

# "There is no first attack in karate"

The 2<sup>nd</sup> principle of Funakoshi's Karate  
*by Enzo Cellini - 11/28/2020*

Karate is **budo** and budo means: the way to avoid confrontation, where "do" means "the way"; "Bu" is made up of two ideograms: "tomeru" = "stop" and "hoko" = "halberd" and therefore "stop and avoid the clash". This is the true spirit of budo, which inspired Funakoshi Sensei and to which Egami Karatedo is oriented.

Egami Karatedo therefore teaches us not to take the initiative but to let things come towards us in order to deal with them before they reach us. In practice this means that if we are forced to use a technique to defend ourselves, it will be a defense technique.

In the dojo we train in attack techniques with great commitment and try to make them truly effective, because only in this way we can then learn defense techniques that will be equally effective.

The goal in Egami Karatedo is to achieve Heiho (the method of inner peace), that is, to reach the mental state of unperturbed calm, a condition that does not allow the need to defend oneself. Initially, however, and until we feel the need to defend ourselves, we will use defense techniques, but with time and training we will reach an increasingly calm mind and we will be more and more able to move together with the aggressor's movements, canceling and dissolving his/her tension and the effectiveness of his/her action. But be careful, in order to be able to reduce the aggressor's tensions, it is first of all necessary to know how to dissolve our own tensions, the ones we have inside.

Attraverso esercizi di respirazione abbinati a esercizi di espansione mentale possiamo gradualmente imparare a diminuire ed eliminare le nostre tensioni. Through breathing exercises combined with mental expansion exercises we can gradually learn how to decrease and eliminate our inner tensions.

To expand the mind means to eliminate physical and mental tensions.

In the absence of internal tensions, we will be able to effectively face the external ones, those that come our way. We absorb and dissolve them live, in real time and thus we move with a clear, determined and assertive mind. This condition allows us to relate with others in a sincere way and is the basis of one's own well-being and that of others: it builds bridges for mutual trust.

All this sounds very nice, but we have to earn it and it is only through training and time that we can change our needs; yes, this is what we have to deal with: changing our needs and not changing our behaviors. Changing one's needs is not easy, but the effectiveness or not of our actions in the face of aggression depends precisely on our needs.

If faced with an extreme difficulty we feel the need to defend ourselves because it can harm us, then we will respond to this need and we will inevitably do it by defending ourselves or even by attacking, because we experience this situation as a danger for us. It is another thing to react to the same situation with the need to manage it: in this second case we face this extreme difficulty with a different mood, like a difficult situation to be managed, but we do not feel it as a danger for us. In this case we will have an advantage and we will move more effectively. With a calm and imperturbable mind, faced with an aggression, the need to come to an agreement arises spontaneously, because our priority will be to take care of the other who is in great difficulty and needs help in spite of appearances.

Therefore, being able to put into practice the second, but also the first principle of Funakoshi's Karate, certainly depends on our needs.

When we reach the state of imperturbable calm, we will have achieved Heiho: inner calm. This will allow us to live in harmony with ourselves, with others and with nature. To undertake this path with determination, however, it is necessary to be convinced that our mind is our weakness and at the same time our strength.

The first step towards mental calm can be taken with exercises to expand the mind through breathing. For example, we can perform a heian kata in 5 minutes: moving through our breathing in microscopic details and in the greatness of the universe. Or during the mokuso we can breathe slowly and deeply, expanding the

mind to fill all the space of the environment in which we find ourselves, as if to touch its borders.

But be careful: breathing and the image of mental expansion are only exercises, they are tools that can help us reach the goal, which is to recognize the sensation of mind expansion. This is what we must learn to recognize and replicate at any time, especially in situations of tension (internal and external).

At a later stage we must then be able to abandon thoughts and images and to silence the mind, to enter a sensory world: the energetic world.

Meditation is a great exercise of freedom, it is a fascinating journey into the "here and now" that gradually leads us to focus on the sensation that the expansion of the mind gives us; we then realize that it also involves the body, becoming a state of expansion of the being, that is, mind and body together. And it is by continuing to consciously contemplate the sensation of the expansion of being and remaining "immersed" in this expanded sensorial dimension, that we will begin to experience a new reality and a new way of facing difficulties and human relationships, because we will be able, through the contemplation of our living in relation with others and with the environment, to make peace with ourselves and at the same time be able to recognize our wrongs, our faults and the motivations of the other.

We will thus enter a harmonic energy dimension. Energy is neither negative nor positive, we are the ones who can transform it into tension or harmony.

In order to expand the mind it is sufficient to leave it free to expand. The beauty is that the condition of an expanded mind is our nature, there is no need to force ourselves to establish it, it is enough to simply eliminate the tensions that constrain it (it is like releasing the compressed foam in a can by pressing the cap: it expands naturally).

The goal is to be able to constantly live the expanded and vibrational dimension of being and do everything while maintaining this particular condition of openness in the dimension of the "here and now". This is "DOZEN": meditation in motion.

Egami Karatedo is dozen.