

SOUTH HILLS KARATE ACADEMY NEWSLETTER

Welcome to the Tang Soo Do Martial Way Association, Inc.

by Kwan Jang Nim Andy Ah Po



As a result of a decision that was made by your Sa Bom Nim, Master Gene Garbowski, during my visit to the South Hills Karate Academy this past October, you are all now part of the Tang Soo Do Martial Way Association family. As Kwan Jang Nim of the association I wish to take this opportunity to officially welcome you and make you aware that I am committed to working closely with Master Garbowski to help all of you achieve "excellence" through your study of Tang Soo Do.

To ensure that we start properly, I wish to share two very important Tang Soo Do philosophical concepts with you before we embark on this very important journey. The first is that Tang Soo Do is not merely a martial art that focuses primarily on self-defense and physical training. Instead, it is a martial art that stresses discipline and respect and above all the importance of developing character as well as becoming a better human being who is committed to being of service to others.

As the late Great Grandmaster Hwang Kee, founder of Tang Soo Do once stated, "Man is at his best serving others. . . and at his worst judging others."

So remember, no matter how difficult life's challenges and your Tang Soo Do training can be at times, be aware of others in the dojang who may be struggling a bit more than you but who with your help can have a better overall Tang Soo Do training as well as life experience. I promise that if you adopt this attitude, you will be personally rewarded ten fold. Therefore, I ask that you assist and support each other as well as other less fortunate individuals in your community and promise that if you comply with my request I, in turn, will always be there for you. 🙏

Tang Soo!



Where to Turn?

by Stephen Harroun

Last summer, I was considering a few martial arts schools throughout the area. I researched schools that specialized in Jiu-Jitsu, Muay Thai kickboxing, Kung Fu, and even Tai Chi and Yoga. After careful consideration, I was still undecided on which school to join. In July, my wife brought me a brochure for South Hills Karate Academy. Soon after, I came to Master Garbowsky and asked what he could do for me, in terms of martial arts instruction. His response astonished me; he answered by saying, "You will get out of Tang Soo Do what you put in, just like life." When I came to class the following weeks, I felt comfortable and welcomed. I knew I had found the right place.

Overall, my life was going well. Within only a few months, I was starting to feel balance in my life; I had a job I enjoyed, my personal life was well, and I had lost a few pounds. In early November, however, my fortitude was tested. I was laid off from my Corporate Recruiting job due to a slow construction season and the overall collapse of the housing market. I had never been laid off, and did not know where to turn for support, aside from my wife and family.

STEPHEN HARROUN, OPERATIONS MANAGER
PROFESSIONAL RECRUITING SERVICES

star performance
Recruiting

4514 PLUMMER ST
PITTSBURGH PA 15201
PHONE: 412-999-8911 FAX: 412-862-4304
s.harroun@salesforenterprise.com



I kept busy by helping my cousin with his business, but still felt deflated. I have always had a relatively high self-esteem, and had never encountered such a devastating blow to my sense of self-worth. Toward the end of December, I made a commitment to get into better shape and focus my energy on something positive.

I started eating more healthfully and dedicated more time toward training, attending up to four classes per week. By the middle of January, I realized that I was thinking more positively and feeling much more confident. I began a new job search with renewed enthusiasm. I went to a few interviews, but nothing seemed to be a perfect fit. A few of the students even assisted me in my job search, for which I am grateful. Like the philosophy of Tang Soo Do, I remained strong and focused, which helped me through these difficult times. I recently accepted a position with a reputable company, and have made the decision that I will continue to dedicate myself to Tang Soo Do. Without the support of my new family at South Hills Karate Academy, and the strength I have gained from Tang Soo Do, I do not know how I would have overcome such a complicated time in my life. 🇰🇷

If you are student of Tang Soo Do and under the age of 15, and you would like to write an article or suggest a topic for the next issue of SHKA News, please send your idea / article to:

Master Gene Garbowsky, South Hills Karate Academy
4500 Clairton Blvd.
Pittsburgh, PA 15236



This is Your Brain on Karate

by Kathy Yonek

After our karate class, we are well aware that we have worked our muscles and our hearts. But did you know that karate can help strengthen your mind as well? There is substantial evidence that physical exercise can provide an excellent tool to keep your mind sharp. The brain boosting potential of exercise is relevant to diverse groups of people; from baby boomers hoping to fend off the typical effects of aging to children with neurological disorders.

How does exercise improve brain functioning? Aerobic exercise increases blood flow to the brain and slows the loss of brain cells and tissue, while strength training may provide hormonal benefits to brain cells. The great news is that it is never too late to start. Studies show that starting to exercise even as late as your seventies can confer improvements in brain functioning, and lessen the risks of dementia and Alzheimer's disease.

In addition, there is growing evidence that certain structured types of exercise, such as martial arts and yoga, are especially beneficial to improving "executive functions" – a term referring to our capacity for goal-directed behavior.

Executive functions often decline as we age, but also can be severely compromised in those with brain injuries, and in children with neurological conditions that are so prevalent today, such as ADHD and Autism Spectrum Disorders.



Motor control and "behavior control" areas overlap in the brain, and the stimulation and growth of motor capabilities, via karate, promotes the stimulation and growth of executive functioning as well.

Parents often seek out the martial arts for their children, with the goal of instilling discipline. While this is a worthy pursuit, what is especially striking is that a commitment to karate can change not only the will for discipline, but the brain's capacity for disciplined behavior.

So set aside your Brain Age for Nintendo DS and your sudoku puzzles to make time for an extra Tang Soo Do session this week. Your brain will thank you for it!

"Age is an issue of mind over matter. If you don't mind, it doesn't matter." -Mark Twain

References cited include:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Executive_system

<http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/memory-improvement/HA00085>

http://www.nytimes.com/2007/11/08/opinion/08aamodt.html?_r=3&oref=slogin&oref=slogin&oref=slogin

<http://www.schoolpsychologistfiles.com/forum/viewtopic.php?f=10&t=130&p=759>

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Characteristics of Tang Soo Do

Part One of a Four Part Series


by Master Gene Garbowsky

A description of the characteristics of Tang Soo Do as a martial art will be drawn from my personal opinions on Tang Soo Do, what I have learned from my seniors in my previous twenty-plus years of experience, as well as my most recent discoveries about the martial art we call Tang Soo Do. I will not attempt to dive too deep into the history and origins of Tang Soo Do, but to stay as close as possible to the art of Tang Soo Do as developed by the late Grandmaster Hwang Kee founder of the Moo Duk Kwan® in order to describe the characteristics of Tang Soo Do and how it differs from other martial arts.

In order to completely understand and explain the characteristics of Tang Soo Do first let me provide my understanding on the meanings of the words Tang Soo Do. The Chinese characters that represent Tang Soo Do are 唐手道. The first character pronounced as “Tung” refers to China. The second character “Soo” refers to hand and the third character refers to “the way.” In Chinese the third character is pronounced as “Tao” however in Korean and Japanese this character is pronounced as “Do.” If we were to pronounce the Chinese characters for Tang Soo Do in Japanese they would read as “Karate-do.” This is of particular interest since on the surface; Tang Soo Do will seem to be very similar to Japanese systems of martial arts and as well as other styles of “Karate.” This however is a generalization.

It is also of interest that origins of “Korean” Tang Soo Do can not be traced to any one person in particular. However, the majority of modern Tang Soo Do stylists today can trace their lineage back to the late Grandmaster Hwang Kee and the Moo Duk Kwan®. The Moo Duk Kwan®, founded by Grandmaster Hwang Kee in Korea (1945), was one of five original Kwans or schools teaching Tang Soo Do. According to the United States Soo Bahk Do Moo Duk Kwan® Federation website,

Grandmaster Hwang Kee learned Chinese Martial Arts while in Manchuria. In May of 1936 he met a Chinese Kung Fu Master named Yang, Kuk Jin where he trained in She Bop (postures) Bo Bop (steps), Ryun Bop (conditioning) and Hyung (forms) with there applications.¹

The above is an important point when looking at the characteristics of Tang Soo Do. This is because when we look at the history of the majority of Hyung (forms) contained in the classic Tang Soo Do syllabus the majority of these Hyung can trace their origins to the original Okinawan teachings of an early version of Karate-do initially called “tode” which seems to have been the Okinawan version of Chuan Fa (Kung Fu). This is according to Bruce Clayton, PhD in his book, *Shotokan’s Secret, the Hidden Truth Behind Karate’s Fighting Origins*. In particular, the majority of initial contributions can be traced to an Okinawan, Satunushi Sakugawa who initially studied martial art techniques with a tode expert named Takahara.² In fact, it is Sakugawa who is credited with creating with Karate-do’s Kusanku Kata (form), known to Korean martial artists as Kong Sang Kong. This was in honor of a Chuan Fa expert, the Chinese Kong Su Kong who had beaten Sakugawa after a scuffle. In addition, it was Sakugawa’s teacher who bestowed upon him the title of “Tode” and which Sakugawa wore with honor.³ As the Chinese symbols for “tode” can be read in multiple Asian languages, The Japanese reading of the same characters is read as kara-te which in Japanese can be translated as “China Hand.” The same characters when read in Korean are pronounced as “tang soo” and still means “China Hand.”⁴ 

1. <http://www.sobahkdo.com/fed-web/art-history/.htm>
History of Hwang Kee

2. Clayton, Bruce, Phd. (2004) *Shotokan’s Secret, the Hidden Truth Behind Karate’s Fighting Origins*. Printed in USA:
Black Belt Communications, LLC

3. Clayton, (2004) p. 36-38

4. Haines, Bruce, *Karate’s History and Traditions*,
Tuttle (1995) p. 110



MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

UPCOMING EVENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Master Mignonga's 15th Annual Tournament
Saturday, April 12, 9:00am start
Upper Saint Claire High School
- Jang Bong Clinic
Saturday, April 19, 12:30 - 5:00pm
South Hills Karate Academy
- Children's Little Tigers Classes
Wednesdays, 6:15 - 6:45 PM
Saturdays, 11:30AM - 12:00PM
South Hills Karate Academy
- Adult Sparring Classes
1st Saturday of Every Month
11:30AM - Finish
South Hills Karate Academy
- SHKA 10th Shim Sa (Test) and Ceremony
Saturday, May 24, 9:00AM - 1:30PM (Tentative)
South Hills Karate Academy
(This testing is for students who missed the Feb 23rd testing date.)
Testing list will be published.
- SHKA 11th Shim Sa (Test) and Ceremony
Saturday, June 21, 9:00AM - 1:30PM (Tentative)
South Hills Karate Academy

SOUTH HILLS KARATE ACADEMY NEWSLETTER

The Official Newsletter of South Hills Karate Academy

4500 Clairton Blvd.
Pittsburgh, PA 15236
PHONE: 412-670-3801
email: sabom_1@comcast.net
www.SouthHillsKarate.com

M-F 6:00PM - 9:00PM
Sat 9:30AM - 1:00PM

HEAD INSTRUCTOR & PUBLISHER
Master Gene Garbowsky

EDITOR & DESIGNER
Steve Harroun

THIS IS YOUR NEWSLETTER!
YOUR IDEAS AND SUGGESTIONS ARE WELCOME
PLEASE SEND ARTICLES, PHOTOS, & IDEAS TO:
Master Gene Garbowsky
sabom_1@comcast.net
or
Steve Harroun
steve@harroundesigns.com

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South Hills Karate Academy

9th Promotion Testing and Ceremony And The Importance of Testing

March 7th, 2008



Pittsburgh, PA, February 23rd, 2008

South Hills Karate Academy is please to announce it's newly promoted students for February 2008. Congratulations to all who passed their Gup Promotion Test!



The 9th—Gup Promotion Test Shim Sa (Testing Panel) consisted of Sa Bom Nim Darrin Patterson, Sa Bom Nim Craig Morgan, Mr. Russ Betler, Mr. Charles Durney, Mr. Richard Polinski and Mr. Christopher Marini. Both Mr. Marini and Mr. Rich Polinski took time during this Shim Sa to assist Sa Bom Nim Garbowski conduct the testing. It was the first time either of them conducted a testing and they did a wonderful job in conducting. This was also a special test for South Hills Karate

Academy in that it is the first time rank was awarded by Kwan Jang Nim Ah Po and the Tang Soo Do Martial Way Association.

As is typical with our dojang, everyone's performance of martial technique and Tang Soo Do Choong Shin (Tang Soo Do Spirit) was simply awesome and this was evident throughout the day! Sa Bom Nim Darrin Patterson remarked to Sa Bom Nim Garbowski that this was the best testing for our dojang to date. He specifically said, "It is great to see students who are still training and practicing continue to develop as martial artists.. In addition, I am particularly impressed with the 10th Gups and the amount of material grasped by these beginners." Thanks to Mr. Marini and Mr. Polinski for allowing Sa Bom Nim Garbowski to observe testing from the judges table as this allowed Sa Bom Nim Garbowski to receive real-time feedback from all of the judges on the testing panel.

In all, everyone who tested received a well deserved promotion! Kyok Pa (breaking) for all those testing was impressive. Everyone demonstrated a solid grasp of Ill Soo Shik (one



step sparring) as well as Ho Shin Sol (self-defense wrist grabs). As Sa Bom Nim Garbowski reiterates in class, "Hard work does pay off!" All of the adults put in a little extra time and effort to assure that all of their required techniques were well learned and fully grasped. The adult sparring was solid and all of the children demonstrated superb long distance sparring.

The importance of *South Hills Karate Academy's Promotion Testing and Ceremony's* can not be understated. For the typical student enrolled in lessons at South Hills Karate Academy the entire testing procedure can be fun, troubling, frustrating and invigorating. One thing for sure is that it is a culmination of training effort. It also affords students an opportunity to observe and practice with other students that they may not have trained or practiced with because of different schedules. It is apparent what is involved in testing. Learn the required techniques and when the opportunity presents itself, the student of Tang Soo Do displays their requirements in front of a testing panel and receives a grade and hopefully a promotion. The goal is set. Make a quality showing and receive the promotion. However, we need to take a detailed look at what is involved in the entire process in order to understand the importance of testing in Tang Soo Do.

As we know the end goal, how does a student at South Hills Karate Academy achieve that goal? Yes, as Kwan Jang Nim Ah

Student

New Rank

David Hafer	1st Pre-test
Eric Garbowski	1st Gup
Cody D. Vickless	2nd Gup
Karen Garbowski	3rd Gup
Brian Maxwell	3rd Gup
Denny Pruni	3rd Gup
Dylan Pruni	3rd Gup
Jeffrey Weir	3rd Gup
Eric Irson	4th Gup
Rob Achtzehn	5th Gup
John Gralish	5th Gup
Sean Gralish	5th Gup
Cody Durney	5th Gup
Alex Murphy	5th Gup
Howard Murphy	5th Gup
Margaret Panchura	5th Gup
Casey Fedorchak	6th Gup
Gail Freyrik	6th Gup
Ritwik Gupta	6th Gup
Sumanyu Gupta	6th Gup
Brendan Ross	6th Gup
Payton Bartek	6th Gup
Jacob Hinish	6th Gup
Christian Hinish	6th Gup
Justin Hinish	7th Gup
Zac Goldsmith	7th Gup
Samantha Fogle	7th Gup
Nick Tarson	7th Gup
Stephen Harroun	7th Gup
Jenna Tarson	8th Gup
Maya Harvey	8th Gup
Jena Tarson	8th Gup
Arthur Malenky	8th Gup
Alison Malenky	8th Gup
MacKenzie Mihalk	8th Gup
Kevin Fedorchak	9th Gup
Vincent Polinski	9th Gup
Jackie Roesch	9th Gup
Dan Ross	9th Gup
Christopher Marini, Sr.	9th Gup
Erin Bacon	9th Gup
Cody Potts	9th Gup
Perry Sisley	9th Gup
Wayne Sisley	9th Gup
Joshua Titus	9th Gup
Josiah Titus	9th Gup
Mei Lin Titus	9th Gup
Nancy Titus	9th Gup
Mark Hagan	9th Gup



Po states, "Practice, practice, practice!" But what is involved in this practice? It includes detailed training of technique at a heightened level along with feedback from Sa Bom Nim Garbowsky, Sa Bom Nim Morgan and senior students. The desire to do well should motivate the student to undergo diligent practice. As the preparation is taking place, the student should be receiving constant correction, advice and constructive criticism. Taking this, the student then needs to figure out how to implement the corrections. Some days the training goes well and at other times the student may face some difficulties such as an injury or illness. However, one needs to persevere with the determination of reaching the end goal. All through the training and preparation process the student needs to balance their thoughts and emotions which may contain stress and worry over success or failure.



The day comes for testing and the student has to finish the task alone. No one can do it for them because it is the individual student who steps up and is judged. The testing student must control their emotions in order to be successful. After testing is over the student either feels relief and happiness for a job well done or an emptiness which may allude to the fact that the student could have done more to prepare and could have done better!



When we look at this entire process, how is this any different than preparing for a tough business meeting (adults) or preparing for an upcoming school exam? Any relation to giving a speech to room packed full with coworkers or preparing for the SAT exam or spelling test? You bet! Goal setting, preparation, hard work, diligence, perseverance, determination, mental and emotional control are all involved with every aspect of human life no matter what occupation or lifestyle a person has. No matter what occupation a person has, at some point they will have to step up to the line and be

judged whether it is a job, as a spouse, as a student or as a parent. Life involves stepping up to be judged as does testing for rank promotion in Tang Soo Do. Putting your self out front to be judged is an essential part of Tang Soo Do as in life.

Both adults and children grow in different aspects. However, both grow by having new life experiences. In order to grow a person must put themselves in uncomfortable situations at times and then learn from that situation. The person needs to work on the negatives and then try again. Once the experiences are learned and when that situation is faced again it is no longer uncomfortable! The person has just evolved into someone better than they were before because of the experience



This is what testing for promotion in Tang Soo Do affords us! It creates a situation that may be stressful, but that stressful situation has rules and is in a controlled environment. It allows us to create a dynamic that helps to direct the path to personal growth and development. The further a student advances in Tang Soo Do the more they see that this growth is an essential aspect of life. One of the biggest enemies we can face in our lives is settling for average and constant growth requires us to test ourselves and to see how we respond. *South Hills Karate Academy's Promotion Testing and Ceremony's* is a fantastic opportunity to get experience for life in goal setting, preparation, determination, perseverance, taking criticism and self-reliance. It is a controlled medium for growth in every aspect of life!

Tang Sool

Sa Bom Nim Gene Garbowsky
4th Dan Tang Soo Do
Head Instructor, South Hills Karate Academy

DOMENIC A. LAUDATO
MARY ANN LAUDATO-SISLEY

Pittsburgh
ASPHALT
C O M P A N Y

4993 OLD CLAIRTON RD PITTSBURGH PA 15236
PHONE: 412-881-3200 FAX: 412-884-1133
WWW.PITTSBURGHASPHALT.COM

