

Dallyon

Conditioning for Self Defence

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Dallyon

"...the student must begin to develop his body and toughen its attacking and blocking tools so he is able to deliver maximum damage in combat."

Dallyon is the preparation of the body to be used in self-defence, physically training it to perform during the martial artist's ultimate test. As the quote says it is the conditioning the body's attacking and blocking tools, as well as increasing the amount of power and speed it can generate and doing this throughout the duration of the attack.

In the Taekwon-Do composition Dallyon lies between sparring and self-defence, it is the link between learning how to defend yourself and being able to do it to your full potential. Through this essay I will show you how to prepare your body ready to deliver maximum damage during a real self defence situation.

Power

Power = Force x Speed

This is the equation as it applies to most sporting situations. Power is the context of Taekwon-Do is being able to throw a technique with a lot of force on it very high speed. So, there are two ways to increase the power of your techniques, you need to be able to generate more force when you execute it or you need to execute it faster. When learning the theory of power each of the 6 parts relate back to either being able to help you increase the speed of your techniques or to increase the force that you can place behind them. Every person can only generate a certain amount of power; the theory of power is about maximising it and being able to execute every bit of that potential in your techniques. Concentration, breath control, mass, equilibrium and reaction force are designed to maximise the force you can generate while speed obviously has its own place in the relation to power. By using the points laid out in this theory you can maximise your power and with training you can increase the potential power that you can use. This essay is not about the theory of power as this would just be repeating something that is already written but here is a few ways to increase your potential power.

Increasing the potential force that you can generate is best done by increasing your strength. Exercise such as squats, tricep dips and press ups and a lot of other exercises we perform at training are just forms of weight training so can all be used to increase your strength. However they do not work for all the techniques we use in Taekwon-Do, but luckily there are some less common exercises that are useful.

Squats, commonly performed at Taekwon-Do clubs, are excellent exercises that can be used to increase the power of kicks where the leg straightens to the point of contact as the muscles that you are using are the same. For example front snap kicks, turning kick, side kicks and back kicks power will increase from using squats as exercises. However they will have little effect on the kicks where the leg is already straight or is bending when it makes contact with the target. For example a reverse turning kick or reverse hooking kick. To help these kicks hamstring extensions are extremely helpful. To perform this exercise kneel on the floor with your feet straight behind you, have your upper legs in a straight line with your body, you will need to pin your feet so get a partner to hold them or place them under a heavy object. Try to lower yourself forward, keeping your body and thighs in a straight line, as far as you can possibly go. Then try to return your upper body to the starting position. With practice you will be able to lower yourself lower and lower as your hamstrings strengthen, until your body almost touches the floor. While an exercise such as press ups can be used to increase the power of punches and to some extent will help with knife-hand and reverse knife-hand strikes. However they will have no effect on attacks that are executed backwards and when the arm is bending throughout the movement for example a back elbow. Examples of an exercise that you can use for this are upside down press-ups, for this exercise you will need a bar, rope or ledge that you can grab hold of, lie underneath this and get in the same position as if you are performing a press up then pull your body up towards your hands, then lower back towards the ground allowing your arms to straighten. To make these exercises harder to do you can try using a partner to increase the weight you are lifting. For example you could squat with them on your back or you could press-up with them pushing downwards on your shoulders to increase the resistance. Or you could perform the exercises but only using one arm or one leg to help increase your strength. As this type of training is the same as weight training you could also get a program from a gym to increase your strength.

Another method to improve your strength is to perform the actual techniques with a partner slowing your movement so that you are executing the technique with as much force as you possibly can but because of the resistance you are performing it slowly. With something simple like a straight punch you can get your partner to hold your hand from the hip and slow down your movement while you are executing the technique. Overall it should take you about 3 seconds to perform the technique but you should be executing the technique as powerfully as possible to gain the best benefits.

The next way to increase your power is through increasing your speed. And the best way to increase it is by practising the technique as fast as you possibly can. Simple drills for improving speed involve using a partner. An example is to have a partner standing in front of you with a pad. At any time they hold up the pad at the requested height and you then perform the technique as quickly as you can. The more you focus on moving the technique faster the more your speed will increase as it is being worked at optimal speed all the time. Remember to increase your speed, you need to do all the techniques as quickly as possible when performing the movement, therefore you should always focus on moving as fast as you can.

The Point of Contact

All the techniques in this essay that can be used to prepare the body rely on frequent practice and allowing the body to recover from an exertion only fractionally harder than it is used to and

allowing it to recover from this stress. It is more beneficial to practice these techniques often and not for shorter periods rather than performing these once every now and again and really trying to hammer your body.

The next thing is to prepare the attacking and blocking tools so that during self-defence they will not break or be damaged when delivering maximum power. The problem with many of these tools is that they are very bony so are prone to breaking when a large amount of force is generated across them. So they must be prepared so that the force and impact that they can withstand is greater. The body does this in two ways to try to protect itself from damage. Firstly the bones increase their mass so that their density is greater meaning they will be able to absorb a larger force on impact. The second way leads to the greatest increase. Your bones learn to absorb more force by being better able to direct the force it experiences towards its strongest points, therefore decreasing the likelihood of injury. It does this not by changing shape but by remodelling its internal structure so that it gets an increased ability to absorbing the force from the direction that it is being trained in. This can easily be done by lightly picking out the desired blocking or attacking tools and gently tapping them, in a motion similar to the technique you will use, against a solid object such as a concrete pillar or wooden post. This gentle force generated along them will temporarily put a force along the bones and muscles involved. The body then reacts to make this force less likely to do damage. With practice this force that you can withstand can increase meaning you can hit things harder and harder without damaging the tools you are making contact with. This process however takes a long time to build up so patience is required. It is also important you do not over do it as this will lead to injury, meaning that any benefits you have made will be lost while waiting for the injury to heal.

Before you start it is important that this is not done with children. The stress placed on the bones mean that softer, growing bones can be damaged and deformed.

The Attacking Tools

Examples of the attacking tools that need conditioning are the fore fist, back fist, knife hand, reverse knife-hand, elbow, ball of the foot, back heel and foot sword. Remember that some of these are also used for blocking. Meaning that these do not have to get prepared again when it comes to the blocking tools. Conditioning these attacking tools is easier to do alone. This can be easily done by just by repeatedly knocking a solid object. For example to best condition a fore fist or knife hand it is best to repeatedly punch or knife hand a solid object. Things such as heavy punching bags or even phone books are particularly good for this; in fact they have another advantage. Hand techniques such as a punch place a lot of strain on the wrist if the wrist is not perfectly straight, everyone would have done it, punched a pad as hard as you can and felt the hand bend forward when you make impact. Conditioning can improve your technique helping keep the limbs in better alignment. For the feet it is easy to condition tools such as the ball of the foot and the foot sword when you are standing on a solid floor, just by standing and using the tools you are trying to condition to kick the floor will be effective. However for the back heel you will either need to sit down or strike it against a wall to condition it.

The Blocking Tools

Examples of useful blocking tools you can condition are the inner forearm and outer forearm. The best way to do this is to use a partner and both condition at the same time. Firstly stand facing your partner both in sitting stance, both perform a forearm low block with your right hand, your outer forearm should make contact with your partner, then perform an outer forearm middle side block, again the outer forearm should contact the partners. You then go on to repeat this process on the left side. Start off lightly and do not continue for too long. Again this takes a while to build up but again with practice you will be able to increase the level of force that your blocking tools can withstand. To change this to conditioning the inner forearm you line up your partner in the same way then swing you arm across your body from the outside to the centre of your body in a low position and make contact with your partner, follow this up with an inner forearm middle side block then go on to repeat this on the opposite side.

This type of conditioning can be done for whatever tool you choose, the principle is always the same, and anyone can come up with a number of different techniques to condition your body.

Conditioning your body takes a long time to be completely prepared to be able to use it in a self-defence situation. But with frequent training you can increase your chances of escaping with minimal amounts of injuries if ever you are placed in that circumstance. There is also a large chance of injury when performing this type of training but remember like any type of training you must be patient. Do not try to push yourself through to much pain stop when you feel mild discomfort and eventually your body will adapt to meet the strain placed on it and you will be better prepared to defend yourself should the situation ever arise.