

Midori Yama Budokai: *Hanshi's Corner*
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October 2014

Ichi go, ichi e: One life, one meeting

“Love is that condition in which the happiness of another person is essential to your own.”

Jubal Harshaw in *Stranger in a Strange Land* by Robert A. Heinlein

Okinawan Terminology

Following are four important principles for those who study Okinawan Karate:

- ***Muchimi*** – "Heavy, sticky" movement. Just as in Chi Sao, once you have made contact with the opponent, do not lose that contact, but control him/her. Another definition is "heavy hand," referring to the culmination of power due to *chinkuchi kakin*. *Nigiri game* are used to develop this movement.
- ***Chiru no chan chan*** – Fast "springy" movement. This is sometimes applied to a "springy hand" movement. This is a condition in which the body's muscles are as strong as steel, yet flexible. It also implies the ability to "sense" the opponent when in close contact.
- ***Chinkuchi kakin*** – Instantaneous tightening of the joints to focus a technique. This is used to describe the stabilization of the body for a solid position by locking the joints in the body (ankles knees and hips) and gripping the floor with the toes ankles, knees and hips, and by gripping the floor with your toes. Chinkuchi is the concentration or focus of strength and power, by the simultaneous contraction of the muscles in the body at the point of impact that brings karate techniques from a fluid, relaxed state designed for speed, to a solid, tense state that is designed for strength. The process of "whipping" out a technique, tensing upon impact and then immediately relaxing again allows a *karateka* to achieve maximum power while exerting minimal energy. *Chinkuchi kaikin* is the positioning of the body where, when combined, the muscular and skeletal alignment is at it's strongest. Although Okinawan masters say *Chinkuchi kaikin* is not the same as Japanese *kime*, there are many similarities – the alignment of the body and weapon to the opponent, relaxation of the body for snap (springy movement) and tensing of the muscles at impact to absorb the shock, as "for every action, there is an equal and opposite reaction." It could be argued that *kime* is the culmination of *chinkuchi kakin*. That is, alignment of the body is made from the feet, to the knees, to the waist (lower spine), to the shoulders, to the elbows, to the wrist, to the weapon – that is the "snap of the whip." *Kime*, or instantaneous focus of the body, would be the actual "crack" the whip makes – that is, the moment of the force being focused. Western boxer Jack Dempsey referred to this as "freezing" the muscles, and Georges Carpentier made the analogy of cracking a whip. Jack Dempsey's exact words are: "Shoot your loose, half-opened left hand straight along the power line at a chin-high spot on the bag. But as the relaxed left hand speeds toward the bag, suddenly close the hand with a convulsive, grabbing snap. Close it with such a terrific grab that when the second knuckle of the upright fist smashes into the bag, the fist and the arm

and the shoulder will be ‘frozen’ steel-hard by the terrific grabbing tension. That convulsive, freezing grab is the explosion.” Carpentier wrote: “It seemed to me that the real secret lay in the delivery itself far more than the strength behind it, and I therefore aimed to make my punches the culmination of a perfectly coordinated action of the whole body, beginning with the legs. Incidentally, my punches including the one which I developed later and which was to win general admiration as ‘the lightning settler’, always started from the legs.” Dempsey, like Carpentier and Jimmy Wilde, all talk about sharp ‘jolting’ punches where speed, distance, and timing come together to deliver a maximum effect through a combination of hardness and relaxation.

- **Shimejurasan** – An ideal referring to the perfect performance of *kata*. It also refers to the shock power from the fluid motion in *muchimi*, as well as the efficiency of the person performing *kata*. “Perfect” *kata* also includes perfect control of breathing.

Ending Procrastination for Practicing Disliked Techniques

The following methods are based on ideas of Keith Pascal, *Sensei*. Build on them to practice those techniques you don’t really like to do.

- **Combining to End Procrastination:** Create an exercise with multiple components. Mix and match what you do like to practice with what you avoid --you trick yourself into practicing both. For example, if you don’t like practicing a certain kick, but do enjoy blitzes with the hands, throw a low kick (knee level), telling yourself it’s to keep the opponent from advancing. Then follow up with hand techniques to an opponent who can’t move. The technique you dislike (kick) is now important to the follow-up (blitzes with the hand).
- **Double Boring:** One way to make the practice session more fun is to double up on what you don’t like. If you don’t enjoy practicing the front thrust, but do like the back kick, do a back kick followed by the front thrust. Tell yourself you are practicing against a multiple attack from front and rear. Again, you trick yourself into practicing a disliked technique. To practice multiple kicks, without placing the foot back onto the mat/ground, do the rear kick, followed by a front thrust kick and include a side thrust kick. This allows you to practice kicks you do enjoy with those you don’t, plus you learn much about balance and stance.

***Kuri Uke* or “Coiling” Block**

Although interpretations of this technique vary, the most common – and effective – is as follows. The arm, with hand formed into *shuto*, moves from inside out at a high level. At the completion of the circle, the elbow drops onto the attacking arm (sometimes referred to as *hiji kuri uke*, or elbow coiling block). At first glance, the technique resembles a *mawashi shuto uke*, but the elbow attacks the *sanri kyusho* (LI-10) which is “rich” with neuroceptors. The exponent begins in a front-facing stance. S/he raises the right arm, moving from inside to outside, as the left arm, palm up, is brought across the chest at *suigetsu* level. To apply the elbow, the body is pivoted 90o (left half front stance) as the elbow is brought downward onto the arm. The technique was designed to intercept the attack and protect the rib cage. The most well-known application is at the beginning of the *Kururunfa Kata* of *Goju-ryu* in which *tai hineri* (body twisting) is supplanted by a

diagonal backwards movement into *neko ashi dachi*. *Tai hineri* is still evident in the *Shotokan Kata Kusanku*, in which the body is twisted from *choku zuki* to *uchi ude uke*. Old texts contend that the attack was tangled in the sleeve of the *kimono* and locked into place by the coiling of the arm.

Kobo no Jitsu: The Essence of Fighting

This phrase refers to the concept that in a real street fight, the application taken from *koryu* (ancient) *kata* must really work. The applications are derived from *kaisai*, or the applications hidden in the *koryu kata*. These hidden techniques are found by the use of *kaisai no genri*, or the principles of *kaisai*. These movements are not to be confused with *hyomengi*, which refers to the apparent movements of fighting techniques. A technique found from a *hyomengi* through the work of *kaisai* is called *kaisaigi*. Remember that “*gi*” is the *On* (Japanese pronunciation of the Chinese word) reading for “*waza*.” As mentioned in a previous Newsletter, this may be done deductively (*en-eki-ho*) or inductively (*kino-ho*). *En-eki-ho* would involve the concepts of modern problem solving as given in the previous Newsletter. Concerning *kino-ho*, *Toguchi Sensei* stated: “A *kata* is like a mathematical formula or equation with a specific fighting situation being similar to a number or value we would insert into the math formula. Just as one solves the mathematical equation in inserting numerical figures into the formula, we search for a *kaisaigi* by applying a specific fighting situation to *kata*.”

Miscellaneous

Soke is a Japanese title that means "Headmaster." It is sometimes translated as "head of the family" or even "Grandmaster." The latter usage is a common Western misconception. It can mean one who is the leader of any school or the master of a style, but it is commonly used as the highest level Japanese martial arts title, referring to the singular leader of a school or martial arts style. A *soke* is often mistakenly used to mean the founder of a *ryu*, and has taken on that usage in the west. The *Soke* is the ultimate authority within their *ryu* and has all final discretion and authority regarding promotion, curriculum, doctrine, and disciplinary actions. A *soke* has all authority to issue a *menkyo kaiden* certificate, or its equivalent, indicating that a practitioner has mastered all aspects of his *ryu*.

Mato means target, and was once used to refer to the vital points on the human body. It is derived from the target used in *kyudo*.

Menkyo kaiden was a license used by *koryu* (ancient styles). These included other arts than martial arts. It was usually only given once in a *sensei*'s lifetime, and indicated that a student had learned the major secrets of the *sensei*. Usually, but not always, it signified the successor to the *ryu*. It was a certificate of completion. Different schools used different licenses, but following is a common one: *okuiri*, entry into the secrets of the art, which usually encompassed four years; *mokuroku*, a register and catalogue with entry into the official roles; *shomokuroku* (beginning scroll) required seven to fifteen years of training; [some styles had an intermediate *hatsumokuroku* scroll] *gomokuroku* (after scroll) usually required seventeen years of training; *menkyo*, or licensed instructor (before this you were merely an assistant) required seventeen to twenty-five years; *kaiden*

(sometimes referred to as *menkyo kaiden*), or license of full proficiency or total transmission, usually required at least thirty years experience. This system was all but replaced by the *kyu-dan* system created by Kanō Jigorō, and adopted by almost all other modern (*gendai*) martial arts.

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