The Canadian Isshinryu Way
Everything Karate & Kobudo

Isshinryu.ca

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Put in the Effort

Isshinryu is a very practical art and should be kept a practical art.

I think everyone would agree with the above statement, but it doesn't come without a price. Isshinryu became a practical art because of the contributions of individuals who developed their skills to an incredible degree and also lived in a time where verification of the movements effectiveness was available.

Living in our modern society, it is highly inappropriate for us to "test" out techniques on unsuspecting individuals. However, the Dojo provides the perfect opportunity to test theories with a partner.

In order to truly test your theories, you need to put in effort into your techniques. A willing partner can only teach you exactly what you want to learn. A partner that will make you work for it, teaches you a far more important lesson.

This same principle applies to fighting, kata, etc. If you aren't giving it your all, you are cheating yourself and your partner our of the more important part of Isshinryu. Practical application.

So, the next time you are in the dojo, try to put in as much effort as possible and push yourself and your partners to excel. It is easy to become complacent, but complacency is the route to ending the essence of Isshinryu.

Essential Isshinryu has been Released!

For more information on the first Canadian Isshinryu book, visit www.essentialisshinryu.com!

ATTENTION NEEDED!

Do you know of someone great in Canadian Isshinryu? If so, please e-mail Sensei@isshinryu.ca with the contact details to be profiled in future newsletters.

Upcoming Events

Seminars

Weapons Connection SMART Training—Michigan—Dec 19

Other

Chitora Dojo Pancake Breakfast—January and March—Thunder Bay, ON

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Bo Tai Bo / Bo Tai Sai Kumite
By Mike Fenton

Understanding the history of the Isshinryu kata can provide the Isshinryu Karateka with a greater knowledge of the kata and the techniques it employs. The origins of a kata can guide us toward understanding both the application of the technique as a student and a deeper respect for the evolution of the art as an instructor.

Bo Tai Bo Kumite
Bo Tai Sai Kumite

Name

The name is a very direct translation Bo against Bo Fight and Bo against Sai Fight.

Technique

These kata were implemented in order to practice the application of the weapon skills. The techniques within both kata are very straight forward, but are an excellent training tool for understanding the use of the weapon.

The majority of traditional Dojo perform the kata as a training drill along a linear path focusing on the pattern and pacing of the attacks and defense. Alternately for demonstration purposes, individuals can add predetermined circling of the opponent to add to the visual appearance of the kata, but this practice does not add to the development of the Kobudo techniques.

Origins

These kata have the shortest history within Isshinryu. Created well after Isshinryu had been developed they began as practice drills for the weapons. Similar to forms used by many Kobudoka, they were designed to get a feel for the application of the weapon without real injury.

The Bo Tai Bo Kumite that we see in Isshinryu today was created by Uezu Angi, Shimabuku's son in law and representative to the US. It is based upon training drills used by Shimabuku to develop the Bo. Shimabuku apparently had created a version but eventually it was forgotten and the current version became the accepted form within Isshinryu.

Bo Tai Sai Kumite was developed by a pair of American marines studying with Shimabuku, William D. Blond and Frank Van Lenten. The techniques used were strictly taught by Shimabuku, leaving the two to combine them into the form used today, the structure of which is very similar in sequence to Bo Tai Bo Kumite.

I sincerely hope that you enjoyed reading this series of articles on the kata of Isshinryu. This is the last article in the series as all Kata have now been covered. For more information about these kata and karate in general, please refer to Essential Isshinryu. Up next in the Isshinryu history will be biographies of Okinawan Karate masters. If you have corrections or comments regarding this article or any future article, please feel free to contact me directly.

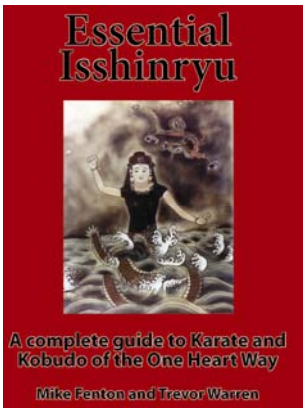
Essential Isshinryu Available

Essential Isshinryu is the recently released book by Trevor Warren and Mike Fenton. The book is a complete guide to the one heart way including both history and techniques of Isshinryu.

Essential Isshinryu is now available for purchase via Amazon.com, Amazon.ca and many online retailers. For more information please contact the authors via this website or by clicking here.

For more information including a complete table of contents for the book please visit Isshinryu.ca or EssentialIsshinryu.com.

Bulk rates and signed copies are available directly from the authors for those interested.



Yin and Yang in our Lives

By Jason D. Miller

In the last newsletter the first half of this article was included, however, after re-reading it for this newsletter I thought to really appreciate it, it should be read in it's entirety so here it is —Editor

"You need to unleash your yang side". These are the comments that I probably hear the most often since I began training as a karateka a few years ago. But what does it actually mean? How does one get in touch with their yang side? What is yin and what is yang?

According to Chinese philosophy, yin & yang are two principles, forces or energies inherent in all things, dating back to the very beginning of time. Yin is traditionally associated with things that are cold, passive, dark/heavy or feminine, while yang represents things that are hot, active, light/ weightless, and masculine. They are both morally neutral, agnostic opposites of one another. Yet, in Chinese philosophy, each of them contains at its very center, an element of the other. As such, they are both in constant, dynamic conflict with one another, each trying to dominate the other but unable to do so because at their very center, they contain the opposite force.

What this principle or model provides us is a means of explaining our own struggles and contradictions in all that we do. These opposing forces are at work within us. Sometimes we are predominantly yin, while at other times more yang, but always a mix of both. The idea is that we need to search for a balance between these two forces: to achieve harmony and equality between them as well as in our lives. It's important to realize that this equilibrium is a dynamic one as the constant struggle between yin and yang is a never-ending one: it goes on and on with no foreseeable end.

In Isshinryu Karate, one of our codes is: "A person's unbalance is the same as a weight." This code above all of the others, has always resonated with me. It's the one that I struggle with the most: finding that balance. I'm fairly certain that I'm not that only one that feels that way. Life sometimes seems to get out of control as we take on more and more things: work, sports, volunteering, social, relationships, family, house and home, bills, etc. How does one find that balance? Or do they ever actually find it? The philosophy of yin & yang seems to offer us some explanation. It tells us that this constant struggle is natural. It tells us that we need to pay attention to what we do and to ensure that we don't do too much of one thing or the other: that we try to find a balance between our yin & yang activities as well as our yin & yang tendencies. We can't be constantly active (yang). There has to be some "downtime" or time to ourselves. If we don't, then we will be out of balance. I think that is probably the main reason that I often feel that my own life gets out of control. I'm constantly active and rarely seem to have time to schedule peace, quiet and tranquility [maybe I need actually need to get in touch with my yin side? ;)].

Chinese philosophy goes one step further. It tells us that we play a key role in the universe/world around us, and that, like us, it too is governed by the same principle of these two opposing forces at work. It goes on to say that "if we are not in harmony and balanced within ourselves, the whole universe is put out of order." [1] It is said that we are a part of the overall universe, and that, conversely each of us contains that same universe within. Therefore, "By what you do and what you do not do [...] if you act in ways which disturb the balance of yin and yang [...] then you alter the very nature of the balance of nature." [2] It's an interesting concept, and yet a little worrisome at the same time to realize that our own personal balance/equilibrium - or lack thereof - can have such an impact on the world around us.

Yin & yang are found in everything around us, including ourselves. For the Chinese, this is reflected in everything they do: in health and medicinal practise (i.e. herbal remedies), in cooking, in relationships, in the arts (music, landscape paintings, sculpture, feng shui), and in physical exercises such as Tai Chi Chuang (an exercise designed to assist the flow of Chi [life energy or breath in both negative and positive forms] throughout the body).

I'm sure you've heard the expression: "Change is the only constant". A fundamental, key aspect of the yin/yang model is that we can't change who or what we are. We are born either predominantly yin, or predominantly yang. Throughout our lives, these forces will fluctuate. Our role is not to try and prevent that change, but rather to accept it and attempt to find and maintain a balance between these naturally conflicted forces, to resolve these conflicts by understanding the world around us, to realize that diversity and difference is natural, and to do so in a passive, non-interventionalist manner so as to not inadvertently disrupt the universe around us. Frustration or unhappiness in our lives often comes from trying to hold onto the past. Part of this struggle is that we need to learn to "let go". Chinese philosophy states that if we follow nature/heaven's way it will lead to virtue, but if violated, it will lead to misfortune. Sound familiar? It's another one of our codes: "A person's heart is the same as Heaven and

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Yin and Yang in our Lives Cont'd
By Jason D. Miller

Earth."

The Chinese philosophy of yin and yang provides us with a means of understanding ourselves, our influences, and our actions as well as those of other people and the world around us. It helps us to better understand what make us who we are, and that, as a result of these fluctuating forces of yin & yang, we are constantly at odds with ourselves. Ultimately, it presents, for us, an avenue to assist in achieving that much needed balance and harmony in our lives.

Here is an interesting poem that helps to summarize the yin/yang principle and its influence in our lives:

"You are part of nature and nature is part of you.
Do not try to live as if you are separate.
You are not.
You are part of your family.
You are part of your landscape.
You are part of the seasons.
You are of both heaven and earth.

In their turning,
In their sequence,
Is your pattern.

Do not go against the flow of life.
The joys of summer give way to the chill of winter.
But both are necessary.
The solidity of earth enables you to reach up to heaven.
One without the other makes no sense.

If you are hard, hard things will befall you.
If you are soft, you can bend and survive.
If you compete, the world will take you on.
If you are able to be content,
The world will roll on with you.

Be known for what you are,
And make your actions signposts that reveal this.
Flow like water round obstacles.
Do not batter your head against a brick wall.
Flow under it and when it collapses, you will be long gone.
Act as if you were part of the pattern of the seasons,
Of the pattern of day and night.

Importance of First Aid in Karate Part 3
By Villiam Tikka and Patricia Lyle

Hello again,

Our last article ended with how a First Aider's ability may depend on the First Aid kit they have accessible to them. Following up with this Part III of the 'Importance of First Aid in Karate' series, we will present both essential components of a First Aid kit, as well as additional ones which can enhance or customize the kit. We will also discuss how a First Aid kit should be used and maintained in order to optimize personal and community safety.

First Aid kits are usually contained within a clearly marked commercial container most commonly white in colour. This allows for quick identification of the kits which should remain easily accessible so supplies can be reached. This is something to keep in mind if you are creating a first aid kit of your own, or repacking a commercial kit: if the kit is too hard to locate or access, valuable time may be lost in an emergency situation.

Next, we would like to overview some important components of a First Aid kit: various sized Band-Aids, tongue depressors, Q-tips, gloves, scissors, adhesive tape, tweezers, slings, safety pins, disinfectant, gauze and various types of bandages. The kit may also include specialized items such as:

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Importance of First Aid in Karate Part 3 Cont'd

By Villiam Tikka and Patricia Lyle

smelling salts, a pocket mask (for CPR), pressure dressings, absorbent cotton, splints and splint padding. You may want a backboard, or Automatic External Defibrillator to accompany the First Aid kit in case of a spinal injury or heart attack respectively. While most of items are found in standard First Aid kits, some of the items, especially those more specialized, may only be found with larger commercial kits.

Given the nature of common Karate injuries, such as sprains, and minor cuts to the face, some additional items may enhance a kit's usefulness for Karate injury treatment. The first thing that can enhance your kit is Steri Strips. These provide an excellent quick fix to small cuts, particularly to the head, as they allow you to temporarily "stitch" the cut back together until the end of a training session. Two other important additions to a First Aid Kit include Coban Tape and Athletic Tape. These tapes are both useful in providing support to joint injuries such as sprains and strains. Although the Athletic Tape will provide more support than the Coban Tape, the Coban Tape is easier to apply and less painful to remove.

The above list is only a guide and is in no way an extensive outline. The items of the kit should be maintained and fully supplied at all times. One First Aid kit is usually sufficient for a classroom size, and additional, less specialized kits can be purchased to supplement should your dojo expand in size. Along with restocking, records should be kept when supplies are used, and the individual injured and the extent of their injury should be recorded, so proper follow up and documentation can be performed.

Our advice if your dojo does not currently have a First Aid kit, is to buy a commercially prepared kit. You may wish to then continue supplementing it with more specialized equipment, such as those indicated above, should the need arise. We also ask that you familiarize the members of your dojo so everyone can be more comfortable and familiar with where the First Aid kit is kept, and what its contents are best suited for.

This concludes the three part series on the 'Importance of First Aid in Karate.' We hope you have enjoyed reading the articles and gained valuable insight into incorporating First Aid into your dojo. We would like to thank you for reading and if you have any questions, feel free to send them to Sensei Mike Fenton, whom will then forward them on to us.

We Did It!

By Tim Leonard and the Toshikai Dojo

The Ottawa Toshikai Dojo spent the morning of Oct. 4th helping raising money for breast cancer research in the Run for the Cure. We had 21 participants representing the Toshikai Dojo wearing pink belts (ya gotta be tough to wear pink). Way to go Toshikai! Special mention goes out to Rod Berek for leading the club with a run time of 21 minutes 10 seconds over 5 K.

Hanshi Mady in Thunder Bay

By Villiam Tikka and Trevor Warren

It was a busy weekend at Chitora Dojo from November 6-8, as Hanshi Albert Mady came to visit all the way from Chikara Dojo in Windsor.

Friday evening began with the usual Black Belt grading. Although Mike Payne was the only person to test, the evening was still filled with enough bruises and dislocations as can be expected from any Isshinryu test. On that note, congratulations to Mike from Kokoro Dojo on successfully earning the rank of Shodan!

Saturday morning started early with the beginners seminar themed towards basic self defense and included some bunkai from both Seisan and Seuchin kata. With only 3 beginners participating in the class, Hanshi Mady was able to give extra attention to the students that could use it most.

The second morning seminar was for intermediate ranks and worked on developing kumite skills. After spending the first hour honing the students fighting abilities with near-constant drills, the students were given the opportunity to spar against each other in about a dozen short matches where they were expected to show control while applying the techniques that they had just learned. The students fought each match with great intensity despite being tired; it was good to see that they were always eager to learn more ways to improve their skills.

By the time of the afternoon seminar, the Dojo had completely filled with over two dozen students, eager to learn in the advanced seminar. Hanshi Mady started the seminar with a watered down version of the warm-up that his fighters do every day, followed by about an hour of both individual and group fighting drills, and ended the seminar with advanced bunkai.

That evening the brown and black belts were invited to have dinner with Hanshi Mady, where he shared many interesting stories about his own training.

The weekend concluded a short seminar for brown and black belts on Sunday morning; Hanshi managing to not only go through each of the empty hand basics with us, but also discuss and explain several techniques and their bunkai.

Thanks to everyone that came in from out of town! Your attendance made the seminars that much more significant. I hope that you all found the seminars worth the trip (I know I did). Also, a very special thanks to Hanshi Albert Mady for taking time out of his busy training schedule and coming up North to help us all continue to grow as karate ka.

If you are interested in a DVD copy of the last two seminars, please contact Sensei Mike Fenton

The Challenges!

Karate

Having recently covered blocks, strikes and stances, its now time to put it together, if in a "basic" way by focusing on the Basics. While this is usually the first thing that beginners are taught (apart from the proper stance) they are no less important as you advance in rank, the basics are something that every karate ka should be able to do well.

Your challenge for this newsletter is to improve your basics.

Some of the things you should ask yourself when doing your basics are:

#1 Am I in the correct stance? Just because stance-work was the focus of the last newsletter, it doesn't mean that you can forget about it now, if anything it should be that much better. Make sure that you are in the proper stance for the basic technique and that each time you step, or put your foot down after a kick, you are in a comfortable, balanced and strong stance.

#2 Am I moving correctly? Stop for a second and think about the body mechanics of each technique. Your entire body, the hips in particular, should flow naturally into each movement. This will cause you to feel more comfortable while doing the basics and at the same time will allow you to generate more power.

Kobudo

Following the theme from the past few newsletters, the Kobudo challenge is the same as the Karate challenge. Pick a weapon and improve upon the basic techniques for that weapon. By honing up on the fundamentals of the weapon it will improve your understanding of the weapon, which will make it feel more like an extension of your body. This will improve your kata as well as your Kumite skills.

Training

Since the other two challenges deal with the basics of Karate and Kobudo, it seems fitting that the training is also geared towards some of the basics in karate fitness: push-ups, sit-ups and running.

Your challenge for this newsletter is to be able to meet the requirements of the fitness test for the belt two above your current belt. For example: a person with a yellow belt is challenged to complete the fitness test for their green belt (yellow->orange->green), which means:

- 30 knuckle push-ups
- 60 sit-ups
- 1 mile run

If this happens to put you above the requirements for the black belt fitness test, then just add push-ups, sit-ups and distance accordingly. After all, we don't want you to feel left out!

Competition Results

None Reported

Coloured Belt Promotions

None Reported

Yudansha (Black Belt) Promotions

Each newsletter, we will attempt to recognize all Black Belt level promotions that have occurred since the previous newsletter.

Again like everything else in this newsletter, there is no guarantee of absolute completeness. If you know of someone I missed, please let me know and I will include them in the next newsletter.

Completed Promotions

Don't stop training now! There's always more to learn and improve upon.

Mike Payne—Shodan—Kokoro Dojo—Thunder Bay, ON

Contributors

Editor & Author—Chitora Dojo
Mike Fenton—Thunder Bay, Ontario
Mike lives with his wife Kyla and has been training in Isshinryu karate for over 25 years, and has been an instructor for over 20 years. He is currently head instructor of Chitora Dojo in Thunder Bay, Ontario.

Author—Chitora Dojo
Trevor Warren—Thunder Bay, Ontario
Trevor lives in Thunder Bay with his wife Maria. He has dedicated a great deal of his time to teaching and his own training with the realization that hard work is the key to success.

Author—Toshikai Dojo
Jason D. Miller—Ottawa, Ontario
Jason is a student of Tim Leonard's in Ottawa, ON and recently earned his Sankyu (Blue Belt). He is currently working to unleash his Yang side, check it out on page 8.

Author—Toshikai Dojo
Tim Leonard—Ottawa, Ontario
Tim lives in Ottawa with his wife Debbie (also a black belt). He currently dedicates a great deal of time to his Dojo and is the first to teach Isshinryu in the Ottawa area.

Author—Chitora Dojo
Villiam Tikka—Thunder Bay, Ontario
Villiam currently lives in Thunder Bay and preparing for Shodan while waiting to ship out for navy training.

Karate Terms in this Newsletter

Chatan—A region on Okinawa

Chikara—Strength

Chitora—Essence of the Tiger

Dojo—School

Hanshi—Great Instructor

Karateka—Someone who practices Karate.

Kata—Prearranged training techniques

Kihon—Exercises

Kobudo-Ancient Martial Way, the term used to describe all the weapons in Isshinryu and Karate.

Kyu—Student rank level, counting down towards 0, being the first rank of Black Belt.

Naha—Port city on Okinawa

Okinawa—Japanese Island where all karate began

Ryukyu Islands—The island chain south of Japan where Okinawa is the largest Island.

Sanchin—Three Battles

Shuri—Capital City on Okinawa

Taira Shinken—Shimabuku Tatsuo's weapon instructor

Te—Older name for Karate. Also translates as hand.

Toshikai—Fighting Spirit

Tuifa—Proper, older name for the Tonfa.

Uchi—Strike

Uke—Receiver, Recipient of the technique being practiced.

Yara—An original student of Kusanku and pioneer of Karate techniques on Okinawa.

Yudansha—Group of Black Belts (Gradutates)

It is important to familiarize yourself with commonly used Japanese words. Try to memorize all the words each time and you will soon have a large "karate" vocabulary.

Isshinryu.ca

Visit Isshinryu.ca for an archive of our newsletters and must more information about Isshinryu.

Story Submission

Stories are welcome from anyone and everyone. They can be about anything related to the Martial Arts, a technique you think is just great; A better way to do a technique; History of a Karate Master; a tournament trick that works well; ANYTHING!

All stories are appreciated as e-mail. You can send it to your instructor to proof read and send in, or directly to me. (Mike (at) Isshinryu.ca) or (newsletter (at) Isshinryu.ca)

You can even include pictures if it helps your article!

Dojo Directory:

Any student is welcome at anytime to visit any dojo. Before class, always introduce yourself to the Sensei of the dojo and tell them who your current Sensei is.

For a full dojo list visit Isshinryu.ca We are getting too many to list here.

Affiliate Cities!

Abbotsford, BC
Contact: Mike O'Leary

Brandon, MB
Contact: Richard Wharf

Calgary, AB
Contact: Charles Boyd

Cookstown, ON
Contact: Harri T. Makivirta

Dryden, ON
Contact: Rick McGogy

Hope, BC
Contact: Norm Losier

Kenora, ON
Contact: Steve Davis

Ottawa, ON
Contact: Tim Leonard

Saskatchewan
Contact: Brian Smout

Sioux Lookout
Contact: Jim Sapay

Thunder Bay, ON
Contact: Mike Fenton & Trevor Warren

Vancouver, BC
Contact: Rachel McGovern

Windsor, ON
Contact: Albert Mady

Winnipeg, MB
Contact: Brent Horton

Canadian Isshinryu Abroad

Berlin, Germany
Contact: Ryan Boesche

Why I like Karate

Tossing the old Pig skin around with my son for 15 minutes
My right arm hurts
Two games of bowling at a bowling party
My right arm and right shoulder hurts
Hanshi Mady's 3 hour seminar in practical
defensive techniques
My whole body hurts
That's why I like Karate
It's a balanced sport

Camilla Tikka
November 8, 2009