Karate techniques.

KICKING TECHNIQUES

Kicking techniques are an important part of Karate. The legs are almost always longer and stronger than the arms and therefore, can be developed into very powerful techniques.

Kicking techniques can be analyzed two ways: by direction and by method of making power. There are, therefore, front, side, back, and roundhouse kicks, and two methods, snapping and thrusting. There are also a few kicking methods which cannot be added to this general category, such as stamping kicks and the crescent kick.

The three main points common to all kicking are: support leg, starting position, and kicking course. The weakest or most undesirable aspect of kicking is that the body must be balanced on one leg, thus creating a problem in balance and shock recoil. Care must be taken to maintain a strong first stance. Starting position of kicks is very important or the power generated by the body cannot be concentrated into the kick. If there is no body connection, the power of the body cannot be applied. Course is important as it is in any technique. If in snap kicks, the course is not correct, it is extremely difficult to make power, also difficult to control the body balance, and next technique will be slow to start. Body control and technique connection are also important to thrust kicking. Also, as in punching if the course is incorrect, there is power loss and control of the kick is difficult.

Front kicking is the most common kick since it uses a very basic action of the body and is natural to use. It is easy to develop body power in this kick and the hip, knee, and ankle joints can be most naturally used. Care should be taken that the hips are aligned directly to the front. Usually power is applied with the ball of the foot, but toes, heel, or instep may be used in special circumstances. The most common front kick is the front snap kick, using the knee to make a snapping motion. Front thrust kicking is difficult to apply to the target, unless the opponent is moving into the kick.

Roundhouse kicks use almost the same dynamics as front kick, except that the kick should be either horizontal to the floor or the course should go through an apogee and slanting down into the target. The course of the kick starts to the side of the student and creates a 90-degree arc and strikes in front of him. The most important point of roundhouse kicking is that power method is hip rotation rather than shifting. The stance leg is very important because if it is not firm on the ground, torque cannot be generated and great power is lost. Not only that, but the ability to shift to the next technique, and the student's balance will be lessened.

Sidekicks are used to the side, as the name implies. A shifting or rocking motion of the hips is used. When side snap kicking, the knee is again used as the fulcrum. Side snap kicks can be applied to a target very close and to attack high places. Side thrusting kicks can be applied directly into the target, and can also be applied to low targets by using a stamping motion. The

main point is that the kick is focused like a punch. Although some people can thrust kick quite high, it has been found that kicking at an angle of over 90 degrees or horizontal to the floor results in a great loss of power. Side thrust kicks developed from stamping, and retains many of the original dynamics. Application point in side kicking is the outside edge of the foot.

Back kicking is most commonly a thrust kick due to the movements and limitations of the body. It is usually applied with the heel of the foot. The leg is drawn up as in front kicking and then thrust back. The body must bend forward to achieve any height; however, the spine should be arched so as to prevent loss of power. Back snapping kick uses the reverse of a regular snapping motion and although it is not too common can make application to a high target directly in back of the student. It can also be used to curve in under the guard of the opponent.

Crescent kicking is done with hip rotation the same as in roundhouse; however, application is the instep of the foot and the leg is not twisted over on its side. Since snap of the knee cannot be used from this position, hip snap must be utilized.

Reverse or inside roundhouse kicking is much like roundhouse kicking except that a reverse rotation or reaction force is used and the foot starts from in front of the body and arcs to the side.

Jump kicks follow much the same dynamics as when done with a stance leg; however, since there is no connection to the ground, body weight must be used instead. Balance during and after kicking is difficult and so they are not commonly used.

Stamping techniques can be done by modifying front and side kicks and thrust kicking at a low angle. However, dynamics are essentially the same.

All kicking techniques can be modified by using the knee as the application point and following the regular dynamics of the kick.

In general, kicks are an important part of Karate. They are strong and powerful, and form an important part of the student's armament.

DIFFERENCE IN HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF MARTIAL ARTS AND SPORTS

Although the Martial Arts and Sports appear to be similar or the same, they are in fact quite different. It will help if we define both Martial Arts and Sports so that the likenesses and differences may be compared.

There is a difference between sports and games, but originally sports and games had a similar idea. Sports first started as enjoyment, a method of relieving tension or breaking routine, but part of sports was by this or other methods to build spirit of and in the practitioners. Sports has a long history; the history is longer than that of the Martial Arts. The first objective of sports was to build spirit. Then, so that this could be done more easily, rules were developed. The third and present stage of sports is records and the attempt to better existing records. To a certain extent not only has this changed the emphasis of sports, but the morale or spirit behind them has changed. Sports were originally to build spirit and attendant character factors, but in present day, though this is still held to be the ideal, common practice is just to win, no matter what the morals saying it's not important whether you win or lose.

Martial Arts has some points similar to sports, but the main point is far different. In any original fighting, to lose was to die. This very simple point dominated man's whole existence. Any contest was a life-or-death struggle. The next step, about 800 years ago, was the development of many techniques to enable the practitioner to win and survive. In fact, a long time ago teachers of self-defense were called "Geisha" or performers because of their ability to practice or prowess. The next step was that it was noted that physical proficiency did not always ensure survival. This was because the mind prevented the body from using its skill. In other words, negative feelings (fear) kept the body from working correctly or the person defeated himself. The desire to live caused death.

Therefore, about 400 years ago, the study of the mental aspects of self-defense began. Study of control of the mind began so that the body could survive. Zen Buddhism helped and at this time, the interplay between Zen and Martial Arts began. One of the important points of the Zen philosophy was that by thorough self-experiencing, one developed the unmovable or unshakable will or mind. This was much desired in the Martial Arts as it was necessary to cut off all negative emotions. Martial Arts does not equate Zen Buddhism. The Martial Arts were interested in this mind control which could be experienced by Zen. They wanted to add it to the Martial Arts in order to survive; they were not interested in the religion per se. Many aspects of this were expounded in the 15th century by Takuan Zenshi, a famous Buddhist minister. Also at this time lived a great Martial Arts practitioner who tried many of these ideas. He was Miyamoto

Musashi and as he was one of Japan's leading swordsmen, his views and experiments were incorporated into techniques on the Martial Arts.

Martial Arts has progressed from this beginning to its present state where it is considered a method for the study of control of the self, the study of the individual to cut out negative emotions that interfere with leading a positive life. And one does this by mastering the physical aspects of unarmed self-defense.

HISTORY OF KARATE-DO

The earliest beginnings of Karate come from China. A common legend in Japan attributes the start of Karate to Daruma Buddha who was the Buddhist philosopher who introduced the religion to China. In order for the students to be mentally and physically capable of being disciples, he made the students learn a form of Karate. Whether this is true or not, Karate or its forerunners did originate in China. It became very popular, and when the Chinese occupied the Okinawan Islands, it was introduced along with many other facets of Chinese culture. There, it was practiced and modified, and at a later date, the Japanese invaded the Okinawan Islands. The rule of the Japanese was very strict and the use of weapons was forbidden.

With any weapons for self-defense forbidden on the island, Karate became much more developed and techniques underwent change and refinement. At a still later time, the islands again underwent invasion from the Japanese with the same harsh restrictions and again, the Karate techniques became polished. After this time though, the Okinawan Islands became a part of Japan and gradually Japanese learned this art and it came out into the open.

Early in the twentieth century, Karate was introduced to the Japanese mainland where it became very popular and was introduced to many colleges and various public schools were opened.

At this time Karate is enjoying worldwide popularity, and interest in this Art is continuing to grow.

Perhaps the most important development in Karate was its being blended with the traditional Martial Arts. Japanese national history is such that the country has had its attention focused on, and time to develop not only many self-defense forms, but a skill and philosophy and technique that involves mental and physical dynamics. It is on this long, deep history of Martial Arts that the techniques of Karate were added. Without the addition of the psychology and philosophy of the Japanese Martial Arts, Karate would be merely a form of hand and foot fighting, not an Art form.

INFLUENCE BETWEEN ORIENTAL CULTURE AND MARTIAL ARTS

It is very difficult for a Westerner to make accurate observations of the relationship between Oriental culture and Martial Arts. The observations I make will at least be objective; however, many nuances of cultural influence will be lost due to my lack of intimacy with Oriental culture.

First, when I refer to Oriental culture, I am more specifically referring to Japanese culture. Although many traits are similar to other Oriental countries, it has many peculiarities of its own. So the discussion I am making will be on Japanese culture and Japanese Martial Arts.

One of the main cultural differences between the Japanese and Western culture is that the Japanese appear to treat the three aspects of human life, mind, spirit and body more as a cohesive working unit than Westerners do. The Western culture is aware of the trinity of human nature; however, the culture tends to dissect or separate each part from the other and deal with it separately. Westerners do not seem to be aware that, in the case of humanity at least, the whole is greater than the sum of the parts. All factors working together are a part of the entity, but the entity is greater by so far than any of the parts.

The Japanese not only accept this very matter of factly, but they use this knowledge when attempting to develop the self. They are aware of the interplay of the three factors, and that by working on one aspect of the trinity, you can influence the others, and by doing that, the whole entity.

A common example of this is the Japanese attitude on the Martial Arts. By starting in on something physical such as the techniques and gradually working toward the mental, concentration or thought as to development or application, they are affecting the spiritual qualities of the student. Conversely, if the person has presence in one field of endeavor, they are aware. In fact, this is the point of the training that the individual will have presence or be in a state of grace in whatever he does. What he can attain in one field will carry over into his entire life.

The idea of consciously practicing one Art form and expecting it to carry over into everyday life; in fact, the conscious attempt to better the self by practice is unique to the Orient. And all the Martial Arts forms have the ending “Do,” signifying way or road which means the use of self-defense form to better the self mentally, spiritually and physically. A Westerner is more commonly interested in self-defense for its own sake, and though he may wish to better himself, he would not conceive of practicing or exercising in just one limited field to improve all facets of his life.

The use of Martial Arts as discipline is unique to the Orient, and from the point of view of Japanese history, it has been proven and also it has been proven that this inner development in turn helps the student reach a state where his self-defense becomes stronger. This, to me, is the most interesting fact of Oriental culture and the Martial Arts.

STRIKING TECHNIQUES

Striking techniques are an important part of Karate. These techniques are very useful, and can be applied by many parts of the body. When referring to striking motions, we are referring only to upper body or arm motions.

To distinguish between striking and punching motions, we may make illusion to a stick. Stabbing or thrusting with the stick could be referred to thrusting or punching techniques, but hitting with the side of the stick would be referred to as a striking technique.

The Japanese refer to a striking motion as “Shimpuku,” and it refers not only to the type of motion or course, but also the type of motion in accordance with physics. It is difficult to explain this motion in English, but it refers to the type of motion made if you hold a pencil in your hand and wiggle it. This motion is not exactly a true vibration, but encompasses many of these characteristics and also keeps the physical motions of snapping techniques.

Striking motions may be broken down into two broad categories: one using the joints of the arm, and the other using a swinging motion. Almost all the upper body joints may be used: wrist, elbow, shoulder and waist can be used. Of course, the more joints used in any technique, the stronger it will be. For example, a technique using wrist and elbow will be stronger than a technique using just the wrist.

The other type of striking motion is made by swinging the arm or upper body, usually using the waist or shoulder joints. The swinging motion may also be used in connection with the joint type techniques. Almost all of the technique motions may be reversed; that is to say, that the motions can be made to the inside or the outside.

There are several reasons why striking techniques are important and valuable to Karate. First, a natural body motion can be used, and motions can be used which fit in nicely in combination with other techniques. Striking techniques can also be used by the force made in body momentum from other techniques. Striking techniques, because of these qualities, can be used to fill in or cover the time between other large but slower starting techniques. For example, after blocking, the same hand can be reversed to cover before a counter punch. Also striking may be applied from almost any angle, and applied to the target at almost any angle, making it very useful.

Striking techniques do not have to absorb shock; therefore, they can be applied to the target from a weak stance. And, as stated before, thus these techniques can be used to cover a weak link in stance or between techniques.

Another factor of striking techniques is that a large power motion can be made with a small driving power. Thus, this technique is valuable to people of small stature or strength, such as women, etc.

Striking techniques are very natural to the human body and almost anyone can learn an effective technique quickly and easily. Striking techniques can utilize almost any part of the upper body so that even wrist snap by itself can be used to make power. Therefore, not only is it easy to use and nice as a covering technique, but these same quick, small motions can be used to fake or break an opponent's balance. These types of techniques are very good for giving the shock with small motions necessary for this type of action.

Some of the weak points of striking techniques are first, the course of these techniques is a little longer than most thrusting motions and, therefore, the time element is longer, but the predictable course makes them easier to block. As mentioned before, the recoil in striking techniques when striking certain targets is a disadvantage. Especially when striking the body area where there is poor transmission of vibrations, escape of recoil is undesirable. Therefore, when using striking, it is important to pick a suitable target.

Almost any part of the fingers, hands or fist can be used in striking techniques. Also these combinations are doubled by the fact that both inside and outside motions may be used. Also, almost any of the various striking techniques, especially those using the open hand and the four sides of the wrist may also be used for blocking techniques. In fact, many of the wrist snap techniques are used in block/attack combination.

The wrist, elbow, shoulder, and waist may all be used to make power in snapping techniques. The top side joints are, of course, the easiest to start, and so may be used most quickly and easily. However, the power order is reversed. If the larger joint areas can be used in the power making process, the techniques are stronger.

Striking techniques are one of the three main attack techniques of Karate. These techniques use great speed from almost any stance and can be applied very naturally. They are an important part of the Karate armory.

KUMITE

Although Karate is basically an art form based on self-defense, the use of various types of sparring in Karate is a recent addition to Karate training. Sparring has value in that there is no other way in which the student can practice the application of his various techniques. No other type training gives the opportunity to practice the necessary timing and response against a live opponent.

There are various types of sparring, and each is used or practiced with a different training purpose in mind. The first and most basic form of sparring is three-step sparring. The purpose of three-step sparring is to practice continuous combinations of attacks and/or blocks. This type sparring teaches the student strong techniques, technique-to-technique connection, rhythm, and an opponent's rhythm or how to respond to another's continuous attack.

One-step sparring is usually taught after three-stop as the purpose of it is to teach the students, both attacking and defending that he has only one chance, or to make each technique important and strong. In other words, the student learns to commit himself completely in each technique.

It should be noted that the Japanese translation of these types of sparring does not mean basic in the sense of beginners. It translates better as pre-arranged, or pre-agreed sparring, and both sides should attack and defend with all the techniques and feeling they can muster. If this is not done, the value of the training is lost. It is imperative that both sides give each other the hardest, most sincere and concentrated training of which they are capable. Only in this way will the participants learn and expand their abilities.

The next type of sparring is semi-free sparring. In this sparring, each side acknowledges the side attacking and target areas. As in one-step sparring, the student has only one chance; however, in semi-free, the attacker can shift, maneuver, or fake or do anything that he wishes to increase his advantage. The idea is to wait for or create the most favorable time for attacking. The defense person must learn to defend this and so, learns not to give chances to his opponent, but to remain strong and controlled at all times.. A common mistake of this type of sparring is that since the participants usually take a "free" or naturally ready position, they will perform one-step sparring from a free position rather than attempting to learn to make openings or guard against them. In any Martial Art, the technique is the tool with which one competes: however, the value of Martial Arts is that it goes beyond mere technique or "jitsu" and includes many aspects of human psychology, metaphysics, etc. In semi-free sparring, one is starting to practice these principles.

The final phase in learning sparring is for the student to learn free sparring. In this type of sparring, either side may attack or defend at will in any manner they wish, the only limitation

being to stop short of injury. Although there are many techniques or combinations which can be done, the value of free sparring is that over and above the type of training received in the other types of sparring, free sparring teaches multiple-to-single reaction training, and timing training. In all other types of sparring, the defense person knew where the attack would be, and could direct his attention to the proper defense. In free sparring the training emphasizes the judgment factor necessary (and done in time) to make the correct response. Without this ability, no matter how strong the student's techniques, he will be unable to defend himself in a true self-defense situation.

The other factor stressed in free sparring is the reaction factor of timing. Timing is a very large and important subject and covers many factors. Many techniques need timing to enable them to be used, and timing itself can substitute for many blocks or attacks by its proper usage. This includes the timing of your techniques with the opponent's techniques and your choice of when to attack. The most common methods taught by the Japanese are before, during, or directly after the opponent's attack. During these times, the defense man should make his countering technique. However, in our present discussion of sparring, the most basic facet of timing training is that the attacking person is not restricted in the number of his attacks, so the defense is forced to attack between or immediately after the offensive technique. He cannot wait, as in the other types of sparring. Thus, this training is very valuable. In the more basic or restricted types of sparring, it is an easy habit for students to start waiting until the attacker is finished, then leisurely make their counter. Free sparring requires the student to learn multiple-to-single reaction training, and the correct timing of techniques.

Sparring is an important part of Karate training as without it, it would be difficult for the student to learn how effective his practice would be in a real self-defense situation.

BLOCKING TECHNIQUES

Blocking is, of course, a very important part of Karate techniques. Although blocking techniques can be used as attacking or breaking technique, the blocks we will refer to here will be mostly in situations where the student must block or be struck by his opponent.

There are several types of blocking techniques. One of the most common is the direct blocking or striking of the opponent's attack. These are usually powerful focused blocks such as rising block, middle block, down block, etc. The point of using these blocks is to make a strong block so as to break the opponent's attack. Also, the practice of strong focused blocks helps the student to learn to improve his focus, so that he can make small techniques or motions and create strong power. When the student is able to do this, he can make effective blocks under any condition.

Another type of focused or direct blocks are those that use snap focus. Although any block should use snap to help in the focus, I am referring to the striking blocks such as chicken neck, Chinese sword, etc. which utilize snap in the manner of a striking technique. These blocks are focused, but only for a very short period of time. The advantage of these blocks is that they can be used from a weaker stance to make a focused block.

Another type of blocking uses a sweeping or deflection motion. These blocks do not require as much power, as the person blocking does not try to stop the block or break balance, but merely to deflect the attack from its target. You merely try to lead the opponent's attack. The advantage of these blocks is that they use the opponent's power against him. However, one difficult part of these type of blocks is that a more concise sense of timing must be used. The student must be able to "pick up" the opponent's attack so that he can deflect it. Several important technical points are that the student should not over block, but use the deflecting hand very close to his own body. He should also be careful not to push, but pull the block on as close a course to the attack as he can. Do not try to use opposing power, but lead the opponent. Direct or focused blocks may, of course, be used as deflection blocks by altering the angle of attack.

Hooking blocks use a circular motion of the arm and hand and are usually used as an aggressive type block. They are a little like combining a deflection block with balance breaking. They can be applied with a limited amount of power and after deflecting weight and focus can be used to apply the opponent's weight and balance against himself. Also, the hand is ready for a breaking attack after the block is finished. These blocks can use limited motion and power, but still let the student break his opponent's balance and attack.

While using any block, the correct muscle order and body flexibility must be used, but in direct blocks, care should be taken that there is a tight fist and correct focus or the muscles of the arm will be weak and the body systems can be damaged.

Other miscellaneous blocks are leg blocks, as the legs can also be used for sweeping blocks or direct blocks. It is more difficult to use focus with the legs, but they do have more mass and the use of body weight. The disadvantage is that they are usually slower than arm techniques.

Direct blocks may also be applied as attacking techniques when starting an attack. Direct blocks may also be modified and used as attacking blocks. For example, the rising block may be used to deflect the opponent's arm and then thrust at the face. These techniques, however, will be discussed more fully at a later time.

Blocking techniques are a most important part of Karate training, and due to the nature of Karate as a self-defense art, their correct use is important. As in many defense situations, the block is the first reaction and all other things depend on it.

STUDENT MOTIVATION AND WAYS OF STRENGTHENING

Motivation is important in Karate because this is the spark or drive which starts the student on the path of training. Without strong motivation, it is not possible to give the student strong training which is necessary if he is to advance. Without this interest caused by motivation, training becomes a duty and the student will cease to advance.

Group instruction is the most difficult as each student is motivated by a different reason or set of reasons. However, most motivation can be divided by two very rough categories. One is philosophical and the other is physical. Either one or the other or a combination of both is the reason for the student's motivation. It is important for the instructor to be able to identify the motivating reason as he must use the student's motivation. The instructor has an image which he must give to the student for ideal motivation; therefore, he must know the present motivating factors so he can make the various stages of development.

The instructor must know some of the common various reasons that people are motivated. For example, an interest in Oriental philosophy, the desire to become Superman, or to overcome an inferiority complex. Therefore, the instructor must know what points will interest a wide range of people. One of the most common methods is to have a part of every lesson appealing to the philosophical and part to the physical.

For most students, the motivating factors will change with practice. The instructor must be alert and ready to guide the student to the correct motivating factors.

Another aspect of motivation is that most students who first start Karate are externally motivated. Within this are the various stages or levels of motivation. The best type of motivation is the student who needs no motivation, who motivates himself through a desire to increase himself, and needs nothing else but this desire.

Some of the factors to introduce to classes that will help motivate the students are the kyu ranking system, a varied and interesting training schedule. Contests, instill a sense of accomplishment. External motivation methods must be used until the student is internally motivated. Care should be taken not to make the training so frustrating that the student will stop training, yet they should be hard enough so the student must extend or expand his limits. In this way, the student will learn to attempt to expand his mental and physical capabilities.

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KARATE AND PERSONALITY

When referring to personality in this article, the author is referring to attributes of character such as stability, maturity, integrity, balanced emotions, etc.

Most people are motivated to start Karate in order to compensate for an inadequacy, usually based on a real or fancied inadequacy of the mind. Either that or the student is attracted by some positive feature that he thinks Karate will give him. This again is usually an addition to his concept of himself, or his personality.

Through Karate training, many people are trying deliberately to better themselves; therefore, through this training they find out more about themselves, their limits and their capabilities. By finding out their weaknesses and trying to correct them people learn to analyze themselves better. This is always done by the student with the idea of self-improvement so the individual is not usually depressed or discouraged. Rather, he learns to constructively work to better himself. The ability to face yourself objectively and try to improve is very good therapy. In fact, it is the base of modern psychiatry. Therefore, this constructive striving leads the student to a well-balanced personality and a better life.

Another important interplay of Karate training and student personality is that by bettering himself, the student learns that he can mold himself according to his ideas and ideals and literally construct himself in a positive manner. This produces confidence in self and encourages a person to live by his healthiest standards and produces a more balanced way of life.

The training also directly influences a student as he learns self-discipline to master each technique. It is commonly held that hard work will clean the mind as well as the body. Working as an outlet for frustrations and hostilities, and washing away minor irritations of the personality.

As a person advances in Karate, his conceptions of it change and he is attracted to different aspects of the Art. Thus, the goals he seeks change and the person's personality changes with his goals.

Many people, when they have achieved something they value, obtain a sense of well-being and self-respect. When this happens, many defense mechanisms such as making excuses to self for weak behavior, rationalizing, lack of determination, etc., disappear as the person does not need them anymore.

There has been little study done on the reasons why people are affected by and molded by Karate, but I have seen many cases where training in Karate does change a person to a more balanced, constructive way of life. In fact, the aim of the Karate activities is to achieve and produce a socially acceptable personality. If Karate training produces an undesirable personality, it must be changed. There cannot be a correct training in Karate that produces an undesirable personality as the ultimate goal of Karate itself is to cut out negative emotions for a better life.

The role of the instructor is to change the student's motivation, and better their personality. If the instructor is not doing this, he is not contributing to Karate, society, or the individual.

KARATE TRAINING AND CONCENTRATION OF MIND

Concentration of mind, how it is developed in Karate, how it helps Karate techniques, and its effect on a person and his daily life is one of the most important things about Karate and Karate training.

In Karate techniques, focus is the key to making powerful techniques so one can successfully survive a self-defense situation. This focus is the key to the strength of Karate and an important part of the values of training of Karate as it can be applied to everyday life. Focusing means to concentrate all the mind, body and spirit together at one point in one moment of time, Since the mind leads the body, it is necessary to learn concentration of mind. Without it, techniques will be weak. In fact, the student will be unable to practice at all without some concentration. Therefore, by studying concentration of mind, the student's everyday life builds up.

The basic use of the mind is to direct the body, and the most basic use of the conscious mind is to direct the body. The human mind is capable of thought and action independent of the body, but its primary use is to command the body. Therefore, by training and working them together, the optimum conditions can be utilized to expand the ultimate capabilities of a person.

Concentration of mind is an easy subject to talk about, but the force that true concentration of mind can bring out is one of the marvels of the human race.

By concentrating, all the latent powers of the body can be brought forth. This is the true purpose of Karate training.

A concentrated mind should not be confused with a "stiff" or locked mind, a mind that is on one subject and cannot move from it. Perhaps the best definition of true concentration is where the mind possesses the subject, not the object possessing the mind. Some people confuse or misunderstand what concentration is, but true concentration means that the mind is in control.

In Karate techniques, this mind concentration is applied in techniques to one point at one part of time. This is the making of the power of Karate. But an important part of Martial Arts training is the spreading of the mind to the total environment. The mind must be able to concentrate all over as well as on one point. These two facets complement each other. By developing both the mind becomes stronger. Both are necessary for successful practice of the Martial Arts.

There are various ways in Karate to consciously train concentration: by focusing each technique as hard as possible, by doing Kata, this requires development of concentration over an extended time span. Also it requires concentration on one point and watching all around. Sparring also helps concentration, as conversely concentration helps sparring.

Concentration of mind is necessary if one is to successfully build strong Karate, and to build strong character.

KARATE TRAINING AND ITS ENVIRONMENT

Environment is an important part of Karate training. It aids the instructor and the student, affects his motivation, and influences the development of concentration. Environment is the mental and physical factors which will lead to a correct image of Karate and its correct development.

Basically, the two types of environments can be defined as mental and physical. Mental environment can mean the attitude of the class while in instruction. This, of course, includes the mental attitude of any one student. Mental environment also means the ability of the surroundings to allow the student to concentrate, and also to make or create the correct attitudes for good training,

The physical factors are those which affect the mental environment and factors which are physical in nature. Physical factors which affect the mental aspect are things like lighting and noise. The surroundings should be such that the student can develop and train with no distraction.

Some purely physical environmental aspects are clean and healthy surroundings, floor space sufficient to move around on; no part of the surrounding should contribute to accidents, such as a rough floor, etc. Sufficient and correct ventilation is important, neither too hot nor too cold, and properly aired space is important.

In general, the environment should be that of any other indoor sport. Also it should be kept in mind that the mental aspects are very important, and an atmosphere conducive to the proper mental characteristics is essential.

In short, the area should be healthy and comfortable, and lend itself to training. Concentration is the key to successful Karate training, and environment includes many factors which allows the student to concentrate and build his art.

THE EFFECT OF PSYCHOLOGICAL STATES ON TECHNIQUE

Before we can discuss the effect of psychological states of mind, we must first define them. We are referring to the most favorable psychological state of mind for the correct execution of correct Karate techniques and the correct interplay between two people whether or not any techniques come into action. It is the ability to develop the correct psychological state that is the most beneficial part of Karate. If one can develop the correct mind through training, one can then apply his developed mind into everyday life.

Concentration of mind, though very important to Karate techniques, is not the only ingredient of a correct psychological state. Conversely, of course, a correct psychological state will help build concentration.

The connection of mind to techniques is very important. If you want to do something, then do it; if you don't, don't. This is the ability to act correctly when you want is important. Every action must have a subject and then be able to act quickly and correctly to the subject.

Therefore, the mind must be all concentrated for the subject at hand. So, you must give the subject, then concentrate on it. So, for a correct psychological state, you must make the most favorable conditions for this concentration. One important factor is the cutting off of unnecessary (or negative) emotions so the mind will be clear to concentrate on the necessary subject. The mind must be very calm and cleared of emotions, but at the same time, it cannot be dead. The mind must have spirit. This is difficult to define, but being excited or keyed up is not true spirit; this is an emotion. True spirit has alertness, mental poise, concentration and awareness, and an extension of life force or will. It is very hard to define, but a necessary ingredient. Sometimes, as a training way, emotional spirit is given, then the emotion is cut off, leaving the desirable state of mind.

Nervousness often clouds the mind so that the person cannot react correctly. Some common causes of this are lack of training, experience, lack of confidence. Some personality types are more prone to over nervousness than others. Mousy or quiet people, very opinionated people, and introverted types are commonly too nervous.

What happens with too much nervousness is that a low degree of nervousness warms up the body and puts it in a state of readiness. However, too much nervousness gives continued shock to the nervous system and this goes to the brain and interferes with the correct order. This shock to the brain is like shorting out an electric panel; the system is overloaded with unnecessary shock and the correct stimuli cannot get through efficiently.

Another facet of the ideal psychological state is that Karate is primarily defense against surprise attack, we must be able to make strong power with small motions. The body usually produces action in relation to the shock or stimulus it receives. A correct psychological state is

such that a small shock will produce a big reaction. This ability to make a large reaction from small shock is the reason Karate techniques are so powerful.

The best state of mind for Karate techniques is one which permits quick, strong, correct techniques in response to the correct stimuli. This means the cutting off of negative emotions while maintaining a state of extreme alertness and concentration, readiness for the person to put his entire being into each technique.

MOST IDEAL PSYCHOLOGICAL STATE OF STUDENTS IN GROUP INSTRUCTION

The psychological state of students is important in Karate as it has a direct effect on how fast and how well the student will learn what the instructor is teaching. No matter how good the instruction, without the students having the best possible mental attitude, it will slow and lessen the learning process.

There are several factors which can bring about an ideal psychological state. Some of them such as motivation, physical surroundings, degree of concentration have already been discussed.

One point not discussed is the atmosphere or “mood” of the class and this is done primarily by the instructor. His attitude and bearing can and should influence the class to bring out the needed qualities for an ideal state of mind.

Some of the necessary factors are: the student should have no other thought on his mind; he should be intent on his Karate; he should be interested and eager to train. The student’s mind should be concentrated, but not stiff. If the student has a light attitude, the repeated practice soon becomes boring. It is necessary to concentrate to avoid being bored and also to avoid injuries. If the student is in a serious state of mind, this enables him to be intent on his training. A mental state of concentration brings all physical senses up to their optimum and makes learning easier.

The student should be open to the instructor’s coaching. If he tries his own ideas or methods, the better teaching of the instructor cannot be absorbed. His mind must be in a condition to respond to the teaching of the instructor. However, the instructor should not be too harsh or the student’s mind will become stiff instead of concentrating. Too harsh of an instruction method will also reduce initiative to study on his own and develop his own techniques.

Some physical aspects that are important are that if the body is tired, it learns coordination better. Although this is not truly a psychological state, this factor is influenced by and influences the mind.

It has been found that the best method for group instruction is a dictatorial situation. Under democratic systems, the quality of work is high, but the quantity is low. For most sports, dictated activity builds the students the fastest. It is important that the instructor not press so hard that the students will lose all original ideas. They should not sacrifice creativity and rely overly on the instructor.

In advanced classes, the student should be motivating himself and it is the instructor’s job to motivate the student to do this. There should be an interplay between the student and the instructor.

It must be remembered that there will be many variances in a group. Therefore, the instructor must pick up or lead the entire class so that they will be in the best state of mind for instruction.

PSYCHOLOGICAL STATE AND ITS EFFECT ON REFLEX

Reflex actions are very important to Karate techniques. Since Karate is originally defense against a surprise attack, reflex action is the most important. In fact, real Karate actions must start from reflex because if there is no stimulus or shock, there is no need to act. If one misses the reaction, one loses.

One of the most important factors for correct reflex is that the body be in the best possible condition to react quickly. This is usually a feeling of slight nervousness which activates the nervous system and muscles. Usually the activities of unnecessary body systems, such as the stomach, etc. will be cut off. If the body is too nervous, the motor responses cannot react correctly. This point is one of the most important in Karate training. One of the most common types of undesirable emotions is nervousness that prohibits the body from functioning at its best.

The second aspect of a correct psychological state for reflex action is (once the body, mind, muscles, and motor system are ready) to produce the correct reaction. In other words, if the body is physically ready to go, and then it goes the wrong way, nothing is accomplished. The necessary factor is correct judgment. The ability to keep all factors of the body in the correct state so that you can perceive and react correctly to the stimuli. There are two parts to the factor of judgment. One is how soon you can observe the need for a reaction and then cut the multiple reaction to a single, that is to say correct, reaction. One has to get the stimulus, then do the correct thing or response.

After receiving a stimulus, the body (unless it is very insensitive) will have some reaction. This may be a jump, flinch, etc. but usually the body will do something. There are these automatic, natural body reactions, and then there are conscious positive reactions. In Karate, we must combine these so that our natural body reactions turn into a Karate action.

There are many various factors which influence reactions and their speed. For example, the reactions to sense of touch are faster than those of the eye, and the ear is faster than the eye. Most people react most easily though to stimulus to the eye. Karate people must learn to feel or sense the stimulus, and then react with it. At this level, we pass known facts about reactions. However, there are documented evidence of results which cannot be explained. It is the Karate student's job to develop and try to understand these factors which make quick reactions.

To re-define reaction power, it consists of two parts: the reception of stimulus and two, the correct giving of order to the body for body action to the stimulus. Therefore, we can train both parts of reaction. Train our sensitivity to stimulus, and train muscle reactions.

If the body responds to a stimulus and reacts correctly, it has cut a choice of reactions, or multiple reactions into the correct reaction, or single reaction. In single reaction, there are two factors: the single reaction itself, and the judgment necessary. Between these two factors, there

seems to be a correct balance for the best reaction. The link between these two factors might be timing. However, no one knows for sure. In Karate we can train for correct actions. Then by using sparring, we are training for timing, so this must include the building or training of judgment.

Since there are many facets to reflex action which cannot be proven, the student must train hard and try to develop all his faculties. This is perhaps the most unexplored, and most crucial part of Karate training.

BREAKING TECHNIQUES

Breaking techniques refer to the breaking or opening of the opponent's guard or state of readiness. Of course, this can be done by breaking the actual physical balance, but we are referring to all of the above. The general purpose of breaking the opponent is to be able to overcome or avoid or get past his guard or state of readiness.

There are three basic ways of breaking the opponent's guard: by mental techniques, by physical or by mental/physical combination.

It is possible to break or destroy the opponent's readiness by techniques that affect his mental condition alone. The idea being that if the mind does not react, the body cannot. There are several basic ways of doing this. One is to give a stiff mind by your positioning. Another technique is to break rhythm. There are several ways to do this. One is to break rhythm and disorganize him, so he is not in a state of readiness to attack. Another method of breaking rhythm is to alter your own rhythm. Thus, he will be unable to pick your rhythm up and will also be forced to try to understand your rhythm and this will put him on the defense.

Still another method of breaking balance by mental methods is to let the opponent attack. To do this, he must be concentrating his mind and body on one thing, and this breaks or lessens his ability to defend.

If one side has or can make a stronger spirit, this in itself is a strong breaking technique. If the opponent is convinced he cannot win, he will, of course, lose. Therefore, extending a feeling of strength is in itself a good fake.

Some of the more common ways to break the balance are by physical means. One of the more common ways is by sweeping. This literally physically breaks the opponent's balance and causes him to fall. Another equally strong method is faking the opponent and getting him to react to a supposed attack, and thereby opens his guard. Still another basic type of physical breaking is by a strong opening attack. This causes the defense to expend all his effort and mind on this one technique and it is very difficult for him to recover.

Some techniques that combine mental and physical techniques are: attack with fakes to draw the opponent's mind, touching or slapping so as to give shock to the nervous system and also give the opponent a stiff mind by jabbing, etc. Any technique which will cause him to concentrate on it.

Most common breaking techniques are a combination of mental/physical. One of the easiest methods of affecting the mind is by affecting the body, and even in an attempt to influence the mind is apt to move the body and influence the physical condition.

For general definition, when we refer to faking, we are referring to a technique which does not touch the opponent, and breaking balance is a technique which actually touches.

One of the important things for the attacking side to remember that he, the attacker, should not break his balance, either physical or mental, in his attempts to break the opponent's balance. This means either mental or physical, for what is valid for one person is valid for the other. Be careful not to break your balance in your attempt to break him. For example, sweep at his leg so hard, you lose control of your own body and cannot recover. Or faking and letting your opponent take advantage of the opening you made when faking. Or being so busy thinking about your breaking technique, you lock your own mind.

There are many techniques along the ideas or divisions discussed above that can be used to break an opponent. By faking or using a short technique for an opening technique. By attempting to trap the opponent into attacking, give him a target by dropping your guard or by faking poorly, or by just shouting. A Kiai by itself will shock the nervous system.

It is impossible for anyone to keep the same type guard all the time. Even the act of breathing by itself causes a difference. So it is important to take advantage of these weaknesses and at the same time, cover your own. If you must break your own balance, quickly recover. The next important point is that everybody, as stated before, has times of strength and weakness. These are like waves and the person who can take the rhythm or use the rhythm of himself and his opponent to his own advantage, this person will usually win.

The study of breaking techniques is important and interesting, not only for its obvious help in sparring or self-defense techniques, but also because these techniques bring into play mental sparring and are therefore interesting and lead to understanding the student's spirit and mental capabilities.

JOINT AND MUSCLE MOVEMENTS IN HAND TECHNIQUES

Any hand or arm technique properly uses the muscles of the entire body. However, here we shall cover only the muscles of the upper body.

The movement should be started from the hips and low stomach, which means that the stomach muscles or Rectus Abdominis will be tensed. Also helping those muscles will be the Obliquus Externus. This is the muscle which edges the regular stomach muscles. By tensing this, it helps make connections to the side and back muscles of the torso. The side muscles are the Serratus Anterior and also the Pectoralis Major which cover the front and sides of the chest or upper torso. The Obliquus Externus also connects with the Sacro spinalis of the back. This is the muscle of the lower back which runs up the back close to the spine. The strong upper back muscles which are also used are the Teres Major and the Latissimus Dorsi. These are the common working muscles of the upper back.

At the first joint connection of the upper body, the shoulder, the Deltoid muscle helps to strengthen the joint and activate the arm. Other important muscles of the upper are Triceps and the Biceps. These two muscles cover the back and inside of the upper arm, and are used to extend and retract the arm. Especially important when considering the shoulder joint is the tensing of the Deltoid and Latissimus as these two muscles help to strengthen this joint against recoil impact. Tensing the Latissimus also causes the smaller muscles of the shoulder, the Teres Major and Teres Minor to be flexed.

The next important joint is the elbow. Necessary for correct tensing here is the flexing of the upper arm muscles and also the entire group of the forearm. With the small muscles at the end of the forearm and wrist, there are many groups as the body becomes very specialized.

The forearm and wrist include all the extensor and abductor groups. These muscles lay across the bones of the lower arm and can easily be flexed by rotating motions of the arms, thus allowing the wrist joint to be made strong and locked, even though the wrist is composed of many small bones and ligaments, rather than the meeting of two major bones.

The correct identification of the major muscles and joints is necessary for the student so that he may better understand his techniques.

JOINT AND MUSCULAR MOVEMENTS IN LEG TECHNIQUES

In Karate, almost all techniques should start from the low stomach area. However, the first joint area that is used in leg techniques is the hip joints. The Gluteus Medius and Gluteus Maximus are the muscles of the hip that control the basic motions. These muscles are assisted on the side of the hip area by the Great Trochanter and Tensor Fascia Latae which help bind the hip to the muscles of the thigh. In the back of the thigh is the Biceps Femoris with the Vastus Externus on the outside of the leg. The Semimembranosus and the Semitendinosus are on the back edges of the thigh. Strong muscles on the inside of the thigh are the Adductor Longus and the Pectineus assisted by the Gracilis muscle.

In the lower leg the Achilles is assisted by the Soleus muscle and the Gastrocnemius and lower on the leg the Tibialis Anterior.

As the muscles go to the ankle and foot, they become more specialized, not as much as the muscles of the hands, however.

The muscles of the leg are large and strong, and there are not too many of them. Therefore, a study of them and their functions will help the student to understand the function and limitations of the various leg techniques.

PRINCIPLES OF DYNAMICS IN KARATE STANCES

There are two factors in any Karate stance. The first is before the technique, and the second is during the technique. During the time of the technique, all stances may be divided into two categories: outside and inside tension. The point of interest of stances before the time of technique is preparation or how to make quick movement into the stance.

There are two necessary factors common to all stances: balance and power. By balance, we are referring, not only to the ability to keep position, but also the positioning or balancing of pressures to arrive at a desired position or stance. In other words, to balance is to make static or put at rest because if a person is shifting, he is not in balance. Shifting is defined as the body out of balance seeking a state of balance.

When we refer to power, we mean, of course, the power in a Karate stance which can be applied to a Karate technique. We make power in the stances by use of tension of the muscles and by distribution of weight.

In the outside tension stances, the pressure or tension is to the outside of the stance, making a force much like that of a pair of bent springs, bent concavely toward each other. The power of an outside tension stance goes away from the bend or concave arc of the legs. Balance is acquired by both legs being used and the force of each leg stabilizes the stance. The point of balance in relation to the two legs is what determines what stance it is. For example, the point of stabilization in a back stance is about three sevenths toward the back leg. The center of stabilization is much closer to the back leg, hence the name. The pressure in a Kibadachi is exactly in the middle of the legs. Since pressure is stabilized there, the power balance is in the middle, or fifty fifty.

The power used in Karate technique comes from a mean of the directional tension or pressure and the pressure in a vertical plane caused by the weight of the body. Weight makes tension downward and out over the legs and into the floor. The reaction from the floor causes pressure to go up and out. This pressure combined with the tension of the legs make the usable or applied power and the direction of this force is in a median direction of the two forces.

In outward tension stance, the reaction force of the tension of the legs is being used. Common example is the front stance. In this stance, the back leg is pushing strongly backward into the floor, thereby creating a strong reaction forward in the direction of the stance. It must be remembered that physics, kinesiology and psychology are different, and though in a front stance, it feels as though you are pushing directly forward, from the viewpoint of physics, you are pushing back into the floor and then using this reaction power in your technique.

Front stance uses equalization of pressure and it is strong against power from the front. If the front leg were cut off, the body would shift forward which makes this stance strong. The

combination of being strong against power to the front and strong for making power to the front is the true meaning of a front stance.

In Kibadachi stance, the tension and pressure are equally balanced to the sides and this stance is equally powerful to either side. By removing the pressure from the forward or back direction, power can be exerted from the remaining leg.

As already mentioned, back stance has the back leg receiving most of the pressure and giving most of the power.

In Sochin, pressure and power are equalized. However, in this stance, they are equalized in all directions instead of only one plane.

In inward tension stances, the pressure forces are the same but reversed in relation to the body. The tension of the legs is inward; therefore, tension for balance and line of applied force are the same. Thus, shifting from these type stances is easy, requiring only to release pressure in the desired direction.

Hangetsu is much like Sochin, strong in all directions. Feet are wide so as to allow much pressure of weight, especially in inside tension stances are usually not as strong against shock.

Sanchin is the same, but center of gravity is higher, resulting in less pressure and a higher center of balance.

In Cat Stance, most of the tension is given to the back leg and center of gravity is high, Thus, this stance is one directional with just enough tension in the front leg for balance.

The power angle caused by the bending of the legs has a limit; if there is not much angle, there will be little pressure resulting in little pressure off the floor which means that the stance will be weak.

By understanding the principles involved in stances, we can understand what must be done to correct or increase our Karate techniques. The objective application of the laws of physics is especially helpful in instances where no feeling of correct technique can be had, or where there is an inadequate means of testing for positive results.

DYNAMICS OF BODY SHIFTING

By body shifting, we will be referring to any changing of position of the body. There are two types of shifting: sliding and stepping. There are two main purposes why we shift in Karate, either to apply a technique or to change position for a positioning-type advantage.

In sliding, the most common method is to use the back leg. The front leg can assist, however, by having it move forward, and the momentum of the front leg moving forward will help the body to move. This can be done at the same time or before the back or main leg starts its motion. In shifting forward from an outside tension stance, the student is using reaction power. Therefore, a strong pushing against the floor will increase the reaction power and the speed and power of the shift. From the standpoint of an instructor, this technique has a limit if the students will start making two motions and while it may be correct from a point of view of physics, it is very poor for Karate.

It should be remembered that no matter what stance or circumstance, shifting can be broken into three parts: starting, moving, or coasting and stopping.

It should also be remembered that the two parts to any stance are power and balance. While executing a technique, the student is still in a state of imbalance. If the student were in a balanced stance, there would be no movement. From a point of physics, shifting is created an imbalance in a controlled direction and manner.

We create the imbalance for shifting in two ways. One is by releasing of the tension in one direction and/or by shifting of weight to increase the tension on a leg and thereby, break balance. The most common method is to attempt to do both at the same time.

When finishing the shifting movement or returning to balance, it is common for the front leg (from direction of shifting) to actually be applying power in the other direction, or reaction power in its crudest sense.

If one understands the dynamics of stance, it is fairly simple to understand the elements necessary for shifting.

KARATE AND SELF-DEFENSE

Karate is not the only method of self-defense, and there is more to Karate than just self-defense. The important point is that self-defense is the base or foundation of Karate. This is the skeleton or concept upon which all Karate techniques and how they are practiced. Self-defense is the form or outline of Karate, no matter what reason the Art is being practiced. It is the idea that Karate is basically a defense against surprise attack that is the method of developing our mental and physical powers to their fullest.

In Karate, each technique must be made with self-defense in mind. The power, rhythm and timing are all done with the idea of a strong, quick self-defense technique.

Also important in Karate self-defense is reaction. Reaction must be turned into an action in order to avoid a surprise attack because in such a situation, the defender is handicapped by reaction time.

Even the mental aspect of Karate, the cutting off of negative emotions, comes originally from a self-defense situation. There, this is necessary in order to survive. The idea of self-defense is the most common training method of applying stress for this training or controlling the mind. Therefore, without the concept of self-defense, it is impossible to obtain any mental discipline and the idea of studying the control of the mind and the cutting off of negative emotions could not be done.

Therefore, by attempting to constantly improve the method of self-defense, the instructor will improve upon the ability to expand the mental and physical powers of the students. It is the obligation of the instructor to try to further this ability, and without the concept of self-defense, it cannot be done.

Lastly, the fact that self-defense is the primary purpose of Karate enables the practitioner to use this for a goal or base on which to put his efforts. Because there are so many variations that can be done with the techniques and so many body types, so many different thoughts on the subject, how does one find the right way? By keeping in mind that the goal is self-defense, and showing this goal to the students, it is possible to try and improve Karate. Thus, we can always try to better ourselves and our Art.

MANAGEMENT OF HEALTH FOR KARATE MEN

In health management, there are two factors to consider: health for yourself or an individual and group health. It is important that the student's health should be supervised. Most of them are not aware of the necessary factors, and it is the instructor's responsibility to teach them.

Basic sports health can be divided into several categories: illness, nutrition, and internal health.

Care should be taken with correct ventilation as the student's body temperature will be undergoing change during and after class. These are prime conditions for the spreading of communicable diseases. Care should be taken to keep the dojo clean and sanitary and to isolate any communicable diseases.

Nutrition is important to people engaged in physical activities. Care should be taken that the student has the correct diets and especially of any food supplements that might be necessary due to the training. An example would be calcium for leg cramps or tired muscles. Also, athletes need more iron. Vitamin C is good for stamina and especially if there is a virus condition prevalent.

There are some factors of internal medicine health peculiar to Karate. Karate training is intense and students, especially beginners, should be careful not to overextend. Another factor which ties in with nutrition is an imbalance created when too many calories are burnt up. This, in turn, leads to many other illnesses.

Eating just before training places a great burden on the stomach. Also the psychological state necessary in sparring brings on conditions where it is best not to eat or drink immediately after training. The quick and strong movements of Karate place a burden on the heart, especially with beginners or overweight people. Care should be taken in case a student has high blood pressure. For the nervous system, calisthenics before and after training are best.

A special warning should be noted about communicable diseases, especially respiratory diseases or skin diseases. Sports activities make ideal conditions for the spread of these diseases. Skin diseases can also spread easily.

It is the instructor's responsibility to oversee the basic health of his students that might be influenced by their training.

PREVENTION AND TREATMENT OF INJURIES

Although Karate is a safe sport, especially compared to the other contact sports, occasionally injuries do occur. It is the instructor's job to keep these at a minimum and to give first aid and advice to the student if they do occur.

As simple as it is, one of the basic ways to prevent injuries is to have a complete warm-up. This is especially true with beginners or older people, but should be done for any physical exercise. Karate places great stress on the muscles and joints and warming up will prepare the body for this strain.

During sparring or any contact activity, the demeanor and attitude of the instructor will reduce the chance of injuries. A careless or light attitude causes injuries to the contestants or students.

An important factor in preventing injuries is in the proper care in teaching techniques that will produce unusual strain on the body. In some cases, physical conditioning may be necessary before starting training.

The most common injuries outside of concussion are pulled muscles or ligaments and joint injuries. If these occur, applying cold is usually best. In case of continued training, correct wrapping for support helps.

Most other type injuries are usually from impact. Therefore, the instructor should be familiar with these types of injuries. Concussion is possible on impact to the head, and also due to the boniness, blows to the head or face usually split skin, etc. Blows to the body are dangerous as it is sometimes difficult to tell the extent or nature of damage in body blows. The most important point is to recognize the degree of danger and the necessity to go to the doctor.

In case of an accident, timing is the most important factor. If it is a big accident, don't move the patient. If the injury is to a bone, first tap it lightly to see if it is broken. In the event of injury to muscles, immediately stop action, then send to the doctor. If the injury is to a tendon, make sure there is movement; place cold on and send for the doctor.

On injury to the inside systems, (as would be caused by a blow to the body) sometimes giving cold is dangerous.

The most important factor is for the instructor to recognize his abilities and limitations and be conservative. If in doubt, seek professional help.

PROPER PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT IN KARATE

The conscientious Karate instructor must be very aware of his obligation to develop the students who come to him for instruction. It is his responsibility to make a foundation for the students so that they may develop as they train. An important point is not to confuse conditioning with development. Conditioning is necessary so that the body can be developed, but development is a stage above conditioning.

Conditioning is the first step in constructive building or developing the student. Without conditioning, if strong shock is given to the body, it can cause damage. However, if the body does not get tired, it cannot build up. The most basic fundamental point of the human body is that it builds by being used.

There are three basic ways to build the body. One is by weight. Usually giving weight or pressure to a technique or exercise helps the body to build quicker and learn faster. Usually not maximum weight, but somewhere between 30 and 60 percent of maximum power is best for training purposes. It has been proven that the body builds better this way than it does by maximum weight or no weight at all. Also, the body learns best when tired, so many repetitions are necessary with this method. If the body is not being tired when this is done, the gain is substantially less.

Another method of building the body is the use of isometrics. This is a fairly old form of exercise that has recently been “rediscovered” and is now very popular for many types of sport training. Isometrics is based on complete concentrated effort for a very short time. To completely extend the body for a very short period of time and to do only a few repetitions of this. This is even better than weight training for producing quick results. Another advantage of this system is that it can be done in the last few minutes of a training session. In other words, it is very effective and very efficient.

Another type of training that builds mostly reaction and speed is interval training. This follows the concept of wind sprints in running training. Whatever the technique or exercise, it is tried at full power and speed for a certain period of time and then a short period of rest, and then again at the same speed and time interval. This is done over and over. The point of this type of training is that the student must try hard and not have too much rest. If there is too much rest, the effect is wasted. As stated before, this is mostly used for speed and/or reaction training.

The instructor must be very careful during training that he is building the students most efficiently. However, care must be taken to avoid injuries or illness. It is the instructor's responsibility to correctly supervise the training program. The main point is within the amount of time that the instructor has, how can he most efficiently build up the students.

KATA

Kata or form are the formal exercises of Karate. They are a series of blocks and counters done against four to eight imaginary opponents. These techniques are done in a stylized pattern which takes the practitioner through the series and back to his original position.

There are about 50 forms that can be learned; they are of varying purpose and difficulty. However, they all combine defense and attack combinations along with shifting, turning, positioning, etc. All Kata also have, as a necessary ingredient to do the form correctly, flexibility, body control, power control and rhythm.

Kata is very important, as the Karate that we know today was learned and handed down to each generation through Kata. This was the original way in which Karate was learned, and only recently have “sparring” and basics been practiced and incorporated into the training program. One can appreciate the importance of Kata when it is realized that the entire Kata is a series of defense combinations, but practiced in such a way that no one technique is developed at the expense of others. No basics or sparring could combine the training in balance shifting, body control, etc. which any one Kata has.

There are approximately 50 forms in existence today. Many famous people have made or developed forms, and some have been slightly modified as they have been handed down from teacher to teacher. Some of the forms are old; others fairly recently developed. Some forms are fairly easy to do; some are extremely difficult; some are to develop the body; some develop breathing, or techniques or some are designed for a certain body type. Kata are the dictionary of Karate techniques.

Some Kata are for general training purposes, and include a large variety of blocking, attacking and shifting techniques, using almost all parts of the body. Other forms are very good stance training, while still others introduce new techniques. There are forms which are used to teach breathing which is important for Karate techniques and also is beneficial to the health. Some forms are designed for a special type of body, for either a large-boned heavy bodied person or for a light, quick body. Some forms have been developed for a special purpose, either the application of a special technique or stance or a certain type concept of sparring or self-defense.

Kata have as integral part of them, some of the basic dynamics necessary to Karate, and though hidden or subtle, are more important than any technique; the correct use of body power, flexibility, and rhythm combine and are brought out by the fact that Kata stresses not only techniques, but technique-to-technique connection. This is important in the total concept of Karate as Karate is originally developed as defense against surprise attack, and the student must

be able to move with speed, efficiency, and correct reactions from any position. Kata is the best single method of learning these dynamic concepts.

MAKING TRAINING SCHEDULES

It is necessary for the instructor to make a well-balanced training schedule if he desires to see his students advance in Karate. There are several important factors that must be considered in order to make the best possible training schedule for the student's development.

The main factor that must be known is the purpose of the training. This must be established before any other points can be made. There are three main types of training plus, of course, many attitudes or points that can be learned within these fields. The main types of training are competition, self-defense, or physical exercise.

The next important factor is time. This includes the total time of the course and the length of each class. Also, the amount or frequency of the classes. For example, a six-week self-defense class or a college training in physical education twice a week for an hour each time, or a competition team of three hours a day, six days a week. Also, in some classes, the instructor does not supervise or is not present at every class. In making a training schedule, the instructor must consider the number of hours of training under his direct coaching as compared to total training time.

Another factor is the number of students that the instructor must coach. A very different coaching format must be made for a large class of students that one instructor must coach and a small group, or a private lesson of one student.

Another factor is the students' environment or activities outside the class. This can be important for various reasons: the number or amount of outside time for self-training, or his physical or mental condition due to his total daily schedule. Also the time of day of the class or the time of class in relation to the student's schedule must be considered.

The student's motivation is also a prime consideration. The reason why he is in the class, his purpose for training must influence the training schedule. If the instructor fails to understand the correct motivation, and makes training compatible with it, he will lose the class. Not only is the correct understanding of motivation necessary for correct training, it is the instructor's job to help build the student mentally and spiritually as well as physically. Motivation is the prime tool with which the instructor will do this.

The physical condition of the students must be considered also. This includes conditioning, age, flexibility, etc. Strength is also a factor. Even more important than the physical is the mental average of the students. The mental ability directly influences the manner in which the classes are conducted, and the pace at which the training proceeds. This mental ability may be due to age, environment, or raw intelligence.

All these factors must be considered when making training schedules. Then the training schedule must make each stage or level of the entire program so that the students may proceed step-by-step to higher proficiency.

FREE SPARRING

Kumite or free sparring is the practice of the actual application of all the variety of Karate techniques, using any or all techniques at will, stopping only short of actual contact to avoid injury to the opponent. Although Karate is originally defense against surprise attack, and this may include multiple and/or armed opponents, most sparring is done against a single opponent, as this makes a nice base of foundation for this type practice.

All the techniques of Karate are directed toward Kumite, and so there is an almost limitless variety of techniques or combinations that can be used. Usually only one or two techniques are used, but the student must be prepared to cope with anything.

Not only are there a great variety of techniques, but as in other types of sparring, timing is a prime consideration. Especially in free sparring, this aspect is as important as having strong techniques, or even more so. It is fairly easy to learn the minimum necessary strength, but if the student is unable to deliver a technique, of what use is any amount of power?

After the student has learned his basics and is ready for sparring, he must learn an entire new set of techniques which deal with distancing and/or timing. Shifting, faking, breaking, combinations, all are necessary for the student to be able to avoid and counter attack successfully. Not only is timing necessary to apply a technique to the opponent, but timing becomes in a finer sense a means of finding or creating a blow. In this aspect, timing becomes almost an art unto itself.

All of the above factors, techniques, timing, etc. are based on the ability to make the correct move against the adversary's attack. Since the Karate student is reacting against an attacker, he is responding or reacting to an opponent. It is this correct, learned response, or reaction which is the heart of Martial Arts self-defense. The defense must perceive, make judgment on, and react to the attack or he will lose. Therefore, it is very important to train his reactions from a raw animal state to the point where they will automatically produce the correct action of mind, body and spirit working together.

The first factor of correct reaction is perception or awareness of the threat. Humans have a strong latent ability for this; however, scientific explanation of it is difficult. It is perhaps inherent in us due to our primitive forebearers; nobody knows for sure. It has been proven that such powers do exist and through training can be developed in anyone. It is important that the student learn to feel the actions or even the thought or spirit of his opponent. It is not enough to use the eyes; the entire body must be used to quickly convey the message to the correct responsive centers.

The next step in reaction is judgment; the ability to identify the nature of the attack so that the correct response can be made. Although this is a common-sense type of judging, the

difficult factor here is the necessity to judge as soon as possible. It does no good, for example, to identify a punch after it has been completed or is well on its way. It is necessary to decide what technique is coming even as the opponent is forming the technique. Another difficult point of judging is that it is difficult to train the ability so that it will be effective. It is known that there is a correlation between physical reaction speed, timing and judgment, but more needs to be done on this subject.

The next step in correct reaction is in the sending of correct responses to the body. In other words, development of multiple-to-single action responses. Although judging is part of this process, the wider the choice, the more factors in correct physical reaction are necessary.

All these facets, perception, judgment and reaction must be done so quickly and smoothly that reaction can equal action; and this means a successful action, a correct Karate technique.

As previously discussed, a desired state of mind is necessary for the above events to occur successfully. The practice of this correct state of mind is very necessary. This includes, of course, concentration plus the best state of mind for all factors of the body to function correctly. It is necessary that this desired state of mind allow the student to concentrate on his techniques and his opponent, yet at the same time, let his mind be free or receptive so that he may make the correct responses.

So it is necessary for the student to have a state of mind which will allow his complete control over himself, and then he must have a state which will allow him to correctly observe his opponent.

As a necessary discipline to be able to have such control of the mind, the student will have to rid himself of all extraneous thoughts. This leads to one of the higher values of sparring or Martial Arts as a whole; the ability to cut off all negative emotions. This allows the person to free himself from his mental and spiritual restrictions and fulfill himself to his utmost ability.

It is quite one thing to speak of this sort of mind control and development and quite another to be able to do it. This is where sparring comes in. Not only is sparring the best possible training for an actual self-defense situation, and allows one to practice all the techniques of Karate, and the methods of application we have discussed here, it is also the necessary pressure and testing which will allow the student to learn the correct control of mind and emotions. Sparring is the method which will allow him to develop himself to his ultimate ability.

JUDGING KARATE CONTESTS

Judging Karate contests is a difficult and important job, but the ability to do this correctly is important for the instructor and the proper development of his students. Contests are usually a method of training and/or training motivation. As such, they are usually very important to the students competing in them and have an important bearing on his training, attitude to Karate, and many other of the values which Karate instills. The manner in which a contest is judged, its fairness, attention to all aspects of training represented, and the dignity of the event, are very important for creating positive image which the student will wish to follow and model himself upon. Therefore, the judging is important not only to make a fair and sporting event, but as an educational guide to the participants and to the audience.

Judging correctly is not only important to the contestants, but to the audience as well. Since most contests are open to the public in the desire to propagate the Art and are the most common manner of public exposure, to a certain extent the reactions of the lay public are important. The manner in which the judge conducts himself, and the image he gives will affect the public. The judge contributes to the public's concept of the dignity and value of the Art, and also allows them to relax and enjoy the tournament which, in turn, will favorably impress them. In short, tournaments or contests are for education to the students and many times, to the public as well.

The bearing or manner of a tournament judge will affect the entire contest. As in all complex activities, there must be one command person. In a Karate contest, the judge is the person who is in command of the active events and commands or controls the central theme of an event. He must therefore be alert and give a command appearance, yet poised and self-confident so that all others will feel this presence and respond. Thus, the judge will control the safety of the contestants, running of the contest, and the manner or attitude of the contestants. Through this, he will influence the educational, positive value of Karate.

There are two types of Karate contests and two types of judges. The types of contests are Kata and Kumite. Kata contests are done by the contestants competing against each other, or by competing against a total score. Sparring is done on a point basis where a point is a completely correct self-defense technique executed against an opponent in free or unrestricted play. In both these events, there is one main judge and assistant judges. In either event, the assistant judges are to assist the main judge and to ensure an objective appraisal of the event.

In judging Kata contests, all judges' votes have equal value. Therefore, in these events, either main or assistant judges should observe the contesting and vote as he thinks best. He should keep his standards even if they vary from the other colleagues so that throughout the

contest his judging will be uniform. The main judge should set the standard of the point system and instruct the other judges when to vote, etc. He will be in charge of the contest as a whole.

In sparring, since this is competition between two people, the judge must be especially alert. It is not only much more difficult to make quick decisions necessary, as the judge has no time or space to contemplate, he must also be responsible for safety of the contestants. The main judge must have a feeling of oneness with the two participants, but at the same time not affect either one of them. His position in relation to the contestants is important so that he may see the activity clearly. He must be close enough to see well and yet not interfere with the contestants. He must be able to see and call points clearly. If he reacts to a point too slowly, he will lose control of the contest. Perhaps the best way to call points is to make a mental image of the point so that he can stop the contest and then analyze it. By making his mind's eye like a camera, the judge can register all the necessary factors at once, and then make the decision and explain to the contestants and the audience. He must be able to relate everything in a correct manner which means he must have the technique, the target, type of point and communicate all this in an authoritative manner. If necessary, he should call a halt to the sparring, then think and then act. The judge can always stop the action, then if there is no point, restart the match. The main judge should use his corner judges when there is any doubt in his mind; however, he should remember that his is the higher authority.

The side or corner judges of a sparring contest also have important duties. He is mainly to assist the main referee and is responsible to him. He watches the quarter quadrant of the ring which is closest to him. He may call a point if he thinks the main judge did not see it. However, his main job is to help the main judge when asked. He is to assist when the main judge cannot see due to positioning of the contestants, etc. Also, the corner judge should act if he thinks there is danger to the safety of the contestants.

While judging Karate contests, the judge should be aware that he is the key figure to control the efficient, effect and caliber of the contest. His actions will affect the tournament, and by that, the educational value of the tournament and greatly influence the students and their motivations.

COMMON WEAKNESSES OF AMERICANS STUDYING KARATE

Although Karate is a demanding sport, mentally and physically, and will tax the body of almost any beginner, there are some common factors in the American students studying Karate that are fairly common, and the instructor can count on finding them in an average class. In Karate, a great deal of suppleness and body flexibility is desirable, yet the areas that I shall mention usually need special developing.

The most common weakness or incorrect physical use of the body is usually the misuse of the shoulders. It is possible that the shoulders may be vastly overdeveloped in comparison with the rest of the body, but usually this is not the fact. A more common use of shoulder power is the failure to use the body as a unit, thereby causing the student to use the muscles in his upper shoulders and back when he wishes powerful movements.

One of the most common reasons for this lack of using the body is lack of the proper use of the mid-section or lower torso or abdomen. This can be caused by lack of muscle in this area, but again, it is usually caused not by lack of muscle but lack of correct application. Americans do not have the concept of lower body being the seat of power, and if they are aware of it, it does not really "sink in" or dominate their thinking when using the body. This is compounded by the fact that many Americans are in poor physical shape and the stomach muscles are usually the first to soften and deteriorate in such a situation. Therefore, when the lower torso muscles are not used, either from lack of development or lack of body connection, the student will use the muscles in the top of his shoulders and back to provide the power in his arm movements.

Still another reason that may contribute to this problem is the fact that Americans are conditioned to think of using the muscles of the back when wishing to make powerful arm motions. This also detracts from effective use of the body.

Sometimes while attempting to practice techniques requiring arm motions, students will take a stance which is either too low or too spread out for them to make a powerful base. The result of having a weak stance is much like that of trying to punch while floating in a swimming pool. Since the ground cannot be used as a fulcrum for the body working as a unit, the large muscles of the arms and shoulders are forced to work by themselves.

In any event, if the shoulders are being used for any of the given reasons, therapy or special training will have to be done or the student will not learn the correct muscle order, and will develop bad habits.

If the muscles of the stomach are weak and soft, sit-ups or other stomach exercises may be used. Especially useful are those which also develop the muscles of the ribs or side of the body along with the stomach muscles. If these muscles are sufficient, but the student is unable to use them properly, exercises which bring his attention to their use will help him to develop the

correct usage. Especially helpful for this is proper breathing, and since Americans do not usually practice breath control too much in their sports, it is not common for them to consciously use it. Therefore, breathing training will help develop body connection.

Some mental aspects which will help are careful and repeated explanation of the use of the lower stomach or “Hara.” By continually referring to this, the students gradually become cognizant of its importance. Another technique which will help is the explanation of how the muscles on the front of the body or “inside” muscles help in arm techniques, but that flexing or tightening the back muscles will not help. This can be done merely by having the student set his punch for resistance to shock by tensing first the back muscles and then the front muscles.

Although too high a stance is bad for balance and applications of power, students should not be encouraged to lower their stance to where they are unable to use their legs to support and strengthen the technique. Also, no matter how strong the legs are, if they are not of equal strength to the muscles of the body, there will be an imbalance of power and the body will use only the upper body muscles or at least not fully use the lower body and the floor as should be done.

Still another weakness of American students, which not only causes improper use of the upper body, but prevents body connection and incorrect use of the power that is developed by the body is a weak stance. In many instances, a weak stance is caused by physical limitations. Americans as a whole do not use their legs enough. This is usually caused by the American culture and environment, and results in poorly developed feet and/or toes, and weak knees, not to mention that the leg muscles themselves will be improperly developed. Americans usually do very little walking, and when they do, they are usually wearing shoes. Development of the feet and legs is very important for the instructor if he does not wish his students to be held back. If either the feet, knees or leg muscles are not properly developed and used, it will result in the student using his upper body muscles for power (much like our illusion to punching while over our head in water) or even if the body is working as one unit, much of the power will be dispersed. The stronger the student’s body power, the greater the dispersal. This will be caused by loss of balance or lack of ability to use the floor.

If the knees of the student are weak, it will be difficult to do any kicking techniques. It will also affect his stance and thereby, his ability to concentrate or make power. Not only that, but the instructor must always be on the alert for students injuring themselves. Since kicking techniques use knee snap in the kick, and extreme tension or torque in the support leg, this is a common cause of injuries.

Some American students have extremely stiff ankles. This prohibits them from taking a correct stance, or doing powerful shifting movements. Usually stiff ankles results in a high stance position, and all the inadequacies of techniques that must follow this condition.

Toes can seriously limit the student training also. The toes are important in grabbing the floor and making a strong stance. In other words, if toes are weak, feet cannot grab the floor. If feet cannot grab the floor, stance cannot be strong. If stance is not strong, shoulder power results or dispersal of the power the body does make cannot be concentrated and the technique has no power.

If attempting to build the student's legs, exercises for the knees should be done gradually but consistently as this is a very weak area for most Americans. Therefore, too much attention and care cannot be given this area. I think that the Karate kicking and stance techniques are in themselves the best exercise for developing the muscles of the legs. Stance training is very beneficial for both building muscles and strengthening the knees. Perhaps a few exercises to develop the muscles in the back of the thighs might be tried, as this will help snapping back on kicks and shifting.

For ankles, stance training is good, and warm-ups that emphasize stretching these muscles like squatting with the back straight and heels flat and then bouncing, or leaning against a wall and pushing with the heels flat on the ground. The amount of effort and time put into these exercises will usually repay itself by the student mastering stances, etc. much more quickly.

For the feet and toes, standing on toes is good, also flexing the toes and attempting to master coordination will help. Also, kicking will help strengthen the feet for developing kicking, and resistance to strain or injury of the feet when practicing.

In general, it was found by the President's Committee on Physical Fitness that Americans are weak in the legs and lower back. These two areas are very important for successful execution of Karate techniques. Therefore, for a method to help the student master Karate techniques and for physical education value, these areas should be developed. Another area to be developed is the hip or groin area. While this area is usually sufficiently strong, most Americans are abnormally stiff. The stretching and loosening of the muscles in this area will greatly affect all Karate techniques, either directly or indirectly. I do not think too much attention can be given to this area. Not only is a complete warm-up necessary, but stretching exercises amounting to physical therapy should be attempted if the instructor has the time.

Several exercises which might be included in a general one-hour class as they take little time and add greatly to strength and muscle development are leg lifts. Lie on your back and have the leg about six inches off the floor, then open legs and close, then raise the legs until they are vertical, again lower. Any variation which uses this will build the muscles in the small of the back and also the lower stomach area.

For building legs, knees and feet, squat kicks are very good. Squat on the floor with the entire foot touching the floor, then stand up and kick, squat all the way down and repeat with the

other leg. This builds the muscles of the thigh, strengthens the knees and loosens the ankles. It also teaches snap back and body weight and power control.

In a general class, time is at a premium and there is only a small amount of time which can be devoted to calisthenics and auxiliary exercises. However, if attention will be paid to the weak areas and the calisthenics I gave or to other exercises which will develop the weak areas, I think that the instructor will be gratified by having the students master the techniques in a considerably faster time. It should be the ideal of the instructor to always attempt to improve the abilities of his students and to cut down the time necessary for them to train in order to receive the benefits from Karate. I believe that by building stomach or abdomen so that the student can feel and use these parts of the body, and by developing the legs and feet so he may use correct Karate stances, the student can learn the principles of Karate dynamics in a shorter period of time.





Sensei Greer Golden in Alaska



Remembering Sensei Golden



Even the masters practiced kihon at last year's Master Camp. (From left): Takayuki Mikami, Greer Golden, Master Nakayama (demonstrating age-uke), Shigeru Takashina (behind Nakayama) and Yutaka Yaguchi. Taking mental notes in the rear are campers Hiroyoshi Okazaki and Masonobu Nihei.



Photos courtesy of various ISKF members from the Mid-America ISKF Facebook page



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