



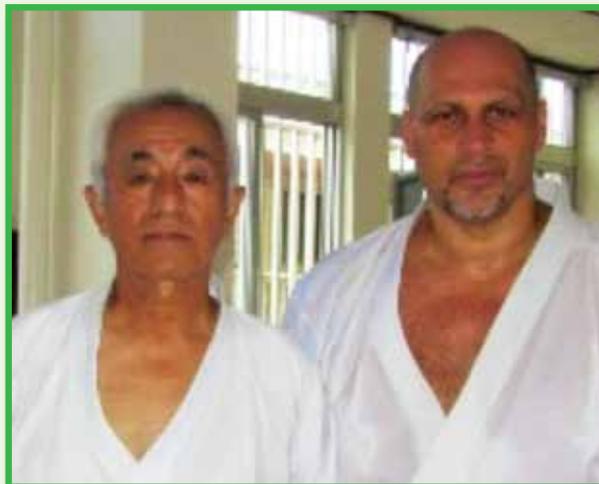
Consistency

By Jerry Figgiani

As an instructor, I am always stressing the importance of consistency to my students. I give them a clear vision that allows them to set up short or long term goals, which will ultimately lead them to achieve success in the martial arts. Over the course of time, consistency can make up for one's lack of talent. There are many mental and physical benefits one achieves that come from consistency. Bottom line, consistency equals success. In Okinawa this is the philosophy of Shorin Ryu Master Takeshi Tamaki Sensei. The first time I met Tamaki Sensei was in 1991, in Okinawa, for the 85th birthday celebration for Grand Master Shoshin Nagamine. My recollection of him at the time was that he was one of the young and energetic senseis from the Nagamine dojo. Along with Yoshitaka Taira, Yasuharu Makishi and of course Soke Takayoshi Nagamine, they all made an impression on me.

In the Grand Master's book "The Essence of Okinawan Karate-Do," you can find a young Tamaki Sensei on page 269 showing some of the postures using the Tuifa. Today Tamaki Sensei is the most senior practitioner out of the Nagamine dojo and the chairman of Shorin Ryu Karate-Do International. With a history that includes being under the guidance of Shoshin Nagamine. His other instructors that have influenced him include legendary Okinawan Masters Ansei Ueshiro, Kensei Taba and Chokei Kishaba.

Today Tamaki Sensei credits consistency for the life in which he leads. At seventy-five years of age and in good health, he still moves like a man in his thirties. Karate has become his way of life. In 2013, he told me "The one thing that Karate is consistent with is kata. I see a lot of misunderstandings when it comes to kata. Many westerners like to fight, but don't have Kata. Kata is a missing element. Kata can teach you to fight by studying the applications. More importantly, kata will give you longevity in Karate. Consistency in one's training and the way one thinks will get you into the later years of your life in Karate."



There is a lot to be learned from the Masters in Okinawa, as to how they use their training to keep developing into their later years. As an instructor, I will often change the approach of how I teach some of my students with the goal focusing on longevity. I want my students to understand the importance of listening to their bodies, being able to prevent injury and not letting the ego get in the way of training. Sometimes it has to be a smarter, not harder, approach. Through it all, the main focus will always be the consistency in one's training. 🐢

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