

**Maximize Your Martial Art Study and Enhance Your Teaching Skills**  
**By Professor Bob “Bobasan” Karnes revised 11-2022**  
**Golden Sage Martial Arts web site [www.bobasan.net](http://www.bobasan.net)**

**My purpose for writing this book (This was in one of my Martial Arts Kata and Beyond Manuals)**

I hope this information in the 1<sup>st</sup> part of the book gives new teachers, the intermediate student, and the advanced martial artist some topics to consider. The 2nd part of this book will be drills that I call conditional reflex drills. These are additional drills to practice or to add to your training to modify and change as needed. I am using the perspective and my 35 plus years experiences of my martial art training in the comprehensive martial art system of DanZan Ryu (DZR) and of DanZan Ryu Zenyo Bujutsu as taught in the Golden Sage Martial Arts School to share my current views and insights on different martial art topics and martial art applications.

**How I Define the Martial Art System that I Study and Teach**

The type of system that I study and teach a modern self-defense character development martial art system. If any martial art system is taught to empower the law-abiding citizen and it has a positive benefit for society we are teaching with a similar philosophy. To be of service to others is the highest honor.

**Disclaimer**

If your goal is to casually train to collect techniques to beat up people in a contest or on the street without studying the ethical consequences of your actions, I hope that you look deeper into your civic responsibilities and priorities. If you think that martial arts are only for only the young and the most aggressive people, this book will not further your goal.

**How long does it take to become a skilled and ethical martial artist?**

In our Martial Art Self-defense system, the student needs time to mature in their skill set to effectively defend against a skilled attack from a larger person. This requires dedicated weekly practice over a least a few years. This is a Zen story that explains this view.

**Zen Story: Time to Learn**

A young but earnest Zen student approached his teacher, and asked the Zen Master:

“If I work very hard and diligent how long will it take for me to find Zen.”

The Master thought about this, then replied, “Ten years.”

The student then said, “But what if I work very, very hard and really apply myself to learn fast — How long then?”

Replied the Master, “Well, twenty years.”

“But, if I really, really work at it. How long then?” asked the student.

“Thirty years,” replied the Master.

“But, I do not understand,” said the disappointed student.

“At each time that I say I will work harder, you say it will take me longer. Why do you say that?”

Replied the Master,” When you have one eye on the goal, you only have one eye on the path.”

**These studies require many hours and a few years of selfless dedicated practice to have a foundational beginning to a never ending, comprehensive mind body martial arts self-defense skill set.**

### **The casual or returning student**

I have been told by some of our students that a brief introduction and a few months at one of our martial art schools have made a positive impact on their lives. Due to life circumstances some students would stop coming to class then they would drop by every few years for a visit or to return to take more classes. No one should sacrifice their health or their family's wellbeing to undertake a live long martial art study. All students can continue to work on their notebooks, their studies in the martial arts, world history, philosophy, and the humanities without stepping on the martial art mat. If you strive to do more good than harm you are still on the same path. Please keep your fellow students and your teachers in mind and please keep in touch.

### **The committed lifelong student**

For an interested student I would suggest 3 months' study at a martial art school to see if you are at the right school for you. For a committed student I recommend studying for two or three days a week with 2-hour classes for at least for at least three years to find out if this system is what you wish to commit your martial art life to. In our studies we also practice many other martial arts styles and systems to enhance what we teach. Completely understanding a comprehensive martial art system would take many lifetimes to fathom its depths.

With years of research, I have found that all styles and martial art systems are very similar but with different paths up the same mountain. No one style, or system is best for everyone. It may be the first martial art school that you tried, like me, or you may spend some time to research and find the system that is the best school suited for you.

### **The Goal of my Healing Art / Martial Art Training**

Internal and external Conflict resolution is a worthy goal to work towards. If you learn to harm others, you need to also know how to heal yourself and others. Martial arts to me are accepting the responsibility to work on completing my character and to continually study these arts to benefit myself, my family, my community and in a small way ultimately to elevate humanity. There are too many bullies and violent people in our society. For the study in an ethical martial art, a skilled and responsible instructor is useful. This type of teacher will teach the dangerous or deadly arts only to students who prove themselves worthy by their words and by their actions. These Students and teachers may stumble but they are on a positive path to a better person and to become a more humane member of society. They are representing their martial system and their school showing the public how a martial art school is a positive asset to the health of a community.

## **Be a Healer of Violence**

### **The Beginning Lessons in a Martial Art System**

All the preceding DZR list of techniques and the additional lists build on each other to form, like other martial art systems, a comprehensive martial art -self- defense system. As Prof. LaGue, Sensei teaches, "Each technique is a spoke of a wheel. One spoke does not make a wheel. It takes all the spokes to work together to help the wheel to roll. With additional wheels linked together they form a sphere that rolls in all directions". Along with the one-on-one guidance or oral transmission of the arts from Sensei to student, called Kuden, the student and the teachers interaction gives the instruction deeper meaning that we call Kodenkan.

### **Avoid the Attack and Using Situational Awareness**

By maintaining distance so the attack is not possible I now call "All Out". Our self-defense system includes many types of martial art study with the beginning emphasis on avoiding conflict. This is taught with two arm's length distance, a non-threatening defensive stance, foot work, centering with breathing and good posture. 360-degree "Situational" awareness incorporates the beginning exercises on breathing, foot work and balance. These strategies are like seeds that are planted. This is the solid foundation needed for all the techniques to follow.

### **Rolls and Falls**

Rolls and falls are taught in the beginning to overcome the fear of falling and to encourage suppleness. These arts also teach body orientation, and they teach body awareness. Without learning to fall or roll throws cannot be taught or survived. Falling arts are the counters to a good throw from an attacker. By feeling the throw being done to you, you can learn the throw.

### **Beginning Discussions on the Law and Morality of Self-Defense**

Discussions about our local legal rights to self-defense is needed. Ethical and moral types of self-defense techniques for several types of attacks are introduced. Someone grabbing your wrist is a different response than an attacker grabbing your neck from behind.

### **Should the Beginning Kyu Rank Student Show the Martial Art Techniques to Friends and Family?**

What you are taught at the school stays in the school except in self-defense (Sensei will need to be notified). Showing what you learn to a larger spouse who is not going to class usually does not end well. Doing the arts off the mat may stop the students' progress and an injury may occur. Showing off to friends or family is not allowed. If you are of a higher rank and you want to teach outside the school your Sensei needs to be included in deciding what, who, and how you teach. You are part of something larger than yourself. If you know someone of good character, bring her/him to class.

### **If You are unable to Avoid the Attack, Then Attempt to Escape**

#### **From the First DZR List of Yawara the First Art is an Escape**

The first list of arts in (DZR) is called Yawara. The first art on Yawara is an escape from an outside wrist grab escape. This art is first taught to get away from the hold then move away from the attacker. This is most important as it teaches us to use relaxed concentrated power to affect an escape. In self-defense if you cannot Avoid it is best to escape. Especially if the student is new to martial arts their skills may be limited. Avoid and Escape is wise but as with most laws in the United States you must try to escape, or you may be charged as a mutual combatant.

#### **Basic Kata and Application of Kata for self-defense called Waza**

The basic arts in some Japanese martial arts are called Kata or basic forms. This is a stylized form meant to preserve the basic art or to isolate its most important principle or to form a skilled conditioned reflex. Self-defense applications of Kata are sometimes called Waza or technique. In Judo the self-defense list is called Goshin Jutsu.

#### **The Seeds and the Cultivation of Seeds**

Prof. LaGue, Sensei taught that some Sensei are seed carriers like the story of Johnny Apple seed these Sensei help preserve the Kata Arts and traditions through their Instruction. Some Sensei adds to and preserve the Kata but also add nutrients and their own style, so the arts also grow into something new and unique. Some third generation Professors were speaking with the daughter of the founder of their martial art system. The Professor said, "We want to preserve your father's martial art system just as he taught it". The daughter said "Why? If my father was alive, he would be teaching the arts differently than he use too" The feeling from the conversation was you have the ball now you run with it.

## **Respect, Preserve, and then Improve**

### **Blend then Redirect the Attack and Take the Center “All In”**

If Avoid and Escape is not possible you may need the skills to use the attacker's strength and size against the attacker. For the defender this is called stealing the center. This is used so the defender will have a leverage advantage. This is also called closing the gap. Taking the center of the attacker or becoming the center of the storm are ways to describe this strategy. It is necessary for the smaller, older, or weaker defender to use off balancing and leverage of the attack to have a positive outcome for the defender. When going with and redirecting the attacker's momentum of their attack we steal units of power from the attacker. Dr. Kano, the founder of Judo, used a 1 through 10 measurement scale to describe this useful principle.  
<http://judokaa.ca/sensei-jigoro-kano>

### **Using gentleness to overcome superior strength is like using water to put out a fire**

**“Water is fluid, soft, and yielding. But water will wear away rock, which is rigid and cannot yield. As a rule, whatever is fluid, soft, and yielding will overcome whatever is rigid and hard. This is another paradox: what is soft is strong.” Lao Tzu**

### **Joint locks and escapes from Attacks Can Resolve Conflict**

Next on the list of Yawara or hand arts we teach pain compliance holds. This allows the student to learn how to manipulate the attacker's joints to break or dislocate the joint or to use a joint lock without a break as a pain compliance take down or controlling art. This can provide the ability of breaking the attacker's balance (Kazushi). This is also a way to connect with the attacker to evaluate their intentions and the attacker's and sense the ability of the attacker to do harm to the defender. You can also encourage the attacker to a place where the attack is nullified. These arts can also be used to disarm an attacker with a weapon. The use of joint locks requires gentleness and sensitivity on the defender's part. The posture and breathing of the defender needs to be calm and centered. At times redirection without harming the attacker is the best way to avoid other attacks. The attack may be a misunderstanding and you may help end the attack without resorting with more harm than is needed to ethically defend yourself. With enough practice, and you have only one attacker, it may be possible to negotiate a peaceful resolution from a superior position. When you have the upper hand, you can sometimes afford to be forgiving. The defender is connected to the attacker like a fishing line waiting for a bite (the counterattack) from the fish (the attacker). The attacker's next move dictates the next art that the defender allows to happen. Rather than the defender imposing her/his will on the attacker (like backing someone into a corner) the attacker moves into a trap while they are moving away from one lock to another lock. You are now close enough to use the appropriate level of force to respond to further attacks. This may need to escalate to counter attacks by the defender like knees, elbows, foot stomps, or non-fist hand strikes up to including deadly force as a last resort to save your life.

### **When off balancing is better than joint locks or strikes**

If the attacker is too emotional, mentally ill, under the influence of drugs, or alcohol to feel pain the attacker may not respond to pain compliance. In this case the defender may use off balancing or a throw to gain the distance to escape. A non-pain compliance escort technique is helpful. The Defender may restrict the ability of the attacker to fight with an appropriate constriction hold or Shime art if escape is not needed or appropriate. This can be used to allow to attacker to regain their calm themselves and regain emotional self-control leading to the end the conflict. A non-pain compliance escort hold may be used. If the attacker is much smaller, not a real threat, or a family member we use the gentle arts as taught in our “Drunken Uncle Jujitsu” classes. I used these gentle arts and developed other arts working in a state locked psychiatric hospital and for other mental health jobs for over 15 years. No strikes or joint locks were allowed or were needed.

### **Other advantages of “All In” close defensive strategy**

The closeness of the “All In” strategy is also effective for situational awareness. By moving beside the attacker or behind them you can scan 360 degrees to make sure that you know of other attackers. You can look for where the potential weapons are or where the appropriate exit to escape is. Being “all in” close to the attacker enables the defender to use strikes before or after a throw or take down while limiting the attacker’s balance and their ability to counter strike. This is useful for defense against multiple attackers as you continuously move behind the attacker to throw or move the attackers into each other.

### **Combining lists of DZR together**

The list of Yawara or hand techniques teaches using leverage, closeness, and body position to limit the attacker’s mid-range and long-range strikes. The beginning to the intermediate students learns the 2<sup>nd</sup> DZR list which is of throwing arts called Nage. Nage is a great and limitless list to study and practice. The throws can be lethal if the attacker does not have the falling skills that are taught. Without the lessons in Yawara, Nage is not as effective.

### **Shime is effective in single attacker self-defense**

The 3<sup>rd</sup> DZR list are the constriction arts called Shime. A constriction art is a hold that is sometimes practiced in sport grappling. Shime is a great course to study with endless variations to learn. Our constriction holds are designed for nonviolent use if possible, but it can be used in a more damaging purpose as a last resort while getting to your feet as quickly as possible. Due to the street reality of uneven ground, possible limited space, possible weapons, and multiple attackers, the sport grappling for self-defense is not advised. Sport grappling does not usually address self-defense against biting attacks, defense against eye gouging, and groin attacks that are more likely during a self-defense application. Without Yawara and Nage, Shime loses its effectiveness. You use Nage or Yawara to get into the constriction. Using Yawara joint locks in controlling the attacker upon release from a Shime hold is necessary.

### **Kicking and Striking is Important in Martial Arts**

We have a rich history of striking techniques in the martial arts. To know how to defend from a well-executed kick or strike the student needs to know how to deliver a good strike, and kick. Studying all the lethal and less than lethal targets on the human body as well as the nerve strikes is essential for all martial art self-defense applications. Learning the blocks and flowing into the vast series of counter strikes and counters to strikes is good self-defense practice. Like throwing arts striking arts may have unintended lethal damage to an attacker. Taking from the expert martial art striking flowing styles and adding them to your martial art tool bag is wise.

### **Other Ways to Strike and why not to always use striking techniques**

By using elbows and knees as well as non-fist, hand striking surfaces striking can be effective for setting up non-lethal constriction holds or throws. Striking with your fist is often not a good idea as breaking your hand defending yourself can make it more difficult to effectively defend yourself.

Most of the time the effectiveness of the strike is unknown at the time of the attack and striking should be the last choice in self-defense if possible. Maintain the “all out” or use a block and a strike to go “All In”. Avoid trading strikes face to face in what is called “no man’s land” in-between “All In” and “All Out” within the mid-range and the long-range power of the attackers striking range.

### **Different Emphasis from Different Systems and Different Teachers**

The martial Art head instructor (Sensei) will add to the curriculum any resource needed to help the students learn. After a brief time, the students will flow into variations of arts through free style or pre-set series of self-defense applications or drills. The martial arts need of larger metropolitan area like Jacksonville, Florida or Las Vegas, Nevada is different than Reno, Nevada. We usually see life and death self-defense techniques taught sooner in the higher crime rates of the larger the cities. If your martial arts become too soft style or too hard style your self-defense will suffer. But as an advanced martial artist exploring the extremes in practice and at martial art clinics is very enlightening. Do not introduce these new arts that you learned to your Dojo

without Sensei permission. Mixing hard style with DZR arts will sometimes cause increased injuries for the students.

### **How the Stress of Classes, Exams and Contests Help the Student**

As the student practices the challenges of working out with other types of students and learning from other teachers the student will be frustrated and out of their comfort zone. This helps the students with their character and self-control progress and tests their ability to remain centered. During a real attack the student needs to remain calm despite feeling stressed. The stress from rank promotion exams, or doing form demonstrations called Kata contest, judged freestyle contest, are ways we use teaching quality control. This is also useful for the student and the teachers to find out where the student's strengths and weaknesses are. We use these experiences to adjust our teaching programs. Adding a little stress shows the teacher and the student how the student may react during a real attack. This will demonstrate their progress in their mental and emotional self-control needed for future rank promotion.

### **Zen in the Japanese Martial Arts**

Zen Buddhism philosophy is necessary for the westerner to understand a basic history of their Japanese based martial art. The calm nonjudgmental awareness of the moment without pre-conceived ideas called Mushin. This is one way that these arts can be performed at the highest level. As I am an amateur compared to my teachers and people who are fluent in Japanese and know the cultural norms of Japan. I have used these ideas and meditative exercises to save my life on a few occasions.

### **Working as a Mental Health Technician Example #1**

One Saturday I was told to go to the intake unit at the State psychiatric hospital unit to monitor two violent clients from the jail. We did not have enough staff to back me up, so a nurse and I needed to keep ourselves and vulnerable patients safe. If possible, we would keep a calm safe unit until the next shift of adequate numbers of staff came on duty.

#### **#1 Remain calm and observe**

As I sat in the dayroom, I calmly noted the agitation and threats from the jail transferred patients towards myself.

#### **#2 Use positive reinforcement provide prn medication, food, and space away from danger**

I would go about normal unit duties providing snacks to the patients (Yogurt therapy :) Opening up the bedroom doors to give the non-aggressive clients a safe place to remove themselves from the dangerous environment.

#### **#3 Buying time**

By listening and not engaging with angry and threatening patients in arguments you tend not to "feed to fire". A crude way to remember this is the saying "Never argue with a crazy person".

Zen Story – Is that so

<https://www.habitsforwellbeing.com/is-that-so/>



## **Protocol and Potential problems in the Dojo**

**“Adversity does not build character, it reveals it.” James Lane Allen**

**An oyster doesn't like grit, but the grit becomes a pearl**

**In winning, be humble and in a failure be gentle with yourself and learn from your mistakes**

**“Neither success nor failure is ever final” Roger Babson**

**Why the Overly Aggressive and Intense use of Western Competition in Martial Arts or Sport  
Grappling can be Counter Productive**

In a traditional Sumo match, there is no emotion seen between the participants before or after the match. The ritual of proper conduct does not allow for displays of emotion from a loss of the match or from a victory. The way that you conduct yourself is more important than if you win or lose a match. Bringing dishonor to yourself or your school is to be avoided. A tirade at the judges when losing or a pumping fist after a victory is not classy.

### **I want to compete against someone**

Compete against yourself to be the best at what you do!

I often hear “I want to know how it feels when a person really resists the technique, so I know if it really works”. Really? Without rules? Without time limits? Without weight or age requirements? Without gloves, groin cups, are steel toe boots allowed? Against weapons? Against multiple attackers? Oh, you want to do an underground activity called an illegal fight to the death blood sport.

The reply might be “Maybe with a bunch of rules so I am not concussed so I can still walk and go to work in the morning”. You want to test yourself against others. There are safe and ethical martial art competitions with the grade on self-control, effective technique, and variety of techniques without breaking peoples arms for a trophy. When you know what you are looking at “would it really work?” is obvious.

### **Do You Really Want to Test Yourself?**

You can become a Prison guard, a Police Officer, or a Mental Health Worker and be of service to your community while you study martial arts after work. Your practice on and off work will be the highest martial art called conflict resolution using the physical and mental martial arts! You will have to follow rules and you will need to use intelligence with people skills rather than brute force and attitude alone.

You WILL be tested!

When relying on brute force and intimidation as your main tool you may have success for a while but someone younger with more strength and less concerned about anyone else may be around the corner. The more arrogant person may not even care about their own life. These types of people are very dangerous, and they are the most harmful to society. Practice the arts and science of martial arts or sports and you will be humbled, or you will be surprised by a smaller opponent. Possibly if you mess with a wild looking old man or woman with tricks and commitment that you have never seen before will give you a free martial art lesson! In Japan the saying “The nail that sticks out gets hammered down” has a different meaning but it does apply to martial arts. The person who walks around like a tiger will attract bigger tigers. In the wild west a gunslinger was always looking over their shoulder for a faster draw and sometimes it was a young kid seeking revenge or looking to gain a reputation to kill the seasoned gunslinger.

**Definition of arrogant - Having or revealing an exaggerated sense of one's own importance or abilities**

**The candle that burns twice as bright, burns half as long**

**“With courage, you will dare to take risks, have the strength to be compassionate, and the wisdom to be humble”, Courage is the foundation of integrity.” Mark Twain**

**“Martial Arts without morality is just so much bad wrestling” Prof. Steve McLaughlin**

### **Healing arts, weapon arts, and meditation**

If this is accurate, when Professor Kano the founder of Judo attended the Tokyo Imperial University in 1877, he started looking for jujutsu teachers. He first looked for a bonesetter called seifukushi. His assumption was that doctors who knew martial arts were better teachers.

The healing arts in our system are called Seifukujitsu and they are the foundation of our therapeutic massage and our resuscitation arts. These arts are required for our black belt ranks. With this knowledge we use these arts to treat ourselves, our family, and our students from injuries. Without this healing art knowledge and years of practice the highest black belt arts are not attainable.

Weapon arts are essential to understand the footwork, posture, and commitment needed to survive physical conflict. Meditation is used to calm ourselves and to become more aware of the moment. Meditation is based on posture and breathing to help center the body and to clear the mind of purposeless fears and rambling thoughts.

### **Kill or be killed martial art applications are necessary to preserve life not to inflate the ego**

A common concern for some martial arts students is learning how to deal with the worst case in self-defense, a life-threatening situation. Teaching a new student, the ways of defending against a lethal attack presents them first with how a lethal attack is delivered. This poses a problem. Are we creating arrogant bullies or future criminals the skills that we need self-defense from? To help prevent teaching the wrong type of student a mutual Sensei -student interview and maybe with a referral from another higher ranked student is appropriate. If a student expects instant highly skilled ability to defend himself/ herself, are we misleading them that what it takes to defend against a skilled attacker? Many hard styles and soft styles of martial arts address this. If a student is small or older, they may need a less athletic softer martial art style to affect a positive outcome against a younger stronger attacker or attackers, it can be accomplished with some martial art systems. The longer the students trains the higher the rank the more advanced techniques and more responsibility they must use the arts only as a last resort for self-defense or defense of the weak and of the vulnerable.

*In practicing the martial arts, you should not be required to be injured to learn how to defend yourself*

### **What are the motives for studying martial arts?**

I have been approached by many potential students who have many several reasons to study martial arts. Some people want to continue to learn or add to their martial art training from another style. Some students have no knowledge of the martial art systems but get a good feeling watching class and how the students interact with each other. Like many other martial art systems DanZan Ryu Zenyo Bujutsu (DZYB) can adapt to the needs of many different people. Each head instructor (or also called Sensei in our system) and at each DZRZB school or Dojo the Sensei is responsible to work with correcting problems or to not teach students based on repeated breach of protocol on ethical or safety differences that the student or teachers may demonstrate.

### **Aggression and ego gratification**

One out of control ego driven student or teacher will destroy the trust and safety of the other students. A student that bad talks other students, and the upper ranks, could be injurious to the health of the Dojo. The Sensei may counsel the student with another senior student present. At some point the teacher and the student may decide that they need to part company and study in another martial art school. If a relationship is developed with the other schools Sensei a discussion with that other Sensei to help the new Sensei meet the student's needs. The student is now on his/her own as our system is not what they are looking for. If our Dojo hears that the former student is bad mouthing our school of causing problems at the new school this will be discussed between schools at the highest level. We want to build bridges not walls between all martial art schools.



## **#1 Rule**

If you have a problem with another student or teacher talk calmly and privately with her/him and work it out. If it is not resolved both people go to a black belt or go to Sensei and talk it out. If the problem is between Sensei and a student another Dojo Sensei may be brought in to help resolve the issue. Do not discuss the problem openly with other students or black belts as this will lead to disharmony in the Dojo.

## **Cautions on Short studies in Many Styles**

A casual grab this and that martial art is like a cafeteria fast food approach. If you quit a school because you feel that you were out of your comfort zone or you were challenged look at your pre-conceived ideas, it may be what we call growing pains. A few talks with Sensei may help before you leave the Dojo.

For the casual student, like a rudderless boat, this may lead to studying without accountability to a teacher, a school and this is not what I define as studying a martial art. Ethical self-defense study or sport training is possible on your own with a balanced dedication to self-improvement. You can train with or become like a mercenary out for only your selfish personal gain at significant risk to yourself and to the detriment of society. This also damages the reputations, the sacrifice, and good works of dedicated ethical martial artist past and present.

## **Studying more than one martial art style at a time**

In a comprehensive martial art system, all the martial art styles are explored. This is done because we need to defend against all types of attacks, we need exposure to all types of Martial arts styles. If the student wants to study at more than one Dojo or school at the same time the Sensei must be aware of the problem of technique crossover between schools. Also stealing students from one school to another will cause the likelihood of problems between both schools. Blending one system with another through a new student will cause unintended consequences. After the student reaches third degree black belt (about 10 years study) this is not much of a problem as the black belt can separate the different school's styles and cause no adverse relationships between schools.

## **Forming clicks within the Dojo**

A well-meaning student or assistant teacher may want to promote a certain teacher on a certain night forming a click that empathizes a different type of teaching from the Sensei. Splitting the school into "us and them" can be unhealthy for a Dojo. If a different martial art or a different emphasis on teaching is done with communication and disclosure with the Sensei, then this new idea may be added to the school's curriculum.

## **Political or religious Discussions at a Dojo**

Not for my school. I do encourage study of critical thinking and deep study of the humanities. All education into social, medical, psychological, and multicultural studies, are encouraged. I avoid spiritual, political, or religious discussions at the school. We will bring up subjects in the context of martial art history and theory as needed to explain the healing and martial art techniques.

## **The Sensei as the first and last word in the Dojo**

There are many ways to operate a martial art school. Some schools operate like a well-run business. Some Dojos are run by a benevolent dictator or a philosopher king or queen. In some schools you "are on your own" and we are all friends having fun. In some early martial art schools, a student dared not ask about a rank promotion or did not ask why a technique was taught a certain way. The stories of students sitting outside a monastery for a year waiting for an invitation to enter to study was common in ancient China. This was a test of their commitment. In my time we were told to have faith and just practice the arts with an open mind. We were told that the system will answer our questions. I answer all questions in private or by e-mail and if I do not know the answer I will say so. If I can I will find out an answer and get back to you.

### **Rules for Black Belt class and Other Guidelines**

A fixed rule was no talking during upper-level black belt classes may still be important. If you were late a minute for an advanced black belt class, the door was locked no matter how far you traveled to get to the monthly class you would turn around and go home. This rule was revised, and you were welcome, but a phone call before would be proper protocol. A more current and more casual way at black belt classes is no casual talk raise your hand to ask a question and only brief quiet talk between you and your workout partner in between the technique.

Prof. Estes said for his massage classes with 40 students, and this applies today at our school “If you can converse without me hearing the conversation it is ok as long as it does not disrupt the class”.

### **Asking Questions in a Regular Class**

If it is a small class, questions can now be answered but during large classes questions interrupt the flow of the class. Practice the art first and it may answer your question.

### **Safety first!**

If you ever feel unsafe stop and let the instructor know. If it is between you and your work out partner, let the instructor know we can usually gently resolve the problem. See #1 RULE above. If you are injured before class let the instructor know. If you get hurt during class stop! Let the instructor know. If you are angry, frightened and you need a break let the instructor know as this is part of your training. Assume responsibility for your personal safety first. Later, as you advance, you put your partner’s safety first. If you are uncomfortable but need a break it may be a good time to ask if you can move off the mat to write in your notebook.

**If you have a problem with the way the instructor or the Sensei is teaching refer to #1 RULE above**

### **Are There Secret Techniques That Are Not Taught to All the Students?**

Yes. The hidden or Okuden arts are traditionally only taught to selected students after many years of advanced instruction. The internet has made some secrets less hidden, and science makes many of the martial art mysteries less mysterious. In times past the reason for secret techniques may be to keep the old Sensei alive with an ace up his/her sleeve to use against a rival school or from the younger black belt who wants to take over the school by beating up the old Sensei. A real concern today is the knowledge of exposing all your techniques can be used against you or used be a criminal or terrorist as in 9/11 taking martial art classes before the hijackings. I think that there was a lot of carrot dangling out there as Sensei would use the hidden arts to encourage your continued demanding work to see what was behind the curtain #1. Having the advanced arts demonstrated in public or in front of non-black belt ranks (Kyu Ranks) is disrespectful and not safe for the Kyu ranks or for the public.

### **Why someone should follow a Sensei**

Can the Sensei demonstrate abilities that I would like to learn and possibly improve on? Does the Sensei do the best for the most students possible? Is the Sensei living an overly lavish lifestyle while requiring other instructors to do all the teaching? Are the Dojo fees thousands of dollars with testing fees? As the instructor said after hearing of a miracle one of his peers claimed that he could do the instructor told his peer said, “you show me”. Another teacher said something like “a form of insanity is to think that you can always do what you once could do”. If your Sensei has no faults you may not be paying attention! If you are unable to agree to disagree in private with your Sensei refer to #1 Rule.

**At their best Sensei is a positive example to others, a life counselor, a cheerleader, a lifeguard, and a healing art therapist all in one**

## A Martial Art School Can Be More Than Just a Place to Work Out

### **The aggressive student**

If a new student demonstrates an aggressive way of relating with others, he /she may see the world as a hostile place and they use threats towards others as a distancing defensive coping skill. With close observation and paring the student up with a higher rank sometimes martial arts training may help the student become less aggressive. This student may become a valued student and may become a valued gentle teacher in time. This type of student may need to find another school in another system if character development and ethical self-defense is not what they are interested in.

### **The timid student**

A very timid person may need gentle encouragement to overcome past mental or physical trauma and succeed in overcoming their well-founded fears. While using gradual desensitizing of being close to others and working to face physical contact to learn the technique their confidence can increase. This type of student may need counseling with a mental health professional if the close contact with others in class brings up severe memories of past abuse. The therapist should work with the martial art instructor to complement the student's therapy. Desensitizing the attack by placing your hands on the student's shoulders first the gradually moving them to the neck to teach a two-hand choke escape can help with this kind of trauma. Using a gentle teacher of the same gender is sometimes a good idea.

### **Business and Martial Arts**

Martial Arts and Martial Art Sports systems and some for profit commercial Martial Art schools can share the same methods of teaching and promote the wellbeing of their students. Some schools may place monetary profit for the owner of the school as a top priority. It is difficult to run a business and a martial art school at the same time. If their teaching goal is to beat up the opponent for a trophy like the fictional Corbra kai from the movie The Karate Kid. I would avoid this kind of school. There are many commercial martial art business courses that may be helpful if you want to make a living at a commercial or franchise martial art school. I have no experience or desire to change what and who I teach for with a business model. Many adult or junior students can train under one instructor learning Kata or arts practiced without an attacker providing one teacher with the ability to make an income. A martial art chain of school's franchise would be one way to achieve this

## **Basic categories of martial art styles**

### **What Types of Martial Arts Are There?**

Through personal research anyone can find out the rich variety of martial art styles or martial art systems. There are many types of martial arts that I am now aware of. In my many years of study, exposure to many other martial art styles at martial art classes and at martial art conventions, I have an idea of what different martial art systems are like. With the availability of the internet anyone can research many other martial art styles that were once secret or limited to a certain geographical area. Some combat martial art systems will specialize in extreme life or death applications to violently end the fight as soon as possible. A few martial arts use pain compliance police control arts. Some specialized systems will teach agency approved mental health workers to use minimum redirection or take downs of the mentally ill in hospitals. Some arts like Aikido use as little force as possible to evade and redirect the attacker into a mutually beneficial harmonious state.

## Basic categories of martial art styles continued

**Hard styles** seem mostly linear with strong defensive and offensive mainly striking arts like Katate, Kempo, Taekwondo, Muay Thai, and Karate. The benefit of these arts is the obvious disabling techniques to kill or maim an attacker at long mid-range and sometimes close-range defense with attacks to vital points. Hard style mental and physical conditioning is required.

As in all extreme conditioning activities, injuries are likely if these arts are not taught under a very skilled traditional teacher with many years' experience. Some of these arts cross over to sports. Although it may be that limited sparring targets and impact limits in training make the martial art less practical for self-defense. The sparring for the hard style student is needed to test the students under the stress of competition but safe enough so the students are not severely injured. Some hard style systems can be learned quicker than some soft styles.

Defense against life and death response is often taught sooner in a hard style system. Avoidance and less than lethal arts against less dangerous attacks using another self-defense system is sometimes taught together with some hard style systems.

With a hard style and some soft style Tai Chi or Chi Gung class many adult or junior students can train under one instructor. By learning single person Kata or arts practiced without an attacker can provide one teacher with the ability to make a decent income.

**Soft styles** tend to be taught at a gentle slow pace in mostly circular feeling. A soft style like DZR, Aikido, or traditional Judo requires a partner to move with to find the path of least resistance to blend and redirect the attacker's movement and their intent. These arts came from the weapon arts of Japan, so the foot work is the same in both weapon and weaponless arts. Some arts like Taijiquan and Qigong are taught in the west as a movement in meditation system or healing arts system Their roots are from classic Chinese fighting systems.

**Jujitsu** or the older term Bujutsu is another soft style and is a generic term that does not specify a system. Bujutsu can be an ancient traditional system now taught to non-Japanese clan members dressed in traditional Japanese clothing using traditional Japanese weapons. Many Bujutsu systems seem to specialize in certain types of traditional Japanese martial art armed and unarmed techniques.

**Hybrid Jujitsu systems.** An example of this soft style system is DanZan Ryu (DZR). DZR is from Hawaii in the 1930's founded by Professor Okazaki. This is a comprehensive system where many of the martial arts from around the world are taught. These arts are on lists incorporating the ancient and modern into a cohesive and complete martial art. Every teacher adds to this knowledge and refines the art to fit their personality and teaches to their student's needs. The modern martial art "Do" or "Way" makes moral and ethical considerations and sometimes includes the healing arts essential to complete one's character to benefit the greater good. Conflict resolution avoid, redirect, and use of more lethal self-defense is taught based on the student's positive character demonstrated over years of training.

This requires the students to be teachers as this art requires more than one teacher to help the arts be practiced safely under the supervision of the Sempai (teacher) or Sensei (head instructor). More often the instructors volunteer their time and make donations to the Dojo as the other students do. The Sensei often has another job to support himself / herself and to fund the Dojo during lean times. Teaching larger kid classes seems to be the only way to keep some Dojo's open. Parents or single parents are very busy working and taking their kids to after school organized events. A great solution is to have the parent or parents join the junior class as helpers and eventually they may join the adult class making martial arts a family activity.

**Brazilian Jujitsu (BJJ)** comes from Judo and was used in no holds barred contest to prove the superiority of their BJJ. The use of these contests with only a few rules match no time limits and no weight division looked to test (BJJ) against martial art the hard style stand up karate systems. Some judo versus (BJJ) matches were fought. BJJ evolved from what was called an underground blood sport to the current cage fighting or mixed martial art sport of today. Once the collegiate wrestlers learned the Judo finishing holds that BJJ used and a longer list of rules made it possible to massively profit from what is also called cage fighting to a very large commercial cable TV market. This sport is like some ancient Bujutsu schools that specialized in a few types of arts. BJJ uses grappling, takedowns, and striking to preserve and promote their specialized and evolving commercial sport. BJJ has taken over the name Jujitsu as they have such a presence in the commercial media. Their BJJ high-ranking teachers get thousands of dollars for teaching at clinics and their techniques are outstanding. Many BJJ teachers volunteer to teach others out the love for their art and they attain a high level of proficiency through clinics, hard work, and dedication.

### **Specialized Training**

With their official trainer's approval, Police, Prison Guards, Mental Health Workers, and members of the Military are taught different techniques than the basic civilian student. This training will be within their code of conduct use of force. A Special Woman's assault prevention weekend course is also available.

## **Martial Arts as a Path to Non-Violence in the Workplace**

### **Does anyone really win a fight?**

Not really. At my martial school I remind students that no one really wins a fight, but we need to be prepared and to be aware, so we may avoid or defend ourselves against violence.

Working at the Prison or at the Mental Health Facility taught me to use verbal de-escalation skills and as a last resort to use the least amount of physical force to end conflict. If we were able to provide a safe therapeutic environment everyone was safer. By not resorting to physical intervention as a first choice everyone was safer. By using verbal de-escalation and other nonviolent resources available was the best way to survive a violent workplace. When we can show that we did everything that we could to avoid physical intervention we were more often backed up by the administration and we were more likely to be able to go home safe and keep our job.

### **When two People Fight Both People Lose**

### **Act as if Cameras are Everywhere to Monitor Your Actions**

One reason to avoid a physical conflict is that it often does not end with one incident, but it escalates.

A couple of examples from my experiences.

As a security guard in Reno, Nevada the tools that we could control the violent customer is our voice, more guards if available, our radio to call for casino security guards if available to ask the customer to leave the casino. The police are called by the casino as a last resort and only after serious injuries to customers or staff. As a security guard at casino night club if I show an angry drunk that I was the bad ass with skills by putting him on the ground while I remained standing over him is fine but what happens next? I will need to find another job as a guard using self-defense to an attack was not allowed. To back away and call for casino security was my job. The customer may sue me. If I am very skilled the physical intervention will look like a gentle accident and with no one hurt the night may end well. To protect myself or someone else from a severe attack I must be willing to be fired, go to jail, or be sued if I had no other choice.

### **Your self-defense actions have unexpected complications.**

If I was able to get the drunk out of the club and casino security did not make him leave the casino I am now on extra alert after the incident for the rest of my shift. My attention must be in several places at once. As I am checking identifications at one entrance, I am keeping my awareness on where my fellow guard is, I will be monitoring the verbal and physical cues from the club customers while looking for possible ways to preemptively stop the next fight before it starts. While doing all of this I know that man that I escorted out of the club earlier may come back in another entrance with a weapon or with some friends to get back at me as I humiliated him. When I go home, I am scanning the parking lot for the people that I ejected from the club and hope that they do not follow me home for immediate or later revenge. You may eat at the casino restaurant, but your back is towards the wall, so you do not get caught off guard by someone recognizing you that you may have been treated roughly the night before.

### **How to get support from others.**

His friends and other customers are watching the interaction between the drunk and myself at the casino bar. They want a fun and safe night, but they do not like a security guard bully throwing their weight around as this might have been them later in the night. They do not want to deal with an out-of-control minimum wage security guard abusing his/her authority.

### **I go down this check list later if things went badly.**

1. Did I quietly ask his friends to calm their friend down?
2. Did I gently encourage the customer to follow me one on one to a quieter place to calmly ask him if he was ok, agree to behavioral guidelines, and encourage him to have a fun and safe night?
3. Before this did you inform your back up guard (If you have one) of your intended verbal intervention.

### **Check your attitude and your inflated ego.**

I must not bring my fear and resentment to the job or home with me. As an example, being a security guard is a difficult job. These questions I ask myself. Are why am I doing this job for slightly over minimum wage, no benefits, less than 20 hours a week, and with no job security? Is it even worth it?

Your co-workers, employer, and most of the public are glad that you showed up to work today.

The benefit that a security guard provides to others is important although not compensated for. Businesses and the public rely on the security guard to be their eyes and ears, to protect their safety and to be there in case of a medical emergency. You are not a police officer.

### **Martial Art Principles that I Learned While Working at a Mental Health Facilities**

Working at a locked psychiatric hospital created other challenges to use verbal conflict resolution rather than physical intervention when possible.

The mentally ill and the prisoners from the jail or prison could and do use any attacks like biting, gouging flesh, or your eyes, all kinds of strikes, kicks, groin grabs, weapons, or planned attacks with multiple attackers. The tools used to remain safe at this violent workplace.

The MHT is very limited without the lethal or less than lethal tools that the police and guards at the jail have. As a Mental health Technician (MHT) you are not allowed to defend yourself with the same level of force that the police can.

Unlike the MHT's the police can go one step above the level of force used against them. While following their departments guidelines the police officer may use their pepper spray, taser, baton, or flashlight to effect an arrest or to prevent the attacker from disarming the officer. The officer follows their department's guidelines.

Martial Art study, meditation, and studies of the humanities kept me from becoming more mentally and physically damaged from over 15 years in this toxic workplace. The physical pain was obvious and the mental and emotional healing was harder to achieve.

**“Darkness has a hunger that's insatiable and lightness has a call that's hard to hear.”**



## **The Indigo Girls**

### **The Challenges of No Rules for Your Attacker**

The mentally ill and the prisoners from the jail or prison could and do use any attacks like biting, gouging flesh, or your eyes, all kinds of strikes, kicks, groin grabs, weapons, or planned attacks with multiple attackers. The tools used to remain safe at this violent work place.

The MHT is very limited without the lethal or less than lethal tools that the police and guards at the jail have. As a Mental health Technician (MHT) you are not allowed to defend yourself with the same level of force that the attacking patient can.

Unlike the MHT's the police can go one step above the level of force used against them.

### **Remain calm especially when those around you are not!**

The workers at the mental health hospital need calm verbal skills and continuous communication to help create a safe therapeutic environment so they can go home at the end of their shift without serious mental or physical injuries. All the MHT's can do if verbal redirection and when verbal de-escalation is not possible, or it is not effective is to wait for other MHT's to show up and help escort the attacker to seclusion room for time out. This is called physical restraint when you put hands on to escort. If the client is extremely violent, we may take the client to the ground to be restrained with leather leg and wrist restraints. This is called mechanical restraint. Medication to control violent patients who do harm to themselves or harm to others is called chemical restraint. Both physical restraint and chemical restraint are not used as often as in the past so the danger to the client is less but the danger to staff is greatly increased.

In the mental health hospital, like in the general population, people react out of insecurity, fear, out of unrestrained anger, or out of thrill-seeking adolescent boredom.

As in society the most dangerous clients were the prisoners from jail or from the prison who have oppositional defiance disorder. Sometimes these people demonstrated psychopathic behaviors as they do not appear to have the ability to have empathy for others. These people seem to have remained at the adolescent stage where they were unaware or uncaring of the cause and effect of their actions. Some of these people are not mentally ill and they were unable or unwilling to benefit from behavioral mental health therapy. These clients were aware that they are basically in charge of the unit until the patient attacks a doctor or until staff can convince the doctor to discharge them.

Who to remain hopeful for the future and not to become discouraged is a continuing process

## **Prepare for the worst expect the best**

Prof. Bob "Bobasan" Karnes  
Revised 11-14-2022  
Golden Sage Martial Arts  
[www.bobasan.net](http://www.bobasan.net)