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November 2015

Dear Anshin Dojo Members,
Welcome to November's newsletter! We had a bit of a hiatus on this due to editorial changes, but now we are back and stronger than ever! For those of you who are new to these updates, we will be sending out this newsletter each month to inform students and parents of upcoming events, dojo closures, and other relevant information.

If there is any information you would like to be included in this newsletter, please do not hesitate and email:
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News and Upcoming Events

Anshin School of Karate would like to offer a warm welcome to all our new students who have joined in the past few months!!

Brandon B, Chiara, Christian, Kevin & Mary, Madeleine, Mason, Matteo, Michelle, Nora, Phillip, Ramjattan Robbie, and Steven M.

Also a warm welcome *back* to fellow student Tony Raposo! It's good to have you back!

To all of these students, may your journey be a long and valuable one. We at Anshin Dojo look forward to seeing you grow.

Dojo Closures

14th – no Saturday classes
28th – no Saturday classes

Notable Dates

02nd – Passing of O'Sensei Shoshin Nagamine (1997)
11th – Rememberence Day
14th – Iaido at Stratford Martial Arts
28th – Iaido at Stratford Martial Arts

Special Events

29th – Friendship Day at Renseiken Dojo

Birthdays

Happy November Birthdays!
Brandon P. (Nov.04)
Robbie C. (Nov.11)

Happy Belated October Birthdays!

Rickey Lake (Oct 04)
Phillip I. (Oct 05)
Claudia J. (Oct 06)
Fernando O. (Oct 09)

Pushing Limits: Never Say Never

There's one very important rule at our dojo - no student should use the word "Can't". Simply put, when there's an exercise or even an idea that you are struggling with, you never say "I can't do it". A better answer would be "I am presently struggling with this but will get better..." This implies that the limit is breakable, and that the student acknowledges it but will grow to overcome it.

In the precepts on the mastery of karate-do, the maxims outlined by O'Sensei Shoshin Nagamine as a guide to what the spiritual aspects of karate truly are include the following: "I cannot develop my own potentialities when in the trap of self-limitation. I must discard this self limitation. If he practices three times, I must practice six times" (Nagamine, 47). It's about challenging yourself.

Don't get me wrong, people *do* have mental limits. Much like the mind can be a great motivator for achieving the unthinkable, it can also come up with the worst excuses and convince you that they are valid reasons not to try and overcome difficulties. It's easy to get comfortable and say "I've tested my limits, I know I can't do that, it's hard" or even convince yourself you "know" you can do it so there's no point in trying, but really, the truth is that **you're scared**. I'll bet that behind that tough facade is a little fear of failure. Failure is not necessarily a bad thing. Through failure, one really gets to know themselves better.

Physical limits are tangible, making them fragile, bendable and even breakable. When you first try the impossible, you will fail, a lot. But if you keep at it, you start sucking less and become able to do things. Physical challenges test physical limits. It's about challenging yourself to go from inaction to action, and achieve the impossible - physically. When you actually DO something you weren't able to do before, something changes. Limits become temporary, and progress becomes tangible and accessible.

It's your physical limits that reveal your mental limits. The entire mentality shifted when I went from talking to doing; moving from mental challenges to physical ones. I told myself that I *knew* what I was doing in karate class, so really, did I need to try my best when in the dojo? The answer is **YES**. Sometimes we tell ourselves we "know" we can do something, but you won't actually know until you try. When I actually tried, I learned that I wasn't as good as I'd thought, which made me determined to be better.

When pushing limits, even on the smallest scale, over time your mentality changes. Pushing myself past that point where my mind told me to stop, even for a few minutes each day, made me stronger. It raises the bar just that inch, which over time equates to miles that you didn't even know you had in you. Maybe not right away, but over time, you will begin to look forward to challenges and not shy away from something that looks tough or impossible and your capabilities will unravel. Most athletes will tell you that the thrill is not in the physical aspect but rather the mental one. It's overcoming your opponent - which in most cases is yourself. Turning off the auto pilot and pushing through to that place where you've never been before. When you break physical limits, you smash the mental ones too. You get both; as you get stronger physically, you get stronger mentally, and you come out a stronger person as a whole.

Believe in yourself. Never stop pushing your limits.

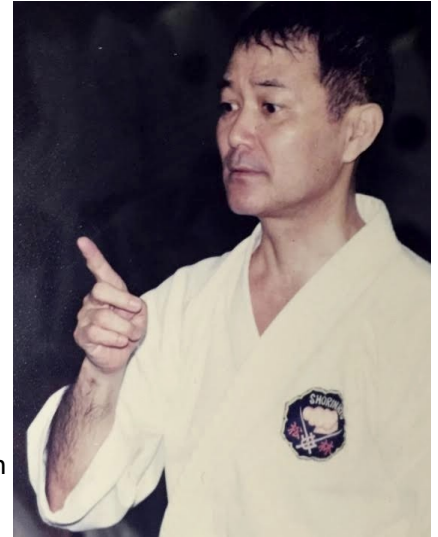


Illustration 1: Soke Takayoshi Nagamine

Vocabulary

waza

(Uah-zah)
techniques

Shiri mo stumore ba yamato naro

(she-ree mo stew-
more-eh ba yaw-
maw-toh naw-roh)

In time, even dust
can become a
mountain

Sensei's Corner

An Okinawan once
said to me,
"Why do we fall
down?"
I replied,
"To get back up"
He then says to me,
"Now you're
learning."

Fall seven times,
stand up eight.