

Sogo-Goshin-Do

WKDA KAI NEWSLETTER **APRIL 2005** issue #4 Vol. 5

NEWS

- ❑ *We apologize for leaving this info out last month on Justin B.* He is a yellow belt with a stripe and he placed 4th in fighting and third in kata in the 10-11 year old division at the recent tournament. Great job.
- ❑ Want to congratulate Ashley Whaley from Edisto Dojo for being one of the youngest *Sempais* in the system. At the age of 10, she has obtained the rank of Sankyu. This has been almost expected of her, since she has been a great student and competitor for quite sometime. Two weeks ago she finished 2nd in Nationals. Congratulations Ashley.
- ❑ Gage Marvin obtained the rank of Rokkyu recently. Keep up the good work Gage.
- ❑ Saturday classes now being offered at Hombu Dojo every Saturday.
- ❑ Shihan Sanford will be at hombu dojo in Walterboro on the 28th of this month (Thursday). Attend if you can to learn from Shihan.
- ❑ T-shirt and Sweat Shirt sales are in full swing. T-shirt costs are only \$12 and Sweat Shirts are \$20. We have already had several people commit to buying these, so continue to support the system (this is a Fundraiser for equipment). If you want newer and better equipment. Then please help out.
- ❑ The Website is updated with new pictures and more members added to the members only page. We are slowly building up all of the participants in Sogo Goshin-Do on the site.

Instructors we still need a list of members (green belt or higher) from your schools. Please send Sensei Daniel the Name (first/last), phone number, email address (if they have) along with home address. Also, we need information from Senseis on their martial arts history. I know in the future Shihan Will is going to get together a book with all the names, addresses, phone numbers, and e-mail. This will be a great way to put everyone's info in one location. (send to: dlschwerin@knology.net)

Nidan by Shihan Sean Mann

Do you ever wonder what makes a 1st degree black belt (*shodan*) ready for his/her 2nd degree black belt (*nidan*)? There are several factors to the formula to move from 1st to 2nd dan. One of these is time. With **steady training** one should move to 2nd *dan* in 1-3 years depending on how much they are committed to improving. Another factor is **teaching maturity**. A new black belt is often thrust into the role of *Sensei*, but by 2nd *dan* they should be maturing and showing signs of strong leadership. Sometimes we refer to a *nidan* as a Full Sensei and the promotion is in recognition of that. One more factor is **improved method**. This doesn't mean that a *Nidan* should necessarily be able to out-spar all the *Shodans* in the class, but there should be clear indicators that the student has improved his/her technique. Always try to improve your method no matter what your rank. For underbelts a similar formula involving *steady training, maturity, and improved method* is part of gaining promotion and we base much of this on the handbook contents. However, for upper black belts we are not only students, but teachers as well and the criteria are more philosophical and more individualized.

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Enhancement of mood

By Sensei Daniel Schwerin RN

Can Martial Arts enhance your mood?

Mood by definition is the characteristic state of how someone feels or simply their mental state. This can be broken down into many components such as happiness, anger, tension, anxiety or fear. The reason for having so many different moods is simple: "we are all human." Simply, this means that in order to be able to express ourselves then we need the tools to do it with.

How we feel is directed by processes within the brain. These processes are governed by neurotransmitters (chemicals) that interact with different parts of the brain. The main neurotransmitters used for feelings include: dopamine and serotonin. Dopamine is released from a specific part of the brain called the Substantia nigra. This neurotransmitter is then transported to different parts of the brain, specifically the frontal lobe where feelings are produced. When we do something that we enjoy dopamine is released telling the brain that that was enjoyable and worth doing again. Serotonin, unlike dopamine, is produced in multiple parts of the brain. The function of serotonin is for attention and arousal. We can affect our mood in different ways: foods we eat, activities that we do, getting enough sleep, and even certain medications will enhance our mood. Exercise is by far one of the most rewarding forms of mood enhancement.

Increased activity will cause the body to release not only dopamine and serotonin but, several other hormones which helps

with mood enhancement. The increase in dopamine levels are registered in the brain and increases to continue these activities are being "programmed". The end result is euphoria, such as when a runner finishes running 26 miles and has the so called "runner's high". Performing martial arts has its own ability to increase one's mood. When you work out leave all the stresses of life outside and enjoy the activity for what it is: A means to enhance your mood.

Summer dedication *by Shihan Mann*

Summer is fast upon us and that means taking vacations, spending time with family, and relaxing. You may even be involved in other recreation in the summer. Just don't forget to stay dedicated to martial arts. Martial Arts is recreational and has sport elements, but unlike conventional sports there is *no off-season*. What this comes down to is most students take for a year or two and then quit forever. Don't fall into this trap if you take some time off. Just tell yourself that you are going back to the dojo and stick to your decision. Ask your parents to make sure you do this if you are still at home. It always saddened me when one of my best students would quit all of a sudden. Often they were the ones that seemed the most determined and dedicated. Burn out and laziness will make you quit a lot of things even if you love it while in the class. Stay focused!! Don't quit even if you take time off!!!

(to contribute to the newsletter contact Shihan Sean: ltsmann@yahoo.com)