

Sogo-Goshin-Do

WKDA KAI NEWSLETTER JANUARY 2005 issue #1 Vol. 5

2005 & Volume 5

Welcome to issue #1 of the 5th volume of the WKDA Kai Newsletter for Sogo-Goshin-Do. This is the 5th year I have been editing the monthly newsletter. I started these in 1998 and continued through 2000 until I left to join the Army. Upon my return to the area I again started the newsletter in 2004. If anyone is interested in anything from those older volumes just e-mail me and I can try to send them to you. I am in the process of seeing if we can't have them all attached on the Sogo-Goshin-Do website like the current issues. I have changed the format slightly for this volume, which may make this more reader friendly and may add pictures in the future. I am looking forward to a great 2005 for the group.

What's in a name

by Shihan Sean Mann

As far as I know there is nobody in the kai who speaks Japanese fluently. Most of the words we do know are related to martial arts or are simple greetings. The simple fact is we use the words and symbols from the Japanese language and yet we really don't always completely understand them. This is true for anyone learning a new language and trying to interpret it correctly. Consider trying to explain the difference between these 3 words "to, too, and two" to someone who doesn't speak English well or at all. They all sound the same but have very different meanings. Within the few terms we use in our art we have encountered a word that we use in 3 different ways with 3 different meanings in Japanese. That word is "go" (21 total uses in Japanese language). The most common use of the word "go" is to mean the number 5. Then we see it twice within the name **Sogo-Goshin-Do** and it has two different meanings and two different symbols to represent them. Look at your patch or handbook and identify them. The 2nd and 3rd character both are pronounced "go".

The first "go" used in Sogo actually means "combined". When coupled with the word "So", which means *general* or *overall* we get a translation meaning to combine and synthesize.

The second word "go" means "defend" and when coupled with the word "shin" which means "self" here it becomes "self-defense". A point of interest is that "shin" often translates to heart as in the words Kamishin (divine heart) or Sieshin

(pure heart). So one could look at the word "goshin" and possibly think it means "5 heart" when in fact it does not mean that at all.

So knowing what each part of the word Sogo-Goshin-Do means is key to truly understanding the total meaning. Be careful in just assuming what words mean or simply putting words together when using a foreign language (especially if you are tattooing them on your body ☺). When possible try to bounce them off native speakers of the foreign dialect. Also, if you remember from a past issue you can get some assistance with Japanese kanji from Chinese speakers as well. Just remember they will often be able to translate the kanji but not always pronounce it as the Japanese would. If you are going to use the words try to get a good understanding of what they truly mean and you will become an asset to your school.

Weapons of the body

By Sensei Chris Schwerin

The weapons of the body are those points that contact your opponent's targets. Our bodies attack these targets in a very specific way and with a specific weapon. When using these weapons, there is a consistency that exists. Hit with hard weapons to soft body targets and soft weapons to hard body targets (*hard to soft and soft to hard*). By learning this very simple rule you will save yourself a lot of self-induced pain. What I mean is how many times have you been sparring and struck your opponent's head with your fist, hurts doesn't it? This is an example of poor weapon selection or poor target indexing. The fist is a hard weapon and the head is a hard target the two do not mix, not without damage to your weapon, which is not ideal. The object is to hurt them not yourself. The weapons of the body can be broken down into eight different groups: the hands, forearm, elbow, shoulder, hip, knee, shin, and feet.

The hands have many weapons and functions. The mobility of the hands is very complex and fragile. Do not abuse your hands by attempting to harden them by breaking inanimate objects. Your hands are perfect the way they are. A closed fist is the most common weapon. To make a proper fist start with an open hand and roll your fingers inward starting with the little finger. Once your

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tips are dug into your palm take your thumb and reach for the middle finger and squeeze. The top two knuckles are raised slightly for proper wrist alignment. These two knuckles are what you want to strike with for your jabs, reverse punches, uppercuts and hooking punches. The bottom portion of the fist is for hammer strikes, which are used for hammering down or to the side. To make a one-knuckle punch just slightly raise your middle finger. This allows your body mass to be distributed over a smaller surface area. The palm is also a very effective weapon. It acts like a knife's edge. The metacarpal bones are what you want to use for your attacks, these are the bones through the center of the hand not the fingers. The *heel-palm strike* is done with the end of the ulna bone. To find the end of the bone rotate your wrist backwards. Follow the outside of the palm to where it meets the wrist. There is where the end of the ulna bone can be found. The force you can generate from a palm-heel strike is incredible. The webbing between the thumb and index finger can be used to strike with. The finger jabs are structurally the worst strike you can do. Try to keep all four fingers together this will help strength them. The thumb jab can also be used. The finger and thumb jabs are used to target index the throat, eyes, and nostrils. If all this doesn't work then just claw your way out.

The forearm strike uses the portion of the forearm from the end of the ulna to the tip of the elbow. Avoid the radial side of the forearm due to the exposed nerves that are present. This weapon can be used on almost all targets of the body.

The elbow is far more powerful than any strike with the hand, the only down fall is you have to be close to use it. Remember the tip of the elbow is very small and with it being closer to the center of the body the amount of momentum you can generate makes this a very effective tool. Just make sure you keep the elbow bent slightly when striking. With the aid of the body's rotation the elbow can strike 360 degrees.

The shoulder and hip are very limited when it comes to striking. They are used more for manipulating then striking. They are good to bump your opponent, which will get them off balanced. But for the most part they will be your fulcrum point for most of your throws.

The knee strike is very effective due to the fact that you can direct all your body weight into the target easily. When doing the knee strike remember to keep the kneeling foot pointed downward and slightly inward. When doing knee drops never do both knees at once. You will lose your balance and will have no supporting body dynamics. The shin can be used much like the knee. It can be used to kick with or drop with. Just remember to target index soft targets.

The feet are much like your hands. The top of the foot can never be used as a weapon and is a very effective target. The toes can be used to kick with if you have some type of shoes on. You should pull your toes back and kick with the ball of your foot. This is more effective and will be less likely to hurt. The heel can be used to stomp your opponent. The outer edge of the foot, the heel edge, is what you want to use for your side-kick. Remember your feet are your base. This is where balance starts and your stance begins if you injure your feet you're only hurting yourself.

I know what you're thinking he left out the head as a weapon. *I personally do not like to use my head as a striking weapon.* My thoughts on this are as follows. If I strike something with my head I may injure it. If I can't think straight it will affect my ability to defend myself. Unfortunately a good example of this is boxers. In time the amount of damage they have suffered due to being struck in the head has caused serious bruising to the brain. Their reaction time and thought process slow down due to this damage. These are things I do not want to happen to me. I do realize this affect does not occur instantly but happens over time in repeated fights. But there are things that can instantly stop you for a brief second. A finger jabbed in the eye or strike to the bridge of the nose will cause your eyes to water and then you lose part of your vision which makes your ability to defend yourself that much harder. I think we should refrain from using our head as an actual striking weapon and use it what it's meant for and out-think our opponents.

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