

# Kill Overprotective Budō

The number of martial arts enthusiasts is growing all over the world. However, the reality is that even if you want to master the true *Bufū* of ancient Japan, you cannot learn the real *Budō*. The hard fact is that there is a castle wall right in front of the *Budō* that I am studying and even if I shout “open the gate”, the gates do not open. Therefore, since there are so many people who aspire to train like a warrior, I would like to command my students to open the gates and together, think about traditional *budō*.

I have also written this in the academic newsletter of Chiba Prefecture but as a rule, those who are currently studying *Budō* believe that the martial arts they are studying are the real thing. In response to this view of *Budō*, as someone who has dedicated themselves to studying the traditional *Bufū*, I sincerely hope that they will learn the correct form of *Budō* even though the forms of Japanese martial arts have changed.

In the past, when I lectured at gatherings of high-ranking people who are practicing modern martial arts, I would ask them if they were putting their lives on the line and the answer, without batting an eyelid, was “yes”. Then I would

remind them that they were wearing protective armor, using a *shinai*<sup>1</sup> instead of real swords, and eliminating dangerous techniques so that they would not get injured when practicing or competing in *kendō* matches.

This is also true for *judō*. Now we are putting out *tatami* mats when we train but if you take *ukemi* in a dangerous place with a lot of obstacles, you will be seriously injured or die. I would say that this is putting your life on the line – practicing like your life depends on it with an understanding of real combat.

While teaching *hanbōjutsu*<sup>2</sup> to police officers, I am often asked “What kind of technique should I use to escape when my opponent completely traps my arm with the stick?” I just say that it’s okay if they break my arm. It’s the *kihaku*<sup>3</sup> that is the most important. This is because your spirit creates an opening in the opponent and you can take them at this point.

Again, real combat is all just *henka* rather than a number of techniques. For some reason, modern martial artists chase after techniques and do not realize that this *hitotsu no henka* [one change] is equal to *senpenbanka* [infinite variations]. Even when using a sword, they seem to be under the illusion that they are doing *kendō* and only know how to thrust and strike with it.

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1. bamboo sword

2. short staff techniques

3. spirit

The most important thing is to be able to cut, just as a chef who has superb knife-handling skills, you must know how to handle a sword.

It is no wonder that there are many serious *kendōka* who think that the 3 *sun* [about 3 inches] at the tip of the sword is the most important cutting part. A sword can be used like a kitchen knife. For example, when you are cooking, sometimes it is difficult to cut through a bone with a knife but you can push with your hand on the back of the knife and use the base of the cutting edge to cut through.

Also, if you are putting your life on the line in an evenly matched fight, you can use just half the tip of the sword to cut your opponent's weak points. This is said to be the mystery of *biken*<sup>4</sup>. In the case of a fight between a person who is aware of cutting with the last 3 *sun* [inches] and a person who is aware of cutting with half the tip of the sword, the half-the-tip person will cut down their enemy. This is because the difference in time that it takes to cut with half the tip versus the last 3 *sun* has a great impact in a fight with real swords where the margin of victory is paper thin. The most important thing is to cut. This is true in the case of the human spirit [or heart, mind] as well.

This is the case with *judō* as well. Kanō sensei said that if you practice *jūdō* well during your lifetime, you don't need to practice *shinkengata* [real fighting] *jūjutsu*. From ancient

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4. secret sword

times, warriors listened to the stories of priests and wrote *den sho* from them or achieved enlightenment but the real master does not take the words of the priest but learns the crucial points of *shinkengata* naturally from his own views of life and death.

In the era of peace, the trend of *kenzen inchinyo*<sup>5</sup> has become strong but you should know that there was already a frenzied downfall of Zen in the era of Ikkyu. It's a big mistake to glorify the words of a priest who has never studied *budō* or to think that the writings of a modern famous author who has never studied *budō* show the true shape of the martial arts.

One day, I had the chance to talk with a famous writer, he had the bearing of a martial artist and without hesitation, he talked knowingly about the sword, "You have the characteristic ego of someone who is in love with the sword", I laughed.

These days, there are narcissistic martial artists from all different *dō*-arts who believe they have amazing technique but intrinsically, one should think about *budō* not so much as a "way" [*dō*] but more as a principle [*hō*] (instant enlightenment). This is because the training of the *dō* is long but it is far from the experience of life and death. As I mentioned earlier, just because you've practiced *xx-do* for many decades doesn't mean anything unless you've prevailed in real fighting. In that sense, *budō* is intrinsically a principle because it comes from the understanding of life and death.

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5. sword and Zen are one

I do not mean to say anything bad about modern martial arts. Whether they are sport martial arts or substantive martial arts, the end results is that they lead to a happy life. However, I'd like you to know that the former is far from life and death and the latter is close to life and death.

# Use the Fire of Life with Katon no Jutsu

Even though I will talk about the relationship between mankind and fire, I will first say that our physical strength has declined since eating foods cooked over a fire. However, this doesn't apply to the Andamanese Islanders [written as Amandaman in the text] who don't know anything about fire. In the period when gas lighters just replaced flint, if you look down your nose at "the third fire" (nuclear energy) you'll be burned to death because it's not just children playing with fire.

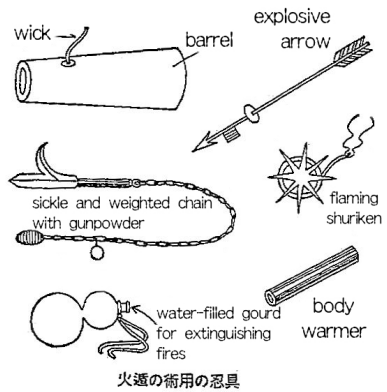
Since we have descended from primate consciousness we know that fire isn't so scary. Fire must be used in order to live.

*Katon no jutsu* is the utilization of pyrotechnics to deceive the enemy. This involves setting fire to dry leaves and *shoji* screens<sup>1</sup> using *uchidake* (pocket body warmer) and diverting attention by becoming a *hinokage* [shadow of fire]. In order to frighten the enemy, a demon mask known as *onibi* [demon fire] is worn and fire is discharged from *hifukidake* [a hollow bamboo tube] to strike fear in the enemy.

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1. Japanese-style sliding doors

Now, when it comes to using gunpowder, things get serious. These tools included *oozutsu* (wooden cannon), *hōzutsu* (wooden bazooka), *sodezutsu* (small gun made of bamboo), *nagetetsukagi* (hand grenade), *umehi* (land mine), *bakuhatsuya* (rocket), *kashaken* (shuriken wrapped with gunpowder) and the *kaen kusarigama* (sickle and weighted chain with gunpowder).



*Ninja tools for katonjutsu*

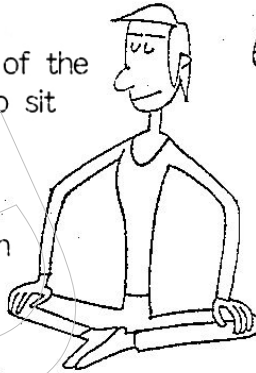
The gunpowder produced smoke. This was not only used as an explosive but could be used when the *ninja* wanted to disappear. If poison is mixed in with the gunpowder this will produce a colored smoke which, if inhaled while sleeping, can lead to death and if it touches the skin, can cause pain equivalent to being cut with a sword. Smoke can also be used to send messages or signals.

In order to douse a fire, the *ninja* would use the *tsurihōzuki* – this is a gourd filled with water from the sponge gourd which, if placed on a roof, will quickly extinguish flames even if hit with a flaming arrow. In this way, the *ninja* knew exactly how to start and extinguish fires. However, is there anything that can put out “the third fire” (nuclear energy)?

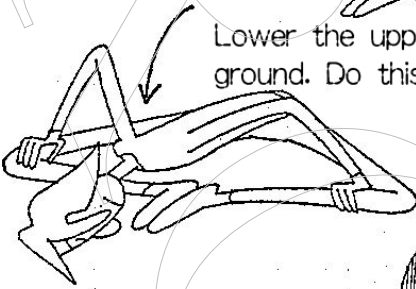
Bring the soles of the feet together to sit in anza

1

Push on both knees

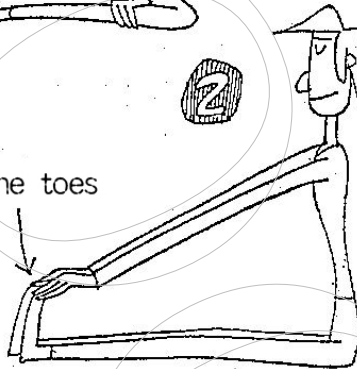


Lower the upper body to the ground. Do this 8 times.



2

Grasp the toes



Lean forward 8 times

