

## *Finding a Place for Karate-do in Mainstream Education*

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The Asian Conference on Education 2015  
Official Conference Proceedings

### **Abstract**

This paper discusses some of the benefits of including karate-do lessons in schools. It begins by providing a brief history of karate-do which originated on the small island of Okinawa, South of mainland Japan and its intimate relationship with education and the Japanese school system. In order to determine its merit we will look at such things as some of the health benefits of regular karate-do training as a form of exercise and how this exercise can positively affect academic performance. Furthermore, the philosophies and ethics of karate-do which are grounded in Busihdo develop healthy habits in its practitioners and have the potential to change lives in very positive ways. The author will draw from his extensive knowledge and experience in Chito-Ryu Karate-do which he has practiced for almost 30 years from childhood to present in Canada and Japan as well as his nearly ten year involvement with the Japan Karate-do Federation (JKF) through the Junior and Senior High School divisions. This paper outlines such important concepts as Bun-bu Ryo-do, Shin Gi Tai, and Reigi Saho. The JKF; the organizing body of karate-do in Japan, is making great efforts and working closely with the Japanese Ministry of Education Health and Science (MEXT) to develop an acceptable curriculum which incorporates karate-do lessons in junior high schools across Japan as part of the budo lessons, an affiliate of the Japanese physical education program. These initiatives will be reviewed and referenced to support the viability of including karate-do in schools' curricula.

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(Japanese *Kanji*, *Karate-do* written by the Author, 2015)

### **Introduction**

In order to have a discussion on this topic we must first answer a few important questions, the first being what is *karate-do*? I would like to put emphasis on the ‘do’ part of *karate-do*. In order to define *karate-do* we must also research where it came from and how it developed. In doing so, we may also attain vital information as to why it is so important to so many people world-wide. With “100 million practitioners around the world” (Espinosa, 2014), it is safe to say that *karate-do* holds a special position in the global society. *Karate-do* has the potential to change the lives of students around the world as it has positively impacted the lives of the 100 million practitioners mentioned above. In this paper I will introduce *karate-do* and outline some of the positive points it has to offer to students if included in mainstream education.

### **Defining *Karate-do***

The Oxford Dictionary of Current English defines *karate* as a Japanese system of unarmed combat using hands and feet as weapons. Christopher M. Clarke in his book *Okinawan Karate: A History of Styles and Masters Vol.1* (2012), he states that, “At its simplest, *karate* is a system of unarmed self-defense” (p.7), implying that *karate* is actually something more complex. *Karate* is indeed a self-defense system, but the discussion I wish to have deals with *karate-do* which requires more clarification in its definition.

In order to deepen our understanding of the terms covered in this paper we must also look at the Chinese Characters (*kanji*). The word *karate*, as we know it today, is made up of two *kanji* 空 and 手, *Kara*; Empty or vacant and *Te*; Hand. These two *kanji* combine to become ‘empty hand’ which describes this weaponless art of self-defense. The two definitions given above, while accurately defining the term *karate*, are lacking when we attempt to define *karate-do* and therefore should not be misunderstood to encompass *karate-do* as well.

When we add the third *kanji* 道 *Michi* or *Do*, often translated as Path or Way, we must begin considering a great deal more than just the aspects of self-defense as we attempt to define it. *Karate-do* has tremendously more depth because it is grounded in the principles and philosophies of *Bushido*; a Japanese “code of moral principles” (Nitobe, 1899) that positively influence peoples’ lives.

It is well known that when dealing with a different culture and a different language we need to address and attempt to understand these deeply rooted differences. However, as in the case of Eastern and Western philosophies, more often than not, the vocabulary available to translate these complex concepts is often lacking (Ames, 2009). This is especially true when we begin to look at the codes of moral principles of Asian martial arts like *karate-do*.

Professor Roger Ames has often stated that in an attempt to discuss the philosophies of Asia in the West people often end up forcing the vocabulary by “trying to fit the Asian foot into a Greek sandal” (Ames, 2009). We are lacking the vocabulary to effectively translate some of the more foreign concepts. Ames offers great insight and aids on the subject of understanding Eastern philosophy and Chinese philosophy in particular. I suggest that we can use similar approaches when addressing *karate-do*; its principles and practices, theories and concepts, and the impact they make on those involved. Obviously, I cannot address everything in this short paper. Therefore, further and more in-depth study on this and related subjects is recommended.

As Ames states, we are really trying to understand the ‘*Lange*’ of the Culture by using the ‘*Parole*’ (Saussure) to deepen our understanding of the social structure of that culture. “*Langue* is a vocabulary that a living culture will generate in order to articulate the importance’s of that culture” (Ames, 2009). It is, therefore, understandable that every culture will have a different *Lange*. We can find this in both the semantics and syntax of the language. According to Ames, when learning foreign languages, we excavate the *Lange* of that culture and, in doing so we discover how that culture has structured itself in ways different from our own culture. *Parole* allows us to express and understand the *Lange* of other cultures, but we are always limited by the vocabulary of our own culture.

In the case of researching the philosophical concepts of *karate-do*, as well as other Asian martial arts, I believe that by deconstructing the *kanji* we can learn a lot more about the intended meanings in a more accurate context. For example, in this case we can see that by adding the character 道 *Do / Michi* to the previous 空手 *karate* it becomes something more than just a weaponless self-defense system; *michi*; a way, a road, or a path, as mentioned above, indicates that there is something deeper upon which this combative system is built, a base that is rooted in its philosophy and a set of ethics that teaches a ‘way of life’ this ‘way’ is grounded in the process of self-cultivation and fosters the qualities of self-discipline and kindness toward others, the doctrine of which states that *karate-do* must never be used to perpetrate violence. In this respect, it may be said that *karate-do* is a path that guides us to peace.

Funakoshi Gichin, a famous pioneer of *karate-do* who contributed greatly to its spread from Okinawa to mainland Japan and considered by many as the ‘Father of Modern *Karate-do*’ was also a school teacher. He is known to have repeatedly stated that, “*Karate-do* begins and ends with courtesy.” This is not a definition of what the

*karate-do* is, but it describes the path. The meaning of *do* is illustrated in the methods of practice and grounded in its history as it developed in and spread from Okinawa to mainland Japan and then to the rest of the world. Although training is often done in groups, the ‘journey’ of *karate-do* is always a very personal one of self-cultivation and for many it becomes the thing that grounds and guides them, giving direction to their lives and over time indeed becomes their ‘way of life’.

Therefore, the following definition given by Funakoshi (1973) is more appropriate than the definitions given above, “True *karate-do* is this: that in daily life, one’s mind and body be trained and developed in a spirit of humility and that in critical times, one be devoted utterly to the cause of justice” (p.3). This, in my opinion, is a more accurate definition of *karate-do*.

### A Brief History

Funakoshi Gichin was a school teacher who authored many books on *karate-do*. He also pioneered its spread from Okinawa to mainland Japan. In one of his lesser known books *Karate-Do Nyumon* (1973), Funakoshi Gichin gives a detailed history of *karate-do*. He states, “Located in the south of Japan, that country, formerly called the Kingdom of the Ryukyus and now known as Okinawa Prefecture, was the birthplace of karate” (p.18).



(Figure 1: Map of Okinawa)

Before this martial art became recognized on mainland Japan it developed in Okinawa among other indigenous fighting arts. The literature supports the estimate that these fighting arts have existed on the Ryukyu Islands for at least 1,000 years, despite the fact that written records are scarce, most having been destroyed during the Battle of Okinawa in April 1945 (Clarke, 2012).

The name *karate* only became recognized in the English language after World War II. First known simply as 手 *Te*, *Ti*, or *Di*, depending on the dialect used. This fighting art was heavily influenced by the classical Chinese fighting arts, the same art introduced to those at Shao-lin Temple which came to be known as 少林寺拳法 *Shorin-ji Kempo*. “In 1392, the emperor sent the famous ‘36 families’ of Chinese

emigrants to Okinawa; they included all sorts of literati, artisans, and experts in the martial arts” (Funakoshi, 1973, p. 20). These families settled in Kume Village which later became famous for its interaction between native Okinawan and Chinese martial artists. Due to the strong influence of Chinese martial arts and the strong connection among the Kingdoms which may be said to have blossomed in the 17<sup>th</sup> century this fighting art became known as 唐手 *tode* or *karate* which translates to ‘Chinese Hand’. The two characters 唐 and 空 are homonyms in Japanese. The first, 唐, denotes that it is foreign, in particular from ancient China, derived from its use in Chinese to signify the Tang dynasty (A.D. 618 – 907). The more recent *kanji*, 空, was introduced for the word *karate* to make it more palatable for mainland Japanese nationalists and is now accepted (Ohshima, 1973). It wasn’t until 1879 when Japan forced the abolition of the kingdom of Okinawa and absorbed the Ryukyu Islands as a Prefecture that the name officially changed to 空手 *karate*.

It is interesting to note that while the Okinawans initially resisted it was the Japanese system of education that persuaded them to “accept their new status as Japanese” (Funakoshi, 1973, p.21). Leading up to WW II many young men were drafted by the Japanese army and educated within its ranks. Many of these young men turned to the martial arts as a way to improve their physical conditioning. This is important to know because after the loss of the war to the American Armed forces *karate* became one of the main methods used to re-build the physical health of the Japanese people, illustrating the positive health benefits of *karate-do* as an exercise system.

In his book *Kempo Karate-do Universal Art of Self-Defense* Dr. Chitose Tsuyoshi (1947), a medical doctor and founder of the Chito-Ryu style of *karate-do*, stated that *karate-do* could play a central role in the re-building of a new Japan stressing that in order to do so “we must first ensure that we are in good health” (p.90). He goes on to list the 5 areas in which *karate-do* practice contributes to one’s general health before stating that “*karate-do* is the most complete form of physical exercise” (p.90).

According to Dr. Chitose, healthy bodies are developed through proper <i>karate-do</i> training which can be seen in the following five areas:
1. Effecting a change in the metabolism of cells.
2. Working to promote the functioning of the capillaries.
3. Improving the circulation of the blood.
4. Stimulating the lymphatic system.
5. Helping to regulate the body temperature.

(Figure 2: Five areas of Karate-do Training Health Benefits)



(Funakoshi Gichin Sensei and Chitose Tsuyoshi Sensei, 1955)

### ***Karate-do* in the Education System of Okinawa and Japan**

*Karate-do* training in Okinawa before the Meiji period (1868 -1912) was only taught in secrecy and usually limited to family members. Therefore, there were very few documents before this time. However, with the beginning of the Meiji period this all changed and *karate-do* became more and more popularized eventually making its way into the public school system of Okinawa as part of the Prefectural physical education program. described in his book, *Karate-do Kyohan*, Funakoshi (1973) writes regarding the public introduction of *karate-do*:

Training in karate was always conducted with the utmost secrecy in Okinawa, with no one teaching or training openly in its arts as is done today. For this reason, books or written records on karate are almost nonexistent. It was naturally unthinkable that karate should be displayed in public exhibition. With the beginning of the Meiji period, the formal education system and the military conscription system were inaugurated, and during the physical examination of draftees and students, those young men with karate training were recognizable at a glance and greatly impressed the examining doctors with their well-balanced limb development and clearly defined muscular development. Then, sometime later, the commissioner of public schools, Shintaro Ogawa, strongly recommended in a report to the Ministry of Education that the physical education programs of the normal schools and the First Public High School of Okinawa Prefecture include karate as part of their training. This recommendation was accepted and initiated by these schools in 1902.

Between the years of 1914 and 1930 Funakoshi and a small group of *karate-do* masters gave public demonstrations and lectures around Okinawa and Japan. Funakoshi has been linked to many schools and companies with regard to his instruction of *karate-do*. Some of the universities include: Keio, Waseda, Tokyo Shoka Daigaku, Takusho, Chuo, Gakushu-in, and Hosei. Now, generations' later *karate-do* classes are conducted as either part of the physical education program or as a club activity in most public and private schools across Japan.

The JKF has been working together with MEXT to develop a curriculum to include *karate-do* lessons in JHS as a part of the physical education program across Japan. At the time this paper was written, there were 202 JHSs which implemented the program across the nation. It is interesting to note that of the 202 schools 127 of them are in Okinawa.

都道府県	中学校名	数
北海道	北広島市立広葉、北広島市立西の里、北広島市立福富分校、北広島市立西部、北広島市立東部、北広島市立緑陽、北広島市立大田、上川町立上川	8
岩手県	私立盛岡白百合学園、北上市立北上	2
宮城県	石巻市立門脇、仙台市立中田、仙台市立大沢、仙台市立築紫、仙台市立郡山、仙台市立桜ヶ丘、仙台市立西山	7
福島県	いわき市立石住、浪江町立浪江、石川町立茨田	3
茨城県	取手市立第二	1
千葉県	私立龍澤	1
群馬県	太田市立西	1
埼玉県	川口市立岸川	1
東京都	私立八雲学園、私立普連土学園、私立東屋学園、私立和洋九段女子、練馬区立開進第三、練馬区立光が丘、私立世田谷学	8
神奈川県	私立神奈川学園、私立清泉女学院、私立捜真女学院、私立F女学院、私立聖ステパ、学園、横浜富士見学園、函館白百合学園、私立相洋	8
新潟県	土越市立一	1
長野県	どんぐり西方学園、阿南町立阿南第一	2
富山県	私立片山学園	1
石川県	私立立松学園	1
京都市	私立華頂女子、私立花園学園	2
大阪府	私立浪速、私立関西創価	2
兵庫県	私立須川学園、私立華徳学園	2
和歌山県	太地町立太地、紀美野町立長谷毛原	2
岡山県	真庭市立緑山	1
広島県	私立如水館	1
山口県	山田立井	1
徳島県	上勝町立上勝、東みよし町立三加茂	2
福岡県	私立福岡女学院、那珂川町立那珂川北、福岡市立西福岡、福岡市立香椎第二	4
熊本県	芦北町立佐敷、芦北町立湯浦、芦北町立大野、芦北町立田浦、私立マリスト学園、私立ルーテル学院、私立文徳	7
大分県	豊後高田市立高田	1
宮崎県	宮崎第一、私立白尚学院	2
鹿児島県	鹿児島市立坂元、私立鹿児島第一	2
沖縄県	(国頭地区) 国頭村立国頭、大宜味村立大宜味、東村立東、東村立有銘、今帰仁村立今帰仁、本部町立上本部、本部町立本部、本部町立水納、名護市立原我地、名護市立羽地、名護市立久志、名護市立久辺、名護市立東江、名護市立大高、宮野村立宮野、会武町立会武、伊江村立伊江、伊平屋村立伊平屋、伊平屋村立野崎、(中頭地区) 恩納村立安斎祖、恩納村立嘉瀬武原、恩納村立恩納、恩納村立仲泊、恩納村立山田、うるま市立石川、うるま市立伊波、うるま市立与勝、うるま市立与勝第二、うるま市立志田、うるま市立高江洲、うるま市立興志川原、うるま市立新橋、読谷村立読谷、読谷村立古堅、嘉手納町立嘉手納、沖縄市立越来、沖縄市立コザ、沖縄市立山内、沖縄市立美里、沖縄市立美東、沖縄市立安慶田、沖縄市立高里、北谷町立北谷、北谷町立森江、宜野湾市立善大間、宜野湾市立嘉敷、宜野湾市立真志嘉、宜野湾市立宜野湾、北中城村立北中城、中城村立中城、西原町立西原、西原町立西原、(那覇地区) 浦添市立浦添、浦添市立神森、浦添市立港川、浦添市立浦西、那覇市立安岡、那覇市立首里、那覇市立真和志、那覇市立石田、那覇市立那覇、那覇市立上山、那覇市立神原、那覇市立崎嘉、那覇市立古蔵、那覇市立小緑、那覇市立松崎、那覇市立城北、那覇市立鏡原、那覇市立松崎、那覇市立仲井真、那覇市立金城、那覇市立石崎、南大東町立南大東、北大東町立北大東、私立沖縄高学	127
<small>半沖縄県で平成25年度に空手道実行了った中学校は154校中127校(約83%)          &lt;平成26年10月26日全空連調べ&gt;</small>		
計		202

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(Figure 3: Japanese Junior High Schools that have included Karate-do classes, 2014)

As we continue to explore this topic, other questions beg to be addressed. What makes *karate-do* so popular? What was its great appeal to the commissioner of public schools in Okinawa in 1902, later to the crown prince and emperor in 1921, and now today with people all over the world? How can a fighting art have such a positive impact on students? The answer to questions like these is actually quite simple and can be found in the character of the participants.

No matter how you may excel in the art of *ti* (*karate-do*) and in your scholastic endeavors, nothing is more important than your humanity as observed in daily life.

‘Ti’ Junsoku (1663-1734)

In Asian philosophy there has always been a strong connection between man and nature and community (Ames, and Hall, 2003, Lau, 1970, 2003). This can be seen in many texts and works of art. The philosophies that have guided the growth of Japanese martial arts are no different.

The close connection to the art of *karate*, academia, and nature is illustrated in the quote above. The underlining principle that a practitioner of *karate-do* doesn't simply learn the moves like a formula, but rather strives to develop a well-rounded and healthy life style that is balanced and innately human. What does it mean to be human? How do we show our humanity? It is believed by many that we show our humanity in our daily acts of kindness and courtesy, through our acts of courage in the face of danger, and in our restraint and self-control. In short, it is in our humility that we show our true strength. What a concept. What a great lesson to learn. I believe that offering such an opportunity to school children can change their academic lives and greatly increase their potential for success in many other areas of their lives as well. "Those who follow *Karate-do* must consider courtesy of prime importance. Without courtesy, the essence of *Karate-do* is lost. Courtesy must be practiced not only during the karate training period but at all times in one's daily life" (Funakoshi, 1975, p. 6).



(Japanese *Kanji, Kansha* "Gratitude" written by the Author, 2015)

People begin practicing *karate-do* for many different reasons, but the longer someone trains the more *karate-do* becomes an intricate part of their lives and, inevitably, one begins to familiarize themselves with the Japanese language and cultural aspects which are embedded in the art. One learns specific skill sets through repetitive practice of precise techniques, but this is only the tip of the metaphorical iceberg. It is no secret that continued practice of this art changes lives, it is said that "those who follow *karate-do* will develop courage and fortitude..." (Funakoshi, 1975, p.6), in this statement we can see that practitioners develop qualities such as self-confidence and self-control. This quiet strength can be taught and strengthened by regular *karate-do* practice. This is reinforced by a set of rules or guidelines known as *Dojo Kun* which I will discuss in more detail later in this paper.





(Japanese Kanji, *Nin* 'Perseverance' written by the Author, 2014)

### **Merits of Including Karate-do in Schools**

The positive effects of regular physical activity on academic performance are becoming more widely documented (Fedewa, Ahn, 2011, Weir, 2011), and some information can be found on the impact of *karate* specific training on performance levels and health benefits among student athletes (Imamura, Yoshimura, Nishimura, Nishimura, Nakazawa, Nishimura, and Shirota, T., 1997, 1999), (Imamura, Yamauchi, Hori, Nishimura, Sakamoto, 2002), (Imamura, Yoshimura, Nishimura, Nakazawa, Teshima, Nishimura, Miyamoto, 2002), (Imamura, Yoshimura, Nishimura, Nishimura, Sakamoto, 2003), (Iide, Imamura, Yoshimura, Yamashita, Miyahara, Miyamoto, Morikawa, 2008). However, there is not a lot of information on the impact of *karate-do* specific training on academic performance, which is why I feel there is a real need to conduct such studies. Until such a study is completed we will have to base our hypothesis on the data available regarding general physical activity and its impacts on students.

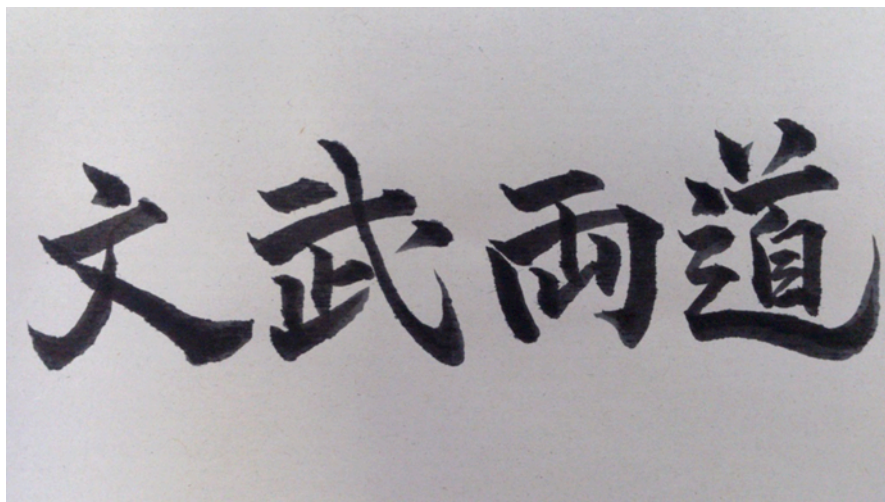
Regarding the impacts of regular physical activity on students, Janelle Vaesa (2012) sites a study conducted in the Netherlands which found a strong correlation between physical activity and test scores. Vaesa suggests children should be active for at least one hour per day. This is a widely accepted guideline which is also supported by the American Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Considering the amount of time children spend in school performing menial clerical work such as sitting still taking notes, reading books, and studying formulas, it makes sense that children would tend to have problems concentrating.

The average school week in North America is eight hours a day, 5 days a week. However, in Japan the days are much longer, some schools beginning extracurricular classes as early as 7:30 a.m. and evening classes running well past 6:00 p.m. Most private schools offer classes on Saturdays and some even on Sundays (Buntoku high school, 2015). One of the suggestions of the above mentioned study was to provide even more opportunities for children to be physically active while at school, beyond the currently provided physical education classes such as "...being a member of a sports club..." (Vaesa, 2012), I suggest that *karate-do* classes could have positive health benefits and augment the current physical education classes while providing the students with the opportunity to learn the qualities discussed in this paper.

My hypothesis, which is based on nearly 30 years of practicing and over 20 years of teaching *karate-do*, is that in a relatively short amount of time noticeable changes among the students' health and concentration levels will be found and continue to improve with regular *karate-do* training. A theory of why this happens is explored next.

*Karate-do* quickly takes the student into the “practice gap” (Chi, 2015). Chi lists three learning gaps that one must cross in order to attain proficiency, the first of which is the knowledge gap. This is where we research and learn all the information regarding the subject. However, without practice we will never become proficient. Chi argues that we have to get to the second gap; the practice gap more quickly. I believe that the approach *karate-do* lessons take do just that. It is through continued practicing of the techniques that we learn the intricate points including such things as the philosophy, ethics, and cultural understanding.

At the end of the practice gap is the attainment of basic competency. However, with the attainment of competency we also come to the beginning of Chi's third learning gap; the mastery gap. Chi states that in this gap “human potential is expanded.” I believe that continued *karate-do* training takes the student through these three gaps in a very natural process that could benefit the students' lives and resonate outward to affect other areas of their life as well. This unique balance of academic proficiency through specific physical training has been appreciated in Japan for centuries and is known as 文武両道 *Bun Bu Ryo Do*.



(Japanese *Kanji*, *Bun Bu Ryo Do* written by the Author, 2015)

### ***Karate-do* as Life-long Learning Method**

From what we have learned in this discussion, the value of *karate-do* can be seen in three major areas; athletic training (運動); self-defense (護身術); and emotional training (精神的な), that is to say, training which fosters the intrinsic traits of courage, courtesy, integrity, humility and promotes self-confidence and self-control among the participants. Such training forms good habits that have far reaching effects. These traits are sometimes described as 不動心 (Mencius 1970, 2003).

As was mentioned earlier, “*karate-do* begins and ends with courtesy” (Funakoshi). Courtesy can be found in many aspects of most traditional styles of *karate-do* and can be seen in many of the everyday actions of the *karate-do* practitioner. From the way one enters and leaves the 道場 *Dojo*, to the way they conduct themselves in the course of their daily lives.

It is believed by many that acting in such a way brings honour to the individual. However, during my time in Japan, it seems to me that people do not perform this kind of genuine courtesy of the attention, but rather because it is natural for them to act in that specific manner in the given situation. This may bring honour to their community, but make no mistake; their courteous actions are not premeditated to draw attention to themselves.

Furthermore, in my experience, showing proper manners through specific etiquette is a requirement for effective communication in Japan. So much so in fact, that different speech patterns in the form of honorifics 敬語 (*Keigo*), developed in the language to demonstrate this in everyday dealings with each other.

This concept of courtesy in daily life is known as 礼儀作法 (*Reigi Sahou*), The Application of Courtesy. The first two kanji mean Courtesy and the last two kanji mean Manners or Etiquette. When placed together they mean the practice of 'good' manners through courteous actions. In his book, *Bushido the Soul of Japan; An Exposition of Japanese Thought* Nitobe Inazo (1909) discusses the many aspects of Japanese courtesy in the *Budo* context. Over half of the book is dedicated to things such as Politeness, Sincerity, Honour, and Self-control all of which are connected to courtesy. Throughout the text, Nitobe compares Eastern and Western philosophies on these subjects and reflects on them in detail.

The International *Chito-Ryu Karate-do* has a list of five rules of conduct, 道場五訓 *dojo Go Kun*, that *karate-do* practitioners are expected to follow in order to display their deep understanding of the importance of courtesy in every aspect of their daily lives. Many Okinawan and Japanese Styles or Groups of *karate-do* have similar *Kun* focusing on manners, cleanliness, self-control, and strength of character (Clarke, 2012). In some schools these *dojo Kun* are recited in unison before and or after training sessions. Students are not only expected to memorize them but also make efforts in their daily lives to be true to them.

千唐流道場五訓 <i>Chito-Ryu Dojo Teachings</i>	
1. 礼儀を重んずべし	1. Must honour and respect manners
2. 態度を正すべし	2. Must have correct behaviour
3. 言語を謹むべし	3. Must have respectful speech
4. 意気を盛んにすべし	4. Must have a thriving spirit
5. 清潔を旨とすべし	5. Must make efforts of cleanliness

(Figure 4: Chito-Ryu Dojo Teachings, Chito-Ryu Basic Guide, 2010)

It can be seen in the rules of conduct listed above that one must make efforts to always show respect to others through their actions and speech and to strive for more. Courtesy can also be interpreted as an act of 心 *Shin*, the Spirit. The development of three important things occurs, “through the course of continued, long-term *Karate-do* practice the Spirit, the Body, and Technique are developed and refined” (Chito-Ryu *Soke*, T. Chitose, personal conversation, 2007).

In addition to the *dojo kun* listed above there are a set of Directives one must uphold, like an agreement clause known as 心得 *Kokoro E*. Students are obligated to know and abide by the following directives. Together the *dojo Kun* and the *Kokoro E* form the code of conduct of Chito-Ryu *Karate-do*.

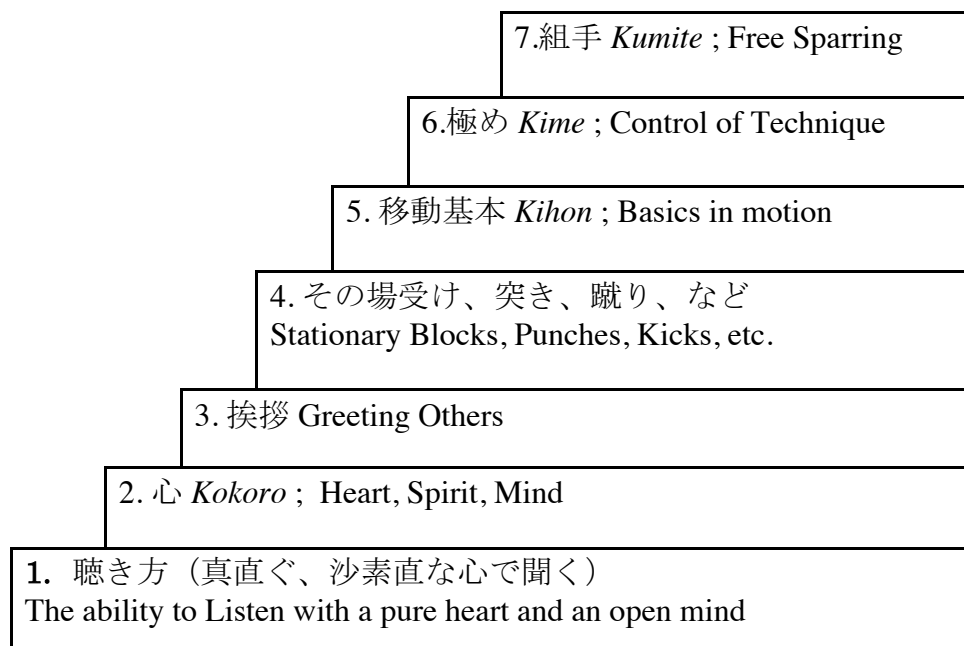
千唐流空手道心得 Directives (Regulations) of the Study of Chito-Ryu Karate Do
a) When you start karate you must comply with the teachings with an open mind and submissive (humble) feeling, and not make bad habits.
b) Of course, you must respect your <i>Sensei</i> , <i>Senpai</i> , and fellow training partners. <i>Kohai</i> must also respect each other. We must have virtue of modesty and humility. “Bravery without respect is violence” (Confucius, 552 - 479 BCE).
c) You develop a healthy body through unyielding dedication to training and perseverance.
d) Training brings forth the cultivation of spirit, personality development is strived for and we are mindful of building peace and freedom for society.
e) Always have correct behaviour and absolutely don’t lose rationality.
f) When you study, it must move from easy to difficult, simple to complicated through repetition. Don’t mindlessly do hard training from the start, and never hurry.
g) Always have an intimacy with <i>Makiwara</i> , <i>Chishi</i> , <i>Sashi</i> , <i>Kame</i> , and <i>Iron Geta</i> and the fist, and don’t hurry the effects of these. Research <i>Kata</i> and <i>Kumite</i> with enthusiasm and train both equally.
h) A long time ago, it took three years to completely master one <i>Kata</i> . If you become a little good at one you must not become conceited. If you become conceited it will stop the progress of your natural moral virtue, and later you will become a useless person to society.
i) You must be careful to be well balanced in all your training and knowledge of theory.
j) If you do not have a clear understanding of these points, do not hesitate to ask your <i>Sensei</i> and <i>Senpai</i> . You must try to correctly understand.

(Figure 5: Chito-Ryu Directives, Chito-Ryu Basic Guide, 2010)

As we can see, the focus of these rules is the perfection of the character of the participants, not perpetuating violence. In other words, these rules outline the same qualities that one would expect to find in a role model (Wooden, 2006). “Being a role model is the most powerful form of education” (Nater, Gallimore, 2006, 2010). Progression in *karate-do* development is often likened to ascending a staircase.

Figure 6 outlines what is focused on during this progression. It is evident that at the base of this staircase is courtesy and respect. The first 3 stages are spent developing the spirit of the practitioner; the 心 *Shin* as mentioned earlier. The next 3 stages (from level 4 to 6) are spent developing technique in increasing levels of difficulty.

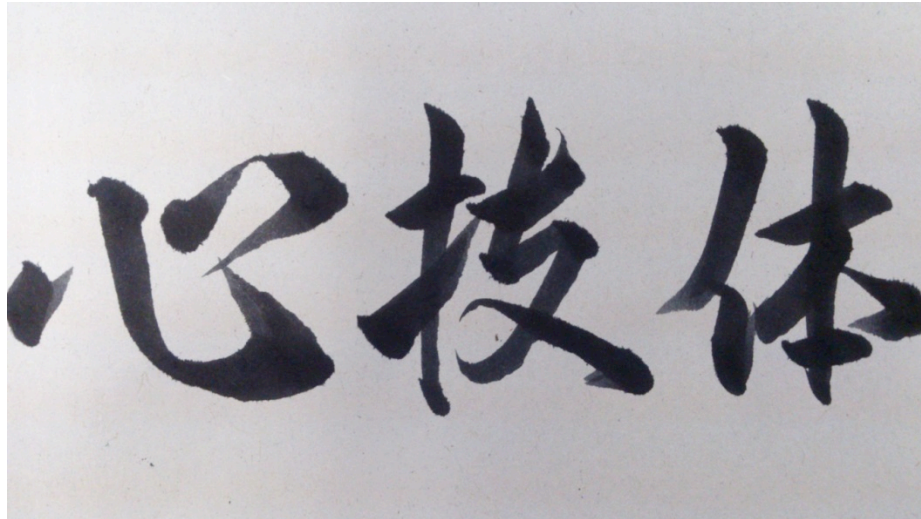
Finally, in the final stage the practitioner is expected to possess the qualities of the spirit rooted in compassion and respect for others, the control of their techniques and therefore, the ability to apply those techniques appropriately.



(Figure 6: the Karate-do Staircase, Japan Karate-do Federation, 2009)

### **Mind and Body Connection through Practicing Technique**

The above examples relate to the concept of 心伎体 *Shin Gi Tai*, a process of self-cultivation. Developing the quality of the character of the participant before developing the combative abilities is a common theme of *karate-do* practice. I believe that this is the quality that sets *karate-do* apart from other self-defense systems. The sense of honor and integrity are present in the foundation of the codes of conduct and in every action while training. The *karate-do* 形 *Kata* is one of the main forms of practice, developed by Masters and preserved by many practitioners over the generations represent the 心 *Kokoro* of *karate-do*. “Every *kata* begins with a blocking technique” (Chitose, 1979), this exemplifies the fact that a true practitioner of *karate-do* never strikes first (Chitose, 1979, Funakoshi, 1973). Developing the 心 *Kokoro*, often translated in academic texts as “Heart/Mind” (Ames, 2009), while developing the techniques is crucial in creating an environment of trust and respect. As we develop our technique we attain greater control of our bodies and in doing so develop stronger, healthier physiques as discussed earlier in this paper. This is the progression of *Shin Gi Tai*; Connecting the Heart/Mind, and Body, through practicing specific techniques. Forming a connection between all three components in the practitioner is one of the major goals of *karate-do* practice (Chitose, personal communication, 2007).



(Japanese Kanji, *Shin Gi Tai* written by the Author, 2015)

### **Challenges Being Faced**

Even with all of the people who have been positively affected by the lessons of *karate-do*, there are still sceptics who believe that *karate* promotes violence.

Fear of the destructive power of *karate* techniques; of the tremendous offensive and defensive power of *karate-do* (Funakoshi, 1973) is one of the things that cause hesitation among some people regarding acceptance in mainstream education (Japan Karate-do Federation, National Instructor's Seminar, 2015). Even from the onset of the spread of this art throughout Japan this was a major concern of implementing *karate* training courses in such organizations as the Okinawan Police Department and the Japanese Navy due to "deep concern over the danger of this art" (Funakoshi, 1973 p. 5). The underlining fear that those skilled in the fighting art would use it to harm others has always been a deep concern for those determining *karate's* place in society. Funakoshi states, "If its application is for a good purpose, then the art is of great value; but if it is misused, then there is no more evil or harmful art than karate" (Funakoshi, 1973 p. 5).

However, as can be seen in this paper and the multiple texts on *karate-do*, the main purpose and pursuit of this art is not for harming others, but rather for self-improvement, specifically the cultivation of the mind and body. Funakoshi has often illustrated the importance of humility as a common trait among *karate-do* practitioners. It is a unique paradigm where by growing stronger both physically and mentally one becomes more humble. "In *Karate-do*, one's individual goal might be improvement of his health or training of his body to function efficiently. He might wish to develop the strength in his arms or legs or body, or to attain poise and spiritual fortitude. Clearly, one could wish to learn Karate-do to become humble. All such goals have to do with self-development" (Funakoshi, 1973, p.6).

The lack of data collected in studies that show the positive impact that *karate-do* practice has on the quality of people's lives makes it difficult to argue its merits for inclusion in mainstream education. The examples that can currently be given are anecdotal or biographical. This is why I believe that there is a need to conduct longitudinal studies to assess these positive impacts on students world-wide.

## **Conclusion**

This paper attempted to illustrate the fact that *karate-do* training does not promote violence rather it brings people together and promotes the development of healthy habits focusing on human qualities that lead to the cultivation of productive members of society.

As educators we need to do more to inspire and encourage students to find and follow their passions (Robinson, 2009). For those who are able to do so the question is not whether they will become empowered by their experiences, but rather, what they will do with this power they have attained. How will they change the world? What impact will they make on those around them and beyond? I believe that augmenting the current education curriculum with the inclusion of *karate-do* classes can have a profoundly positive effect on the health and well-being of students. However, to prove this theory thorough studies need to be conducted and qualitative data need to be analyzed. The unique blend of physical activity and emotional development through the process of self-cultivation that *karate-do* training provides should be available to every student. It is our duty to find ways to engage and inspire our students. It is important to facilitate learning experiences that will have significant influence in their lives. This will lend to achieving a higher quality in their academic development. I am confident that *karate-do* has the potential to facilitate such an impact on many more students if given a more influential role in the school system through inclusion in mainstream education as an extension of the current physical education program.

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Map of Okinawa [http://mickmc.tripod.com/okinawa\\_re190.jpg](http://mickmc.tripod.com/okinawa_re190.jpg)

Japan Karatedo Federation Official Magazine AYUMI vol. 11 January 2015

For further information on *karate-do* specific philosophies please visit the *Karate no Michi* blog by the Author, <http://understanding-karatedo.blogspot.jp>