

## GOOD FORM, Part One

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**W**e've spent the past three installments of this column examining the finer points of the *Jun Fan jeet kune do* stance. Before we set that stance in motion, we should spend a little time looking into the reasons Bruce Lee emphasized the importance of good form. The Big Three are energy efficiency, economy of motion and longevity.

Good form can save you a lot of huffing and puffing by cutting away extraneous motion. As Lee wrote on Page 53 of *Tao of Jeet Kune Do*, "Energy saved by sound mechanics of form can

be utilized in the longer persistence or the more forceful expression of the skill." In other words, you're more likely to go the distance and have more power in your technique if you aren't wasting energy on unwanted movement.


For example, consider maintenance of the stance in footwork. With any JFJKD technique, the objective is to deviate as little as possible from the stance because that's where you're the most protected and the most dangerous. If you step forward three

inches with your front foot, you need to advance your back foot the same distance, which puts you right back into the on-guard position. You should train so that when your back foot lands, it's exactly where it should be, with no fudging or adjustments necessary. It's that kind of precision that saves you energy and time. If, after every step, you land right back in the stance, you're always ready to fire off a shot or move out of harm's way. If you're fiddling with your landing, you'll lose precious milliseconds.

Of course, in the heat of battle, this kind of precision gets muddied quite a bit, but the closer to the ideal you train, the greater your advantage over your opponent will be. In most other sports, elite athletes pay attention to details to this degree. The martial arts should be no different.

When you train in good form, you teach your muscles to remember the most biomechanically sound sequence of doing things. Sloppy training merely reinforces bad habits. But if you do things properly and pre-

Bruce Lee's own handwriting reveals the importance he attached to proper form.

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- # Energy saved by SOUND MECHANICS OF FORM can be utilized in the longer persistence or the more forceful expression of the skill.
  - # Always TRAIN IN GOOD FORMS. Learn to move easily and smoothly. Start your workout with shadow boxing to loosen your muscles. At first concentrate on proper form; later, work harder.
  - # The mastery of proper fundamentals and their progressive application is the secret of being a great fighter.