

Sogo-Goshin-Do

WKDA Kai Newsletter September 2004 issue #3 Vol. 4

Guarantee Success

What is the secret to success in the martial arts? Want to know how to reach black belt status and beyond?

The answers for our Sogo-Goshin-Do system are no different than any other martial art or interest. *Simply never quit!* It is really that easy if you look at it from the correct perspective. Let's break it down to a science:

I. *If you quit, your learning stops there.* No matter where you were and no matter what belt you had earned that's where it ends. **II.** *Probably about 90% of people who quit martial arts never really come back to it.* So if you quit that may be the end even if you say you'll start back later in life. **III.** *If you never quit then you will continue to get better.* It doesn't matter if you are a great student or an average one. During the journey you will become a black belt and a Sensei and you will continue to improve beyond that.

IV. *Most of us go through periods where we get bored or frustrated with everything in life.* The key is to persevere or simply push through it. Find something within the art to re-motivate you. Maybe take up a new weapon or train for a competition. Maybe you are at the level to begin assisting with the kids classes. Read a new martial arts book with other perspectives. *Anything to re-light the fire.*

V. *If you keep training and keep your focus throughout your journey in the arts.* Soon you'll find you have been studying for over 20 years like all the higher ranking black belts in

Sogo Goshin-Do. The practice pays off in the end. So never give up and never quit! *(This works with almost anything in life.)*

Bruce Lee: Myth or Legend

Bruce Lee has gained almost mythical status since his death in 1973, however he was a very real and passionate martial artist. What set him apart was the reality approach he took back in the 1960s and early 70s. At that time no one dared to break tradition and combining arts was really a new idea. Bruce Lee did just that and it took the country by storm.

While we are not a part of Bruce Lee's legacy nor do we practice his Jeet-Kune-Do philosophy we do share many common ideals. He may be a more fitting hero for Sogo Goshin-Do stylists than other famous martial artists. Bruce Lee was one of the first pioneers of martial arts and since his death their have been countless others who reshaped martial arts to some degree. One of those people was Kyoshi Earle Marvin. Kyoshi broke tradition as well and began combining a variety of cutting edge concepts into his art. That art is what we know as Sogo Goshin-Do today. Not only was it acceptable for him to take new approaches, but it was applauded by those who worked with Kyoshi.

While we still practice many traditions in our art and wear traditional uniforms we are really not traditionalists. We are combined fighters studying a synthesized art that evolves. Without pioneers like

Bruce Lee decades ago we may not have had all the opportunities we've had over the years. Even Kyoshi's masters were teaching him advanced ways to combine arts. Men like Master Church and Master Cherry also helped pave the way for Kyoshi's Sogo Goshin-Do.

But it was Bruce Lee who helped make martial arts more popular in the US and today it is practiced in every town across the nation. Without Bruce Lee there is no way to know where martial arts would be today. Just remember he was more than an action star. He was an icon that we can all relate to even now. To find out more about him check out a large bookstore for the Bruce Lee Fighting Method series or look online at Amazon.com.

Keep a Good Notebook

One thing I preach to my students is to keep a good martial arts notebook. It is very hard to store all the needed info in your head and even harder to study it or make changes if you don't have it written down somewhere. It also makes it easier to share your info with others if it is in a format anyone can read.

All the top martial artists within our system have a good notebook and they make changes over the years to catalog what they are studying and teaching. Kyoshi even kept a martial arts journal by his bed at night. He would write down ideas when they popped in his head and even told stories of getting ideas in

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the middle of the night or in dreams.

The pictorial kata at the front of the Walterboro dojo with the Yellow Triangle, Green Circle, the Brown X, and the Black Focus Point came to him in a dream and he jotted it down during the night. The next day he analyzed it and then integrated it into our system. Today it is a major part of the art. If Kyoshi had not kept good notes and had himself prepared to do so we may never have gotten this useful tool.

You may have ideas or questions that come to you during the week. Write them down in a notebook and then you can ask your Sensei about them later for more insights. By building good note taking skills now you will be better prepared down the road when you may be in leadership roles for Sogo-Goshin-Do. If you are already in such a role then you are helping to document the current history of the art. *So grab a pen and paper!*

Official Website Newsletter

The newsletter will now also be on the official Sogo-Goshin-Do WKDA web site each month at:

<http://www.sogogoshindo.org/>

This is the web site Sensei Daniel Schwerin has put together and it is really looking professional. Check it out and give him feedback.

Discipline

Do you have discipline?

Many parents today enroll their kids in martial arts classes to learn discipline and gain self-esteem. Regardless of the curriculum or type of martial art these two things are usually learned in any dojo. This is one of the reasons not to totally abandon tradition in martial arts.

The lining up and wearing uniforms with colored belts is all part of the traditionalism of martial arts. It takes you out of the everyday and puts you into something entirely different and exciting. It becomes fun to endure the strict learning atmosphere where you can push yourself beyond your expected limitations. You learn much about yourself and what you can do in *dojos* that stress discipline of body and mind. However, does it always carry over into your regular life?

This may vary from person to person, but hopefully it does to some degree. Today public schools are facing many problems in the form of discipline that we don't really see in the dojo. Fighting amongst students and disrespect towards teachers are commonplace. To a lesser degree there seems to be even more clowning around in schools today and the problem of keeping 25-30 kids under control can seem to be an impossible task for a single teacher.

Hopefully the kids in our Sogo Goshin-Do programs realize the importance of taking the positive thinking and good conduct they learn in the dojo into their regular

classrooms. They need to know that they become positive role models when they show this kind of behavior.

Instructors should understand what a huge impact their martial arts classes have on kids' lives. I encourage each of you to talk to your kids' classes about proper behavior in school and stress the importance of doing your best and making good grades.

While all recreational sports and activities have this kind of positive impact on kids it should be noted that not as many kids today take part in things like scouting and little league sports. Your karate class may be taking the place of those activities.

Also, while there are karate competitions to compete in, martial arts does not stress winning as much as it does self-development so it is a unique combination of instruction. Kids learn more than self-defense. They gain maturity, focus, and self-esteem. From these things stem many other types of growth.

Senseis please talk to your kids classes today if you are not already doing this. Good Luck!

I Need Articles

I would like to challenge every black belt in the group to jot down a brief 100 word article for the newsletter. That should be any easy task. Just think of something you want to share and e-mail it to me.

(to contribute to the newsletter contact Shihan Sean Mann by e-mail at: Nowheremann3@yahoo.com)