



# KDA Today

Karate Do Academy, Westlake, Ohio

Fall 2018

Karatedo.net



*"Bowling"*  
Artist - Gianna Crimaldi

*From Sensei Jim.....*

In this issue of KDA Today, I would like to share some research I did into the "art of practice" Our classes usually end with the Senseis encouraging students to practice what they have been taught. But, how exactly to practice may be a question in your mind. If so, you may want to read carefully.

The following excerpt is from a recent book called "Peak". Its author is Anders Ericsson who is a PHD and professor of psychology at Florida State. Ericsson has spent 30 years studying chess champions, violin

virtuosos, star athletes, and memory mavens to find what makes them excel and how they practice or train. His findings prove that you do not need innate talent to excel, but you do need to nurture what potential you have by using the proper methods of motivation and practice.

He terms this method "deliberate practice". It will reveal some new ideas you may want to incorporate into your own training and teaching. But, you will also notice that we have been intuitively doing and saying many things correctly as his research shows.

In short, deliberate practice is characterized by the following traits:

Deliberate practice develops skills that other people have already figured out how to do and for which effective training techniques have been established. The practice regimen should be designed and overseen by a teacher or coach who is familiar with the abilities of expert performers and how those abilities can best be developed.

Deliberate practice takes place outside one's comfort zone and requires a student to constantly try things that are just beyond his or her current abilities. Thus, it demands near maximum effort, which is generally not enjoyable.

Deliberate practice involves well-defined specific goals and often involves improving some aspect of the target performance; it is not aimed at some vague overall improvement. Once an overall goal has been set, a teacher or coach will develop a plan for making a series of small changes that will add up to the desired larger change. Improving some aspect of the target performance allows a performer to see that his or her performances have been improved by the training.

Deliberate practice is deliberate, that is, it requires a person's full attention and conscious actions. It is not enough to simply follow a teacher or coach's direction. The student must concentrate on the specific goal for his or her practice activity so that adjustments can be made to control practice.

Deliberate practice involves feedback and modification of efforts in response to that feedback. Early in the training process, much of the feedback will come from the teacher or coach, who will monitor progress, point out problems, and offer ways to address those problems. With time and experience, students must learn to monitor themselves, spot mistakes, and adjust accordingly. Such self-monitoring requires effective mental representations. (The ability to "see" it correctly in your mind).

Deliberate practice both produces and depends on effective mental representations. Improving performance goes hand in hand with improving mental representations; as one's performance improves, the representations become more and more detailed and effective. In turn making it possible to improve even more. Mental representations make it possible to monitor how one is doing, both in practice and in actual performance. They show the right way to do something and allow one to notice when doing something wrong and correct it.

Deliberate practice nearly always involves building or modifying previously acquired skills by focusing on particular aspects of those skills and working to improve them specifically; over time, this step-by-step improvement will eventually lead to expert performance. Because of the way that new skills are built on top of existing skills, it is important for teachers to provide beginners with correct fundamental skills in order to minimize the chance that the student will have to relearn those fundamental skills later when at a more advanced level.

I hope that you can gain some insight from this research and use your practice more effectively and with better results.

See you in the dojo. Kiai!!!

# May Promotions



Not Pictured  
Grady - Orange  
Quin - Brown 3



## May Promotions



## July Promotions



Sammy – Orange

Teja – Orange

Not Pictured

Harrison – Orange

## September Promotions



Orion - Yellow



Erin - Green



Marina - Green

Not Pictured  
Reza – Green



Ryan - Yellow

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## **Work to Eliminate the “Modified” Forward Balance Stance**

-- by *Sensei Chris*

For some time now, I have emphasized the need for a correct forward balance stance where the student is facing forward with shoulders, belt, hips and both feet facing in the same direction. Oftentimes, I see a student revert to a “modified” forward balance stance where the front leg and foot is facing forward, but the back foot is at an angle. It looks like a cross between a fighting stance and a back balance stance. There are times for either a fighting stance or back balance stance, but not when the kata or technique at issue calls for a forward balance stance. This modified stance causes the student to be too upright and not well grounded. And, it just looks bad. The solution—turn your back foot so that both feet are facing forward. Do it every time you move, forward and backward, into a forward balance stance. Having both feet in the same direction—pointing forward—forces the whole body forward. Remember to keep your legs far enough apart, with the front leg bent and the back leg straight, so that you are firmly planted. It takes time and effort to break bad habits, but worth the effort.

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## **Teaching**

-- by *Gavin*

My favorite thing in karate is teaching students. I like it because it helps me with my karate skills and I am a visualizer so I work well when I see it. I think all blue and higher belts should teach and I think it is the best for all of us. Teach or not teach, it is your choice. But I think we learn best by teaching and it is working well for me. So take time out on Friday's or Saturdays. I do this and I believe it is important.

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## **Sparring**

-- by *Nolie*

One of my favorite things to do in karate is sparring, here are the reasons why. First, you don't know what is coming from the other person, like a kick or a punch! You always have to be ready. Second, I love

when I get to do freestyle sparring because you can do any technique you want! I personally like to do hook punches because I am shorter and hook punches sometimes can go high. Lastly, I like to go really fast so my partner doesn't have time to think about what move I may do next.

There are a lot of things to remember when you are sparring. First, keep your eyes up. If you don't you will get hit and it will hurt you. Second, try to focus on what you're doing. If you focus, you will do better. Third, cover your ribs with your elbows. If you don't you will get hit in the ribs and I don't think you want that. Also, try to block everything because if you keep doing that you will get better at blocking. This is important so you don't keep doing the same block every time.

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## **What is “Pinan”?**

-- by *John*

In our dojo, the word “pinan” is used as a name for a handful of our katas. As an orange, yellow, blue, purple, and brown (3rd class) belt, we learn a “pinan” kata. Even though we have all of this exposure to this word, we are unaware of its meaning.

We are taught that “kata” (Japanese) means “form” (English). I have found out that “pinan” means “kata” (English). Despite the fact that our terms are translated to Japanese, “pinan” is Chinese, and “pinan” (Chinese) means “heian” (Japanese). In the end, “heian” (Japanese) means “kata” (English) and “kata” (Japanese) means “form” (English).

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## **The top five reasons why you should do karate**

-- by *Ryan*

5. You will get a better workout than in school gym class.
4. You will make new friends.
3. You learn balance, self-discipline, flexibility, core strength and self-confidence.
2. You learn another language.
1. It's fun!

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## **Karate Reflections**

-- by Marina

When I first stepped into the dojo, I was faced with so many new things to learn and do. In my opinion, every different part in karate has nice aspects to it, as well as challenges. Here are some of the things that you get to do in karate, and what I think about them.

**Katas:** One fun thing about katas is that you get to move across the floor, and you get to learn a new kata for every new belt and for some belts, you get to learn multiple. One challenge is that you have to memorize and perfect each new kata.

**Escapes:** One fun thing about escapes is that you get to work with someone else. One challenge is making sure that you don't do anything too hard and hurt the person you're working with.

**Japanese:** One fun thing about Japanese is that you get to learn another language. One challenge is that there are a lot of terms to learn.

**Sparring:** One fun thing about sparring is that you get to work with someone else, and you get to move around. One challenge is that you have to think fast.

Although there are challenges that come with doing karate, once you overcome these challenges, karate is a lot of fun. Not only that, but you learn self-discipline and respect. Overall, karate is a really fun activity with many benefits.

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## **What I like about Karate**

-- by Naomi

My name is Naomi. I am 8 years old and earned the yellow belt before summer. I have been a part of Dojo for 15 months. My senseis are Jim-sensei and Randy-sensei. To get to the yellow belt, I worked hard and practiced a lot at home by watching videos from the class and remembering the things senseis told me to pay attention to. I also practice counting in Japanese. I like Karate because it is a lot of exercise and make me feel stronger. I especially like Pinan one and X-block. I am working on the escapes and falling techniques. I like my senseis because they

make us work hard. I will continue to work harder to get to the next belt.

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## **Why Practicing your Japanese in Karate is Important**

-- by Alanya

Practicing your Japanese regularly is not hard. Thinking of it as something fun and cool helps. Doing good when it comes to Japanese helps you to do well with your practicing of Karate because you can recognize what you're learning in a different way than English. Japanese is important for everyone learning Karate. Read on to find out how different people at different levels can practice in different ways.

**White Belt -** If you're a white belt than practicing your Japanese is key to earning your next belt because you are only a beginner. If you haven't already, than you have to get a requirements list from the Website. Your orange belt requirements sheet lists all the Japanese requirements and other requirements needed to move up to the next belt. One way to practice your Japanese is to learn one Japanese word each day than on Friday or Saturday when you get to class you can practice and review them all.

**Orange and Yellow Belts -** If you are an orange or yellow belt than practicing your Japanese is important because you are now more experienced and advanced so your Japanese should be too. Remember that you should practice your Japanese requirements from your last belt just as much as your present belt so you won't forget them.

**Green and Blue Belt -** If you are a green and blue belt the same thing applies to you. You should also continue to practice your previous belts Japanese requirements. And if you don't know, already you're most likely to be teaching Japanese so if you don't know it well you won't be able to teach it. In your Karate notebook you should keep a pen and paper so you can write down the new Japanese terms you learn. This way you can practice later and remember it.

In Conclusion, remembering to make learning Japanese fun isn't hard...use things like notecards, games, songs, etc. Challenge yourself to keep learning more and more words and try to use them every day. Learning your Japanese is not only important but will help you earn your next belt. Good Luck!

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## Bob's Corner

### Block, Strike, or Both

The intent of this article is not to dictate what is a block and what is a strike. As a student of karate and as you grow through the different belt levels, I hope you realize that there is a thin line between what is a

strike and what is a block.

Let's start with some simple definitions from my Webster's Dictionary.

Strike: To hit with some force.

Block: To obstruct by placing obstacles in the way.

In simple terms, a strike is my intent to hit a specific target on my opponent. A block is my reaction to prevent my opponent from hitting a specific point on my body.

One of the first "blocks" you learn is the upper block. I view this as a strike followed by a block. As your arm raises the fist is leading the line of attack to the opponent's chin/face followed by the arm blocking an incoming strike. As an exercise, think about the application of the other orange/yellow belt blocks you are working on.

KDA Twenty Seven Hands Kata: I will leave the majority of the techniques for the students to interpret as a block, strike, or both. My favorites of the techniques are the punching over the opposite shoulder and the same shoulder.

In a close quarter situation, punching over my opposite shoulder can be a close elbow strike to my opponent's head (i.e. strike). If my opponent was

striking me to the face, the same move (using the elbow to protect my face) can be considered a block intercepting the strike. Punching over the same shoulder can be a rising elbow with intent to strike the opponent's jaw, but I've also seen other martial arts clubs guiding the attacker's fist to contact the rising elbow (i.e. Block).

On your own, go through the twenty seven hand kata and determine whether each technique is a block, strike, or both. There are no wrong answers. The technique is what you believe it to be.

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## Upcoming Events

Mark your calendars for the Holiday/End of Year All School Workout.

When: Saturday, December 15th 11:00 AM

Where: Dwyer Center, Bay Village OH.

## Our Staff

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