

Midori Yama Budokai: *Hanshi's Corner*
Written by Ron Rogers *Hanshi Meiyō Kyōju*
August 2013
Ichigo, ichi e: One life, one meeting

Shizentai or Natural Posture

The following description is from the 1918 book, *Jiu-Jitsu or Jiu-Do, Selection from the Kodokwan Method* by K. Yamanaka [bracketed comments are those of your *hanshi meiyō kyōju*].

“You should stand upright without in the least bending your head or body, with your feet a little separated and knees straight. [The armed forces found this to be bad policy. Circulation is not good with locked knees, and may cause the individual to pass out. However, as much is made of relaxation, the author may simply be referring to not taking an excessively rigid defensive stance!] You should adopt an easy and comfortable position without putting your strength in any part of your body [as mentioned later in the book, remaining relaxed conserves energy and strength], and with undivided attention to the exercise, but quite calmly and peacefully, with your eyes fixed twenty or thirty paces ahead [one of the first allusions to “viewing a distant mountain.” Also, this is a recommended distance used in some meditation].

“When in this position you will be able to move quite freely. At such times your mind should be sovereign of the body, and your hands and feet your servants [one of the first allusions to “*shi, ki, chikara*”; first, the intent, then energy given to the body to carry out the intent].

“But remember, always, even in practice one should try to imagine one’s opponent an actual enemy [even in 1918 the concept, if not the term, of imaging was known]...and you must observe your opponent continuously, how and when he would attack or be on his defense.” [Even in the early years, the concept of “*sen*” was stressed, and the actual terms of “*sen no sen*,” and “*go no sen*” are used and explained.]

Bushi or Warrior aka Samurai (simplistically)

Two phrases were in common use for the bushi/samurai caste:

“*Bushi no nasaki*,” or “the tenderness of the warrior,” which was to have been mercy and gentleness to balance militarism.

“*Bushi no ichigon*,” or “the word of a warrior,” which, once given, would be kept even at the cost of family or life. “*Nigon*,” meant “double-tongued (literally two-tongued), and referred to someone who lied or betrayed their word.

“*Isagiyo*,” means “the pure clean spirit of a martial artist.” This referred to the martial artist cleaning up “ordinary reality,” in order to allow growth beyond his or her previous life-style.\

Karate Training by Robin L. Rielly

The sub-title is *The Samurai Legacy and Modern Practice*. This is one of those books to which you may return and glean something new each time. It was originally published by Tuttle in 1985, but has recently been reissued. One (relatively small) section of the book, which includes eight pages, has “Martial Arts Sayings,” some of which are well known

and others somewhat obscure. They are given in Romanji, Kanji and translated into English. In addition, a paragraph or two are given to explain them. There are fifteen such sayings, and I give them as they are presented (without the kanji).

1. *Ri no shugyo, waza no shugyo*, or “the study of reason and the study of technique.” This was written by the Zen priest Takuan to Munenori Yagyu, swordmaster.
2. *Kan ni hatsu o irezu*, or “not room for even a single strand of hair,” which is another of Takuan’s adages, and refers to instantaneous reaction.
3. *Sekka no ki* or “the occasion of flint stones producing sparks”. [An instantaneous event!] Musashi’s, *Book of Five Rings*, alludes to this.
4. *Mushin no kokoro* or “detached mind”; that is, a mind free to respond to any external stimuli.
5. *Mizu no kokoro* or “a mind like water,” which refers to the reflective quality of water; again, referring to the instantaneous ability of the stimuli and the samurai’s reaction to it.
6. *Tsuki no kokoro* or “a mind like the moon,” describing the detached or unobstructed mind.
7. *Gi shin fuki* or “technique and the mind are inseparable.” Zen considers the physical and mental act to be the same, with no separation (see numbers 2 and 3).
8. *Ken shin fuki* or “the fist and the mind are inseparable.” This is a variation of the above Zen saying.
9. *Do mu kyoku* or “no limitation for life.” Reilly believes this, perhaps more than any other saying, mirrors the essence of *karate-do*.
10. *Karate ni sente nashi* or “in karate there is no first attack.” Reilly explains this as the sixth sense (*rokkan*) using *sen*.
11. *Myo wa kyo-jitsu no kan ni ari* or “the essence lies between attack and defense.” In Reilly’s words: “Continuous thoughts of attack are contrary to the philosophy of the martial arts, whose paramount goal is self-defense. Similarly, preoccupation with defense leads one to be timid in the face of an aggressor. Between them lies an area that is neither attack nor defense; this is the essence of the art.”
12. *Koe naki o kiku, katachi nuki o miru* or “no-sound you can hear, no-image you can see.” Again, this relates to the sixth sense.
13. *Ikken hissatsu* or “one punch, one kill [death blow].” This actually refers to a life and death situation, in which you only have one chance.
14. *Shu ha ri* or “obedience [to tradition], divergence [from tradition], transcendence [of tradition].”
15. *Ken zen itchi* or “the fist and Zen are the same.” [The martial art] must be experienced in order to be fully understood.”

Ate Geiko

Ate waza are hitting techniques. *Atemi waza* are techniques of hitting the body. *Ate geiko* is the practice of hitting. This is a training method done with a partner. One person continually strikes at the other with a rapid succession of techniques. One partner learns to follow up and the other learns to block, parry and avoid.

Walter Todd Sensei, (1927-1999)

Walter Todd, *Sensei*, age 72, passed away on 26 November 1999. He was the President and founding member of the Shudokan Martial Arts Association in Oakland, CA. He was a *Hachidan* (8th degree black belt). He was survived by his wife, Eve, and two children. Walter Todd's martial arts career spanned over 50 years, beginning in 1945, while stationed in Tokyo with the American military. He married a Japanese woman, living in Japan off and on throughout the 1940's, 1950's and 1960's. Todd *Sensei* trained with many of the martial arts greats, including Mifune Kyuzo, *Judan* (10th degree black belt) and Ichiro Abe (*Hachidan*) at the Kodokan Judo Institute. Mifune *Sensei*, a legendary figure, was the last living holder of the tenth *dan* awarded by Kanō Jigorō *Shihan*. Mifune accepted Todd as his personal student. In 1948, Todd *Sensei* became the first foreign student of Otsuka Hironori, *Sensei*, *Judan*, and founder of *Wado Ryu Karate-do*. Later, in 1954, Todd *Sensei* trained under Obata Isao, *Sensei* and other Japanese experts in *Shotokan Karate-do*. Obata *Sensei* was a direct student of Funakoshi Gichin, *Shihan*. Funakoshi *Shihan* approved Todd *Sensei*'s black belt certificate, making him the first foreigner in history to obtain a *Dan* rank in *Shotokan Karate-do*. According to Todd, at that time, right after the war, martial arts were not allowed to be taught in the public schools. But they could be taught in private *dojo*. The only martial arts done in the schools were actually in the form of outside clubs that used the schools' facilities. They were banned from being taught formally at the colleges and public schools, but that didn't mean they couldn't hold a class. A man who helped to break that rule was an American named Paddy O'Neill, who was the publisher of the Japanese version of *Reader's Digest*. He had lived in Japan beginning long before the war and was one of the first foreigners to get the rank of *Godan* in *Judo*.

After returning to the USA, Todd *Sensei* trained in *Karate-do* under Takahashi Yoko, *Sensei*. Takahashi offered to teach Todd *Karate*, if Todd would work with him in *Aikido* to "keep up his techniques." This was Todd's formal instruction in *Aikido*, and it was Takahashi who introduced Todd to Tohei *Sensei*. Takahashi had multiple ranks in the arts of *Judo*, *Karate* and *Aikido*. Todd arrived at his own definition of *ki*: "*Ki* is the spirit of the movement, from movement to movement, seeking that which is pleasurable." Todd felt that when the body did a good movement it felt good! And that feeling at that moment was *ki* at its best manifestation. Takahashi was a direct disciple of the legendary Toyama Kanken *Sensei*, who founded his own celebrated system of *Karate*. Walter Todd was appointed as *Shibu-cho*, or Branch Director for the U.S. This gave Todd complete authority to rank students in *Toyama-ryu Karate* and direct the development of *Karate* in America. After Toyama *Sensei*'s death, his son approved Todd *Sensei*'s rank of 8th *Dan*. Todd *Sensei* studied *Aikido* under two world famous instructors. The first was Tomiki Kenji, *Sensei*, founder of *Tomiki Aikido*. Todd stated that Ueshiba was angry with Tomiki with how he changed *Aikido*. Tomiki was attempting to get *Aikido* accepted into the *Kodokan*, and actually helped in the formulation of the *Kodokan Goshin Jutsu*, a self-defense form. The second was Tohei Koichi, *Sensei*, the only man ever to receive a 10th *Dan* certificate in *Aikido* directly from the art's originator, Ueshiba Morihei, *O Sensei*. In fact, Ueshiba personally approved and signed Walter Todd's 1st and 2nd *Dan* certificates. Todd said that the training with Tohei was informal – more Todd *Sensei* later received a 6th *Dan* in *Aikido* from the celebrated *Kokusai Budoin* of Tokyo. In June of 1993, the

Kokusai Budoin, was founded in 1952 by leading masters of various forms of *budo*, with branches in dozens of countries. It is one of few groups in history to be authorized to issue rank certificates by Japan's Imperial Family. Though known to be rather conservative in nature, the *Kokusai Budoin* issued Todd Sensei an 8th Dan in *Judo*. Even in Japan, ranks above 4th Dan are difficult to achieve, and it is extremely rare to find a foreigner ranked 6th Dan or higher. He once commented, in an interview, that *Judo* was his first love because it brought him into the martial arts. If not for *Judo* he would not have discovered *Karate* and *Aikido* later on. His discovery of *Judo* was by reading a book by Charles Yerkow (actually, Yerkow wrote seven books, all of excellent quality), at which point he went to Japan and enrolled at the *Kodokan*.

Todd struggled back from a near fatal automobile accident several years ago. In addition he had surgery to install two artificial hips. Even so, he continued to teach and subdue young opponents literally one-third his age. He was "a living testament to the power of perseverance and the vitalizing capacity of authentic *budo*."

Although, Todd Sensei had not operated a *dojo* for some time, he continued to teach seminars, and remained actively involved in the Japanese martial ways until the end of his life. He never reached a point in his life where he could no longer teach.

Errata

Hanagi Chomo, not Funakoshi, was the first person to use the name *karate* to mean Empty Hand rather than T'ang Hand. This was in 1906 and was used in Hanagi's book, *Karate Soshu Hen*. It was later accepted by the majority (but not all!) Okinawan Masters at Funakoshi's urging.

In London, Ian Fleming and Sir Peter Smithers, PhD worked together in naval intelligence. Fleming was even taught by Sir Peter, PhD, a jiu-jitsu expert, how to kill a man in combat by biting [sic] him on the back of the neck.

Any or all of this information may be copied for students if desired. All that's asked is that acknowledgment of authorship be given.