

**Caltech Karate Club - oldest university**  
**Karate club outside of Asia**



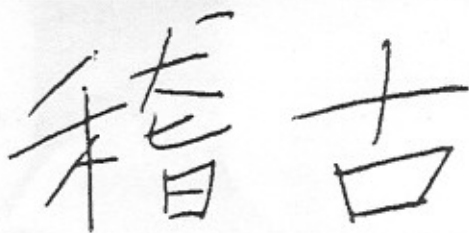
Founded in 1957 by Master Tsutomu Ohshima, the **Caltech Karate Club** is the oldest university Karate club outside of Japan. Until his retirement in the summer of 1994, classes were taught by **Master Tsutomu Ohshima**, who introduced Shotokan Karate to United States practitioners in 1955, and is widely acknowledged as one of the greatest martial artists in the world. Through **Mr. Ohshima**, the Caltech Karate Club establishes a direct lineage to **Master Gichin Funakoshi**, the father of modern Karate.

Classes are open to all members of the Caltech community. There are 3 practices a week, Monday, Wednesday at 7pm, and Saturday at 10am. The first hour is an introductory class (for those with little or no prior experience). The second hour is an intermediate and advanced class. Students may take the class for physical education credit (PE 044: Shotokan Karate). The practices are held in **Braun Gym, Multipurpose room**. For more information, please email [shotokan@cco.caltech.edu](mailto:shotokan@cco.caltech.edu), or

Visit our web site for more info:  
**<http://www.cco.caltech.edu/~shotokan>**

# Introduction

Before I talk about the parts of practice, it is important to look at what we are doing in training, to think about the real reason why we practice. In Japanese the word is keiko. The character "kei" means to think and "ko" means old or ancient. So practice, keiko, means to think of the ancient, that is to think back to the masters.



To think

Old, ancient

*To think of the old.*

When we practice, this is what we do. We try to understand the lessons the masters of the past have transmitted to us through the katas (forms) and more recently through the basics and methods of sparring described by

Master Funakoshi. This book has some of my ideas about what these masters were trying to show us with their practice. I have tried to make clear explanations but some things are beyond words. The only way to figure them out is to practice seriously for many years. If you practice well, you will find them for yourself.

When you are trying to solve a problem in practice, sometimes much practice is required. You must be conscious of the problem day and night, and try to find the best way. Stick with it until you overcome it. In this way you will be making a discovery just like the ancient masters did and this is a great feeling.

One of the greatest parts of martial arts is that at the same time we are polishing our physical movements, we are also polishing our minds and thus becoming better persons. We can become strong and good at the same time. In original martial arts the idea was simple — to win a battle — and everyone sought to become very harsh, cruel, almost inhuman, to achieve this aim. But at the highest level, the person with the cleanest mind won, and that is the really beautiful part of martial arts.

We are not practicing just to learn techniques. We are also searching for our strongest feeling and ideal mentality. No matter what we are doing, the most important element is our mental strength. So that is what we do in our daily practices and special trainings: find our best mentality, how we can face difficulties any time, any place, against any opponent.

There is an old explanation of Zen which also serves to explain martial arts practice. The simple Japanese characters on the next page illustrate the meaning of our practice.

The beautiful part of our mind is easily lost and easily collects dust; therefore, it must be constantly polished. We must bring this part of the mind up to the ideal human level. This is manifesting the Buddha in yourself in this lifetime.

As karate practitioners, we are looking for this serious mental and physical training for ourselves, but we know that is not enough. Simultaneously we have to be realistic and effective in combat. We have to be able to face not only amateur attacks, but also the attacks of other strong karate practitioners.

## ***2 Notes on Training***

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direct

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indicate

人

human

心

mind

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appear

性

nature

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reach

佛

Buddha  
idealistic  
human being

*Look at your mind*

*Bring out your best*

*Look at your own mind severely, directly and honestly. That is the first way to find the human mind. Look at your own, from bottom to top. This is our training process. The mind is sometimes good, sometimes bad, ugly or beautiful, cowardly or courageous.*

*Once we look at our minds, the real deep parts of the mind come out. The beautiful, clean, powerful part of the mind comes out after the bad part is examined and removed.*

For example, you cannot escape the punch of a strong opponent by thinking you should escape it or by thinking you need to perform some twist of your stomach to get out. You must learn, instead, to extend your mentality into your opponent as he attacks. You can't have an empty stomach feeling, sucking in to avoid the attack. Your stomach should be full, connected with your breathing. Then even if the attack brushes your stomach, it will not hurt you.

You will learn this only through practice. You must face many opponents and many attacks. You must make 10,000 or more of your favorite kata before you begin to understand its true meaning. You must practice your favorite technique 100,000 times before you can use it in any

situation, against any opponent. Think of this: if your opponent has made 100,000 oizuki thinking of a realistic situation every time, do you think you can escape if you haven't practiced at least that many times?

Our practice stands on realistic combat. We have to know we are standing on the Earth with two legs and, when an opponent comes to jump on us, no matter what, we've got to destroy him. What do I mean, "Destroy the opponent?" I mean destroy the opponent's evil mind. You must be able to use every part of your body and mind to stop his evil mind.

The words in this book are to guide you, but the practice is something you must make for yourself, honestly and straight, if you want to understand what karate really is.