



Newsletter

December 1992

*Dedicated to our karate brother Rich Walter.
May you have been granted peace.*



A Word From Shihan

Mastery

We all seek mastery over the predators of life. Sickness, accidents, criminals, and vicious animals have always stalked mankind. (When I speak of He I mean mankind. Gender is not the distinction here.) We find that mastery of self is at the heart of all victory. There are three elements in our triumph. These are; 1) fury, 2) control and 3) serenity.

There are stages of adjustment when one is told that he has a short time to live. We first say that it is not true; then some try to bargain with God; we then become furious, and finally comes acceptance. Fury (not hate) is a gift of God for it casts out terror. We train to call up great anger when we are faced with criminal attack. Never let thoughts of what the enemy may do to you fill your mind. Give all! Body, mind and spirit to stop what must be stopped.

Second is control. Fury without control makes a man a monster and a stupid monster! When a hunter goes out to kill a man eating tiger he thinks of the severed hand of the pitiful victim. He says, "I'll kill this S.O.B. if its the last thing I ever do." Then he lets his mind take control and so survives. The tiger does not.

Third is serenity. I do not know if one has to go through fury and control to get to serenity. I suspect that he usually has to. There is a vast source of power for each of us who follows the way! We come to know the great power is love. We do not walk alone any more. Beyond fears frustration and failure is peace that passes understanding. We can say with the great warrior David, "Yea though a walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil for thou art with me."

May the eternal spirit grant you peace.

Shihan Foster

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The Betrayed

Chuck Asher

Highland Park Yin Yang Do

At various times in the Do, my fellow karate ka express their anger at being betrayed. They are dedicated to the art and steeped in its philosophy. They practice with a religious fervor, master their Kata, and yet they still feel they have been somehow tricked. And in many ways they may be right. Worst of all, the culprit, the deceiver, the trickster is among all of us, making the pain even greater.

At some point in time either because of age or illness, our own body decides to take its' revenge for all the years of physical abuse we have heaped upon it. Some times it screams its resentment, while other times it lets us know in subtle ways. The end result is the same. We feel betrayed and angry that we can no longer adequately perform the physical demands of karate.

I may still throw that kick as high as the young students, the only difference being, he is still standing afterwards. I can still break with my hands, unfortunately, it IS usually my own fingers. And I guess it begins to tell when the word "matte" sound so much sweeter than "hajime".

I am trying very hard to accept and adjust to the sands of time, but the sands are very abrasive. It is very depressing, but only because of the false goals which I have set for myself. I am confusing the "sport" with the "art". I must learn that one can perform at any pace, and almost in any manner and still preserve the art form. The difference is the state of mind. I must learn that if in my heart and mind I remain true to the art, what the body does is only secondary.

I once heard Shihan Foster say that we all can run a mile, it just takes some of us a little longer.

From the Treasurer

Al Ferguson

I would like to take this opportunity to reacquaint myself with all the old members who may have scattered to different parts of the country and introduce myself to all new members of the Yin Yang Do Karate Association. I am honored to be the new Association treasurer. I have a fresh batch of Association patches for all and new "Double Ax" patches available for all Yudansha. I also have Dan and Kyu certificates. (Lifetime membership - \$25 (Includes a patch), Patches - \$5, Kyu Certificates - \$5, Dan Certificates - \$10.) So if you have any questions or need to order please contact me

On a sad note, Tuesday November 17th Rich Walter passed away. Rich was from the KYF Dojo and was only 54 years old. He was one of my favorite people in the Association. Rich had a very dry sense of humor and was well liked and admired by everyone who knew him. We all miss him and send our condolences to his wife Sandy whom he affectionately called "Princess".

Zanshin Do Karate Club

George Zimmer

The term "Zanshin" is comprised of two characters. The first one, "zan" means, to remain or to continue. The second character, "shin", means heart or mind. The study of Zanshin Do emphasizes the life long practice of developing and extending Chi, and continuing the concept of "spirit" after a movement or act. For example, we continue to feel spirit after we finish a kata or session of kumite, and we believe that one's spirit continues grow after death. We extend Chi beyond the physical parameters of our body and we seek a relationship with a spiritual presence outside of our bodies in an effort to enhance our lives. And while most Zanshin practice has been embedded in the study of Zen as it relates to Japanese influence, Zanshin has practical applications to American Karateka and contemporary study.

Practicing kata is not merely a physical exercise but rather, a formal exercise uniting the body, mind, and spirit at a moment in time. This is most frequently described as "moving zen". Zanshin literally means perfect finish. However, Zanshin as it relates to Bushido means to continue the spirit and open the mind/heart after the physical act has been completed.

As we are aware that our spirit and soul continue to grow after death, and we continue to love after making love, and as we continue to experience feelings after we have completed a kata, so, we study Zanshin. The purposeful act of practicing Zanshin Do requires the martial artist to open the mind and heart while moving in a deliberate yet semi-conscious state. When the kata has been completed, the mind and spirit continue to grow and contribute to our understanding. Allowing this state of mind to exist and flourish is the practice for which our club is named.

Should you see a Karateka wear the patch attached below, please keep in mind that our Karate Club is subordinate to the Yin Yang Do Karate Association and to Shihan Foster. After 12 years of conducting classes, we have developed a sense of mission and purpose that is to be identified as the Zanshin Do Karate Club. Our meetings are set for Sunday evenings between 5:00 - 6:30 PM. Our classes are held at Washington Junior High School, in Kenosha, Wisconsin. For more information, feel free to contact me



From the President

Richard K. Bruno

As this year comes to a close, we can reflect on some of our accomplishments in our association. I would like to congratulate Al Ferguson as our new treasurer and Al Gomez as our new Vice President/Secretary. I'm sure they will do an exceptional job as our new officers. We have had several new schools formed in the last few years and we want to welcome them in the association. Ron Zeith has started a new school at the Danish Brotherhood in Kenosha, WI and has had several promotions. Al Reingold has also opened a new club in Atlanta, GA and has had a successful year teaching the martial arts. Jack Delinsky has opened a school in Chanhassen, MN and DuWayne Balk has opened a school in Wausau, WI. We wish them a healthy and prosperous future. If anyone knows of any other new schools in our association, drop us a line so we can recognize them.

In the last several months I have had the pleasure of visiting some of our schools in Illinois. I have visited Lynn Philyaw's school in Waukegan (Far Eastern Arts) and have visited Bob Tondi's school in Highland Park. Both schools have talented people who are learning from excellent instructors. I have learned a few techniques from watching these instructors and their students. I would like to thank them for having me as their guest.

I have also attended our headquarters dojo in Kenosha, WI under the instruction of Shihan Foster. Shihan always keeps the door open in Kenosha for anyone who wishes to visit during the year. Shihan Foster is celebrating his 55th year in the martial arts. Without doubt he is the most experienced caucasian in the U.S.A. and perhaps the world. He is very impressive to watch and learn from regardless of what rank someone is in his/her development.

Well I also have to mention our Holiday Party, January 9, 1993. We will be at the Danish Brotherhood in Kenosha, WI and we hope this new date is less hectic for everyone. It will give us an uplift in the month of January.

Editors Note:

In order to keep our costs to an absolute minimum I send the newsletter to one person within a dojo. The dojo can then make copies and distribute as necessary. Thank you for all your help!

The spring newsletter will be out June of 1993. Please have any articles to me by May 23, 1993.

Any questions, comments, suggestions, etc. please direct to - Al Gomez,

I hope to see you at the January party!

Kata: Historic Tradition or Artistic Interpretation?

Robert Nelson

Occasionally, a student in Karate will come to me with the question, "Why does a kata done by a student from another dojo look so different from the way we are taught in this dojo, even though we practice the same style of Karate?"

The best explanation I can give is that kata is a true art from and that no two Sensei will execute the kata in exactly the same manner.

The movements of the kata may be the same, that is tradition, but the timing and emphasis may be slightly different, thus making the kata look different. Some instructors may even change a movement in the kata to fit their personal interpretation of the form and teach their interpretation to their students.

Think back to when you learned a new kata. Your instructor was teaching a pattern, a set number of movements. Compare the art of a kata to that of the art of drawing a picture of a person.

The art teacher may first draw an outline of a person (a stick figure). This outline could be anyone at this point. The first time you learn the movements to a new kata, you are learning a similar outline. As the artist continues, more features and colors begin to appear. The artist is putting his interpretation of the person's features on the paper.

After you understand the basic movements of the kata (the outline) you will, as the artist did start to add features and "colors" to the kata. By that, I mean you will go past the basic outline of the kata and develop an interpretation of the movements. This interpretation of the kata can change over time because of exposure to new experiences, abilities and skills. Each time you prepare to do the kata, think of a blank slate which you are about to turn into a masterpiece. This "work of art" may seem very "sticklike" at first, but with time and practice will improve and begin to develop it's own features and colors.

Kata can also be compared to a piece of music. The sheet music gives a musician a pattern. The musician will interpret the music using his own ability and style. Can you think of an old song that someone has "remade"? No doubt, while similar, the song will be different from the original tune. A kata is similar in that each time you do it you are reinterpreting the form. The kata pattern may continue to remain the same, but the timing and rhythm may be slightly different.

A kata is like a fine painting or beautiful music. While the form may be the same, it has a feeling and look which is usually unique to the individual student's interpretation. This uniqueness is not something to be scorned or treated with less respect, but should be observed in such a way that you may learn from another's interpretation and possibly come to a new understanding of a traditional artform.

Empowerment-A Case for Women's Self-Defense

Lynn Philyaw

Three years ago, I and three others designed a 15-hour women's self-defense training called ACT (Assault Control Tactics). Our combined expertise includes the fields of martial arts, law enforcement, social work and counseling, education, and communication. Either through the Far Eastern Arts (FEA) Center or through my high school adult education program, we've trained hundreds of women, refining the program as we went. We have a long way to go before I'm completely satisfied with our efforts, but we've made a start, and, as the primary director and coordinator of the training, I've learned a great deal about the problem of sexual assault, myself and the challenges of putting together such a program.

I've come to realize that sexual assault is an increasing national problem. Since no more than 20% rapes are reported, statistics vary, but a conservative estimate is that one in four women in this country will be sexually assaulted during her lifetime. A rape occurs on the average of one every minute, and no age or social group is immune. Moreover, "survivors" of rape whom I've talked with and heard about are profoundly affected long thereafter. One young woman in a recent class of ours has suffered for the past four years from "post traumatic stress disorder," a malady similar to that experienced by several Viet Nam vets. Along with haunting nightmares, she often reexperiences the ordeal when awake and will "blank out" while she's going through it. As a result, she can neither hold down a job nor enjoy a normal relationship with a man. In fact, forcing herself through each of the five ACT ! sessions was a tribute to her bravery and a sign of her desperate attempt to get beyond this experience.

This October, I and the head of our counseling department attended and were presenters at the second annual International Conference on Sexual Assault on Campus in Orlando, Florida. (We'd been instrumental in developing one of the first, to our knowledge, serious assault awareness programs at the high school level. At any rate, we were the only high school in the country represented at the conference.) Dr. Hein is a man who is a seasoned high school counselor and had been educated to the statistics on sexual assault last year. Still, he had not been fully committed to the program until he heard three survivors of rape speak about their experience and its aftermath. Their words brought him to tears. I don't think any of us who hear such traumas shared can ever again see it as just another social problem. It's one that potentially concerns us all, male or female. Because rape is a violent rather than a sexual act and one born out of anger and frustration rather than desire, it will continue to escalate until social and economic conditions improve. (When the Soviet Union began to unravel, incidents of sexual assault and rape rose dramatically.) Until then, women have to do what they can to protect themselves, as must the rest of us.

The challenge of teaching a course like ACT ! lies in being sensitive to the needs of women like the one above and in determining how to "reprogram" their responses to threat and their concept of themselves as potential victims. From early on, our parents and our culture "program" with certain attitudes, behaviors and values. Unfortunately, along with acquiring many positive traits, most women are programmed

to be perfect "victims" -- compliant, physically passive, nurturing, placating. (This is still true, fundamentally, despite all the talk of the "liberated female.")

I didn't realize fully until recently, how well-suited, for a male, I am for training women in these skills, at least in empathizing with their plight. Like many of us, I came to karate for self-defense; however, I had an even greater need than most. Since childhood, physical and even verbal confrontations were very foreign and threatening to me. Like many females in our culture, I was a comforter and nurturer by nature and upbringing -- not one who sought competition and conquest, relatively passive rather than aggressive. I didn't even feel I had the right to feel angry; instead, I would seek to understand my part in the problem. Over the years, I've had to learn to express my anger and to feel comfortable with fighting. Now I can do both when it's appropriate, even relish them, but it was a challenge getting to this point, and I can easily understand those who have to "reprogram" themselves in order to defend themselves.

Aside from understanding that they have a right to defend themselves (causing pain and injury) and that they have the ability to do so, students must learn to turn the fear response into productive anger -- for anger and fear are simply opposite sides of the same coin. It is gratifying to see timidity and uncertainty transformed into an assurance and power of which few thought themselves capable. Chances are that the great majority of these women will never be assaulted, but, equipped with a new self-knowledge and options to compliance, they will no longer walk or drive with a depleting and daily anxiety that, for many, hovers all too near.

As I mentioned above, the ACT ! training is still in a process of development. Any single program, rather it's 3 hours or 24, can only create awareness, change some attitudes and equip students with temporary skills. Reinforcement is needed, and I will fill this gap with refresher courses, with advanced training, and with video-tapes to provide a work-out and to reinforce techniques. Hard materials will include a work book and video tapes. My eventual aim is to provide training and instructional guidelines and materials for people who will teach the courses in schools and communities nation-wide. It will be a program in which instructors, materials and advertising costs are paid by student fees. (The current fee is \$125, though no one is turned away because of lack of funds; those who can't afford the regular fee pay what they can.) I'm currently working on obtaining college accreditation so that instructor trainees could receive academic credit for the course. At present, we have three ACT ! classes scheduled: Highland Park, IL, in April and June; and Waukegan, IL, in late January.

If you have any advice, help to offer or questions, please call me at home (708-623-3113) or at the Center (360-1050). This is a project I strongly believe in. As the Shihan explains, the knight on our patch represents the chivalric virtues, one of which is defending the weak, helping those most in need. Today, this might better be translated into "empowering" those who feel at the mercy of the strong so they might maintain their own integrity and lives in the face of those who would threaten them.