

Shoshin Ryu Yudanshakai Newsletter

November/December 2007

Vol. 14 Issue 6

Another Conversation with Professor Chubb

By Myron Dickson

Q: Good evening, Professor. Thanks for meeting with me today.

A: It's always a pleasure to see you, Myron.

Q: Professor, as you know the Danzan Ryu Jujitsu Alliance just held Ohana 2007 in beautiful Santa Clarita. Many of your old friends were there and inquired about your absence. I hope it wasn't due to health-related issues...

A: No, no. Working for the Clark County School District puts an unusual strain on the old pocketbook. I only work nine months a year full time and then it's a scramble to get additional income. Every other year I have the opportunity to work summer school but that's only for six weeks and only half days. It still presents a problem, financially.

Q: Doesn't SRY take care of your expenses when traveling to and from events such as these?

A: Sure. But I have great difficulty in accepting their assistance when I am no longer actively involved in the martial arts.

Q: I must confess that there was an ulterior motive for my visiting you. I wanted to get your thoughts on a couple of things, if you don't mind?

A: Dear Myron, surely you don't think me naïve enough to think you would drive three hundred miles into the desert just to keep in touch?

Q: Ouch!

A: Go ahead, Myron. What's on your mind?

Q: Well, sir, there's been some talk that the Ohana gathering is no longer relevant and that the continual drop in attendance year after year is a sign of that. What are your thoughts?

A: That may be true, I don't know. I've received several very favorable comments about this year's event. But poor attendance is no measure of relevance. Ohana is relevant as long as there are those who remember Professor Okazaki and wish to honor his name.

Q: Do you think the Danzan Ryu Alliance is helping in this regard?

A: I think it is trying to; it just doesn't know how to go about it.

Q: No disrespect intended, but do you think you could do better?

A: Under the present climate, no.

Q: What do you mean by that, if I may ask?

A: Well, there are two factors that lead me to this conclusion. First, there are those who, for whatever reason, wish to see Ohana fail. Unfortunately, these individuals are often in positions of leadership and can easily persuade students not to support Ohana and what it has to offer. Second, the focus of Ohana has moved from what connects us all, Professor Okazaki and his art, to what makes us different. This deviation occurs when we no longer teach the basic boards but rather other styles or influences in the belief that to do so will keep up interest. Ohana was intended to celebrate our heritage, not dilute or obscure it. (**Conversation cont. on page five**)

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Promotions

Sankyu:

Ian Klane	Shoshin Ryu Maine
Mike Hutchings	KaishinKai
Roy Marsh	KaishinKai
Ryam McDaniels	KaishinKai
Syivia Reyes	KaishinKai
Takahide Aso	KaishinKai
Joe Granville	KaishinKai

Yonkyu:

Jamie Smith	Shoshin Ryu Maine
Cliff Carrico	KaishinKai

Gokyu:

Spencer Arnold	KaishinKai
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Rokkyu:

Joseph Larsen	Shoshin Ryu Maine
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Shichikyu:

Chris Charlebois	Shoshin Ryu Maine
Rick Forbes	Shoshin Ryu Maine
Amy Forbes	Shoshin Ryu Maine
Peter York	Shoshin Ryu Maine

Jukyu:

Megan Forbes	Shoshin Ryu Maine
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Words of Wisdom

“If you think you are good enough, you have just started your decline.” – *Unknown*.

“The lame man who keeps the right road outstrips the runner who takes the wrong one.”
-- Sir *Francis Bacon*

“Against those skilled in attack, an enemy does not know where to defend; against the experts in defense, the enemy does not know where to attack.” -- *Sun Tzu*

“The secret of health for both mind and body is not to mourn for the past, worry about the future, or anticipate troubles but to live in the present moment wisely and earnestly.” – *Buddha*.

KaishinKai Update

KaishinKai was busy this fall. In addition to our summer camp and a couple of conventions, we've had many good sized classes. In between terms and during the summer, Sensei Sue Jennings' Evergreen State College group comes to the main dojo in Centralia. The main dojo is small, and it was packed this summer as we've had more students on the mat than we've had in a long time.

The college group is back to Evergreen for their fall term. Sue has over thirty registered in the adult program. She tried to get a junior's group going again this term but there weren't enough registered to continue - maybe next term. Jujitsu classes at the college are on Tuesday and Thursday nights and Saturday afternoon. Hers is the largest recreational education program at the college and they've bought all new mats mainly because of her program.

Green Belts and above come to the main dojo on Mondays and that's getting crowded too. No complaint! It's great to have a good sized class.

Many of the students attended the most recent Pacific Northwest All Dojo Workout. This was hosted by Ross Gibbs in Eugene Oregon on October 20th. Ross is an AJI Godan and usually hosts a clinic once a year. There were attendees from the AJI, ShoshinRyu, Jujitsu America and the AJJF.

Tim Ames, Sue's lead Black Belt has moved to Seattle and is starting to hold classes. Before long we'll have a DZR dojo in Seattle. To keep the instructors busy, we are having a KaishinKai Black Belt workout on November 10th for Nidans and above. We'll be going through the last part of Shinin and into the first part of Shinyo. There is a little rust some of them need to dust off.

Our next Pacific Northwest Regional clinic will be hosted by Sensei Sue Jennings at the Evergreen State College in Olympia on Feb 2nd from 10:30 to 2:30. Any Shoshin Ryu members traveling in our area are welcome. For most of you just get on I-5, head north, and just keep going and going...

Best always, Professor Ron Jennings

Don't Believe in Magic

By

Prof. Rich Charlebois D.O.

In the past, I have had the privilege of using my "Dr. Rich" space in this newsletter to voice opinions about subjects at the intersection of martial arts and healthcare. In some cases, I have answered actual questions posed to me by fellow martial artists. In other cases--when I thought the subject was important enough, or perhaps of wide interest--I have written as if in response to some question on some subject.

By now, most of you know that I'm a dyed in the wool skeptic. My opinions, in this newsletter, are generally "evidence-based." I don't practice homeopathy because it doesn't work. I don't sell magnets for patients to wear on their joints because they don't work. I don't recommend sticking needles into, or applying pressure to, vital points on the feet, hands or anywhere else people want to stick things. I don't manipulate my aura, and I sure don't balance my chakras!

I subscribe to a podcast called *The Skeptic's Guide to the Universe* put out by the New England Skeptical Society. Last week's episode left me laughing hard one moment and completely incredulous the next.

The podcast featured discussions on two videos, with links at the site, that relate directly to magical thinking in the martial arts. The first video follows a supposed chi master preparing to use a sword -- which he has just used to effortlessly hack a substantial tree trunk into three pieces -- to prove the power of his chi can withstand a sword strike. As warning to those sensitive about blood, this guy cuts his arm to the bone, then bleeds quite a bit, as one my expect. Watch it at:

http://scienceblogs.com/neurotopia/2007/10/martial_idiocy.php

The second link, takes you to a video of a kiai master attacking his students without physically touching them. In one scene, he pummels the guy continuously from ten feet away for about 15 seconds! He also makes the self-deluded mistake of issuing a \$5,000 challenge to any martial artist who can withstand this magical onslaught. Well, surprisingly enough, someone takes him up on it. The result is not pretty. As one of the commenters on the clip noted, the opponent had clearly not "drunk the dojo kool-aid." Watch it at:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gEDaCIDvj6I>

These two case studies combine to form an excellent review of the cost of magical thinking, especially in the martial disciplines. It can be dangerous to believe in magic. And when a person like that rises to a position of leadership, even over just a few students, the danger multiplies. Unfortunately, I have seen jujitsu instructors teach using this type of technique as well.

Link to The Skeptic's Guide to the Universe -- <http://www.theskepticsguide.org>

Link to The New England Skeptical Society -- <http://www.theness.com/home.asp>

Danzan Ryu Hall of Fame

Inducted in 1995

Professor William G. Randle, Kudan, began his training in 1954 in Oakland, California, under Prof Ray Law. Prof. Randle began teaching at the Santa Monica YMCA in 1959. He taught there until 1965 when moved to Austin, TX. He taught at St. Edwards University from 1965 until 1972. Professor Randle returned to California in 1972 and started the Westside YMCA dojo in West Los Angeles where he has been teaching for the last 35 years.

Among the black belts that Professor Randle has promoted are Danzan Ryu Hall of Fame members Professor Mike Chubb and Professor James Marcinkus.

Ask the Doctor

Dear Dr. Rich,

Is the old saying, "No pain, no gain" really true? Is it really supposed to hurt to get better at something like a martial art?

Mike Easterhurtz

Dear Mike,

Ah, old sayings. My favorite is the often referenced "gut reaction." Having seen and treated many of those gut reactions, I don't recommend using them for much. On the whole, "old sayings" often emphasize a single, fundamental truth at the cost of several truths that the sayer believes are less important. For example, "never judge a book by its cover" properly urges, I suppose, that I not jump to unwarranted conclusions about people, things, or situations based on superficial appearances. In reality, however, I often find my initial impression from a book's cover describes the contents well enough to make a very helpful decision.

So, this "no pain, no gain" proverb is really an exhortation to persevere through minor discomfort for some worthy end-goal. Ask yourself, "exactly how worthy is the expected result?" "Exactly how much pain am I willing to bear for this cause or goal?"

We all do this everyday. We make decisions based on what we believe, what something will cost, and what things will bring us. Sometimes the costs are intangible, like self-respect, or ideas of right and wrong we ascribe to.

In the case of the human body, pain is always an indicator of damage. Sometimes that damage is very slight, and sometimes that damage is more severe. Sometimes the damage is small, but when often repeated, adds up to severe damage over time. An excellent example of this comes to us from judo and jujitsu. It turns out that players in these arts are more likely to develop degenerative joint disease in the joints at the tip of the fingers. Students of the arts that practice breaking boards and bricks develop degenerative arthritis of joints in the hands, elbows, feet, knees, and hips more often as those who do not. Just look at the cauliflower ears of some grappling students to see what their sport costs them.

An other adage, "That which does not kill me, makes me stronger," is often quoted on the mat. That is a good example of the logical *fallacy of the false dichotomy*: the fallacy in which the speaker assumes there are only two possible perspectives available. In this case, things that maim you, might not kill, but might *not* make one stronger. A lot of real estate lies between "dead" and "stronger."

If a technique you're doing hurts, you're probably not doing it right. With the exception of a few noteworthy cases from Arizona, most jujitsukas are not masochists. If the pain is mild and brief, stick with it a while and decide if it is something you're going to want to endure in the future. If the pain is severe, or long lasting, I recommend you have sensei take a look at how you're doing that technique.

As an aside, I once encountered a Thai kickboxer on a construction site that practiced kicking telephone poles with his shins. He said that his instructor demanded all his students perform this practice three days each week. Several of his friends left training with chronic pain and fractures. You really have to decide what you want out of your art. I want a sport that makes me grow by challenging my endurance, my ethics, my humanity, and my intellect. If, instead, I was faced with an art that challenged my ability to withstand pain for questionable goals, I would transcend, and move on.

Best always,
Dr. Rich Charlebois

If you have a question for Dr. Rich Charlebois, he can be reached at drich@3rfp.com

(Conversation cont. from page one)

Q: On that same thread, I've noticed that many students of Danzan Ryu jujitsu also practice other martial arts as well. Do you think this improves either?

A: That really depends upon what you, as an individual, are trying to achieve through your study. For instance, if your goal is to be "invincible in battle," then you would be prudent to add as many weapons to your arsenal as possible.

Q: How about "mastery over your opponent" as a goal?

A: What's the difference? Look, few people today actually take up the martial arts as a means of perfecting one's own character. They sort of stumble into it after a long and often arduous journey...

Q: In your opinion is "perfection of character" more important than mastery of technique?

A: Yup. Mastery over "Self" is far more important than mastery over others.

Q: Can you perfect your character without perfecting your art?

A: If you perfect your character you have no need to perfect your art. But let's back up a minute. I want to clarify my position on this point: Perfection of character. I believe the proper goal is "the PURSUIT of Perfection of Character." I firmly believe that we humans are incapable of perfecting our own character; not without divine assistance, that is.

Q: Getting back to practicing multiple arts, does this hinder or help your art?

A: Whenever you divide your attention or time between two disciplines both will suffer eventually.

Q: Even if they are similar?

A: If they are similar, why study both? Believe me, I've heard the arguments: "I took up judo to enhance my throwing skills" or, "I practice Gracie jujitsu to strengthen my ground fighting skills." My sensei taught me that there are only three things you need do to enhance your skills: Practice, practice, and practice.

Q: Thank you, Professor. As always, it was a delight to speak with you.

A: My pleasure, Myron. I hope we can get together again real soon.

Black Belt Profile

Name: Scott Hargis

Nickname: None really

Rank: Shodan

Dojo: South Coast YMCA

Years practicing the martial arts: fifteen

Styles studied: Tae Kwon Do, kickboxing, European style fencing for five years, Danzan Ryu, Judo, and a touch of Brazilian Jujitsu.

Favorite ice cream: Raspberry chocolate chunk

Favorite book: *The Blank Slate* by Stephen Pinker

Favorite food: I call it "the German dish" sauerkraut, pork chops, smoked sausage, and potatoes. The sauerkraut is prepared to be sweet.

Favorite movie: Strictly Ballroom

Favorite actor: Kevin Spacey

Favorite actress: Sandra Bullock

Favorite musical artist: Elvis Costello was for a long time but not so much now.

Things I do away from practicing jujitsu: I used to like to run, but my knees are bad so that's kind of out. I have four kids, and I love to spend time with them.

Favorite thing about practicing Danzan Ryu: The challenge of it. There are so many things that I really like about it. There are so many different applications and different possibilities. To learn to master them all, that would be really tough. I can see how if I am ever in control of this art, I could be very proud of myself.

Four famous people I'd like to invite to dinner: Galileo, Thomas Jefferson, Abraham Lincoln, and Isaac Asimov.

Biggest inspiration: My children. I am also inspired when I meet people who seem to have a great deal of wisdom about life. I try to find those people and figure out what it is about life that they have figured out.

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Shoshin Ryu Yudanshakai

Membership form



Please check one: _____ New member _____ Renewal _____ Date _____

Name (Last) _____ (First) _____ (MI) _____

Address _____

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Birthdate _____ Sex: M / F Phone(s) _____

e-mail address _____ Dojo affiliation _____

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Dues/ fees: \$25.00 per year. Membership dues include mandatory liability and supplemental medical insurance. Membership is for the current calendar year from January through December 31.

Signature _____ Date _____

Parental consent if under 18 years _____

Mail to: **Shoshin Ryu Yudanshakai**
C/O Prof. Kevin Dalrymple
5547 E. San Juan Dr.
Orange, CA 92869

Phone: 714 - 538 - 4622

Please enclose your check payable to Shoshin Ryu

For more information, visit us at www.Shoshinryu.com

Shoshin Ryu Yudanshakai Request for Funds Form

Name: _____ Date: _____

Address: _____

1. To what dojo do you belong? _____

2. Are you a member in good standing? Yes No

3. How does the money you are requesting fit in with the mission statement of Shoshin Ryu Yudanshakai? (Teach Danzan Ryu Jujitsu to anyone who is able and worthy; Assist those who are teaching Danzan Ryu; Recognize those who have devoted a significant portion of their lives to teaching Danzan Ryu.)

4. What are you requesting the funds for?

Mats _____

Financial hardship for memberships _____

Instructional based travel (ie., have a professor come and workout with your class) _____

Other _____

If you have marked other, please explain what your request is.

Important: All requests must have approval of the board of directors before they will be paid.

Mail this form to: Shoshin Ryu Yudanshakai
c/o Professor Bryan Stanley
5092 Robinwood Drive
Huntington Beach, CA 92649

Or e-mail this completed form to: owen2aji@gte.net or SRYNewsletter@aol.com