



**Kissaki-Kai  
Karate-Do**

# Newsletter

October 2023

## ***THE OLDER KARATE-KA***



As time goes by, all martial artists have to face the inevitability of the aging human body; the universal decline of flexibility, strength, vigour and muscle mass as time goes by.

I am sure we have all noticed on social media the number of the super athletic karate-ka of earlier times now often seem but portly caricatures of their former selves. It is almost that as their abilities to execute the techniques with the same power and ease grows less, so does their interest in trying to maintain their earlier standards.

To be sure, many will point to the string of injuries over time which have decreased their range of motion and speed.

For myself, And yes, these things do effect our physical abilities.

Sooner or later (later actually) every long-time martial artist falls prey to the ravages of time; as with every aspect of life, things gradually decline and decay. Entropy is inescapable.

Physically inactive people can lose as much as 3% to 5% of their muscle mass each decade after the age 30.

On average, adults who don't continue strength training on a regular basis can lose 4 to 6 pounds of muscle every 10 years! Over time, loss of muscle strength can put everyday activities out of reach of many, with common

activities such as walking, jogging, and just about all other sporting activities in which they may have excelled in earlier years becoming compromised, and the gradual decrease of personal standards can frequently become so disturbing that all such activities become less and less satisfying, eventually, in many cases they are given up altogether!

Sarcopenia, as it is termed, is a natural process and is common to us all. However, it is not uncommon for those who have devoted much of their lives to mastering a physically demanding, time-consuming martial art, which makes huge mental and physical demands on the mind and body; the gradual loss of mobility, flexibility and strength often leads to depression and even to the complete abandoning of the art!

I completely understand why so many genuine 'Heroes' of the Dojo and competition arena in former days can now be found in

the Bar rather than on the Tatami. Swelling waistlines provide evidence of the decrease in the amount and degree of their training as the challenge of continuing severe regimes which now provide only decreasing results takes over and destroys all enthusiasm.

Have I depressed you enough yet? I could go on, relating war stories of broken bones, replaced hips, bad backs, torn ligaments... the list goes on. All of which are there to add as the background to the increasing Sarcopenia!

To be honest, those fast high level kicks, the snappy punches, the deep throws, the fluid movement on the Tatami- all are now much less high, much less fast, much less snappy than they used to be.



But wait! as I write I am 79 years old and have suffered all those injuries and more: Bronchial Asthma from childhood, and I can boast of both knees 'fixed', broken collarbone, snapped Achilles tendons, 'lost' shoulder tendons, a Heart Attack, severe Back problems and Sepsis requiring 2 operations to date plus innumerable bloody noses and black eyes.

And yes, of course I am not able to spar or compete as I used to

in former times. But I haven't given up! I changed the emphasis of my training.

To be honest, I began the process many years ago as I became disenchanted with the complete 'Sportification' of what purported to be a deadly and effective form of Karate. In truth, it was a rule-bound compromise with most of the effective defensive techniques removed or proscribed, making it useless for the young female, or the the older man and woman who were looking for a self-defense art.

I won't go on labouring the point; the transformation into a mind and body development art of the original Chinese and Okinawan defensive art on its introduction into Japan is well known and documented. Karate-jutsu morphed into the character-building Karate-do. Thus began the huge rise in sports karate and the concomitant concentration on



developing fast and 'safe' techniques aimed squarely at scoring points to win medals and trophies.

Although I really enjoyed the competitive aspect, and managed to win a few National and International trophies and medals myself, I was deeply disenchanted with what I could clearly see was a neutered and ineffective martial defensive art except for the few exceptional karate-ka who could make themselves effective in real life.

This is, of course, good for them, but more or less useless in training less athletic, vulnerable students who would rely on a referee to ensure they came to no harm!

Thus began my deep dive into getting to grips (literally) with the original Okinawan defensive arts. Now - how does this help the ageing karate-ka of today?

Initially, it was obvious to me that I had to do some research into just what were the original styles of Karate in Okinawa, from which modern-day styles have developed. But more than that. At the time I was researching for my PhD in Old Norse, and also teaching Anglo-Saxon, so, I possessed the necessary skills to carry out this study. However, I deemed it necessary to also take into consideration the influence of the Chinese martial arts on the local Okinawan systems. Plus, even more, I could readily see the reliance that was placed on very early instructional manuals such as the *Bubishi*. This led, inevitably, to me establishing the International Institute for Kyusho-Jutsu Research, to go deeper into the possible benefits of using the various vulnerable areas of the human body in aiding effective defense techniques.

This led me down a number of 'Rabbit Holes' so to speak, as I investigated the validity of the Chinese concept of Chi (Ki) life force which purported to flow through invisible 'Meridians' in the body, and which were thought to provide methods of interrupting this force, thus helping to incapacitate an attacker.

After literally years of trial and

investigation, it became apparent that this whole idea of the human body being subject to the ebb and flow of invisible lines of 'force' was simply due to a different history of medicine and the use of concepts which mirrored the Western mediaeval medical ideas of the four 'Humors' which had to be kept in balance for the body to function nominally. Finally, this investigation then took me to studying human anatomy and physiology, which shed light on some of the effects gained from using a minority of the Kyusho Points. It became obvious that manipulation and striking of anatomically vulnerable areas could induce powerful effects and reactions from the human body, entirely without involving mysterious, invisible channels and forces!

All of the preceding led me into detailed research into modern patterns of violence and aggression, and then to considering the *Bunkai* of the original Okinawan *Kata* and the methods of the most respected of the instructors

Why? Because the types of physical attacks were often very close to those we find in modern society, and, more importantly, this knowledge underlined the dissatisfaction I found in the modern sport karate: low, long stances, unrealistic stylized patterns of practice against multiple



assailants, the general exclusion of throwing techniques, choking and strangling, of applying judicious locks and restraint techniques, the lack of realist tactics in favour of training specifically under competition rules, with so many effective techniques banned as 'too dangerous.' Finally, it was apparent that I had to go back to the original defensive reasons for training in Karate, moving it away from the 'Self-development' vehicle that it had become, wherein the objective was not as important as how the whole exercise was carried out as 'Moving Zen.'

I also began my many years association with various Law Enforcement agencies in Europe and the USA. Having to meet full-on the degrees of violence and intimidation that officers faced on the streets every day, even further underlined the absolute failure of modern karate to enable anyone to deal competently with such dangerous situations!

Moreover, it soon became apparent that, as I couldn't be in all Police Academies at the same time, I had to devise a catalogue of what became known as 'Rules of Combat' which didn't just specify which techniques to use in any situation, but more importantly, how to engineer any confrontation in the officer's favour. A set of tactics devised to be used as an adjunct to training in all different types of attack and arrest situations which would be available even when I was not personally present. Thus we could not just teach effective tried and tested techniques, but do so in conjunction with a set of tactics to make them even more effective!

To the point. If we look at photographs of some of the old and most respected Masters such as Choki Motobu, for example, although nicknamed 'Saru'

'Monkey' in his younger days because of his athleticism, his teachings lead inescapably to the conclusion, that performing athletically demanding kicks and the like were just not in the syllabus.

Indeed, although many Masters were agile and lithe in their youth, what they taught as defensive karate relied almost entirely upon simple and direct techniques not involving methods which might place too much reliance upon athleticism rather than basic, direct application of tactically correct and powerful techniques!

That isn't to say that modern techniques Mawashi-geri Jodan, for example, do not have their place in your defensive armoury if you are skilled, flexible and fast enough to use them; no, only that as one's abilities decline, it is vital to have other skills which remain effective for you.

However, in the end, if you are happy that, as your glory days of youth vanish into the mists of yesteryear, and physical decline is now apparent, you do not wish to continue to participate in your former regime, then resting on your laurels in respected retirement is an option. There is nothing intrinsically wrong with that. You have probably earned that right.

For me, however, I 'Do not go gentle into that dark night, but rage, rage, rage against the dying of the light!' as Dylan Thomas put it so well!

I am never (and never have been) satisfied with whatever skills and status I may have attained. I am always reminded of a school report emblazoned with: 'Could do better!'

I am still trying as much as I can to become the best that I can be.

At my advanced age, this

motivates me to get up every day and do what I am able to do: I train as much as is possible, I am still strongly motivated to look deep into the uses of martial techniques, and to pass on my knowledge to any who might wish to check it out.

I have an inexhaustible hatred of bullies and violent predators, and this gives me power to continue. My proudest achievements have been the commendations I have received from Police Academies noting the assistance my training has provided to support their officers in their duties of arrest



**Receiving Police Academy Citation**

and control, and saving some from brutal attacks.

In none of this training was it necessary to rely upon more than normal ranges of flexibility, high kicks, or other sporting aspects.

Simple and well trained execution of effective techniques used within the 'Rules of Combat,' and assiduously practiced was enough; and this type of training is still entirely possible into one's eighties, if following a regular regime of good diet and continued exercise!

It seems to me, that the problem dividing those who retire from the Dojo and those who do not often stems from their original choice of following the Sporting path or the Original Karate path.

When one stops being a medal winner - where does one go?

When you are no longer able to match the speed and endurance of the new Shodans, why would you keep beating yourself up on an inevitable downward curve? When one chooses Original Karate, the path is endless!

Again, I reiterate, this is not an attack on anyone's personal choice: rather it is a feeling of sadness for what the individual and the martial art has lost from making a different choice.  
**Vince Morris 2023**



### Private Training

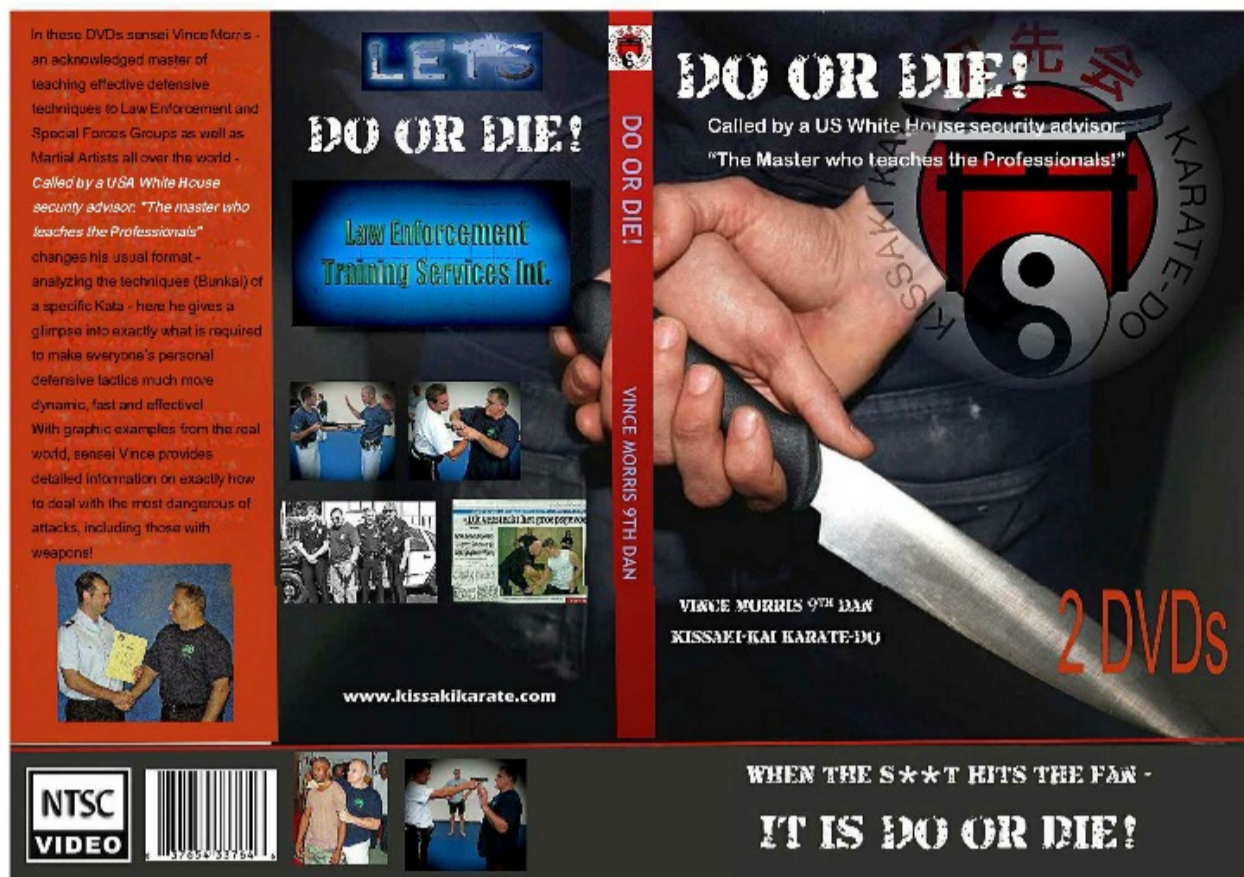
Make the break from routine training and come and visit sensei Vince, sensei Guy and sensei Eva for some days of intensive private training! Chose from 2, 3 or 4 days of small group learning in sensei Vince's private Home Dojo, in Bedarieux in the sunny South of France!

Minimum number of 2 participants - maximum 6, under the direct tuition of Kissaki-kai senior instructors! In-depth learning aimed at your individual needs. Take the opportunity to be directed by the best and most knowledgeable teachers.

There will also be time for you to relax and chill-out and there is plenty of inexpensive accommodation available. Email: [info@kissaki-kai.com](mailto:info@kissaki-kai.com) for all details.



Clip from 'Do or Die' USB / DVD  
'[www.kissakikarate.com/shop](http://www.kissakikarate.com/shop)



In this 'Do or Die!' USB & DVD set, sensei Vince Morris - an acknowledged master of teaching effective defensive techniques to Law Enforcement and Special Forces Groups as well as Martial Artists all over the world

- Called by a USA White House security advisor:  
***"The master who teaches the Professionals"***

- In these detailed instructional videos, sensei Vince changes his usual format - of analyzing and explaining the techniques (Bunkai) of a specific Kata - and here gives an insight into exactly what is required to make everyone's personal defensive tactics much more dynamic, fast and effective in the real world!

With graphic examples. a long way away from the safety and control of the Dojo, sensei Vince provides detailed information on exactly how to deal with the most **dangerous of attacks**, including those with weapons!

Using clips from Law Enforcement and Social media including many from Police Training seminars and Kissaki-kai seminars you get a detailed look at how techniques should be executed, as well as why they should be done that way.

As usual, sensei Vince has his own inimitable way of presenting knowledge and fun combined with ruthless reality!

Deliberately going over important techniques until understanding is achieved, means you cannot help but become more effective in Reality, not Ritual.

[www.kissakikarate.com/shop](http://www.kissakikarate.com/shop)

