



"The more understanding you have about Karate, the less you need to change or modify it." – Tsuguo Sakumoto

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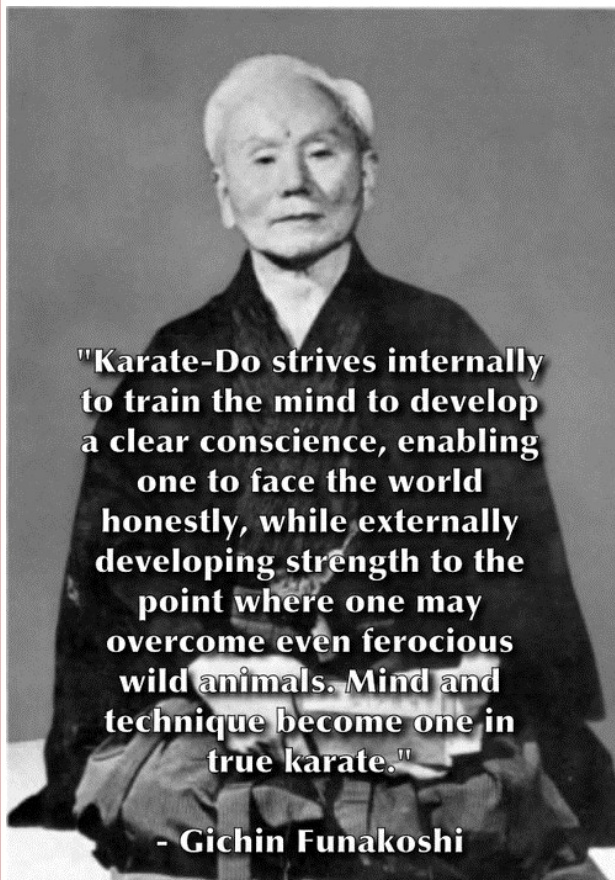
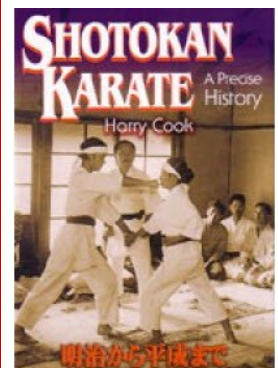
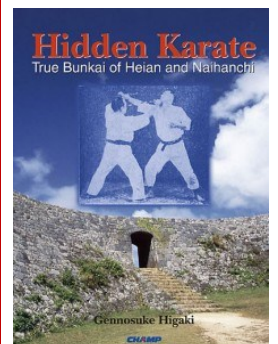
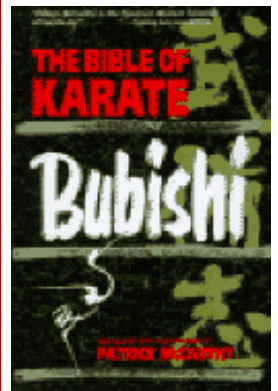
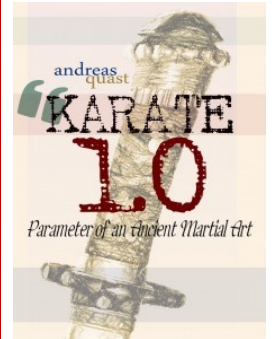
Spring 2014

NL SHOTOKAN KARATE

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READING



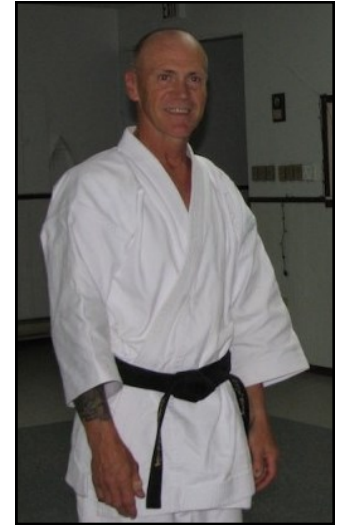
"Karate-Do strives internally to train the mind to develop a clear conscience, enabling one to face the world honestly, while externally developing strength to the point where one may overcome even ferocious wild animals. Mind and technique become one in true karate."

- Gichin Funakoshi

空手道

Most experts would define a martial sport as being an athletic activity which emphasizes competitive fighting or competitive forms (kata). Techniques practiced in the dojo are the same techniques authorized in competitions. Unauthorized techniques (eye-jabs, for example) would not be practiced in the classroom as they serve no purpose in the competitive arena. Fencing, Olympic-style Tae Kwon Do, Greco-Roman wrestling and Judo are examples of martial sports.

A martial art is a combat method whose primary objective is the development of self-defence capability. These martial art systems develop into complex methods with a great variety of movements and occasionally even weapons training. Although some of these techniques would be suitable for competitive fighting, these would represent but a small percentage of the complex combat method. Although the training in many dojos is not conducted with an eye for competitive trials, the latter can be considered of some benefit as they may help develop a better knowledge of one's abilities and weaknesses. Aikido, Jujutsu, traditional Kung Fu and traditional Karate are examples of martial art systems.



In the 21st century, many martial arts systems are undergoing a profound change: Many traditional Karate and Kung Fu systems are slowly mutating into martial sports with some becoming relegated to merely gymnastics. Some Judo federations have gone so far as to re-institute traditional Jujutsu in an effort to conserve some of the more martial aspects of Judo. This is because competitive Judo is somewhat neglecting some of this martial art's original ideas and methods. One of the negative aspects of competitive fighting is the fact that such venues tend to considerably reduce the quantity of techniques being utilized in real combat. A Karate or Tae Kwon Do club that focus 90% of its time on competitive training can be defined as a martial sports club. A club that would relegate competitive training to a special class while continuing to train traditional techniques should be considered a martial arts club.

Most people today devote a huge amount of their spare time to internet social media, electronic games, and for their martial arts study being entertained by MMA (Mixed martial Arts) on television. In recent years there has been less and less interest in the study of real martial arts. MMA is highly promoted by television networks and organizations which are making huge amounts of money entertaining audiences all over the world. MMA is a noble sport for sure, but again, it is not a martial art. The name should be MMS (Mixed Martial Sports). True traditional Karate can be clearly defined as a martial art. In some dojos training is solely based for competitive fighting. This is not Karate. There is no such thing as "Sport Karate"; there is Sport and there is Karate. Martial artists practice for fighting real fights which they hope will never happen. This brings to mind two quotes from the legendary samurai warrior Miyamoto Musashi... "The ultimate aim of martial arts is not having to use them" and "You can only fight the way you practice".

Let's turn off the televisions, shut down computers, and do something real. Karate is good for the body, the mind and the spirit. Don't just think about it; do it! It's never too early and never too late. Karate is for life.

NEW: NL SHOTOKAN BLOG
WWW.NLSHOTOKANKARATE.COM

KARATE FEELING

"Time in the dojo is precious, time spent training is precious too! So I think we all do well to remember that karate is a martial **art**, not a martial science; therefore, knowledge and a good memory are not enough to give it life. If you don't develop a **feeling** for karate, then all you'll have is an ability to *do* karate, and *doing* karate seldom stands the test of time.

Michael Clarke, 8th Dan, Gojo-Ryu, Shinseidokan Dojo



Please note, the opinions and views expressed in this document are not necessarily those of any particular Dojo or organization, nor of any particular individual. Submissions and blogs appear as they were submitted or posted.

If you would like to contribute to the NLS Newsletter, or have ideas for articles, etc, please send your submission to jeff.hutchings@gmail.com

Food for Thought

• Opposite is a list of the most common street attacks compiled in the UK after years of study. This provides real food for thought when we start to analyze how well our Karate can/will work in an actual combat situation



Source: <http://www.mokurendojo.com>

Common Altercation:

- Push to chest followed by a punch
- Punch (usually a haymaker) thrown without preceding physical technique
- Chest/lapel grab followed by punch
- Two-handed chest/lapel grab followed by head butt
- Two-handed chest/lapel grab followed by knee to groin
- Bottle, glass, or ashtray to head
- Lashing kick to lower legs
- Stabbing the face with broken bottle/glass
- Side head lock
- Front head lock



“Once a kata has been learned, it must be practiced repeatedly until it can be applied in an emergency, for knowledge of just the sequence of a form in Karate is useless.” – Gichin Funakoshi



Mundy Pond Shotokan, Sensei Bruce Lee
brucelee@nl.rogers.com

MUN Dojo, Sensei David Bell and Sensei Paul Bell
dbell@mun.ca

The Goulds/Calvert Shotokan, Sensei Wayne Lee
wlee@bellalliant.net

Trinity Shotokan Karate, Sensei Kevin Price
info@trinityshotokan.com

Zanshin Dojo, Sensei Bruce Mann
zanshin@bellalliant.net

SHOTOKAN DOJOS

Marystown Shotokan Karate, Sensei Tony Fitzpartick
tfitz59@persona.ca

I was recently ask to have a look at a Kata (sent by video) of a student that had trained with me some years ago to see if I could give some input.

First I would have to say that I have struggled with Kata for years to try pick one that suited me and my build, and to understand and develop that one. Secondly, I would try to bring my findings into other, more difficult katas.

This is a road in Karate that I continue today and will continue throughout the rest of my Karate life as I work toward becoming a master. Karate to me has never been boring and I have learned from so many students and instructors alike; the higher I go the more interesting it gets. We never know how much we have touched the lives of our karate students until long after they are gone and they email you or you meet them on the street.

In Newfoundland - a little island in the sea - we have had the great fortune to have had many masters visit, each with their own cut on Karate, but all with the same principles: to try and leave a little knowledge and then come back to see if it has been worked on, and to leave a little more.

To name a few :

Sensei Masami Tsuruoka
Sensei Hidetaka Nishiyama
Sensei Yutaka Katsumata
Sensei Yamaguchi
Sensei Jerry Mar



Those are instructors that I have had the privilege to train under and be graded under. All have had an influence on Karate in Newfoundland. I am grateful to all the karate instructors that have come before me in Newfoundland who have bought me to the stage I am now in; especially my Sensei Jerry Lee who is still training and still influencing me in my training. To see Mr Gerry Fin still train, and most of the senior instructors to me still training and developing, keeps me wanting to learn more.

Back to the student that had asked me to have a look at his Kata. The Kata was Hangetsu

The first point I made was;

1. Develop all technical aspects of the kata.
2. Don't try to be fast and explosive before developing technique.
3. Don't try to impress with speed—be yourself
4. Do the Kata in slow motion. Sensei Nishiyama would say 10 times slow , one time at regular speed.

It took some time to understand this concept but it works.

5 Create muscle memory for the Kata and make it a positive habit. This I think is what is meant by 10 times slow. Fast before slow equals no muscle memory.

6. This will allow you to identify bad and poor habits that you would not have identified at regular speed.

Cont'd

The next is stance:

7. Spend time on your Hangetsu stance and its transition to the next stance .This will help you form Hangetsu stance more smoothly when moving from one stance to the next.

Sensei Bruce Lee was also asked to give input and had some great points to offer. The student sent a note of appreciation and said he would work on these points.

Good luck and don't rush. Enjoy, train hard, and it will pay off.

SPECIAL TO THE NL SHOTOKAN NEWSLETTER "SHUTO-UKE" BY JESSE ENKAMP

Shuto-uke is a common block - found throughout nearly all styles of Karate - in various forms or shapes.

However, looking at the Japanese name of the technique, we discover two fascinating aspects of the technique that many people don't pay enough attention to:

1. First, don't let the word "uke" fool you.

Although the term "shuto-uke" is often translated as "knife hand block", it's equally useful as an attack. Hence the less common, but equally correct, name; "shuto-uchi". The word "uke", which we in the Western world refer to as "block", actually means "to receive" in Japanese. And hey - what better way to receive an attacker than with a welcoming knife hand strike delivered right back?

2. Secondly, the term "shuto".

When it comes to traditional Karate, it has been said that the hands and feet should be sharp like edged weapons. Even grandmaster Ito-su Anko wrote, in 1908, that one should "use his hand like a spear or halberd". Once you touch an enemy, it's game over.

Perhaps no other technique embodies this "one strike, one kill" ("ikken hissatsu") concept more appropriately than shuto, which literally means "sword/knife" ("to"), "hand" ("shu").

So, how does one achieve the ability to apply hands and feet as deadly weapons? By visualization. The true power of a shuto-uke comes not so much from striking or blocking something with the edge of your hand, as from applying the mental imagery that you're cutting through something with your sharp hand - just like a sword or knife.

This mindset is what separates a good shuto-uke from a great one.

Good luck!

/Jesse

www.karatebyjesse.com

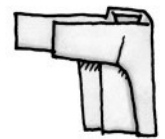
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DOJO KUN

HITOTSU! JINKAKU KANSEI NI TSUTOMERU KOTO
HITOTSU! MAKOTO NO MICHIO MAMORU KOTO
HITOTSU! DORYOKU NO SEISHIN O YASHINAU KOTO
HITOTSU! REIGI O OMONZURU KOTO
HITOTSU! KEKKI NO YUU O IMASHIMURU KOTO

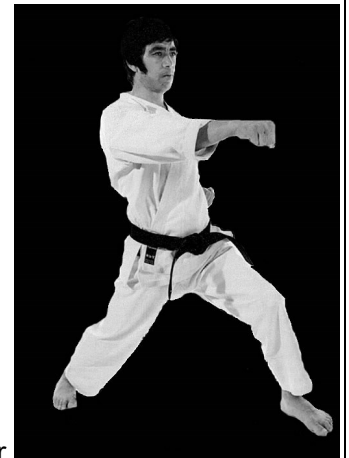
SEEK PERFECTION OF CHARACTER
BE FAITHFUL
ENDEAVOUR
RESPECT OTHERS
REFRAIN FROM VIOLENT BEHAVIOUR



According to Kousaku Yokota, **Hikite** is a Japanese word consisting of “hiki” meaning pull or draw and “te”, a hand. In Shotokan it is a basic part of a variety of techniques. On the surface, Hikite is considered to be supplementary to a given technique: the pullback arm gives leverage to the technique being delivered with the opposite arm, but in looking at this more closely, it is much more than that.

Through the Kyu grades, especially, the draw arm is emphasized, and rightly so. One of the most integral concepts of Shotokan is the generation of speed and power, and the physical movement of pulling the draw arm to the hip or solar plexus (shuto block) assists directly in this. As part of the mechanics of a solid punch, for example, the ‘*equal and opposite reaction*’ law loosely fits as we connect the arm coming back with the arm going out. This is simply illustrated with a kazama zuki. Jabbing the Makiwara with *just* the attacking arm is a different beast than jabbing while ripping the draw arm in the opposite direction of your punch. In Shotokan, a punch going out and the draw arm coming back isn’t simply an upper body movement. It originates, like nearly everything else in our art, from the hara.

I believe a second piece of the draw arm functionality in our training is the fact that when the draw arm is pulled back, it assumes the position of *loaded for launch*. A cocked draw arm is your opponent’s nemesis. A draw arm in position is ‘aware’ and ready to deliver another attack or block in a timely fashion. Controlling your limbs in a real confrontation is crucial, and a controlled draw arm helps the Karateka get a handle on this. Keeping your elbows tucked in and your hands in a formation that keeps you from getting your fingers broken or disjointed is fighting 101. Sensei Lee regularly reiterates that losing your wind, your vision or a limb is a recipe for disaster in a real combat situation.



In my opinion, in addition to the added momentum we get from the draw arm, and the protection and readiness of having it in set position, the draw arm is part of training in hip rotation. In many of the techniques in Shotokan, the draw arm comes back to belt level, or just above the hip. On countless occasions in the Dojo we hear, ‘throw it from the hip’ or ‘shoot it from the hip.’ Karateka have to learn to utilize the power in hip rotation, and from the outset, practicing punching by initiating the action from the hip is paramount.

Gichin Funakoshi, in his early book “Karate Jutsu”, classifies Hikite alongside all other hand techniques. His definition is one which provides a good insight into the usefulness of this technique: “...the meaning of Hikite, or pulling hand, is to **grab the opponent’s attacking hand** and pull it in while twisting it as much as possible so that his body is forced to lean against the defender”

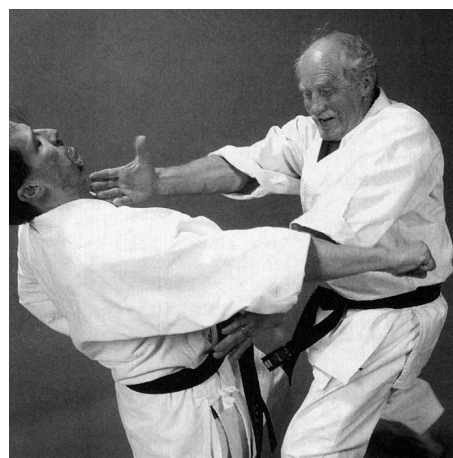
Karateka who study Bunkai immediately come to understand that the draw arm is, as often as not, grabbing something as part of the set for an attack. A left-hand shuto is an excellent example: The left hand comes to the right side of the face (this, of course can be a blocking motion), while the right hand extends out to the opponent before it is pulled back when the shuto is delivered. If it happens that the right hand has already performed a block or deflection and a subsequent grab, when you pull it back you are maximizing your technique by pulling your opponent in as you strike. In this case, opposing momentums mean higher impact force.

Having said all that, when Karateka get to a certain point in their training, the draw arm is sometimes trumped by hip. The second half of the statement by Matthew Miller below mentions this.

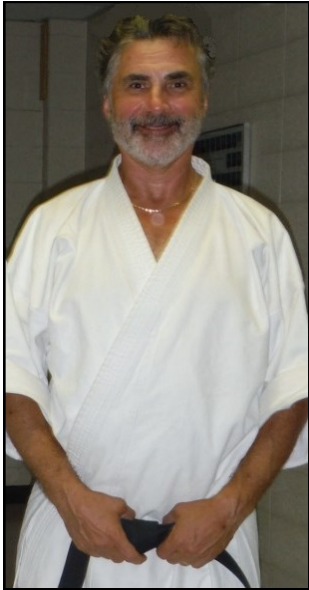
“Very often, the explanation that accompanies this technique when it is first taught is that the pulling action assists in accelerating the hand and performing the technique, and that returning the hand to the hip prepares it for the next technique. By others, this is deprecated, the argument being that returning the hand to the waist is unnecessary, and exposes the head to easy attack.” Matthew Miller, The Bunkai of Basics

When we reach the Dan grades, we are expected to ‘do more with less.’ Translated, this means that some of our movements become smaller, but our power becomes bigger. A bigger emphasis is placed on controlling the core muscles to generate power. At black belt level we are expected to study and train vigorously in muscle contraction and expansion as well as understanding torque. Therefore, hip rotation becomes paramount, and the draw arm can be utilized for other means. In keeping with Miller’s thoughts above, for example, a right-hand gyaku tsuki can be delivered with the leading hand (left hand) kept in place as a defense against a jodan counter attack. In a real combat situation attacks between fighters are often delivered simultaneously, and having your lead arm already in place to ward off the attack or to deliver an offensive strike makes sense. An example would be throwing an upper-level palm-heel strike along with a reverse punch. Because of the body mechanics employed, the reverse punch will still be delivered with the same ferocity and speed as if you had utilized the traditional draw arm-to-hip movement.

In my opinion, Shotokan instinct will tell you whether or not you should deliver a full-out attack with draw arm pulled back, or a more cautious one, while protecting your head. Either way, without utilizing kime from your body core to do so, you’re basically playing high stakes tag .



For information on Dojos, upcoming events and a PDF version of this document, see the following link by Bob Davis: www.stjohnsdojos.net



Good posture equals strong balance, and strong balance equals someone difficult to knock off their feet. Although having good posture is ideal for health and wellbeing, the reason I studied this subject was to improve my fighting skills. Stability of stance and the awareness of what's immediately happening around us are very important elements of karate training.

Two things to first consider with good posture are deportment and body language. Body deportment is the way we behave towards other people, encompassing: dress, voice, posture, attitude, projection and body language. Body language encompasses the other two aspects in relation to kumite (fighting). When competitors are scrutinizing one another, they are looking for information. Such as: are they prepared, do they show experience, is there commitment of intention etc. The body is communicating all the time, especially under stress.

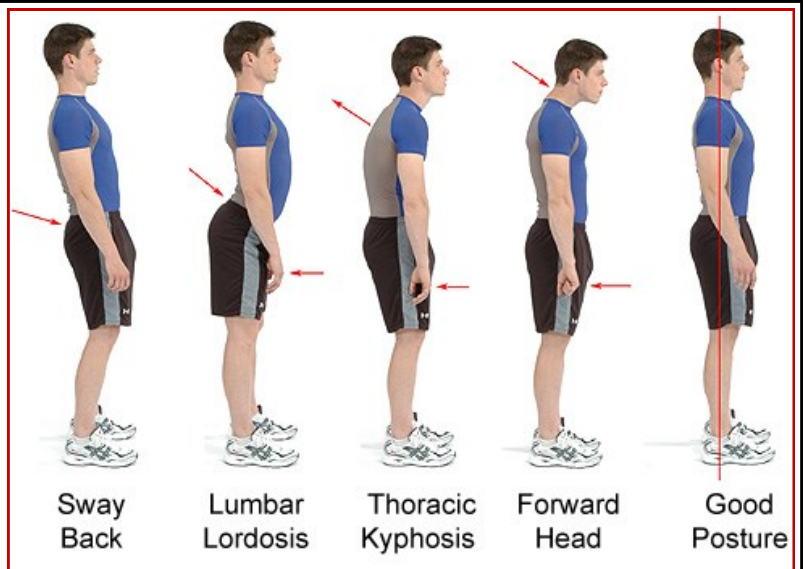
There is an old expression relating to awareness of self, "Study oneself is to know the enemy." Body language is typically subconscious; however, there is also the deliberate conscious side of body communication. This non-verbal language provides clues as to the attitude or state of mind of a person, e.g. aggression, attentiveness, boredom etc. Studies have shown that the verbal component of face to face conversation is less than 35% and that 65% of communication is done non-verbally. Posture or attitude of the body can be developed through awareness and physical drills.

Having a strong core combined with elongation of the spine in union with deep breathing is the foundation of stability. Regarding posture, the spine should be stabilized in a neutral position. Keep in mind that the three natural curves present in the spine are supported with core strength. Ideally all the body segments should be such that the least amount of energy is required to maintain this desired position. While maintaining this position, a person will be able to optimally attain balance. This in turn will facilitate optimal breathing and affect the circulation of body fluids. Good posture will not only give you strong balance but as a side effect also help you look and feel better.

Having a strong core combined with elongation of the spine in union with deep breathing is the foundation of stability.

To identify and maintain good posture, keep your body in alignment; straight back, squared shoulders, chin up, chest out, stomach in. Draw an imaginary line straight from your ear lobe through your shoulders, hip, knee to the middle of your ankle. Keep your weight on the balls of your feet, shoulders square, neck back and head up. Teach your body what it feels like to have ideal posture. Stand with your head, shoulders tail bone and heels to a wall - the more familiar your body is with what's straight the more natural it will feel.

Using trigger points throughout the day, be conscientious of your posture. When brushing your teeth in the morning elongate your spine. When driving to work set your mirror high and sit up tall in your seat. Whatever trigger points you use, make it a habit. Develop core strength (strong abdominals and strong calves). This will help a lot. If you have poor posture, correcting it can take a long time. However, it's very important to do so. Many physical problems can be alleviated with correct posture. It will help improve self esteem and make you feel more confident.



Most of all it will make you a better fighter and therefore a better Karate-ka.

GROWING: ST. JOHN'S SHOTOKAN & KOBUDO TRAINING CENTER OPENS



On June 1st a new kind of dojo opened in St. John's. Dan Blackmore (Sandan) and Bob Davis (Shodan) opened "St. John's Shotokan & Kobudo" to promote traditional martial arts in the city. While the martial arts skills are traditional, the format of the dojo is not - it is a black belt training centre. Practitioners may attend and hone their skills on the mats, and attend quarterly clinics led by highly qualified Sensei. The training centre is meant to supplement regular classes and give black belts a place to get some extra practice, to focus on training themselves, and to discuss martial arts with peers. Students will be given the opportunity to learn how to absorb the lessons received from their Sensei during regular classes, seminars, and clinics and make them work for themselves.

The idea for the dojo stemmed from how Dan and Bob supplemented their own attendance to regular classes by meeting at the local squash courts or park (when it was nice out) to train Shotokan and Kobudo. As gradings appeared on the horizon, they would occasionally add these extra practice sessions to their weekly schedules. Eventually the sessions became a part of their regular routines. The two wanted their fellow students to be able to join-in and benefit from supplemental training. Further, with a space that would be available weekly for 2-3 hours would be perfect for holding a "mini seminar," or clinic on a specific topic. The hosting Sensei could break out of the mould of teaching classes that cater to multiple ranks and focus on lessons that are suited for black belts. An added benefit in establishing a "black belt club" might be that kyu ranks would have additional incentive to obtain their Shodan, and beyond. Perhaps the change in convention might be enticing to potential students and returning students alike. It is for these reasons that Bob and Dan decided to open a dojo.

Cont'd

St. John's Shotokan & Kobudo will remain a place where students can get together and work on their arts independently or collaboratively. The environment is open and friendly with no formal classes in regular training sessions, which are Sundays from 3:00pm to 5:00pm. In addition to regular training sessions, St. John's Shotokan & Kobudo will be hosting quarterly clinics from some of the best Senseis in Shotokan and Kobudo! Clinic topics will range from kata, to bunkai, to kumite, and self-defence. The dojo is centrally located at the St. John's Martial Arts Centre, 21 Mews Place (behind Pippy Place). It is one of the best martial art training facilities in the city, with 1000 square feet of tatami mats on a suspended floor and a 20-foot ceiling. The dojo is well ventilated during the summer and well heated during the winter. You will often hear music playing in the background. The dojo is registered with the Newfoundland Karate Association and is fully insured. The training centre uses day passes instead of monthly memberships. Each pass can be exchanged for 1 two-hour training session. Passes can be purchased from Dan or Bob, and there are price discounts for purchasing packs of passes: 1 Day Pass is \$8.00, 1 Month (4 passes) is \$25.00, and 3 Months (12 passes) is \$60.00. The passes will never expire.

You can find St. John's Shotokan & Kobudo at <http://www.shotokankobudo.nl.com>

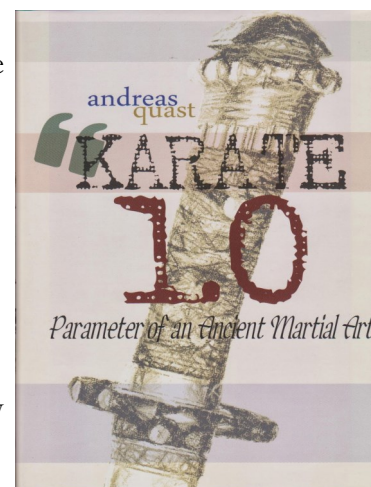
The Martial Way begins with one
thousand days and is mastered
after ten thousand days of training
Mas Oyama

NEW BOOK

The history of Karate is shrouded in mystery, and yet millions of enthusiasts ensure this ancient art thrives powerfully in the twenty-first century. As one of the most comprehensive, and demystifying studies on the enigmatic parameters of ancient combat traditions, Karate 1.0 intrigues readers with rich detail and missing insights of this martial art. Nearly twenty years of research make Karate 1.0 the go-to book for students and masters addicted to the pride of Okinawa.

“KARATE 1.0 will compel you to rethink what is currently known about the historical and cultural background for the art that brings us all together ... KARATE 1.0 is destined to become a future classic and a MUST for the bookshelves of every serious Karate-ka. I am SO EXCITED about this project and hope you will be, too.” - Patrick McCarthy, Hanshi 9th Dan, Australia

<http://ryukyu-bugei.com/>



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