



# KDA Today Winter 2013

Karate Do Academy, Westlake, Ohio

Karatedo.net

"Karate Do is a lifetime study" ~ Kenwa Mabuni

"Mastering others is a strength, mastering yourself is a true power" ~ Lao Tzu

"Arise, awake and stop not till the goal is achieved" ~ Swami Vivekanand

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## Sensei Jim Speaking.....

"Most problems precisely defined are already partially solved"--- Harry Lorayne.

In this article, I would like to discuss the power of awareness. The Sensei at KDA often discuss the best methods of teaching. The question sometimes arises.... Why do many students continue to make the same mistakes week after week even after they have been corrected numerous times? Does "better stances" or "more power" or "no wasted motion" sound familiar? Errors are not the problem; ignoring or misunderstanding them is!

So without awareness, it is not possible to hear the teacher and move forward. Trying to learn a skill without total awareness is like trying to apply a stamp without adhesive....it just won't stick.

Of course, awareness would include our strengths as well as our weakness. Being aware of our strong points brings confidence, motivation, and satisfaction. It is a great comfort to us. However, only awareness of our weaknesses will allow us to improve as time goes on. This is often not a pleasant experience. One sure sign of the growth of awareness in your training is that you feel as if your "getting worse". In reality this is not the case. On the contrary, you are instead beginning to make progress

toward self-awareness. Also, you may become discouraged and want to quit karate just when you have turned the corner and have identified the areas in need of improvement. You may become confused and return to old patterns that were holding you back in the first place. At this point, the Sensei, if you let them, will help you find the courage to persevere and find the right course of action to improve.

A Japanese story illustrates the respect for refined awareness common in some Eastern cultures...

"An old Samurai warrior knew his time on earth was near an end and wished to bequeath his sword to the brightest of his three sons, He designed a test. He had a friend hide just inside the barn, above the

doorway, and gave him three bags of rice. He then invited each son inside one at a time.

The first son, after feeling the rice bag fall on his head, drew his sword and cut the bag in half before it hit the ground.

The second son halved the bag even before it hit his head.

The third son, had a sense and was aware that something was amiss, and thus declined to enter the barn.....He, because of this, earned his father's sword"

So students of KDA, there is a great difference between recognizing an error which is explained to you by your instructor, and accepting an error... an acceptance which implies full responsibility for correcting that

error. Full awareness implies a willingness to change. Carefully watch and listen to your instructors. Watch students less and more skillful than you and be aware of their movements. Practice, if you can, in front of a mirror or use video to pinpoint specific areas in need of improvement. Awareness then is the beginning of learning. (Inspired by The Inner Athlete by Dan Millman)

**PS :** A welcome to Vivek, who has accepted the responsibility of KDA Today editor. Please share with him your thoughts and ideas for your article in the next issue. We would like to hear from as many students as possible in coming issues. Merry Christmas and Happy New Year....Kaia!!!

## **KARATE AND THE LAW OF SELF- DEFENSE**

**Karate's my secret**

**I bear no weapons**

**I use only in self-defense**

These words should be familiar to each of us as they are the “preparation” for each of our katas. Not only do these words embody our martial arts philosophy, they also have important legal ramifications.

Pursuant to Ohio law, a person has the right to use reasonable force to protect himself or herself from harmful or offensive contact. This is self-defense. There are several key points to self-defense to keep in mind.

First, self-defense is just that—a defense. You are not acting in self-defense if you cause the altercation in

the first place. Remember Gichin Funakoshi's second precept of Karate-Do, “There is no first attack in karate.”

Second, if you can escape from a potentially harmful situation without the need to resort to force to protect yourself, you should do so. This ties in to Gichin Funakoshi's fourth precept of Karate-Do, “First control yourself before attempting to control others.”

Third, the amount of force you use to defend yourself must be reasonable under the circumstances. This element is key. It means that you cannot use greater force than is necessary to protect yourself. For example, if someone only pushes you without further contact or aggression,

you should not react by punching him in the face. And the use of deadly force is only justified if you reasonably believe that your attacker is prepared either to kill you or to inflict serious bodily harm. Gichin Funakoshi's twelfth precept of Karate-Do has application here, "Do not think that you have to win, think rather that you do not have to lose."

To summarize self-defense: (1) don't start the fight, (2) retreat if you can, (3) if you must use force, use only the amount necessary to subdue your opponent and protect yourself. Do not act merely to save face or to "show off" in front of your friends or family. Only act because you have no other choice. As a karateka, you

should hold yourself to a higher standard.

In our classes, we learn powerful strikes and techniques using various parts of our bodies which are directed to our opponent's vulnerable points. Some just inflict pain, others can break bones, and some can kill. As we learn and perfect these, we must always remember that they are to be used "only in self-defense.".....

- **Sensei Chris**

## **Physics of Karate**

Do you want to be able to punch stronger, kick faster, and generally have more effective techniques? If you understand some basic principles, and apply them to your techniques, you are guaranteed to improve your power.

The first concept is kinetic energy (E). That is just the amount of energy contained in a moving object.

$$E = \frac{1}{2} m v^2$$

In this equation, E is the energy, and m is your mass, or basically how much of your body is moving. V is the speed at which it is moving. Notice v is squared ( $v*v$ ) in this equation. A little more speed can really make a difference in your energy.

Let's apply this to a punch. If you just use your arm to punch, it is only a small part (~ 5%) of your body mass. If you step forward, much more of your body mass is behind the punch. Ouch! Also, if you work on punching faster, say by 20% faster, you will increase the energy of your punch by

a 40%. If you add a hip rotation as well, you even further add to your energy of the punch via a similar additional rotational energy term.



The second concept is pressure P. Pressure is force per unit area ( $P=F/A$ ) The force of your punch is

$$F=ma$$

Here m is again your mass behind the punch, so the same principles above apply. The acceleration, a, is how much your punch is increasing in

speed at impact. So you don't want a constant speed  $v$ , you want to accelerate your body into the punch. The acceleration and speed at impact are what is important. It is important to also know that a well thrown punch reaches its maximum speed when your arm is only 80% extended. So you want to drive into your target, not stop at the surface. Like the runners who don't slow down at the finish line but keep running as fast as they can until after they cross the finish line.



Pressure is force per unit area, or  $F/A$ , where  $A$  is the area of impact. You want to use a small area of impact so  $P$  is highest for a give  $F$ . That is why it is important to make contact with your punch with only your first 2 knuckles on your hand, and not a larger part of your hand. The force is delivered directly down your arm and distributed over just the small area of your knuckles. Similarly, consider a heel kick, where you want to kick with just the heel for maximum pressure to your opponent. If you keep these basic concepts in mind as you work on improving any of your techniques, you will greatly increase the effectiveness of your techniques.

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- Sensei Sandy

## Focus on the details

### Second series #2

Always bow to each other as a sign of respect for your partner.

Uke starts in a zen kutsu dachi.

Tori starts in a neutral position.

Uke steps in aggressively and executes an oi tsuki.

The Tori steps back into a horse stance and blocks with a soto uke. He quickly follows this with a tettui to the temple.

The Tori then shifts into a zen kutsu dachi with a gayaku tsuki.

The Tori then steps back to recover.

The Uke has remained motionless during the drill.....



- Sensei Sandy



## Bob's Corner: Sparring

### Part 3 - Avoiding Attacks



The intent of this article is to prevent your opponent from

hitting the intended target. In some cases your blocking limbs will take the impact to protect your head or body.

#### Avoiding Hand Techniques

##### Attacks:

The following techniques are intended to prevent your opponent from making contact with a hand technique.

**Sway Back:** Standing in place, this technique is just swaying upper body away from the strike body.

**Duck:** Keeping your back straight, you bend your knees to lower your body to the ground.

**Slip Left:** Move your head to the left with your left hand on the right side of your face. Your palm should be facing away from you. Imagine your opponent is throwing a jab and you move your head and parry with the left hand at the same time.

**Slip Right:** Move your head to the right with your right hand on the left side of your face. Your palm should be facing away from you. Imagine your opponent is throwing a jab and you move your head and parry with the right hand at the same time.

**Bob and Weave:** Similar to ducking, but you don't come back up to where you started. Imagine an opponent

throwing a straight punch at you. You duck down to avoid and sway to either the left or right so you come back up on either side of the path of the strike. I'll be sure to bring some focus mitts to class to let everyone have a chance to work on this one.

### **Intercepting Hand Technique**

#### **Attacks:**

These next series of techniques are intended to intercept your opponent's hand technique attack. Better to take a punch to the arm instead of in the face.

**Single Cover:** Keep one arm with elbow pointing down and fist pointing up in front of your face. You need to be able to see, so don't block your line of sight.

**Double Cover:** Keep both arms in front of you with elbows pointing down and fists pointing up in front of your face. Don't block your line of sight.

**Peek A Boo:** Both arms are horizontal in front of your face, just below your eyes.

At KDA, we do not target the head while sparring. You should practice all these techniques in case you want to spar at an outside sponsored tournament which has different rules.

### **Intercepting Leg Or Low Hand Technique Attacks :**

**Front Leg Shield:** Stand in a fighting stance and imagine your opponent is trying to sweep your front leg. You merely raise the foot off the ground

and step back down quickly. Practice moving in on your imaginary opponent as you step your front foot down.

**Cross Leg Shield:** Stand in a fighting stance and imagine your opponent is doing a low punch or front kick to your groin. Raise your lead foot off the ground making your lead thigh parallel with the ground. Twist at the waist to bring your lead leg in front of the groin.

**Cross Leg Shield With Arm Block:** Repeat the steps above, but bend your lead arm so the elbow touches the top of the lifted thigh and hand covering the side of your face. Imagine a roundhouse kick is coming and you're uncertain whether it will hit high or low.

**Rear Leg Shield:** Your opponent is doing a round house kick to the opposite side of your body. Bring your back leg in front with foot raised off the ground and thigh parallel to the ground. Bend your arm (same side of body) so the elbow touches the top of the lifted thigh and hand covering the side of your face.

**Intercepting High Leg Technique Attacks:**

Imagine your opponent is throwing a high roundhouse kick to your head. You do not want to be on the receiving end. Do a single cover technique to protect the side of your head while stepping away from the kick.

**Practice:** Practice these techniques on your own. If questions, we'll cover them at class.

**Something Extra:** I would like to briefly go over the kicking techniques you have available or will learn as you progress in rank. I won't go into a lot of detail.

**Front Kick:** The front kick can be done with either the front or back leg. If using your back leg, I would recommend stepping down after the kick to advance on the opponent and follow up with a hand technique.

**Side Kick:** I tend to rely on my back leg when doing the side kick so that I may step forward and advance after the kick (and follow up with a hand technique).

**Roundhouse Kick:** Done with the front leg we refer to it as a flip kick. It may not be a powerful kick, but it may break the concentration of your opponent when he's planning to move in on you. When using a rear leg roundhouse kick, I would recommend going for the ribs to bring your opponent's hands down for protection....and then target the head (without actual contact) or visa versa. Note: The intent is not to strike your opponent's head, but help them become aware that they are dropping their guard and opening up a vital target.

**Hook Kick:** This kick uses the heel of the foot to attack the target. You may use the lead leg if both your chest and your opponent's chest are

pointing in the same direction (ie..right leg lead to left leg lead). If your chests are pointing in different directions (ie..left leg lead to left leg lead), a spinning or rear leg hook kick may be warranted.

**Crescent Kick:** I like to use a front or rear leg crescent kick to knock the opponent's hands out of the way for another attack. The crescent kick is an arcing (think like a circular motion) kick that uses the bottom of your foot to attack the target. For beginner's, it may be best to teach and explain the hook and crescent kick during class time.

**Mix it Up:** Okay, you've learned stances, how to move, hand techniques, how to avoid strikes or kicks, and the different kicks in your

tool box. Take some time to put these together while sparring with an imaginary opponent. It's known as shadow boxing, so don't feel silly if the neighbors see you practicing in the backyard.

**Breath:** When observing students sparring, some seem as though they hardly take any breaths. Your body needs oxygen when participating in the very physical activity of sparring. Here's a simple practice to supply your body with oxygen. Kia! on each or every other technique.....**Bob**

## **KDA Promotions**

**September/October 2013**

Nita - **Orange Belt**

Caid - **Orange Belt**

Wendi - **Yellow Belt**

Patti - **Yellow Belt**

Gianna - **Yellow Belt**

Brenna - **Yellow Belt**

John - **Yellow Belt**

Sam - **Yellow Belt**

Audrey - **Green Belt**

Allyson - **Green Belt**

James - **Green Belt**

Tami - **Green Belt**

Navi - **Brown 2**

**Congratulations!!!**

**Keep up the hard work!!**

### **Editor's Note**

“Happy Winter 2013”. I would like to congratulate Karate Do Academy of

Westlake and Bay Village for another successful year. Like always we achieved many goals – skill improvement for belt requirement, many successful promotions to higher belts, Kime and the most awaited fun filled Picnic with skill and drill at Sensei Jim’s house. I would like to express my gratitude toward Sensei Jim, Sensei Randy, Sensei Sandy and Sensei Chris for all the training, devotion and personal attention throughout the year. It was my great pleasure to work on KDA Today Winter 2013. I would like to extend my warmest wishes for the upcoming holiday season and hope that the New Year is filled with Katas everyday ☺

.....Vivek Aslot

*Happy Holidays*

