

The Power of One

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Taekwon-Do teaches us to use the maximum use of one's body mentally and physically through intensive training. You may have heard the expression "one technique to the correct vital spot is all you need to disable your opponent". I strongly believe in the above statement because it is essential for self defence when one's life is endangered. Through this essay I will reveal the secrets of the above statement, its meaning, and how we can best apply it.

Over the past ten years of my Taekwon-Do career, I have noticed that many students do more than the required techniques to disable an opponent during self defence, and one step sparring. I have also noticed students frequently attack the wrong vital spot, or attack the correct vital spot but use the wrong attacking tool; in either case this results in a poorly developed attack and a waste of energy. Students must become efficient with his or her techniques to avoid this waste of energy.

Each Taekwon-Do technique has its own individual purpose which was developed by General Choi to make the most efficient use of energy and present maximum power to a blow. There are hundreds of techniques which one must become familiar with and be able to adapt to any situation that one may encounter. Using these techniques to their full potential requires the correct attacking tool, choosing the correct vital spot, maintaining good balance throughout the movement, and applying all aspects of the theory of power; this will result in a devastating outcome in which the opponent will be disabled from just one technique.

Our goal is to develop these techniques so that we can choose any one of them to efficiently disable an opponent to do this we must learn to use our Taekwon-Do patterns. Patterns hold the key to all the techniques needed to become proficient in self defence, one step sparring, and free sparring. I have noticed that when a student begins their self defence, all the techniques and stances that they have learned from their patterns are forgotten or ignored. Students must learn to take techniques from those patterns and adapt them to the situation at hand. In my view, patterns provide the knowledge and physical skills from which students learn and develop a technique to a high degree of proficiency before applying it on an opponent.

The student of Taekwon-Do must, over time, learn all the vital spots on the human body and also learn all the techniques that best work on that particular vital spot. For example it is no good doing a forefist punch to the neck artery, it will not have the desired effect of stopping or disabling the opponent as it does not have the required concentration. A knife hand side strike to the neck artery on the other hand would disable with no problem at all providing one has used maximum power.

Listed below are some examples of vital spots and techniques which best suited for each other, and the pattern from which the technique is from.

Vital Spot	Suited Technique	Pattern
Skull	Side fist downward strike	Kwang-Gae
Temple	Back fist side strike	Do-San
Bridge of nose	Knife hand side strike	Dan-Gun
Eye ball	Double finger thrust	Choong-Jang
Mastrid	High thrust with angle fingertip	Tong-Il
Mandibula	Twin fore knuckle	Choong-Jang
Philtrum	Long fist	Yon-Gae
Jaw	Turning punch	Eui-Am
Point of chin	Fore fist punch	Dan-Gun
Lips	High side front strike	Choong-Jang
Angle of the mandible	Crescent punch	Eui-Am
Upper neck	Reverse knife hand strike	Choong-Moo
Adam's Apple	Middle knuckle fist	Yoo-Sin
Wind pipe	High finger tip thrust	Ge-Baek
Clavicle	Knife hand downward strike	Hwa-Rang
Thenar	Self defence releases	7th kup syllabus
Radical artery	Reverse knife hand side block against a vertical punch	Jung-Gun
Back wrist artery	Outer forearm high side block against a back fist	Do-San
Wrist joing	Knife hand guarding block against a punch	Toi-gye
Shoulder joint	Downward kick	Juche
Nose	Open fist punch	Choong-Jang
Neck artery	Knife hand inward strike	Won-Hyo
Sternum	High turning kick	Hwa-Rang
Heart	Front elbow strike	Yul-Gok
Solar plexus	Middle finger tip thrust	Do-San
Spleen	Upward punch	Hwa-Rang
Liver	Side elbow thrust	Hwa-Rang
Epigastrium	Side kick	Joong-Gun
Umbilicus	Back piercing kick	Choong-Moo
Lower abdomen	Upset finger tip thrust	Toi-Gye
Pubic region	Ground high turning kick	Choong-Jang
Groin	Low twisting kick	Ge-Baek
Scrotum	Low front snap kick	Joon-Gun
Instep	Stamping kick	Choong-Jang
Occiput	Reverse Hooking kick	Juche
Cervix	Back fist horizontal strike	Juche
Upper back	Reverse turning kick	Eui-Am
Small of back	Vertical punch	So-San
Kidneys	Upset punch	Kwang-Gae
Coccyx	Knee front snap kick	Choong-Jang
Fossa	Waving kick	Yoo-Sin
Achilles tendon	Low inward block with reverse knife hand against a side kick	Eui-Am

Vital Spot	Suited Technique	Pattern
Ankle joint	Straight elbow downward thrust against a side kick	Juche
Elbow joint	Parallel block against knife hand side strike	Juche
Armpit	Middle knuckle fist upset punch	Ge-Baek
Floating ribs	U-shape punch	Yoo-Sin
Knee joint	Pressing kick	Kwang-Gae
Inner thigh	Low twisting kick	Eui-Am
Tibia	Fore fist pressing block against a front snap kick	Po-Eun

The Taekwon-Do student must condition their body and weaponry (attacking tools) to a very high standard. Without this type of conditioning we become vulnerable as the techniques we deploy on an opponent will not have the desired effect of stopping or disabling, and may cause injury to one's self. I relate conditioning to a knife for example a blunt knife is useless for cutting, but sharpen that same knife and it becomes an efficient cutting tool. Similarly, our attacking tools must become "sharp" in order to achieve an efficient one technique blow. I have listed some methods below that will help the student achieve the appropriate level of conditioning for attacking tools.

1. Pad work = Hitting the pads with different attacking tools trains the mind and body to hitting an objecting with accuracy.
2. Press ups = Are good for strengthening the shoulder joints, elbow joints and wrist joints; this also can be done on fingers and knuckles but only on the first two knuckles.
3. Squats = Are good for strengthening the leg joints, muscles and hips.
4. Stretching = Is a must as we need to be flexible so that we can execute techniques efficiently and quickly.
5. Performing techniques in slow motion = This is very effective for building up the muscle memory in all techniques.
6. Repetition = By doing techniques over and over they become programmed into the mind for automatic use.

In this essay I have covered:

- energy efficiency in techniques.
- how patterns are used to gain the techniques we need for self defence, one step sparring and free sparring.
- why you need to know the correct vital spots and attacking tools.
- knowing what technique best suits that vital spot and the pattern that it is from.
- conditioning the body and attacking tools and some methods which can be used.

All the above aspects are essential to obtain the necessary destructive techniques to disable an opponent from just one blow. However, there is one more aspect to cover and without it all of the above requirements are insufficient. This concerns the theory of power which is essential for making everything that I have explained so far come together. For example I have given students the bow and arrow, but now they require the tuition for releasing the arrow (the theory of power) to obtain maximum distance.

There are six elements to the theory of power which one must learn to enable you to bring everything together for that one technique blow.

1. Speed

Speed is the most essential factor of force or power. Scientifically, from Isaac Newton's basic equation, force equals mass times acceleration ($F = ma$). According to the theory of kinetic energy every object (attacking tool) increases its weight as well as speed in a downward movement (sine wave).

2. Mass

Mathematically, the maximum kinetic energy or force is obtained from maximum body weight and speed. The body weight is applied with the motion by the turning of the hips as the large abdominal muscles are twisting to provide additional body momentum to the smaller muscles which aid the attacking tool.

3. Concentration

Applying the attacking tool to the smallest target area will concentrate the force and therefore increase its effect. For example the force of water coming out of a water hose is greater if the outlet is smaller.

4. Equilibrium

Balance is of utmost importance in any type of athletics. By keeping the body always in equilibrium, or well balanced, a blow is more effective and deadly. Conversely the unbalanced opponent is one that is easily toppled. To maintain good equilibrium, the centre of gravity of the stance must fall on a straight line.

5. Reaction Force

According to Newton's law every action has an equal and opposite reaction. When a car crashes into a wall with the force of 2000 pounds, the wall will return a force of 2000 pounds. For example, reaction force from a punch with the right fist is shown in Taekwon-Do by pulling back the left fist to the hip.

6. Breath Control

Controlled breathing not only aids one's stamina and speed but can also condition a body to receive a blow, and enhance the power of a blow directed against an opponent. Never inhale while focusing a block or blow against an opponent. Not only will this impede movement but it will also result in a loss of power.

Now you have the bow the arrow and the procedure to fire the arrow all is left is to apply it. Like Bruce Lee once said "knowing is not enough, we must apply. Willing is not enough, we must do." Great words from a man who knew how important it is to have that one technique blow. Also for

something to think about which I once heard from my instructor (Mr Ian Campbell) is that we only tie our belt around our waist once as a symbol of that one technique to disable. Through out this essay I have covered a range of topics all relating to that one technique blow and why it is important to the Taekwon-Do practitioner. Also to the reader of this essay I hope you have learnt or picked up something that you can take away and use in your training or just remember this *"one technique to the correct vital spot is all you need to disable your opponent."*