

MODERN MASTERS

As the martial arts develop and become more popular there is a natural divergence in style and content of tuition and practice. There are now a plethora of people who claim or are claimed to be masters of martial arts. Remember, it is very easy to be a master of a small group, but to be honoured by all is a rare thing. Political interests and finance mean that in today's martial arts genuine masters are hard to find. Some people claim that anyone not training *their* way is either under-developed in their understanding or too political to accept the aforementioned master.

In the author's opinion criteria for mastery must include physical prowess, an UNDERSTANDING of the arts, their applications, evolution, and the nature of violence. Although one may be able to fight without it, a master should exhibit humility or they really will not have travelled very far on the martial arts road. Mastery does not necessarily make one a good teacher, but often the understanding acquired during the process of mastery enables a clear education of others.

Some of the following are masters due to the footsteps they walked in, others created their own path.

Following on from Master Funakoshi, Nakayama became head of the Japan Karate Association and spread Shotokan throughout the world with his pioneering instructor's course/ambassador programme. Nakayama was the author of the Best Karate series of books and Dynamic Karate, which is highly sought after by all the schools that came after the JKA. Most popular of Nakayama's followers and highly respected by Shotokan Karate-ka, Sensei Kase, Asano, Enoeda, Nishiyama, and Kawasoe, are all formidable teachers and fighters.

Andrew Sherry was the first Shotokan Shodan to be graded in this country and is head of the Karate Union of Great Britain. Terry O'Neill has plenty of fighting experience in and out of the dojo, as a 6th Dan and former doorman. Mr O'Neill used to publish Fighting Arts International magazine which was the most informative and educational magazine on the martial arts market.

Asano's student Vince Morris teaches internationally to police forces and uses pressure points to great effect.



Professor Tom Muncy 10th Dan

Outside of Shotokan Professor Wally Jay has developed Small Circle Ju-Jitsu which has had a profound effect on the analysis of Torite techniques. George Dillman pioneered research into pressure points which was further advanced by the work of Tom Muncy and Rick MoneyMaker (who head the Dragon Society International and brought the old eastern medicine into context). Remy Presas is world-renown for his stick fighting, as is Bruce Lee's successor Dan Inosanto. Bill Wallace is known as "Superfoot" for his amazing kicking ability.



Professor Rick MoneyMaker 9th Dan

Within our own association we have Hanshi Alan Tattershall, the UK representative of the Dai Nippon Butokukai. Peter Consterdine, 7th Dan, has the hardest recorded punch in Europe and is the trainer of bodyguards. Author Geoff Thompson used to be a doorman and is the subject of a film about his life. Mr Thompson is a good example of a man who had his life changed by the martial arts so that violence is no longer his way of achieving results.



Sensei Anthony Blades 5th Dan

Anthony Blades is our 5th Dan Renshi, co-founder and respected karate-ka he also holds the grade of 1st Dan in Torite Jutsu and is an Associate Instructor with the Dragon Society. Russell Stutely is a 4th Dan in karate and also holds qualifications in Torite Jutsu, RyuKyu Kempo, and Kung Fu. Russell was the first European to reach the status of full Dragon Society International Instructor. Russell and Anthony guide the development of our martial arts and act as grading examiners to all black belts in our association.



Sensei Russell Stutely 4th Dan

Many others are masters. Not including them here is more a matter of time and space considerations than any judgement of their ability and standing. One factor is constant, however - judge them yourself, not by any title.

Purple/White Belt (4th Kyu)

Fundamentals

SANBON ZUKI

AGE UKE, GYAKUZUKI, GEDAN BARAI

SOTO UKE, EMPI UCHI, URAKEN, GYAKUZUKI

UCHI UKE, KIZAMI ZUKI, GYAKUZUKI

MAEGERI, OIZUKI, GYAKUZUKI

YOKOKEKOMI, GYAKUZUKI

YOKO GERI KEAGE

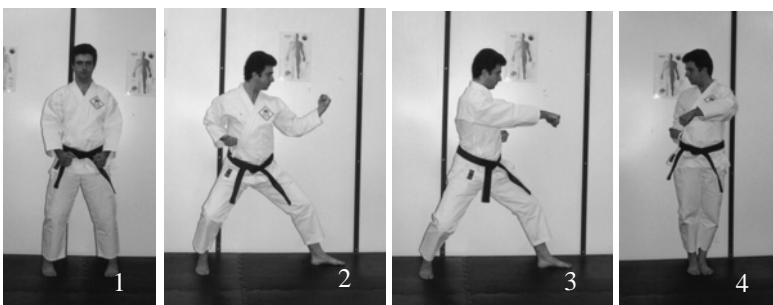
MAWASHIGERI

SHUTO UKE, KIZAMI KEKOMI, NUKITE

Purple/White Belt (4th Kyu) - Kata

HEIAN GODAN

Peaceful Mind Level Five



- 1) From a ready position
- 2) Look to the left, sink your weight and step out into kokutsu dachi making uchi uke.
- 3) Immediately make gyakuzuki.
- 4) Slowly pull the right foot to the left, look to the right and make kage zuki.



- 5) Sink your weight and step to the right into kokutsudachi making uchi uke.
- 6) Immediately make gyakuzuki.
- 7) Slowly pull the left foot to the right, look forwards and make kage zuki.
- 8) Cross the wrists over the left hip and step forwards along the main embusen making morote uke in kokutsu dachi.
- 9) Step forwards into zenkutsudachi and make juji gedan barai.
- 10) Pull the wrists back sharply.
- 11) Thrust the open hands upwards, with the wrists crossed.



- 12 - 14) Uncross the wrists and pull down to the right hip. The right hand is palm up, fingertips forward; the left hand is palm down, fingertips pointing right.
- 15 - 16) Push the left hand sharply forwards then step into zenkutsudachi and punch oi zuki.

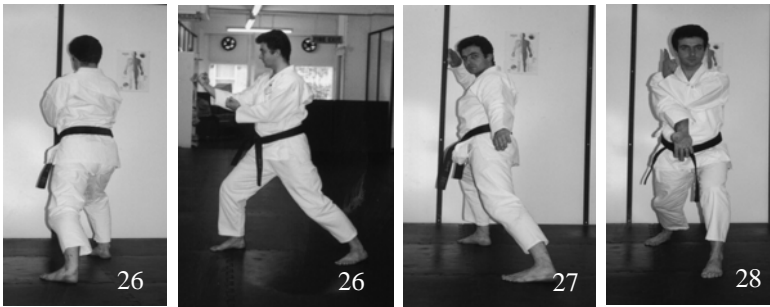
Kiai

- 17) Turn 180° anti-clockwise, pivoting on the left foot. Make kiba dachi and gedan barai. [Some teachers have a fumi komi just prior to the gedan barai]

- 18 - 19) Cross the arms in front of the body, left hand under. Look to the left, pull the right fist back to the hip as the left hand pushes around. The left palm is horizontal until the last moment.



- 20 - 21) Make mikazuki geri with the right foot to the left hand and then set down into kiba dachi while making empi.
- 22) Look to the right. Move the left foot to make kosa dachi and make morote uchi komi.
- 23) Make jodan morote urazuki, twisting the hips and head to face the other way. The left foot is placed naturally, not forced into any stance.
- 24) Jump from the left foot, upwards and 180° anti-clockwise. While in the air, **Kiai**.
- 25) Land in kosadachi, making juji gedan barai.



26 & 26a) Look to the right and step out with the right foot to make morote uke.

27) Look over the left shoulder. Move the left foot across, sweeping the left hand down and the right to just in front of the forehead.

28) Change the stance to zenkutsudachi and thrust the right hand downwards (palm uppermost) while bringing the left hand to right ear.



29) Move the left foot to make kokutsudachi and make manji gamae.

30) Slowly move the left foot to the right.

31) Twist the body and feet on the spot, cutting downwards with the right hand, the left hand just in front of the forehead.

32) Step forwards with the right leg into zenkutsudachi, thrusting the left palm downwards (palm uppermost) and the right palm to the left ear.

33) Move the right foot to make kokutsudachi and make manji gamae.

34) Step backwards to Yamae.

Purple/White Belt (4th Kyu) - Kumite

Kihon Ippon Kumite - Jodan, Chudan, Mae Geri, Kekomi, Mawashigeri

Both sides of the body. Any step, stance, and response is allowed, ensuring the correct distance for kumite.

Purple/White Belt (4th Kyu) Oyo Jutsu

Straight punch:

Continuing the theme of evasion, shift both feet away and past the attack. Brush the attacking limb to ensure you are not being hit. Grab the attacking wrist. Retaliate. Moves from kata should be readily apparent at this grade.

Hook punch:

Shift directly in to break the attack. Retaliations must be under control showing all the principles learned to this stage.

Purple/White Belt (4th Kyu) - Bunkai

Any move from any previous kata.

Applicants are now invited to demonstrate a move from previous kata and its application. This will demonstrate an understanding of the technique and its uses.

Grading Summary for 4th Kyu

FUNDAMENTALS (Kihon)

Sanbon Zuki

Age Uke, Gyakuzuki, Gedan Barai

Soto Uke, Empi uchi, Uraken uchi,

Gyakuzuki

Uchi Uke, Kizamizuki, Gyakuzuki, Gedan Barai

Maegeri, Oizuki, Gyakuzuki

Yoko kekomi, Gyakuzuki

Mawashigeri

Shuto uke, Kizami kekomi, nukite

KATA

Heian Godan

KUMITE

Kihon Ippon Kumite

Jodan Oi-Zuki, Chudan Oi-Zuki,

Mae geri, Yoko kekomi, Mawshigeri

OYO

Straight: Avoidance Shift,

Chudan or Jodan retaliation

Hook: Intercepting Steps,

Chudan or Jodan retaliation

BLOCKING

The term we have is a huge mis-nomer. The Japanese term uke more properly translates as “recieve”, yet the term “block” has stuck in karate. This incorrect translation has led to a variety of bad practices which do not harm a *do* art, but could be dangerous to actual usage outside the dojo.

True blocking is similar to the type used in competition, mere parrying of blows. The best type of block is, of course, to not be where the blow intends to land or anywhere on its path. True blocking will rarely use two arms, very rarely cross them, and virtually never make the shape of the “uke” techniques.

Many people question the validity of karate techniques in the way they have been taught in the traditional styles. Some people switch arts, or practice the sport version where a full age uke is never used. Some try to justify the “preparatory positions” by saying that if speed can be built doing the technique with two hands then one hand will be quicker. Some say that using two hands helps the hip rotation. These suppositions come about because of kumite exercises used to build up stamina, strengthen bones, and help timing. The idea that kumite is the actual combat application of technique is an unjustified leap of faith.



Once we understand that the finished position of a technique is not where contact is made with an opponent but instead where the force is required to end having damaged an opponent, then we can see that the applications are damaging. When we add that two hands are used because both are involved in the technique then we find reasons for the shapes we make, and the routes we use to make them.

The simple act of hikite being an active pulling action, introduces us to the path and final position of our opponent. The path of our technique and its final position must make contact and pass through the path of an opponent. This defines the target area and effect of the technique.

The *supposition* of the “block” takes account of an opponent’s attack being met with the uke technique. The useful uke technique takes effect after having parried or dodged the attack, at close quarters. In oriental martial arts certain assumptions are made - such as not wanting to get hit. All techniques are put together with the assumption that the practitioner already has common sense, and exist to refine a response to an aggression.

Techniques were created to deal with unwarranted acts of aggression - an attack, a mugging. The sport of the time and place was wrestling (like sumo), so karate was not for sport. Planned duels and assassinations would use weapons - the honourable weapon being the sword, so karate was not for duelling. The techniques were for dealing with an attack, once it had occurred - not at a set distance. One this has been accepted, and the uke technique is used as a two-handed response then targets begin to fit the technique.



This is not to say that the opponent must be made to fit your response, but rather to make sense of the technique. Your response will be more effective whichever "block" you use when combined with realistic targetting, distance, parrying and evasion - often lost to "competitive" karateka whose targetting, distance, parrying, and evasion rely upon an extreme range being available.

All uke techniques must work from a wrist grab, a push, and a punch. These are all, of course, an aggression of the arms, and - theoretically - the same attack. Other attacks which most techniques take into account are bear hugs and chokes.

The following section details the use of uke techniques for more than "blocking". Whether or not these were the original applications cannot be claimed, history will not tell. What is certain is that these techniques, taught in the orient, use oriental medicine as their foundation and finish fights. Often they go against the natural inclination of the defender, therefore requiring training to perfect. This could be the reason why practitioners of old might take 3 years or more to learn a kata.

Remember, karate is not a system of natural movements, but movements performed naturally.

AN INTRODUCTION TO PRESSURE POINTS

Along with the other theories for an effective technique there is no suggestion that pressure points should be sought out during a fight. What is encouraged is the practice of techniques which automatically land on pressure points. The recognition of vulnerable points of an opponent can only help the effectiveness of techniques, and the study of pressure points may prevent one from causing harm where it is unnecessary.

Previously we have looked at the oriental 5 element theory and the meridians which are believed to be channels for this intangible power. These meridians have varying numbers of locations along their length which are susceptible to being struck, rubbed, or pressed from specific angles. These are known as acupressure points and are used to heal, or correct the imbalanced energy flow, in shiatsu and acupuncture.

Western researchers such as George Dillman have suggested that pressure points are located at the centre of the divergence of two branches of a nerve. The extra pain caused by striking the point is believed to be caused due to activating two neural responses at once. This initial investigation holds true for the most part, but fails to account for the effect on organs associated with the oriental meridians.

Once again we return to using the theory and science which was in use when the martial arts themselves were formulated.

Pressure points are known by the name of the meridian they lie on followed by their number of points from the beginning of the meridian. Points are either positive or negative, belong to one of the five elements, are on an energy flow up or down, and are associated with a bowel or organ. The notable exceptions are the points of the Governor vessel in the centre of the back and the Conception vessel in the centre of the front of the body.

For example Large Intestine 1 is the first point on the Large Intestine meridian, located on the edge of the index finger, close to the joint. The point is a Yang point of the metal element and energy flows down to it.

There are known to be 108 points on the body, and martial arts techniques generally land on one or more of these points. Checking which point is landed on can be a useful test of an application and any follow up.

Certain points are of specific value, for instance causing nausea or vomiting, releasing the muscles of wrist, or knee or neck, or even memory loss.

Pressure points are an area of study in and of itself, with serious implications for martial art techniques.

Acupuncture was brought to Japan in the reign of Emperor Chi Wen (circa 562AD). This was not alternative medicine - it was medicine, defined by testing and observation.

GEDAN BARAI

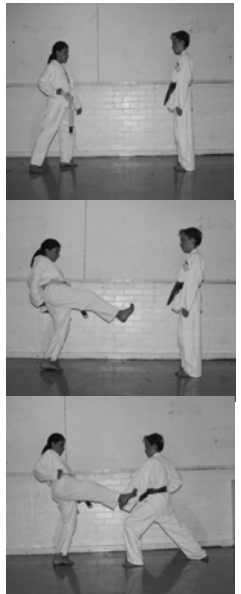
One of the very first things to be taught, gedan barai is vital to karate and understanding the huge variety of uses for it may be life saving.

Most karate books show the following as usage for gedan barai:

- 1 TORA in zenkutsu dachi UKE in natural stance
- 2 TORA kicks maegeri UKE in natural stance
- 3 TORA kicks maegeri UKE steps back blocking gedan barai.

Naturally, one is led to question this application:

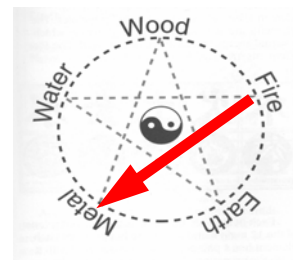
- ⇒ Why step back when you usually practice this move stepping forward?
- ⇒ Why utilise the small ulna bone against strong leg bones and muscles when it would get broken?
- ⇒ Why would an opponent look to kick at a such ineffective range?



Instead let us consider these useful applications...

a) The defender has his wrist grabbed by an attacker. When a person is grabbed it must be remembered that the grabber has an intention - to attack! The attacker seeks to pull the defender in; to be headbutted, punched, kneed, strangled, etc. This requires energy. By intending to do you damage the attacker tenses certain areas and makes them more viable targets. In this application the grasping arm is tensed, activating the fire and metal meridians of the arm. The reason for dropping down the striking arm across the body is to turn the attacker's body away so that the weapon they were intending to hit you with is taken "off-line". With the attacker at a disadvantage your retaliation is at your discretion.

The descending wrist has several targets. Large Intestine 5 and 6 on the outside of the wrist are Yang metal points. By striking either of them with Small Intestine 5 or 6 (Yang fire points) we make the energetic equation fire melts metal. Remember that taking a step forwards and 45° through the attacker turns them further and adds the bodyweight to the dislodging action (just in case he has an incredible grip).



Constructive Cycle (Usually reversed)



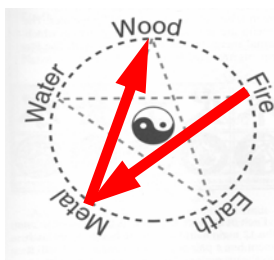
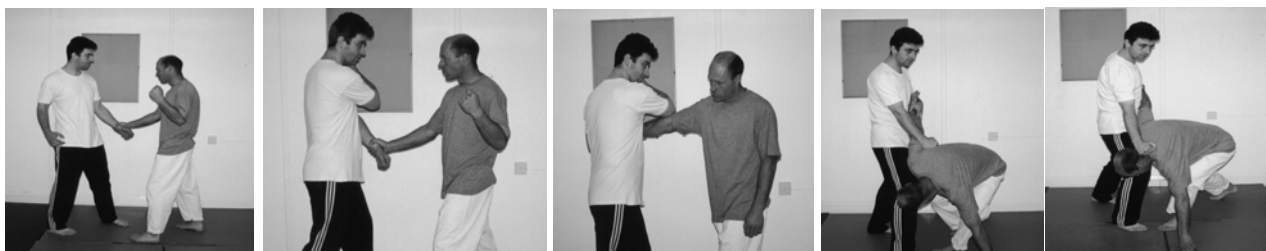
Destructive Cycle



Breathing. Quadrant Theory. Five Elements. Vibration. Yielding/Controlled Pliability. Cross-body motor reaction. Pressure Points.

b) The defender has his wrist grabbed by an attacker. In order to more fully deal with the attacker, and to prevent further attacks it may be necessary to do damage. The attacker's intention of violence makes the un-yieldingness which will make your response hurt them.

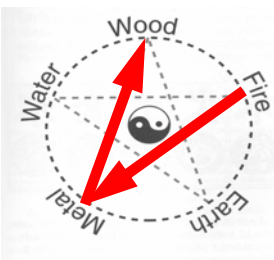
In order to "tie-up" a limb of the attacker and draw then into your response you make hikite (latching the attackers wrist) and draw the arm back. The latching hand digs into Small Intestine 5 and 6 (Yang Fire) on Heart 4 and 5 (Yin Fire) and Lung 7 and 8 (Yin Metal). This twists the opponents arm and exposes Triple Warmer 11 (Yang Fire) which you strike with your elbow fractionally before stepping through at 45° and continuing the downward sweep. The continuous contact of the arms drags energy against its natural downward flow, disrupting. By pulling back hard on the wrist just as your arm reaches its natural maximum extension Gallbladder 20 becomes the viable target (Yang Wood point).



Breathing. Quadrant Theory. Five Elements. Vibration. Controlled pliability. Cross-body motor reaction. Pressure Points. Wave Form. Yin Yang.

c) The defender is pushed. The brushing action is a short strike into the Small Intestine (Yang Fire) meridian. Latching the arm and pulling it across the body disrupts the attack before continuing with the elbow to Triple Warmer 11 (Yang Fire) and finally to Gallbladder 20 (Yang Wood).

An alternative finish is shown in "F" strangulation.



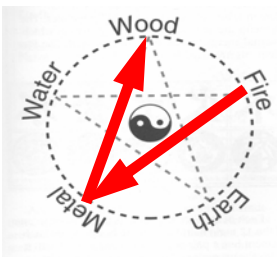
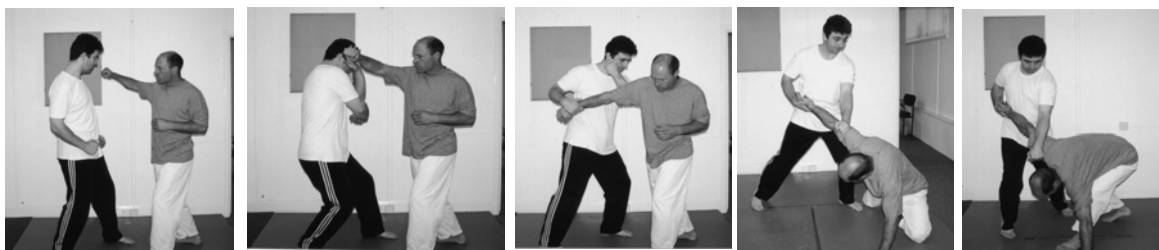
Breathing. Quadrant Theory. Five Elements. Vibration. Controlled pliability. Cross-body motor reaction. Pressure Points. Wave Form. Yin Yang.

d) The important thing to remember with a hook punch is to try and get past it to fight from an advantageous position rather than getting trapped, blocking, on the inside (on-line) where there are more weapons to deal with.

By covering across the body we cover up more of our own targets and leave the hand nearest to our opponent as a viable weapon (on-line). The “brush” action contacts the Yin and Yang Fire meridians as the other hand makes a short strike to the point where the liver (Yin Wood) meridian crosses the Gallbladder (Yang Wood) meridian in the ribs. At the same time the “brushing” hand latches onto the wrist metal and fire points.

By dragging back further with the hikite Triple Warmer 12 becomes the target for the ulna bone before continuing to Gallbladder 21.

By injecting the knee into Gallbladder 31 (Yang Wood) we can gain extra benefits.

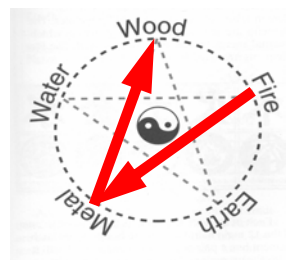
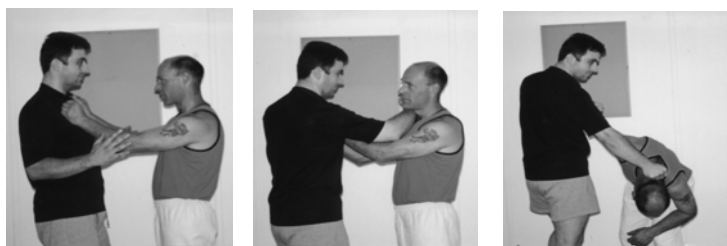


Breathing. Quadrant Theory. Five Elements. Vibration. Controlled pliability. Cross-body motor reaction. Pressure Points. Wave Form. Yin Yang.

e) When a belligerent individual grabs the clothing of the lapel area with both hands we can reckon on them following with a headbutt or knee attack. Quickly we bring a hand to the opposite high quadrant and drop it forcefully across the neck.

Prevent the removal of a hand (or both hands if you reach across) by holding it to your body. If the pinning hand can cover Large Intestine 3 (Yang metal) and Small Intestine 6 (Yang fire) we can short-circuit the body. Twisting our torso - from the hips - helps our pinning action and reduces the chances of any head or knee reaction from contacting any delicate areas once the opponent has been struck.

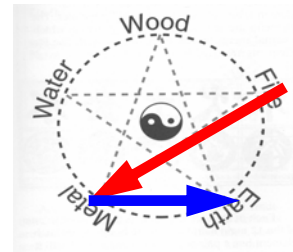
Remember that by making contact and staying in contact with the neck of the opponent the number of vulnerable areas struck can be expanded to include Small Intestine 15 (Yang fire), Triple Warmer 16 (Yang fire), Large Intestine 18 (Yang metal) and Gallbladder 20 (Yang wood).



Breathing. Quadrant Theory. Five Elements. Vibration. Controlled pliability. Cross-body motor reaction. Pressure Points. Wave Form. Yin Yang.

f) In poor circumstances the defender finds himself being strangled. One or two-handed the technique remains the same. In a two-handed strangulation you must act quickly or lose consciousness. In a one handed strangulation you must be wary of the other hand etc.

Distract the strangler by hook punching the jaw. This will probably land on Stomach 5 (Yang Earth). Bring the elbow down on top of Large Intestine 9 and 10 (Yang Metal). With the other hand grip Heart 3 (Yin Fire) with the thumb and pull back hikite. The first hand makes a low level sweep as a step is taken and the ulna bone connects with Large Intestine 18 (Yang Metal) or Stomach 9 (Yang Earth).



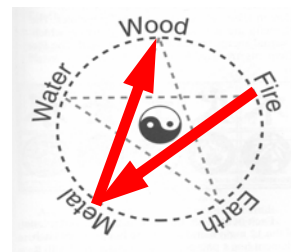
Breathing. Quadrant Theory. Five Elements. Vibration. Controlled pliability. Cross-body motor reaction. Pressure Points. Wave Form. Yin Yang. Reverse Constructive Cycle

g) In the unfortunate circumstance of an attacker having already achieved a bear-hug, one can use gedan barai to throw them. An initial lowering of the body-weight and shifting of the arms prevents the hold from stopping your breathing.

By stepping out to the side - as in Kihon kata - the whole of one's body-weight is put to use instead of trying to use arm strength.

As shown, bring the opposite hand to latch onto Large Intestine 10 or 11, or further down the arm at Heart 6 and Large Intestine 5. Disturb the opponent's strong position by elbowing directly backwards into the Gallbladder - Liver crossing and use the powerful leg muscles to twist the hips, pulling the opponent over.

Grasping either the wrist or the elbow (dig into Heart 2 with the thumb) release the other hand so as to strike the head or neck. Effective targets to include Gallbladder 20, Large Intestine 18, Stomach 9 or 6, Triple Warmer 16 or 17,



Breathing. Quadrant Theory. Five Elements. Vibration. Controlled pliability. Cross-body motor reaction. Pressure Points. Wave Form. Yin Yang.

h) As the attacker puts a hand forward (to push or grab or strangle) meet it palm to palm and pull sharply down whilst stepping. Pericardium 8 (Yin Fire) is activated whilst reaching when contacted. The little finger contacts Heart 7 (Yin Fire) and makes a bridge during the pulling action.

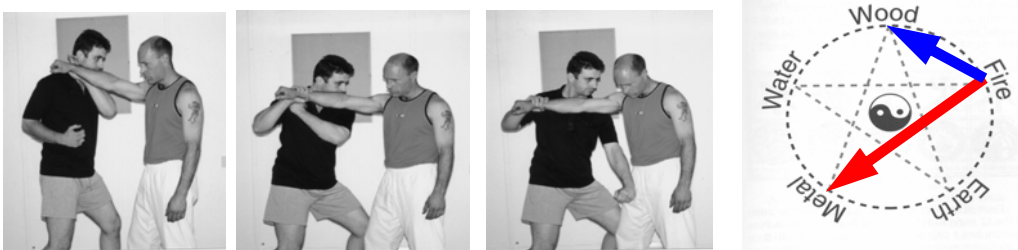
An appropriate retaliation would be to any Metal or Wood point.



Breathing. Quadrant Theory. Five Elements. Vibration. Controlled pliability. Cross-body motor reaction. Pressure Points. Wave Form. Yin Yang. Reverse constructive cycle.

- i) When receiving a punch, make certain to use brush-grab-strike from an off-line position. The meridian wipe is followed by a latch at the wrist, thereby preventing natural energy flow.

The descending arm action in this case is a strike to the groin area, particularly using the bone of the wrist to impact upon Spleen 12 (Yin earth).



Breathing. Quadrant Theory. Five Elements. Vibration. Controlled pliability. Cross-body motor reaction. Pressure Points. Wave Form. Yin Yang. Reverse constructive cycle.

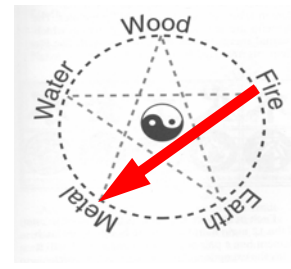
- j) Additional impact can be created in response to a punch by adding the bodyweight and colliding with the attacker's ribs using your elbow. This can be particularly effective if the Gallbladder-Liver meridian crossing can be contacted. Utilising quadrant theory to drop the arm across the attacker's body and down brings the hand to the hip balance points.



Breathing. Quadrant Theory. Five Elements. Vibration. Controlled pliability. Cross-body motor reaction. Pressure Points. Wave Form. Yin Yang.

- k) Receiving a punch with the brush-grab-strike principle, as before, the elbow can also be dropped directly onto the end of the sternum on the conception vessel. With the diaphragm directly behind the solar plexus this is a winding technique.

The forearm is then dropped across the body to put the enemy down.



Breathing. Quadrant Theory. Five Elements. Vibration. Controlled pliability. Cross-body motor reaction. Pressure Points. Wave Form. Yin Yang.

As we can see, gedan barai is much more than a “down-block” designed to stop a kick. Indeed, for the number of times it is practiced one might assume that a kick was the most popular form of physical attack. This is, of course, not the case. An aggressor is far more likely to hit or grab than they are to kick - unless you are lying down.

Gedan barai is worthy of deep study. It may be the best technique in karate.