



# Pantojas Shotokan Karate Do

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(For members of Pantoja's Shotokan Karate Do)

## KARATE AND YOU

### GENERAL CONCEPTS OF KARATE TECHNIQUE

1. When practicing karate, it is essential to keep karate techniques *as a whole* in perspective.
2. Karate techniques are based on tactics to guard against sudden and simultaneous attack from multiple assailants. What is necessary to defend oneself when suddenly attacked? There are basically two things required:
  - a. **Proper reflex motion**, induced by correct judgment in detecting the opponent's movement before he can initiate it.
  - b. **A technique which allows one to exert the maximum power from a minimum of motion**
3. No matter how fast a person can perform a technique, it is of no use if one is too slow in detecting the opponent's movement. A beginner will not know how to react until he actually sees the opponent's motion. However, through practice, he can become aware of the physical transition in his opponent.
4. To develop such mental awareness **one must achieve, as a prerequisite of training, a psychological condition in which one is free from all emotions which obstruct correct perception, proper detection and proper reaction (reflex motion).**
5. Karate is designed to enable one to initiate a new motion on the point where the preceding one is completed. In karate, **the end of one motion is the beginning of the next.**
6. There are three main methods of learning karate techniques:
  - a. Kihon (basic) practice- To practice basic techniques (without an opponent)
  - b. Kata (form) Practice- To practice basic combinations, coordinating one technique with one another, and leaning appropriate body shifting (turns)
  - c. Kumite (Sparring) Practice- The practice with an opponent, mainly to develop a sense of timing and distance as well as an effective strategy.

### BASIC MAXIMS FOR KARATE PRACTICE

A serious attitude is a fundamental requirement for karate as a form of BUDO (martial arts). Through BUDO one is able to reach, technically and spiritually, a stage which ordinary human beings rarely attain. This is done by placing oneself mentally on the threshold of life and death... the most serious situation a man can face. Placing oneself in such a situation is the most direct route to reaching the highest goal. **One will never be able to acquire the essence of karate, no matter how many years on practices, if movements are only movements of hands and feet and not performed with a serious spirit.** In karate, particularly, one must not practice with any frivolity. Such unmindfulness not only prevents improvement but also can result in injury, for karate is a sport in which an unnecessary accident is inexcusable.

### PRACTICE WITH PERSISTENT EFFORT

In practicing karate it is essential that one apply a persistent and sustained effort. This is particularly true while learning the basic techniques, which often become boring when their novelty wears off, since they consist of a repetition of simple movements, usually against an imaginary opponent. **Unless a persistent and tenacious effort is applied to learning the basics, one will never acquire the essence of karate.**

### ONE MUST LEARN EACH TECHNIQUE IN DEPTH

There are many techniques in karate. Punching techniques alone number more than fifty. Techniques, which are partially learned, are ineffective, rendering one vulnerable to danger. It is like building a house on a concrete foundation before the cement is dry. Becoming proficient in one technique will lead one to discover points in common with other related

techniques. **The mastery of a series of related techniques will be easier due to proficiency in one.** If a person is acquainted with a hundred techniques but not proficient in any, it is the same as not knowing even one.

### **VIOLENCE CORRUPTS KARATE LEARNING**

Socially and morally, violence is intolerable. For a student of karate to be in such a psychological state as to act with violence would make him utterly incapable of even mastering a single technique. Since karate has traditionally been known as a "martial art for a man of virtue" and also one that begins with a formal courtesy and ends with a formal courtesy, its purpose is beyond fighting. **It is aimed at molding the ideal character through intensive training from the standpoint of human dignity.** Fulfilling personal grudges or resorting to violence is something, which goes against the basic principles of karate.

### **ESSENTIAL PRINCIPALS OF KARATE**

#### **1. PHYSICAL PRINCIPALS**

##### a. MAXIMUM STRENGTH

- i. Force is directly proportional to the degree of muscular expansion and contraction.
- ii. The striking power of a force is inversely proportional to the time required for its application. In a scientific language, force equals mass times the velocity squared.

##### b. CONCENTRATION OF STRENGTH

- i. Other things being equal, the shorter the time required for striking force to be applied, and the more effective it is.
- ii. The greater the number of muscles brought into play in performing a given movement, the greater the concentration of strength.
- iii. Maximum concentration of body strength depends on effective utilization of the resultant of forces produced by exertion of the various muscles,
- iv. Concentration of strength depends not on simultaneous exertion of all body muscles, but on their exertion in proper order.

##### c. UTILIZING "REACTION=FORCE"

- i. This refers to the well-known principle of physics that to every action there is an opposite and equal reaction

##### d. USE OF BREATH CONTROL

- i. The breath is sharply exhaled during the execution of techniques and inhaled after their completion.

#### **2. PSYCHOLOGICAL PRINCIPLES**

##### a. "A MIND LIKE WATER" (MIZU NO KOKORO)

- i. The Japanese expression "mizu no kokoro" refers to the need to make the mind calm, like the surface of undisturbed water.

##### ii. "A MIND LIKE THE MOON" (TSUKI NO KOKORO)

1. This concept refers to the need to be constantly aware of the totality of the opponent and his movements, just as moonlight shines equally on everything in its range.

#### **3. COMBINED PHYSICAL-PSYCHOLOGICAL PRINCIPLES**

##### a. FOCUS

- i. "Focus" in karate refers to the concentration of all energy of the body in an instant on a specific target.

##### b. RESPONDING (HEN-O)

- i. This refers to the correct and precise apprehension of the opponent's movements and the conscious adoption of the proper techniques in accordance with them.