

The Isshinryu Way Everything Karate & Kobudo

**Isshinryu
Worldwide**

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Make the best of every day

Days don't always go as you plan, but that's no reason to let that be a deterrent to you having a great day.

Training in the Dojo is great, but it also can mean less focus on yourself (which is usually a good thing), but while the world has dictated that we must take a break from the Dojo it is a great time to focus on ourselves and make our training personal.

This newsletter is going to focus on that, ideas for continuing to improve all aspects of your martial arts and physical well being, but that's not all that important. This can be a great time to re-evaluate your other "systems" to make sure you are optimal.

A few simple questions for you...

Do you eat as healthy as you can?

Do you focus on the positives instead of negatives?

Do you look for solutions or dwell on

problems?

Are you active, or enjoying hours of television?

Do you make it easy for yourself to form good habits?

Do you accept your bad habits or strive to replace them with good habits?

If you answer the above questions honestly, I suspect everyone can answer both yes and no to every question. The answers may vary day to day, or even minute to minute. We are constantly in flux, trying to live in the moment while reliving the past and dreaming of the future.

If you recognize that this moment is the one that matters, make the best decision you can and then repeat. If you continue this pattern, every day can be the best day.

Stay healthy, keep active, keep training, keep improving!

Upcoming Events

Events

All Events currently On Hold

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Essential Isshinryu is available!

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

Is this a gift or a burden?



Independent Training Guide

Throughout the world, Dojos, Gyms, Schools and other places where Karate training usually happens are closed currently. While we all greatly miss the comradery of the Dojo and of course getting to punch other people, it doesn't mean you can't continue training and improving your kata. Consider this your guide to training, regardless of your level, there's a section for you. And... For those of you that think you're advanced, it's cumulative, practice should start with the basics.

Beginners

Basics are the true masters of Karate, being great at the basics, makes you great at Karate. So now is a great time to drill them as much as possible. Hopefully everyone has a printed list of the basics to help your memory (another great thing you can work on).

How to practice: Since you are alone, looking for your own mistakes is key. Do them in sets of 10, but for the first 6 (3 on each side) do them slowly paying extra close attention to your stance, hand positions and correct yourself, just like your Sensei would. Then for the last four, put all your effort and snap those strikes out!

When you've done all the basics you know, do the kicks.

The more you do this, the better you'll get!

Other fun ideas: Practice your breakfalls on your bed, do all your kicks without putting your foot down, use a mirror to watch yourself punch, do the basics backwards. Also, don't forget to read the work out suggestions.

Coloured Belts

Kata is already an individual practice tool. They were created to allow people to practice their karate alone, so it's a great way to develop your skills.

Just as in the basics practice (you didn't skip the beginner section right?) it's important to take the time and pay attention to yourself. Do the same with your Kata.

How to practice: Adjust the numbers based on how many Kata you know. If you know 1, do it 10 times, if you know 5, doing them 4 times is probably the right number.

For the first half, do the kata deliberately, paying attention to the footwork, head turns, body positions. Then apply those techniques and do sharp and focused for the second half.

If there's a Kata you are learning, double it up, make sure you don't forget it. Make your Sensei happy when the Dojo re-opens by being ready to learn, no re-learning for you!

Other fun ideas: Find something hard around the house (or in your backyard) and treat it like a Makiwara, Short on space? Do the Kata without stepping, Need to work on your stance? Do the Kata without upper body techniques. Try some techniques you don't normally do (Spin / Jump kicks/punches)

Kobudo / Advanced

First thing first, find somewhere safe to do it. If you live somewhere that the weather has improved, use your backyard, outdoor training is great. If you still have snow and it's cold, wear boots and use your backyard, outdoor training is great!

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Independent Training Guide

Following the previous sections is an great way to also continue working on your Kobudo basics and kata so there's nothing to add.

Other fun ideas: Dig out some of those weapons you rarely train with and work on them. Try making your own basics, what combinations feels good to you? Have you tried holding the Bo on your left side?

Physical training at home

If you don't normally work out at home, you may find it hard to push yourself. Your house has lots of fun temptations, but remember, every workout you do, whether it's at the gym, at the Dojo or at home is for you. If you cheat, you are cheating yourself. Don't do that, you deserve better.

We are lucky individuals, Karate physical training and warmups are almost exclusively based on body weight and don't require special equipment. This outline will help you do a short 20 minute workout, but please make it your own and continue to change it.

Warm up: 2 Minutes of light cardio vascular exercise (jumping jacks, running on the spot, skipping, something fun and easy).

Limber up: 3 Minutes of loosening exercises, neck circles, ankle rotations, touching your toes. The goal is to move every joint and make sure they remember that they can and should move and flex.

Focused Stretch 4 Minutes: Pick a stretch to focus on (change daily) and pick a second stretch that helps it. Do the helper stretch first (for example, if working on splits, pick hamstring), and do it for 2 minutes (1 minute per side) and then move on to the second stretch.

This most important thing is to carefully work to your limit. Push as hard as you can safely and carefully breathe at the end points. One great way to help with

your flexibility is to contract your muscles when you are extended. It helps teach the muscles they will work while stretched and helps extend them.

Circuit 2 x 5 Minutes

Pick five exercises, they can be any exercises, but as a general guidelines, try to vary them. Picking one stomach (situps, leg lifts), one upper body (pushups, pull up), one legs (squats, lunges), two endurance (burpees, shadow boxing, running on the spot, jumping jacks) with the endurance sandwiched in the middle works great. You may also want to do only pushups one day or only stomach. Have fun and make it different every time.

You just start with exercise one, do it for 1 minute, then move on to the next. By the end of the 10 minutes, you should be completely exhausted, if not, try harder next time!

Cool down 1 Minute

Almost all done, now that you've done all the hard work, tell your body to relax by taking some deep breathes and doing active recovery. Don't just stop, keep moving, move slow and shake out the kinks, make sure nothing is too slow, too tight. A great way to do this is with light shadow boxing. Try a bunch of relaxed kicks and punches to help your body go back to normal (and keep that nice slow breathing).

Make it Enjoyable

This is the most important part! Whatever you choose to do, make sure you are having fun doing it. Try to end in such a positive way that you can't wait to do it again tomorrow. If you have lots of down time, break it up and do it in small chunks throughout the day (or if you are busy, do the same, it's easier to schedule 5 minutes than 20). Lastly, if you need help, ask! Email your Sensei, we are all in this together and are hear to help!



Rough Times By Richard Ruberto

Rough times eh? But now we all need to stay calm and focused. Lead by example for others to follow. My strong recommendation is for everyone to continue training at home the best you can. I have used a local Federal park (Wadsworth Fort) for my outside training. I also use a friends dojo. At home I have light weights and a rebounder but really don't need them.

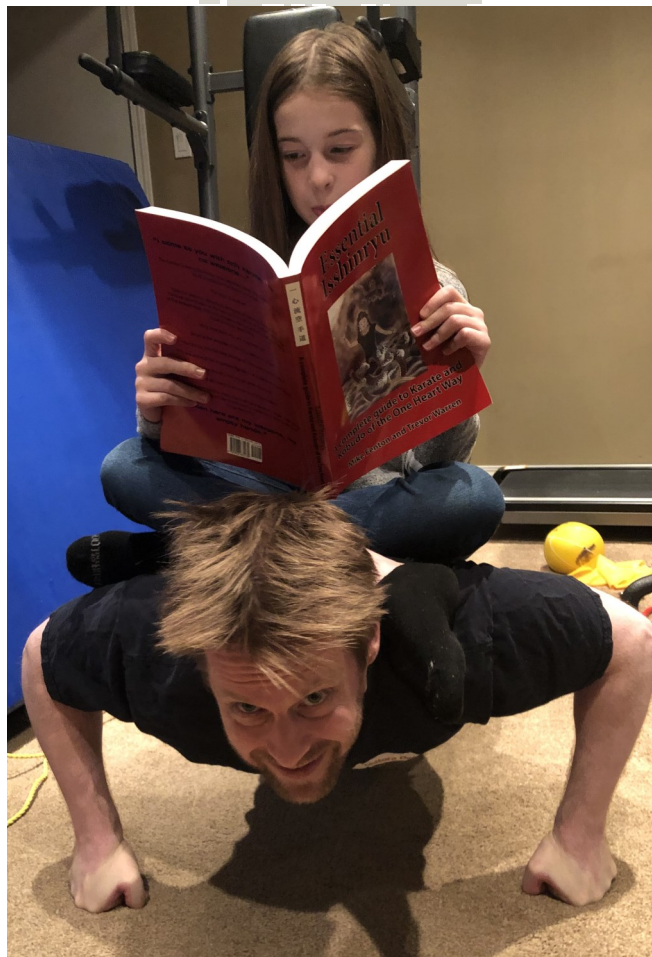
If you only have standing room to train on that's more than enough space. Go through your kata continuously without moving your feet and just lift your knees but don't kick. If you only have one kata then do it over and over again without stopping. You can also do your weapons kata without the weapons in hand. Have a set

of stairs anywhere in the house or apartment? Walk or run up and down one step, the two steps at a time. Do planks, push and sit ups. Use a chair to do triceps. Stretch! Dust, vacuum, sweep or mop. It's all exercise.

Finally, face time your sensei or seniors for advice and correction. I'm available to help anyone who asks so do not be shy.

In this together,

Richard Ruberto



A good read, and a good workout. Get creative and improve yourself!



Sai Focused Classes at Toshikai

By Julie Laurendeau

When 2020 came around, Shihan Tim Leonard, head of Toshikai Dojo in Ottawa, began the year by incorporating a focus on Sai workouts and kata. What better way to get in tune and in shape with your weapons than to incorporate specific sessions in the weekly classes?

Both the Wednesday and the Sunday classes have been focused on Sai. Below is a list of all the ways we practiced or incorporated the weapon in our sessions.

Basic techniques: How to hold and manipulate the Sai

This part of the class included demonstrations and practice on the proper way to hold the Sai, as well as the different ways to strike and block with the Sai either opened or closed. This exercise is critical in ensuring that the weapon is held, used and manipulated the right way. Whether a student is new to Sai or more experienced, the sessions allowed everyone to either be more familiar with the weapon or review important aspects of a proper hold. Also included were the “what not to do” with this pointy and heavy weapon, along with a few interesting stories and experiences about practicing the Sai at the Dojo or at home...

Upper Body Kihon with Sai

We used the Sai during our warm ups when doing our upper body Kihon (empty hand basics) series with the Sai, holding it closed for punches and using it open for open hand techniques. The manipulations required a few modifications of some of the techniques in order to, for example, avoid getting hit by the side hook when coming back to the waist. This type of practice was excellent to strengthen the hands, wrists and arms as well as perfecting the use of the Sai.

Seisan no Sai

Seisan with Sai, why not? Another exercise that provided an excellent opportunity to perfect the manipulation of the Sai. This kata presents both closed (fist) and open hand techniques and is easily adaptable to perform with the Sai, using the Sai closed when the hand is closed and open when the hand is open. Of course this also included some minor modifications at times to make the tech-

niques smoother and avoid injuries.

Chotoku Kyan no Sai

Although not a traditional Isshinryu kata, this one is a great introduction to the Sai for students who have not yet learned Kusanku Sai kata as it allows to learn and practice the basic movements with the Sai. Conveniently, when the students later learn Kusanku Sai the movements from Chotoku Kyan no Sai are easily transferred to Kusanku Sai. And for the more experienced karateka, the practice provides another great review.

Bo Tai Sai and Bo Tai Bo Kumite

This is the part where we can “play” with what we have learned and practiced. Weapons Kumite requires the 2 karateka to maintain control and focus while performing sequences of attack and defense. Whether you are a new or a seasoned karateka, these sessions offered teaching, review and learning opportunities of the techniques for everyone. One major advantage of this kind of training is the immediate feedback we all receive if our grips, stances or body position are not correct. Having the weapon come loose in your grip or having an impact hurt a bit in our bodies teaches us to correct what was wrong. This can be far more effective than having a Sensei tell you to correct something. Feeling the difference immediately when you correct something is very valuable for improving our techniques.

Last but not least! I need to mention how we managed our karate classes in this challenging isolation time. As classes were cancelled, it became urgent to find a solution to keep on with the training. How much can a karateka do on his own? I don't know about you, but I knew I would not always be motivated... So, we converted to online classes to continue our group practice. We are using the Zoom application, which allows us to see and interact with each other. Partner practice may be out for a while, but there is so much we can still do, whether it's kata, drills or techniques. We have all been pleasantly surprised at how effective the online sessions can be and how enjoyable it is to remain active and connected with

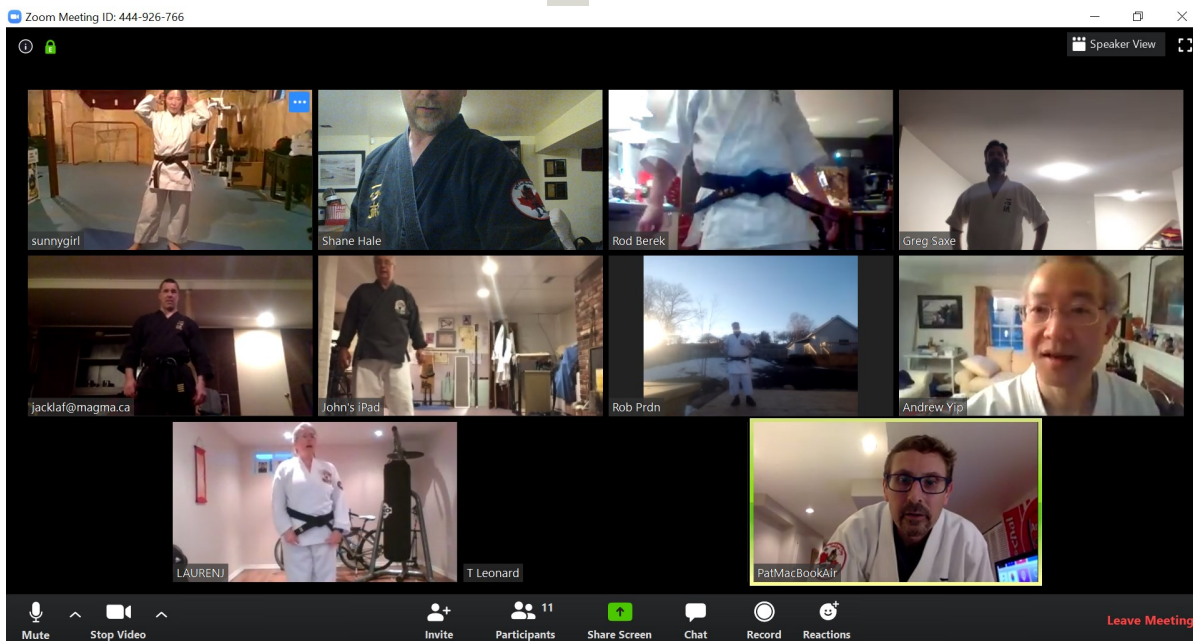
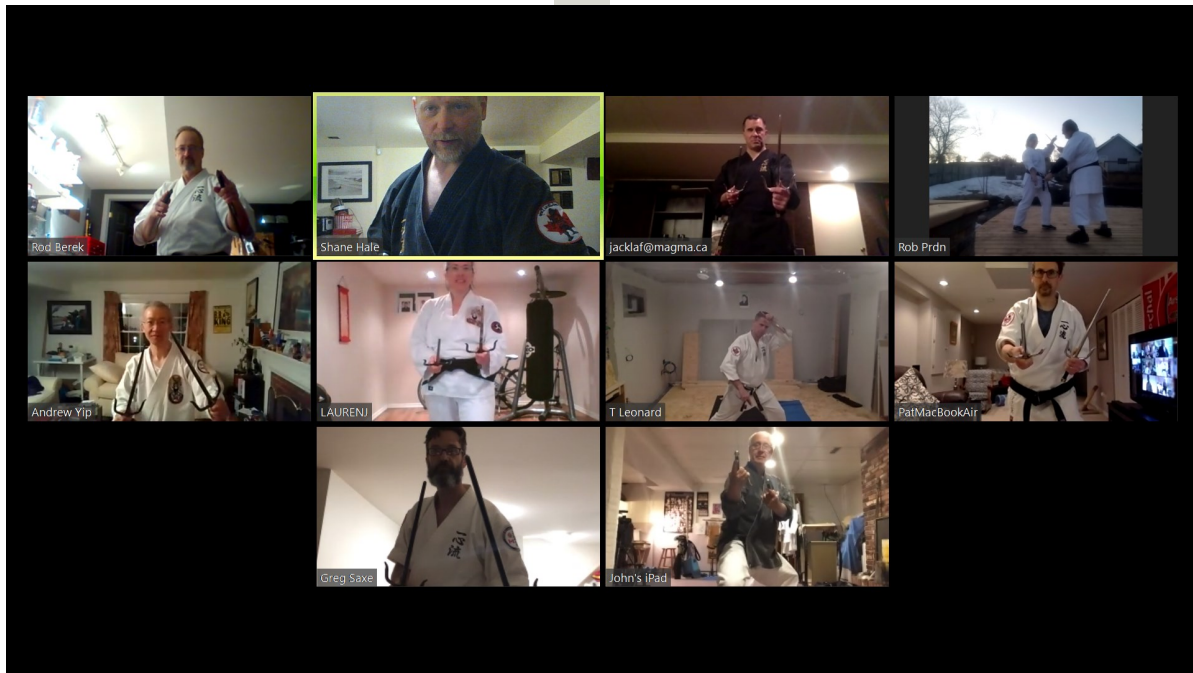
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Sai Focused Classes at Toshikai

By Julie Laurendeau

our fellow club members. Let's stay motivated and keep our karate shape!

Oss



Zoom based classes sound fun, maybe we should all join Toshikai Ottawa!



About The Newsletter

Just as in our dojo training, the newsletter is about sharing and improving as a group. We regularly have contributions and updates from Quebec to British Columbia in Canada, as well as from Germany, New York and the Southern United States. Everyone is always welcome in my Dojo or to share via the newsletter.

Articles 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 articles are appreciated as e-mail. You can send it to your instructor to proof read and send in, or directly to me. (sensei@isshinryu.ca)

You can even include pictures if it helps your article!

Karate Terms

Baka-yaro Idiot or fool, use can range from playful to insulting

Bunkai take to pieces/analyze

Dachi Stance

Dojo Training Hall

Fōkasu Focus

Gokyu Fifth Step

Hai Yes

Hajime Begin

Ie Home or dwelling

Kakuri Isolation

Kenko Health

Keri Kick

Kihon Exercises

Kyu Level or Level

Makiwara Wrapped Dried Rice (Or Striking Board as we all know it)

Mo Ichi Do One more Time

Mokuso Meditate
Rei Bow

Ryu Way

Sanchin Three Battles

Sempai Senior Student

Seretsu line up

Shin Mind/Spirit

Shinbō suru Perservere

Suwate kneel down

Tatte stand up

Tomaru stay

**“Don’t seek for everything to
happen as you wish it would,
but rather wish that everything happens as it actually will—
then your life will flow well.” -
Epictetus**