

ZANSHIN



THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE YOSHUKAN KARATE ASSOCIATION

Fall 2010

Halloween Fun at the Dojo



The Mississauga Dojo was crawling with creatures at the annual Kick or Treat. See page 2 for more photos of Halloween fun.

KANCHO CORNER

Return on Investment



At a recent Black Belt class I had mentioned that, on face value, martial arts training has a poor return-on-investment. What I meant by this is that if a student trains for many years in martial arts, they will likely never have to use their skills for self-defense. Practically speaking, this would be seen as a poor ROI.

If our ability to defend ourselves is our only goal, investing years... and decades... into our training seems to be a poor decision. Most of us will live out the remainder of our lives without ever having to defend ourselves.

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At the same time, some students/parents fixate on getting the 'Black Belt'. Again, why train for many years when there are many dojo that happily give out Black Belts after 2 years or enough income. Of course the new Black Belt isn't really worthy of the rank and doesn't have the requisite skill commensurate with the rank... but nonetheless, they can tell friends/family they are now 'Black Belts'!

In both propositions, we see a relatively negative ROI in terms of time/effort/money for the return received. So why do we invest so much of ourselves into the arduous study of martial arts?

The answer is in the 'do'. In 1882, Professor Jigoro Kano consolidated his study of Jiu-Jitsu (gentle art) and created Judo (The way of Gentleness). Essentially, Kano-Sensei removed the more dangerous techniques and preached that the real study of Budo (Way of Martial Arts) is really about character development. As such, many arts followed suit (Ken-Jitsu became Kendo, Karate became Karate-do, Aiki-Jitsu became Aikido, etc.) and the arts evolved into an avenue for people to pursue personal development.

This then is the real ROI for any dedicated martial arts student. It is the pursuit of personal development (gentleness; honour; spirit; loyalty; self-discipline; respect for self & others) that is the true goal of each budoka (student of the martial arts). Receiving a belt not earned, street-fighting, or showing disrespect for others would indicate the student is not a true student of budo and therefore does not understand the true return-on-investment of their efforts.

Ultimately, our study of martial arts is a never-ending path to personal improvement. Whatever belt we wear, however many times we may need to defend ourselves or our loved ones, the true return on investment is how we continually work on improving ourselves and how we live our lives.

In fact, a very good ROI that impacts us and everyone around us.

Kancho



The following is an essay submitted by Natasha Campbell in July, 2005 as part of her Black Belt Examination. The question presented to her was: *How has training in karate affected you and your perspective on life?*

How Karate Affects Me

I was lucky enough to find a sport I loved and could continue doing at an early age. This was, of course, karate. My life, for as long as I can remember, has been divided into three settings: home, school, and the dojo. I've always viewed the dojo as a sanctuary, and no matter what was happening at home or at school; I would always go in and be able to come out a little happier. I think it was more than just endorphins: in the dojo, nothing discriminated. A thirteen-year-old brown belt could be sparring with a forty-year-old black belt, and the difference people would first notice would be their belts. The only thing that people paid attention to was your rank, not your age, height or weight. This was my first attraction to karate, but I soon found many more. Karate has motivated me, imparted on me self-confidence, and enabled me to view everything with a new perspective, which I applied to everyday life.

Last year, I discovered during drama class that a disconcerting number of teenagers couldn't touch their toes. Although I could touch my toes, I found myself attempting to flatten my hands to the floor and go further. It was then I realized that karate motivates me to do more. As quoted by Robin Williams in *Dead Poets Society* 'For me, sport is actually a chance for us to have other human beings push us to excel'. When surrounded by people who can't touch their toes, the person who can doesn't feel very motivated until confronted by a person who can do the splits. It was in the dojo that I discovered there is always someone who can do better than me, and that inspired me to work

harder. If I ever need to feel motivated with a task life presents me, an hour in the dojo will be enough.

Self-confidence was one of the harder points for me to master. But it was at junior blue belt that I had to make a choice, which had nothing to do with anyone else. The only time I ever doubted leaving was when I was stuck at junior blue. Without a doubt, it was the most depressing belt I've ever had. I knew that it was my last chance to turn back. For me, full blue meant you were a lifer. If I got my blue belt, I would just *have* to get my brown, and then black — essentially, I was in it for good. However I had also just come back from a very long vacation on the coast of France, feeling very unfit and 'out of it'. All my friends were ahead of me, and I had two choices: either turn back now, or keep working at it. In the end, it was up to me, and I told myself that I could do it. The turning point came after a Saturday morning class at the Rock, where I decided that something that made me feel *this* good wasn't something to give up on. It wasn't about my parents, my friends or the kid across the street. Sadly, a lot of my friends did end up leaving, but by then I had already made my choice. If it felt right to me, I would continue doing it. From then on, when it came to exams at school or even organizing parties, I knew that if I worked hard enough at it I'd be able to do anything.

I have recently discovered that one of the reasons so many people enjoy karate is because it suits so many different types of personalities. I was a perfectionist, consequently being drawn

to kata more than anything, because the technique had to be perfect. What karate allowed my to do was explore the different aspects of my personality. With sparring I discovered determination, with bunkai I found creativity. This affected my school as well: I was strong academically, but my athletic and artistic talent grew stronger as well. Making up a variation for bunkai was like creating a new scene with the same set of characters. Setting up an opponent was like setting up a play for soccer. Karate seemed to be able to translate into everything I did outside the dojo as well.

There aren't enough words to describe how karate makes me feel. Until I was introduced to it, I had no idea how I survived without it in the first place. In the end, karate is something that simply fits, that makes me happy and introduced me to an entirely new way of life.



Natasha Campbell is currently completing her Masters in a Cognitive Neuroscience lab at McGill University – focusing her research on the mind-body interaction.



New Yoshukan Dojo

A new Yoshukan dojo opens the doors for karate students in Lachine, Québec. Sempai Calistru, chef instructor, pursuing his dream, is starting this new adventure with enthusiasm,



supported by his friends and family. Here are a few images from the very first day at "Karate-do".



"Brownies"

Montreal Yoshukan students from NDG dojo, celebrate their successful brown belt examination. Here are the "brownies" Ian Barret and Andrei Roma enjoying the moment.

Photo by Shana Frutcher



Chinto kata anecdote : Ce Kata est d'origine Chinoise inspiré d'un boxeur Chinois Quan Fa Anan.

Les Okinawais ont ainsi nommé l'expert de boxe chinoise présent à Tomari (Naha) au milieu du XIXe siècle.

Chin signifie dominer ou maîtriser et **To** veut dire est comme dans **To- Kyo** (capitol de l'est) pour souligner l'origine : Quan Fa expert de l'est de la Chine.

Il est maintenu que ce kata est inspiré du mouvement des oiseaux. Cela est évident dans les caractéristiques de grandes motions avec les bras ainsi que les sauts.

Il y a plusieurs changements rapides dans la posture ainsi que la direction de l'attaque, ce qui compose un défi dans son ensemble pour le karateka.

L'expression doit se faire dans la souplesse, en motions légers, comme un oiseau. Toutefois, en dépit de ces caractéristiques, les techniques sous-jacentes (**bunkai**) sont rapides, décisifs et mortel. La première partie du kata symbolise la lutte entre l'oiseau et le serpent, exigeant équilibre, légèreté et rapidité d'exécution. À la partie médiane, on peut reconnaître dans la transition des aspects de **Nokori-ai** (Grappling).

A.D. Shodan.

Black Belt Weekend



Louise Provencher, Betty Gormley, Peter Bakomihalis, Sebastian Calistru, Zeljko Violoni, Sarah Perez, Lucas Ruecker, Raluca Stanescu, Constantin Calistru



Toshih kata in the park



Kobudo training



Black belt group



Advanced Junior class at the Mississauga Dojo

Japanese Moment

A lovely thing to see:
Through the paper window's hole,
The Galaxy.

Haiku by Kobayashi Issa

Competition Team Mississauga

As a Yoshukan black belt I've learned to discover that the real art in karate is that of building character and developing oneself. Our motto has always been 'building life champions' and although I do not see myself as a champion in the sport arena I do feel that I've taken away a lot of life lessons from the dojo that have allowed me to excel in other areas of life because of the confidence I gained from training. I attribute budo to be one of the greatest arts taught because it can be applied to a range of ages and every person takes something different from it. However, due to my competitive background I would be lying if I said that sport karate has had no impact on me.

I started competition at a young age, probably around 5 or 6 years old, back when I was still competing in a girls and boys division! When I look back on my tournament experiences I always had a role model who would inspire me and would make me want to be a better competitor. With this being said I think I was fortunate enough to be in close proximity to these people because I would often go outside of my own dojo to train with different dojos and teachers. Funny enough, this is actually a



Daphne Trahan-Perreault, National Kata Champion, poses with the Competition Team after an enlightening class as guest instructor.

rare thing in the sport karate world because often students are not encouraged to go out of their dojo and learn from different Senseis because they are not to mix with their competitors. However, Yoshukan has a different philosophy, we encourage learning and expanding our knowledge and in doing so building ourselves. With this philosophy and the love I have for competition we had introduced a competition team program for



Competition Team members proudly hold their certificates from the 09-10 season.

our younger students who were eager to learn more about sport karate and push themselves to do better in tournaments.

The competition team program began in 2008 under the instruction of Kancho Robertson. The team was open to any individual who wanted to participate in tournament, either in kumite or kata and the idea was to bring in the best of the best to teach and inspire our students. Among the list of instructors, we had many international competitors and well respected Canadian judges such as **Pat Grant, Chris de Sousa Costa, Daphne Trahan-Perreault, Karl Sutten, Nassim Varasteh, Bill Carr, Antonia Terrera**, etc. We have always selected teachers who were positive and had a passion to teach and who we knew would make the experience fun. With this being said, I believe this is a contributing factor why the competition team has run for 3 years now and is still going strong!

The Competition team program is not time consuming but is definitely a different push from regular training. Classes run the first Friday of every month for 10 months in which, 5 months are taught by an instructor from our dojo (that being me for the last 2 years) and 5 months from different competitors and judges. We focus on kumite drills such as footwork, tactics, distance and timing, and rules and regulations along with kata training, which concentrate more on technique and how to best perform for the judges.

After all the years that the competition team has run, one thing has remained constant. It has always enticed students who are particularly dedicated and determined because they are the ones that are willing to push themselves and put in that extra to be the best. As we can see that extra bit has helped because our dojo has shown to be very successful these past few years with over 100 medals won in Provincial competition and three of our students being selected to the Provincial team.

HEE'SS BACK! Sensei Bakomihalis returns to NDG Dojo

Sensei Peter Bakomihalis has rejoined the teaching staff (Sensei Robert Kalinowicz; Sensei Rebecca Khoury; Sempai Malcolm Mazumdar) at NDG Dojo this past summer. With a number of Yoshukan Black Belts at the dojo (Sarah Perez, Henri Tchibozo, Simon Mercier-Nguyen, Miki Nishida, Balgovind Pande, Charles Mayer) the club has continued its 42-year tradition as one of Canada's longest running karate dojos.

Sensei Peter began his martial arts study in 1974 with Kancho Robertson and Sensei Michael Litwinczuk at the LaSalle Dojo and has been a loyal and dedicated student & teacher ever since. With Sensei Khoury and Sensei Kalinowicz

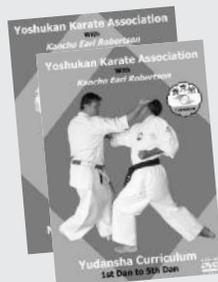
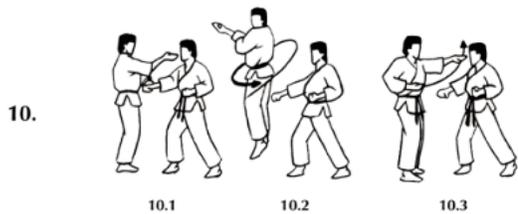
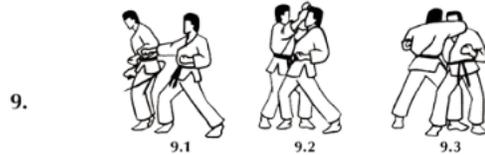
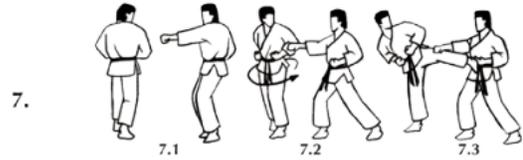
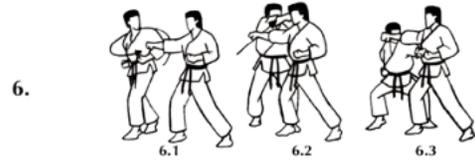
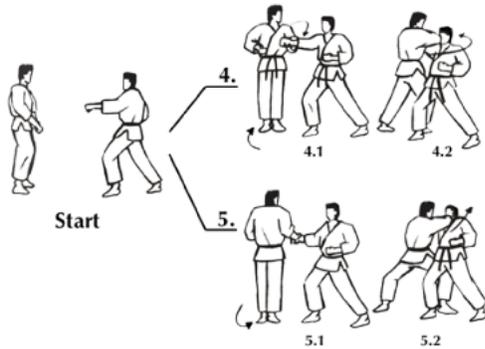
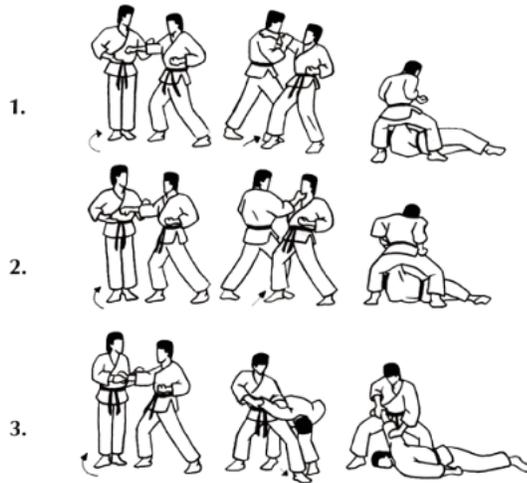
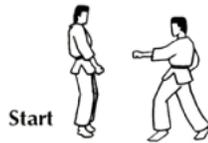
all in the same dojo, there is a wealth of experience and knowledge for the NDG students to tap into.

The NDG Dojo was originally founded in 1968 by Sensei Mike Litwinczuk and then Kancho Robertson took over as Chief Instructor in 1974. Over the past 42 years thousands of local students have trained in its halls and dozens of noteworthy Black Belts have graduated from this iconic training location. If the walls could talk there would be many stories about great battles, personal accomplishments and soul-shattering defeats. With Sensei Bakomihalis back at the dojo, it will again connect the past with the present and Yoshukan's future in this small part of the city.



Photos by Ian Barrett

Kaiten No Ho



Yoshukan DVDs – White Belt to 5th Dan

All Kata; Bunkai; Kumite; Ukemi; Kobudo and Goshin Jutsu demonstrated by Kancho Robertson from beginner to 5th Degree Black Belt in the Yoshukan System.

\$29.95 each or both for \$49.95. Please add \$15 for shipping & handling charges. Payments can be made by credit card or check at the Mississauga dojo.

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