



RANDOLPH
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ACADEMY

ACHIEVE

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Issue 5



Learning from Failure

"I've missed more than 9,000 shots in my career. Lost almost 300 games. Twenty six times, I've been trusted to take the game winning shot and missed. I've failed over and over and over again in my life. And that is why I succeed."

—Michael Jordan

Often times in the Dojo, as a student you're taught to practice, work hard, and perfect your technique. The positive lessons taught in the Dojo can help you to succeed and build your self-esteem. However, sometimes as you're trying to get better, you'll make some mistakes. And mistakes are OK as long as you recognize them, learn from them, and try not to repeat them. It may even help to know, esp. when you feel you cannot get something down or that others are learning faster than you are, that many people in the Dojo (and the Kai for that matter) are making or have made similar mistakes. And sometimes, some struggles or failures can be your best learning experiences.

Most of you know (or if you need to, you can read my Kanpai article in Achieve's first issue) that my first day of teaching didn't go so well. I learned quite a bit from that experience and it helped me really focus on studying and paying attention to become the teacher I am today. But, for right now, I'm going to tell you a story from when I was a young teenage Brown Belt that helped to teach me focus, humility, and not to underestimate anyone, and as a life lesson in the Dojo, was one of my best failures for the lessons it taught me:

As a young student and camper, there was a group of us who always looked forward to tournament competition, esp. the kumite tournament. In Karate Camp 1993, we'd been split into a ring of teenage Brown Belts. In our division, I had "scouted" someone I knew well as my toughest competition and as luck would have it, he was on the other side of the bracket, and there were a few other people who I'd know would be challenging, and I started to mentally prepare. After the byes had been settled and the competition had gotten underway, I looked to see who I'd been paired with for my first match. While I didn't remember the young man's name as he wasn't from Rockaway Dojo, I knew of him and I'd seen him spar at previous camps and Shiais.

He was about my size, lean and wiry like I was, but in the kumite that I'd seen him do, he never looked quite comfortable. He wasn't aggressive, but didn't look like he was comfortable counter-attacking either, and if I had to use a word to describe him in my then limited experience, it would have been *tentative*. So, when I saw him sitting across from me in the first round, I smiled. Or maybe smiled isn't the right word. Perhaps a better word would be *smirked*. I was enveloped with a certain cockiness and looked ahead to the opponent that I wanted to spar at the end for the trophy. This initial match was just a formality. It would be easy, right?

The match started and even though I'm normally a counter-attacker, I attacked first with a flurry of techniques. But my opponent moved and counter-punched. He scored the first point! I was enraged to say the least. Not scoring the first point went against what I thought should happen in the match that I'd already won in my head. I took a breath and went back to what I was good at and shortly after, I scored a point with a roundhouse kick. The score was tied 1-1, but instead of thinking, "OK do that again and move on", I thought, "His first point was a fluke and now I have this." I went back to doing things I wasn't as good at and attacking in a way I knew I shouldn't. While my opponent seemed overwhelmed, he threw up a front kick, and the match was over. He'd won, and probably more appropriately, I'd lost. I was upset with everyone, my opponent, the judges, everyone...*except myself*. In that moment, I wasn't ready to learn from that experience yet, so I fumed for the rest of the day and was actually looking forward that night to lights out.

The next morning, I went for a walk. I ended up sitting in front of the lake, still upset, but as I sat there and looked out at the nature surrounding me, the realization sunk in that I was actually upset with myself. I was finally ready to learn from that match and the lessons it taught me, esp. about ego and how not to get ahead of yourself, and how to learn in every moment. It's one of the reasons I still call it one of my best failures. You see, everyone makes mistakes and gets knocked down sometimes, or sometimes has to practice many times to get something just right. But failures are only failures if you let them be; failures become successes and weaknesses become strengths, if you learn from them.

Mr. Hopler Sr.

Dojo News and Achievements

New F.I.S.T.– Congratulations to Kade Marques, Sankyu, on his promotion to F.I.S.T. member (Assistant Instructor).

Charity Event– On Saturday, June 6, 2020, the Dojo hosted it's annual Concert & Art Show benefiting St. Jude Children's Hospital. While circumstances forced us to do it differently this year, not having it in person, but rather broadcasting live over Zoom, we still managed to have an excellent event, get many wonderful student as well as professional musicians and artists, and raise over \$4,800 for St. Jude., surpassing last year's total! Special thanks to Douglas DaSilva, Ikkyu, music director & emcee, Estefania Borrero, Nikyu, Art Director, Jason DaSilva, Ikkyu, who helped run the show in the background, and Sophia Keoskey, Ikkyu, who not only helped us set up, but who gave an inspirational speech halfway through about why St. Jude is important to her family and how they helped bring this event to the Dojo. Also, special thanks to everyone who participated and helped make the event what it is, including professional musicians, Bassist (and fellow Rokudan) Mark Wade, Oboist, Rob Botti, Violinist, Tzu-en Lee, Flautist, Lish Lindsay, Saxophonist, Todd Groves, and Pianist, Stephen Porter, and all who helped give us some great ideas for next year!

Special Event– On February 15, 2020, the Dojo held its 2nd Parents Night Out event which included a special class, board breaking, dinner, a movie, and games. A lot of the Dojo's junior students and their siblings attended and made it a fun event while giving their parents a few hours to themselves!

New Baby– Congratulations to Paula Czeisler, Orange Belt II, on the birth of her niece, Orly Raya, who was born January 2nd, 2020, just 9 days before her big sister, Lyla Belle, who turned 3. Paula is hoping with the warmer weather she'll be able to spend more time with her nieces.

New Baby– Congratulations to Instructors, Eric Hopler, Rokudan, and Leeann Hopler, Yodan, on the birth of their daughter, Jayde Melanie Hopler, on August 6, 2019. Welcome Jayde!

Congratulations– to Ava Hopler, Purple Belt II, who was selected in her school as the 2nd grade reading superstar, and is reading far beyond her grade level. .

Congratulations- to Alohi & Advay Rao, both Purple Belts, on individually both achieving Student of the Month in school this year and being finalists in the Center Grove Elementary School spelling bee for the 4th and 5th grades, with Alohi taking 2nd place. Great job Alohi and Advay!

Adjust & Overcome- Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Dojo had to stop running in-person classes in the Dojo in mid-March. But as we always do, we adjusted, and started having all of our classes live over Zoom. While not ideal for everyone, it helped keep us active until the Dojo could reopen in person, showed us again how to overcome adversity, and gave us some ideas of how to incorporate Zoom classes from time to time even once the Dojo is fully reopen. A big thanks to all students and their families who found ways to adjust with us through this unprecedented time.

Anniversary– Happy Anniversary to our Dojo! The Randolph Martial Arts Academy celebrated it's 5th anniversary on September 6, 2019. This major milestone was celebrated that weekend with a special class for all students on September 8, 2020. In addition to class, we had a special potluck Kanpai with a speech and great food brought in from all of our Dojo families. Looking forward to the next 5 years. Kanpai!

Black Belt Promotion

Congratulations to the following individual who was promoted in 2019:

Devon Kott– Nidan– Camp 2019

Mr. Kott worked very hard over the years and made an extra effort to get to Camp 2019 and earn his rank. Excellent job! Kanpai!



Devon Kott started studying Karate in 2009 at the age of 14 under Mr. Hopley Sr. at the Kenvil Karate Academy with his brother, Justin. When the Randolph Martial Arts Academy opened in 2014, they followed him there and continued their studies. Mr. Kott made Black Belt at Karate Camp 2015 and earned his NiDan (2nd degree Black Belt) at Karate Camp 2019. Mr. Kott has had to balance school, work, karate, and more. Always a hard worker, he has, in the process, become a man of persistence.

Here's what he has to say:

In everyday life and Karate, you learn of various traits that help create and maintain a positive and healthy attitude. Over the years, two traits that have been the most relevant to me are determination and optimism. I am a full time employee and a full time college student. I am also a Ni Dan, second-degree black belt, at Randolph Martial Arts Academy. While these are two important parts of my life, I am only one person and therefore must prioritize one part over the other, that being school. However, even prioritizing school and work can be difficult and seem tedious but its times like these where being optimistic and determined are important parts of having a healthy and positive attitude.

Between when I started college in 2013 and now, I have noticed the various circumstances and rates at which people progress due to these circumstances both with school and in Karate. While I started my associates in 2013, it took me four years to graduate. Due to various reasons, I have had to take breaks from school or take a smaller amount of classes than I wanted to. On top of that, I worked full time at a job in a position that required me to handle various managerial positions that were both time consuming and stressful, but not at all rewarding for the work that it demanded of me. While a few years of this doesn't sound like a lot, it can be discouraging and make you feel like you're falling behind or making little progress when everyone around is graduating, going on to four year schools, getting jobs in their fields, buying a house or apartment, etc. I felt as if it would take me forever to catch up to that point in life that everyone was going towards or had already passed. However, as time went on, I started to accept my position or situation. Having people to talk to both in and out of the Dojo helped to improve my outlook on my situation and to focus on myself rather than everyone around me. Instead of seeing how far away from my goal I was, I started to see how I close I was to it. I understood that everyone progresses through life at different paces be it school or karate.

While I am still in school, I have made progress on my own path. After a few years of working in an unrewarding job, I got a new job in May 2019 as an Engineering technician that has a lot of room for growth, and I am working towards my bachelors in Electronics Engineering. It will still take me a few years to finish my bachelors, but I have made some progress. Moreover, I will continue to do so at the pace that is best for me.

No one person has the same starting and finish line in life and that on each persons' path there are various obstacles at various points on that path. With each roadblock that you come across or each time you're reminded of how far ahead everyone else seems, feelings of discouragement, or "is this worth it", "I'll never finish", or "what's the point" can weigh you down or make you feel stuck. You should not judge yourself nor be concerned about your position relative to others, or feel discouraged by those ahead of you, because others don't know what you have experienced between then and now, or what it took of you to get to this point, just as you may not know that about them. While some of you are not in college yet, this can still relate to you whether you play a sport that you practice hard for, practicing an instrument, you may feel like other Kai or Dojo students get promoted faster than you do, or whatever situation pops into your head that you feel relates. Your focus and determination should be on getting to your own finish line and climbing any obstacles that pop up in your way. True optimism is believing & knowing that you can get over those obstacles and not feel discouraged by those that pass you, because you will complete your own journey at your own pace.

Kanpai,

Devon Kott

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