

## On the Hachiriki

*By Master Kawanabe*

As you know Hachi means 8 and Riki means power. The eight ways or directions in cutting or striking is just categorized or symbolized for training purposes. It is a way of making your waist capable of moving around in all directions naturally in the most efficient way and when the heels, knees and upper body work in harmony, your techniques will develop to your utmost. This can be done only when you relax and take away all the unnecessary power of your body except the natural pool of Ki around your joints. This is so you can move around in all directions just like when Ki penetrates instantly, perpendicularly, horizontally, or like a tornado in a whirl.

In the practice of Hachiriki with the Ken, people are apt to be concerned or concentrate on the Ken too much and then naturally become absentminded of their physical posture. The same can be said when you work in karate when striking or kicking. Imagine that your waist is the root of a tree and your upper body is the trunk, then your arm is a branch. The waist then absorbs energy from the feet. Even a child knows about this, but this imagery is needed.

Now that you have already grasped some knowledge, I hope the following description won't be bothersome. Here 8 not only means just 8 directions, but the movement and power in all directions with the engine or axis of the waist movement. All the rest of the body, especially the lower part of the waist, follows obediently with the waist movement. This can be tested and trained in your usual standing pose or sitting on a chair in a relaxed way. Concentrate on your waist rightly so you can assure and imagine the power stored on both sides of the waist. Practice so that you can move your waist or the rear foot strongly and swiftly with just your stomach breath. This manipulation of the waist movement together with the foot work is very important in making an ideal "Oizuki". The "No breath oizuki" can be made from this waist operation as well. Imagine and feel your Ki or breath on any part of your body, especially on your rear waist and rear heel, right before making "Oizuki". Both sides of the waist, front and rear, must be equally balanced at the finishing point. At the finishing point all the strength of the body is removed and absorbed into the waist. "Putting breath" is hard to explain, but you can understand it physically in reality.

I came to understand keenly that just by using the stomach power the "hachiriki" can be practiced naturally in quite a relaxed way as well as strongly and this is really the point difference from the usual Karate.