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# The *Ultimate* Life

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“If you find a thing difficult, consider whether it would be possible for *any* person to do it. Because anything that is humanly possible, that falls within human capabilities—  
***You too can accomplish.***”

~Marcus Aurelius

## “A Closer Look”...at the Summer *Fight* Season

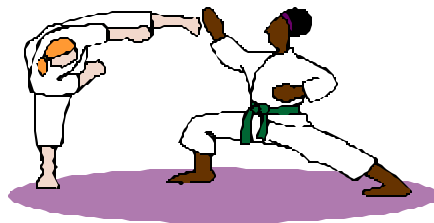
In this issue, we focus on fighting, and more specifically, *tournament* fighting. It has been said, that regardless of the reason for your martial arts training, the only way to truly test one's ability to fight and defend himself is... *TO FIGHT*. Whether students choose to fight in a tournament now or in the future, we all would all be well-served to remember that unless we *practice* fighting, we can never really know if we will be able to defend ourselves should it become necessary outside of the dojo walls.

As students continue to advance in rank, the sparring portion of our curriculum intensifies. While some really appreciate this, and look forward to the concentrated training times focused specifically on this-one on-one fighting, others feel apprehensive and uncoordinated.

These feelings are natural, but we should remember that if feelings of discomfort and apprehension overtake us when sparring in a safe and friendly environment, how much *more* practice will we require to stay calm and focused in a situation of actual danger? Those of us who aren't that comfortable fighting, who aren't overly proficient, who don't possess a natural talent or gift for the sport are logically the ones who need to practice it the most if we hope to defend ourselves should the need arise.

Does that mean that we all have

to enter competitive tournaments? Absolutely not! However, training tends to intensify in the months preceding the summer fight season, and we would all benefit by taking our training as seriously as if we were getting ready to compete. That kind of focused effort and dedication, regardless of the goal, is always beneficial. If nothing else, those of us who aren't planning to enter tournaments will be in much better physical condition by mid-summer. To be in 'fighting condition' is a good thing whether we intend to fight or not!



Now let's consider the flip side: There are those in our UMA family—we know them well—who LIVE for the fight. They train hard all year in anticipation of the climactic tournament season. Some find their true passion for karate for the very first time when they step out onto that competition mat and they hear the word “FIGHT!” Others knew from the very beginning of their training that their ultimate goal was to compete—to go for it with all they possess, and more—and push their minds, bodies and spirits to the limit of their endurance, and then beyond, if necessary.

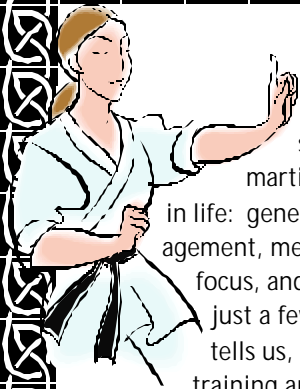
Regardless of **your** reasons for training, fighting is an essential part that must not be neglected. If we were to mistakenly believe that training, drilling, endurance and strength training alone would enable us to defend ourselves in a dangerous situation, then it seems possible that our self defense skills might be left wanting. Our senseis knew from the beginning that in order to have a full-rounded martial arts program, sparring would be an essential component that must be practiced, whether students plan to compete or not. This is why it is an integral part of our UMA curriculum that everyone performs.

To those who **are** about to fight, *we salute you!* The rest of us will be there, cheering for you and watching you give it your best and most valiant effort—while you bring home the victory for UMA!! In order to do that, of course, we must start right now—at this moment in time—to train with everything that we've got in preparation for that day when the culmination of all our efforts will come to fruition.

Remember this, “**The greatest mistake you can make in life is to be continually fearing you will make one.**” (Elbert Hubbard) Whatever it is that you want to do, pursue it with passion, and do not fear failure. The only one who truly fails is the one who fails to **try**. Good luck fighters—**WE BELIEVE IN YOU! OSU!**







## The 'KIAI!' of UMA...

There are many reasons people adopt the martial arts discipline later in life: general fitness, stress management, mental agility, health and focus, and self defense, to name just a few. At its core, history tells us, however, is practicing, training and studying to acquire the ability to defend oneself without any weapon other than the empty hand.

As a person begins to focus on the martial arts way of life, oftentimes that focus begins to shift and a type of realization starts to manifest itself. The discipline of karate encompasses far more than the physical, and while UMA does not promote any one spiritual discipline, we cannot possibly remove that crucial component from our training—nor would we desire to. There is so much more to karate than a good workout or (yet) another social activ-

ity. Certainly, there is a level of camaraderie, loyalty and friendship that tends to develop among those who train together, but that alone is not enough to maintain the commitment when life gets too busy to see straight.

It would be so easy to 'give it up' (or pull your children out of the program) when life's demands begin to pile up, but isn't it at this very moment that we most NEED to train? If we're stressed to the max, what better way to relieve that stress than to train hard and clear away the clutter in our heads—even if only for a few blessed hours each week?

Our martial arts training is, by far, one of the healthiest overall practices that we can commit to, as it includes physical, mental, emotional and spiritual disciplines. It is a self-improvement course in disguise and

helps us reach deep inside to discover our fullest potential. It also covers the full gamut of the physical health world. Not only are we exercising our bodies, improving our overall health picture and becoming more fit, we also find a most efficient stress management program, which enables us to stay healthy in other ways, as well. If you've made this commitment—and this is something that you enjoy—don't allow the tyranny of the urgent steal away your training time!

***You are worth the investment!***

### ***Congratulations to UMA Students!***

*We are very proud to announce that THREE of our UMA Oneonta students won Citizenship Awards this year—Belle Santiago, Courtney Keith and Maddie McAndrews—three bright young ladies who are living a life that exemplifies the martial arts way. Thank you girls, for being such GREAT role models!*

**“When you give a little bit more...  
...you get a whole lot back!”**



Parents, as you have probably realized, karate can be highly beneficial for your children—it's not only physically healthy, but also helps build self esteem and confidence. Additionally, karate seems to help growing bodies, with their ever changing size and shape, attain earlier, better coordination skills. In a nutshell, the baseball players become better baseball players, the football players become better football players, but most importantly, the student becomes a better *person*. Please know that you've made a wise investment in your child's future—one that will pay dividends for the remainder of his or her life!

We are thankful to have your family as a part of the UMA family! ~Sensei Don



# UMA

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**UMA's Mission** is not only to hone the skills of self defense and martial arts, but also to use them as personal development tools. This endeavor will aid us in our quest for martial arts perfection and also in our daily life and careers.