



Newsletter

June 1990

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A Word From Shehan

I saw a show on TV - Billy the Kid. Authenticity was not the primary concern in the show, but one thing stuck in my mind. Billy said to his gang, "Do you trust in yourself? If you don't, you'll be slow and if you're slow you're dead."

In the crisis of life there may be no one there to trust in, except yourself. We are alone from the cradle to the grave. We meet most of the critical times alone, we die alone. Friends, family and teachers may wave from the shore, but we go into the ocean alone.

We may train until we develop great strength, technique and speed, and still be ill-prepared not only for the crises but also the grind of life.

There is great power and faith deep in each of us. As you train and meditate, it comes to you. This is the gift of the "eternal spirit". My Lord said "I will never leave or forsake you." Walk on! Walk on! With hope in your heart and you'll never walk alone" "The Kingdom of heaven is within you."

News Items:

Donna and I wish to thank Marc Travanti and his students for a good time and great hospitality in New York. I was impressed with the high quality of their work. Marc is now a Nidan, worthy of all our respect.

It was a great April. Several of our highest ranking students were at Chuck St. Pierre board of revue and seminar in Green Bay, Wisconsin where his son Jim was promoted to Shodan. We were greatly honored by the participation of Sifu Bill Penca in the seminar. We met representatives of other associations as well as Chucks several schools. There are some great martial artists in the North. Jim looked good!

Brendon O'Connell and Rodney Greene received the ranks of Shodan. We were so proud of them!

I want to thank so many people, whose work makes the "Yin Yang Do" possible - Our president Richard Bruno, our executive secretary Al Gomez and so many others that inspire me and keep the association going and growing. As you know, I am more interested in quality than quantity.

Sayonara
Shehan Foster

Birthday Party for Shehan

We will be celebrating Shehans birthday this year on July 7, 1990 at Bristol Oaks Country Club, 16801 - 75 street; Bristol, Wisconsin 53104, (414) 857-2302. Located 3 miles west of Interstate - 94 on the south side of Highway 50. Social hour will begin at 5 pm, with dinner at 6 pm.

The buffet menu includes baked sugar cured ham, broiled Cod fillet with creole sauce, buffet salads, potatoes, vegetables, dessert, rolls, butter and a beverage. The price will be \$13 which includes tax and tip. Please call Dick Bruno with any question

From the President:

Richard K. Bruno

There comes a time in every student's mind when he/she says, "Why study karate?" The lay people only know the martial arts through the movies. Even the most "educated" still relate the martial arts to violence. The other day when I was talking to a person about the martial arts, he said "Well isn't that what's it's all about - fighting?" This person was "educated". He had a master's degree and beyond. However, he failed to realize or understand what the martial arts really is to the serious student. The highest level of the martial artist is "cultivating" The mind. The first level of black belt means you have passed the "minimum" skills in physical development. The next step is to develop your mental aspects. What are some of the mental aspects of the martial artist? The following are a few I would like to elaborate on at this time:

- 1) Control
- 2) Visualization
- 3) Meditation
- 4) Spiritual Development

Control of the mind means many things to the martial artist. This *does not* mean a martial artist does not get upset or angry. However, a "controlled" rational anger is what one feels when he or she does kata. We all get upset in everyday affairs - we are emotional animals. Consequently the martial artist has to "control" his or her physical anger because of negative results. We cannot always run away from conflict. Conflict is inevitable in life. Some good results sometimes come out of non-violent conflict.

Visualization when we do our kata and perception of the opponent is very important. We sometimes call this the "imaginary" opponent. The martial artist is at one with the opponent. They think and move as his opponent will to receive his downfall. Implementation of each move is only part of the form and the form is part of each move. Again we have the paradox of the yin and yang concept that comes into the picture.

Meditation is an integral part of the martial artist repertoire of mental aspirations. As every student knows

there are different levels of physical developments and mental developments in the martial arts. At first the beginner has difficulty "emptying" his/her mind. The sensei or sifu says "Think of nothing". The beginner says, "How do I do this?" At first he/she may wish to think of one concept. (ie: a color, or concrete object that has pleasant connotations) Meditation relaxes the mind thereby making us more acute in our mental concentration. Within us all is the mindless primitive form which we evolved from our species. However, there is also the calmness and gentleness that meditation can cultivate in our lives.

Spiritual development involves many levels of understanding for the martial artist. We all know people who are financially solvent, educated, and seemingly in a high position. However if self-centeredness and selfishness dominates their personality, then this person is a failure. We often judge success by monetary values. How big is your house or how much money do you make per year?

We are all students in life. Unfortunately some of us never learn, our lessons - even at the black belt level. One can be a black belt physically but never reach any spiritual understanding. There are many paths to the same goals in life. When a sensei claims, "My style of karate is the best", he/she is at a superficial level. All styles have something to offer us - we only need to open our eyes. If we have only thought of ourselves and quickly come to the dojo and quickly leave then we are lacking in spiritual development. Only when we have taken the time for others and taught others can we be at a beginning level of understanding. For to teach others is the path of learning for ourselves. We all "think" we are busy and perhaps we are in our own little world. Indeed the one who has helped others along the path of life are the true winners. These are the people who will live forever in the hearts of generations to come. These are the people who are on the road of spiritual fulfillment.

The following article, written by William F. Penca, comes to us via the *Tao Shaung Society Newsletter*
Rhineland, Wisconsin.

Gaze to the heavens and sit upon a cloud with me, and remember days gone by; then let's look together for tomorrow before tomorrow flies by. For God's sake don't sleep or you will wake up days past and suddenly you have more to remember than you have to look forward to.

We study for years: listening, working, practicing -- so that, finally, in the end, or maybe it is the beginning, we will be called Sifu. But it is at this great moment that the world changes in a bitter sweet kind of way. All the confidence that we worked to attain is actually ours to have and use and that is great. All the strength, technique and power is ours to use, and that is great. We become wholer than we were before we see that our realization is really quite humbling in the vast sea of knowledge and it is more than overwhelming.

Suddenly we are right back where we started, a beginner, but more mature. Now we see some of what our future holds. What we think we know is hard enough to hang on to, but it is a Sifu's job to grasp the unknown and make it known. So a Sifu must be a perceiver, and at the same time a doer and a leader of men and women.

So with this spirit a Sifu teaches his students to live their lives as if it were a technique and practices timing, patience and intent with discipline. These are the same principles that make any technique workable. So without a Sifu's persistence on these points a technique is just a technique, and if a student fails to see this point, the student's life will lack the substance to some day perceive as a Sifu perceives.

In order for someone to get a lot they need to be able to give a lot, so it makes sense that the Sifu gets the most because he is in the position to give the most. Most of what a Sifu is about is what he does with the knowledge he has gained through the teaching of his Sifu.

Sifu's know that knowledge feeds on knowledge. The little we do know can grow to the more we do later.

Sifu means teacher so when we finally become a Sifu we also become a teacher and it is at this time a Sifu really starts to feel like he is starting to grow as a teacher as well as a person because now they come in contact with the responsibility bestowed upon them. Most of us don't really know how much work it is to be a Sifu until we become one.

When a student calls at 3 o'clock in the morning wondering what to do and, like a parent, you give advice knowing that this student will ultimately make his/her own choice and they should. But as a Sifu you see that the decision that they make will more than likely affect their training. But with a big sigh you focus your intent on those who are there, and if you are good at practicing what you preach, there will always be a student with a need to learn.

It is also my opinion that to be a good Sifu one must teach, otherwise call yourself a blackbelt. Let the title Sifu be reserved for those who make the sacrifice and effort to teach. I really think that to be a good Sifu one must have a martial imagination and a thirst for knowledge and the ability to act upon that knowledge. If this is true about you, then welcome to the realm.

It has been a long time friend. Your handshake feels good but somewhat different, more tried perhaps ... your eyes too, there is a depth I did not remember. I find beauty in this and a sureness that can be felt. Perhaps you have years to draw your strength from. Stand ready, here comes the future, quick look, here it goes into the past.

We live history and grab for the future and the now ... well it is sometimes too close to see.

William F. Penca
FuChen KungFu
Founder Tao Shaung Society
Vice President, Northcentral Black Belt Federation

"Self" in Karate-do

By Al Reingold

Zen whether practiced in the martial arts or through other mediums, teaches "Selflessness" -- the abolition of the ego in favor of the center. Through this process one seeks to attain *mushin*, or "no mind", a state of heightened awareness, sensitivity, relaxation and control.

Another variant of "self" in Karate-do deals with a more Occidental interpretation of the word, namely in terms of "selfishness" rather than "selflessness". The life in a Dojo inculcates a striving toward the growth of the character rather than limiting the development to the merely physical. Practitioners with more experience are called upon to share their knowledge freely with students new to the art, thus naturally imbuing spirit of familial development as opposed to the cutthroat competition that is prevalent in many other facets of our lives. There is no room for "politics" in a Dojo, for the goal is to diminish the artificially imposed importance of the self, to allow oneself to submit to a higher authority. It is here that humility, an integral component of the art as we study it, comes into play. To quote Sensei Lynn Philyaw, "One of the hardest things to teach a Karate student is the paradox of releasing a false sense of control in order to gain real control."

To let the "self" go is indeed a very elusive thing, both in concept and in application. However, if and once this is achieved, the practitioner grows in at least two ways. His ego no longer fogs his perception of the world around him; his acuity becomes clearer, more focused. His mind and body merge, allowing for a more centered approach to life. Second, he begins to realize that he does not exist solely for himself, but rather he maintains a responsibility toward his fellow man. Respect, another primary component of our Karate-do, constantly serves to remind us that we learn from those more experienced to help those who seek guidance. Respect, self respect, also demands that we turn our gaze inward, introspectively exploring our own potential.

Lao Tzu says in the *Tao Te Ching*:

"He who knows others is clever;
He who knows himself has discernment.
He who overcomes others has force;
He who overcomes himself is strong."

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Lessons from Kata

By Bob Nelson

There is more to be learned from kata than just movements and breathing. Many of the principles of kata can and should be applied to a karateka's everyday life. This brief article is an attempt to show how lessons learned from kata practice can be applied to life outside of the dojo.

Do each move in a kata with the same care and concentration because each move is as important as the one preceding it, and the one to follow it. This means the karateka must concentrate on the here and now, even if it is for a second or two on a particular movement. The karateka should apply this philosophy to their daily lives and be aware and centered at all times. To use an old cliché "Live life one day at a time." relates to a kata movement, in that the movements should be done one at a time. The karateka should not live in the past or live in the future, but for the present. This is the same as the kata movements, where once the movement is done, let it go. There should be no dwelling on movements to come, as concentration should be on the present movement.

The execution of a kata should demonstrate the internal and external strength of the karateka. External strength is best noticed in properly executed techniques which are done with control. This type of "strength" outside of the dojo is best seen in the way a karateka walks. The karateka will walk with the head and neck erect, the shoulders straight, and confident stride. The internal strength of a karateka is not as easy to detect as external because it is something which must be felt, as well as seen. The internal strength can be best seen and felt in the karateka's breath control. The breathing should come from the saki-tanden, and should be timed with the movements of the kata. The spacing of the breath with the movements is just as important as the move itself. This "internal" strength outside of the dojo is best observed in the way a karateka handles stressful situations. Does the person explode and lose breath control, or do they remain composed and in control of their breath.

The above ideas are only a few of the lessons which can be learned through kata. So next time you watch a kata or execute a kata try to think of ways to extend the principles to your life outside of the dojo.

The Focused Karate Punch: Minimizing Contact Time

By Al Gomez

The focused karate punch which we strive for is delivered in a different manner than a "haymaker". The physical difference between these two punches can be explained using some basic physics principles.

The karate punch can be seen as a collision between two bodies. Let's look at one aspect of the focused punch. When the hand comes into contact with an object, the hand must contact the object for a very short time to impart a maximum force. A longer contact time would transfer more momentum to the object there by minimizing force. This would relegated the punch to that of the haymaker.

A form of Newtons Second Law is useful as an explanation in this type of collision. Shown mathematically why this short contact time is necessary for a powerful focused punch we have:

$$\text{Force} = \frac{\text{Change in Momentum}}{\text{Change in Time}}$$

Where:

Force = force applied on the hand and object

Change in Momentum = resistance to change in motion

Time = the amount of time the collision lasted

Substituting *fictional* numbers into the above equation we have:

Force	$\frac{1000}{1 \text{ second}}$	1,000
Force	$\frac{1000}{.1 \text{ second}}$	10,000
Force	$\frac{1000}{.01 \text{ second}}$	100,000

As the time in the denominator in the previous equations approaches zero the force will increase dramatically.

Ideally a well focused punch would transfer very little momentum and time would be kept to a minimum. An example would be breaking a board. When breaking a board we do not want to "push" with the hand. We must focus for an effective break.

The "snap" of a focused punch has importance in the scheme of things. What must occur for a properly delivered punch is something called an impulse. More aptly put one must have a "snap" or "bounce" in their punch. To only stop a punch at the end of its path is fine, but to "bounce it back" will give a much more dangerous punch. All this must occur during the "small window of time" in which we focus.

In general, the focused punch must stop before the arm is fully extended. This is to reduce the shock to the elbow and shoulder joints. Once again it is during this small "window" just prior to hyperextension in which we can experiment with the minimization of time.

I have presented only one *physical* aspect of a punch in terms of physics. There are numerous examples in karate and other martial arts which could be cited. Next time you practice, give some thought to how you are delivering the punch and try to incorporate the minimizing of time. Good Luck!

"Thirty minutes of the horse stance will show the difference between fantasy and reality."

Shehan Foster, April 28, 1990 N.Y.C.

Shehan Foster Visits New York City Dojo N.Y.C. Yin Yang Do

This spring our dojo had the pleasure of inviting Shehan Foster and his lovely wife Donna to visit us for a long weekend. The Fosters stayed with sensei Travanti and were treated to a full schedule of New York events.

Shehans' presence was to most of us an introduction to the revered man who is the foundation of our karate system. Some of our time with him was obviously spent in the dojo. During workouts, he guided us through katas and was stressing the application of slow karate movements. He introduced the origins and principles of the "drunken monkey." Shehan also spoke about the spirit of karate and the dojo as a family. This made us realize our responsibility not only to each other, but to the extended Yin Yang Do family.

To celebrate the Fosters' visit, a party was thrown in their honor. The high point occurred when a member of our class, Dave "Tiny" DeLong performed a hard-driving rock-n-roll rendition of "You Gotta Be Cool For The Shehan"; a song he composed especially for the occasion. Reverend Foster was so taken wit Dave's song that he returned the gesture with two American folk ballads. In addition to his musical talent and his engaging stories, we also appreciated his ability to move with imperceptible ease from one subject to the next and to temper intensity with humor. The "social" Shehan was as inspiring and surprising as the "Master" Shehan. His words and actions seemed to be a constant demonstration of Yin Yang principles.

After their visit, we returned to our dojo with many thoughts to ponder and movements to practice. Shehan and Donna left New York City after experiencing some of its cultural and culinary diversity. It was a weekend best described as "glorious beyond compare."