

Aggressor and attacked

When faced with an aggression of any nature, physical or verbal, and we defend ourselves by attacking, our reaction does not actually stem from the need to defend ourselves from those who attack us: what causes our reaction is our need to defend ourselves against the insecurities and fears that we still carry inside ourselves unresolved.

Therefore it is not from external aggression that the need to defend oneself arises, but from the feeling of inadequacy and from a state of extreme discomfort that we feel for the fear of not being able to calmly face the situation. This state of frustration and psychological condition of suffering generates the need to defend oneself and this need is expressed in the most natural way: with aggression.

The aggressor is only the spark that unleashes all our tensions and upon whom we release them with violence. It may seem absurd, but also the attacker, who at that moment obviously needs to attack, is defending himself from his "ghosts". In a real fight, therefore, both the aggressor and the attacked are defending themselves from a condition of great discomfort, each from himself to the detriment of the other. Unfortunately this is the normality, but it is a sad and tragic scenario. Moreover, the actors of these situations, if they were in a calm mind, would have no reason or need to attack or defend themselves.

In martial arts, where we are called to develop self-defense methods of maximum effectiveness, the same thing can happen and unfortunately it is easy for tori's aggressiveness to be contrasted with at least as much aggression on the part of uke.

In martial arts training when faced with an attack, we get used to fueling the attitude of aggressiveness against aggressiveness, clashing with the other, and especially when we teach it to our students, we are actually telling ourselves and our own students that this is the best or the only way we have to face and solve extreme difficulties. It is not so. Therefore it is absolutely necessary to experiment an alternative, more effective and healthier way: Egami Karatedo.

The practice of Egami Karatedo inevitably turns the lights on our aggressiveness and, through the learning of defense techniques, allows us to understand that the aggressor always takes on the characteristics and dimensions of our inner conflict.

The greater our inner conflicts, the greater and more frequent our sense of danger will be in the face of any aggression:

- great inner conflicts = many and great external enemies = the feeling of danger is frequent and strong
- small inner conflicts = few and small external enemies = rare and scarce is the feeling of danger
- no inner conflict = no external enemy = no sense of danger

So our tensions and our inner conflicts are directly proportional to the appearance that the aggressor assumes in our eyes. When we have no inner conflicts, the aggressor will not appear to us as a danger, but as a problematic person, who has great difficulties and who needs help. Under these conditions we will be able to take care of him, neutralizing his action and establishing a silent agreement with him without his knowledge, which will destabilize him by offering him a way out.

Egami's Karatedo teaches us that the causes and solutions to aggressions must be sought and processed within ourselves; in fact it is precisely reconciliation and the agreement found within ourselves that will allow us to face any difficulty in life with the right mental state.

The masters Funakoshi and Egami have explained that the way of karate is oriented to the purification of the spirit and to the well-being of the soul, through the learning of defense techniques, as indeed was taught by Bodhidharma, universally recognized as the founder of Eastern martial arts.

In his book "My way of life", Funakoshi indicates which is the right condition that the mind must have in order to realize the karatedo and he does so when he describes the moment in which he decided to use

the pseudonym "Shoto" to sign his poems and to name his dojo and his group of practitioners (Shoto-Kan, Shoto-kai).

Shoto means: "the rustling of the wind through the pines" and Funakoshi explains the mood of peacefulness and mental calmness that he experienced on a windy day while listening to the rustling of the wind that moved the trees, which he defined: " a murmur equal to celestial music ". At that moment he thought: "this is the peace of mind necessary to achieve the way of karate".

Today many experienced practitioners continue to focus attention and all their efforts exclusively on perfecting techniques to dominate and subdue the other, completely ignoring the spiritual aspect of the discipline.

To practice Karatedo without cultivating the spirit means to distort its meaning, making it merely a brutal method to impose oneself by subduing and dominating others.

To choose the Way of Karate means to change oneself through others, freeing oneself from one's own fears and insecurities. It means understanding one's aggression, understanding where it comes from and how to manage it; it means appeasing states of mind such as anger, resentment, hatred, fear and learning how to transform them and sublimate them in understanding and kindness. The way of Karate means being strong and determined, but not aggressive; kind, but not weak; humble but not submissive; proud but not arrogant. It also means learning to take care of the other through the yawara kumite (gentle kumite) and being able to dissolve the tensions and resistances of the partner, eliminating one's own first.

"I", "myself" and "the other" are the elements of the virtuous triangulation that underlies training in order to bring about a state of mental calmness and inner peace, which will naturally guide our actions.

The training of yawara kumite develops trying to apply the techniques by treating the partner gently, because this makes us improve our ability to listen and perceive the body and moods of the partner. This path teaches us to accept and follow his movements and to direct him harmoniously destabilizing him without opposition. This continuous and careful way of interacting with others gradually increases in the practitioner the ability to adhere naturally to the other, to become the other and discover a new efficacy and a new way of life.

If the mind is disturbed and agitated, the clash is inevitable. The effectiveness of the technique in Karatedo reaches its maximum when it is not "disturbed" by internal tensions. In Karatedo we try, through a "silent" state of mind, to establish inner calmness, to move together with the other with maximum effectiveness without fighting.

These are two ways of facing reality and two diametrically opposed lifestyles: the first is a clash in the tormented attempt to subjugate the other, the second is to seek a harmonious solution and an agreement.

Karatedo is an extraordinary journey, it is a path to change and improve oneself to make people live and live together and not to kill or subdue them. It is a very difficult goal to achieve; in fact it is for this reason that we seek almost always, but without success, the easiest way, that is to say: change others, imposing our point of view and our will.

Karatedo and Heiho (peace method) are realized when, elevating the spirit, we reach the state of inner peace and the need and pleasure to agree are established naturally. All the rest is a wearisome and endless struggle without winners.

Enzo Cellini, August 8 2019