



# SMAA JOURNAL

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## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### 2024 SMAA DUES

This is a reminder that SMAA membership fees were due on January 1, 2024. Your prompt attention to this matter is appreciated. Payments can be easily and securely made at [www.smaa-hq.com](http://www.smaa-hq.com).

We appreciate our members paying dues promptly. It makes life easier for the SMAA staff of volunteers, and it is representative of the type of self-discipline we are cultivating through the study of traditional Japanese martial arts.

### DONATIONS & TAX DEDUCTIONS

The SMAA is a federally tax-exempt, nonprofit corporation. As such, your donations to our association are tax deductible. Send your donations, in the form of a check or money order (made out to SMAA), to our headquarters in Michigan. We'll send you a letter back acknowledging your contribution, which you can then use for tax purposes. We hope you'll support the SMAA in our goal to preserve and promote traditional budo and koryu bujutsu.

### E-MAIL

Please make sure we have your correct e-mail address. Without this address, we can't e-mail you the *SMAA Journal*.

Do you have a new e-mail address? Have you sent it to [hedavey@aol.com](mailto:hedavey@aol.com)? If not, we also won't be

### OBJECTIVES OF THE SMAA

1. To promote and aid in the growth of Japan's traditional arts and ways.
2. To assist the public in achieving spiritual growth and physical development through budo/bujutsu.
3. To further friendship and understanding between Asian and Western martial artists.
4. To establish goodwill and harmony among martial artists of various systems.
5. To offer Western martial artists access to legitimate budo/bujutsu organizations and teachers in Japan.
6. To give practitioners of authentic budo/bujutsu recognition for their years of devotion to these arts.

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- Karl Scott Sensei
- Nicklaus Suino Sensei
- H. E. Davey Sensei

**Editor:** H. E. Davey Sensei

**Assistant Editor:** Troy Swenson Sensei

**Webmaster:** Don Prior Sensei

**General Manager:** Nicklaus Suino Sensei

修道館武道会

able to send you SMAA publications, so please be sure to let us know if your e-mail address changes.

## SMAA PATCHES

The SMAA HQ is selling official SMAA patches for your gi. They're great looking patches that embody the spirit and honor instilled in members of our group. They won't fade or bleed when you bleach them, and yet we've been able to keep the cost down. Each patch is basically a 3 ½ inch circle featuring our logo below:



Our patches were produced using state of the art digitizing and ultra-modern technology to create an accurate and attractive embroidered emblem. They feature tight stitches, sharp detail, clean lettering, and top quality craftsmanship. There's no jagged stitching, but we've still got plenty of stitches so that the background doesn't show through.

*The patch should be worn on the left side of your gi jacket near your heart. SMAA policy mandates only one patch per uniform to maintain the sense of dignity associated with traditional budo.*

These new patches are a great way to show your respect and enthusiasm for our group; we hope all of our members will order at least one. *And the best part is the patches are only \$5.00 (US) each!* (E-mail [shudokan@smaa-hq.com](mailto:shudokan@smaa-hq.com) about special shipping for international orders.)

To order, go to the "Payments" section of [www.smaa-hq.com](http://www.smaa-hq.com) or send a check or money order made out to "SMAA" to:

**SMAA HQ**  
**PO Box 6022**  
**Ann Arbor, MI 48106-6022**  
**USA**

## FACEBOOK PAGE



Have you been to the SMAA Facebook page? If not, you're missing out on the latest SMAA news, features, videos, photos, and information. It's easy and safe to join Facebook, and all you need to do is click the "Like" button to become a follower of our Facebook page. This is the fastest way to get SMAA news and updates, and we hope you'll drop by <http://www.facebook.com/ShudokanMartialArtsAssociation> and check it out. Once you're on Facebook, we hope you'll share our page with your friends and help us promote the SMAA.

## SMAA ONLINE PAYMENTS

Did you know you can pay for your annual dues at our website using PayPal or a major credit card? You can, and you can also pay for gi patches and promotions in the same way. This is a much faster, and in some ways more secure, means of sending money to our headquarters. We hope more of our members will make use of this feature. Just drop by <http://smaa-hq.com/payments.php> for more information.

## SMAA YOUTUBE CHANNEL

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Shudokan Martial Arts Association

Want to see some great videos of SMAA teachers, officials, and members? Now you can by visiting our YouTube channel. We're Shudokan1994, because 1994 is the year the SMAA was founded.

To see video of SMAA teachers and members, go to:

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gg5Nika6Ge0&list=PLS11\\_XCH8RkI868tRKZ0fdJFSeFGyNZ0o](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gg5Nika6Ge0&list=PLS11_XCH8RkI868tRKZ0fdJFSeFGyNZ0o)

To see video of the amazing experts that trained leading SMAA officials and teachers, go to:

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zcE7zBhv9Hs&list=PLS11\\_XCH8RkIV8liNZoXI93WI79BLe1NZ](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zcE7zBhv9Hs&list=PLS11_XCH8RkIV8liNZoXI93WI79BLe1NZ)

## NEW SMAA ONLINE LIBRARY

We're always trying to offer more benefits to go along with your SMAA membership. So, be sure to

## 30 YEARS OF THE SMAA

*By H. E. Davey*

This year marks the 30th anniversary of the Shudokan Martial Arts Association. I was present at the beginning of our worldwide nonprofit association, and I'd like to reflect on what this anniversary means to me and the goals of studying budo in the SMAA. The objectives of our group and the traditional martial arts we practice are lofty and not always understood.

Since I'm a writer, I wanted to produce something special for SMAA members: an article of length and substance to help you appreciate the history of the SMAA and what our leaders think of as the true meaning of budo. It's my anniversary gift to all of you.

### THE BEGINNING

I grew up practicing authentic Japanese budo, starting at age five. And with the exception of studying with my late father, who was Japan-

drop by [www.smaa-hq.com](http://www.smaa-hq.com) and check out the new SMAA Online Library. We're in the process of gradually adding back issues of the *SMAA Journal* to our website.

## HYPERLINKS

Since we live in the age of the Internet, we're trying to make the *SMAA Journal* more interactive. Look for words in blue and underlined. These are hyperlinks.

Click on them, and you'll connect to websites that can give you information about topics mentioned in this and future issues. Have fun surfing the web! Just remember to come back and finish reading the rest of this issue.

certified to teach judo, aikido, and jujutsu, most of this training took place under Japanese and Japanese-American teachers. It was a great way to grow up, and budo was explained to me as being more than a hobby.

Over time, and especially after becoming a teacher, I realized that not everyone outside of Japan had received the message that Japanese martial arts can and should be practiced as a method of character development. These arts are just that—art forms—and while some modern budo can be practiced as sports, this wasn't originally the main focus.

Many contemporary forms of budo end in the designation -do, which means the "Way." Even in the case of ancient samurai era martial arts, the Do concept isn't unknown, but it's often glossed over by Western students of these arts, and this dumbing down of the Do has sometimes taken place in Japan as well. But what is the Do and why should we care?



*The author teaching traditional jujutsu*

## FIND AND FOLLOW THE WAY

Do is the Japanese version of the Chinese word Tao (道) as in the philosophy of Taoism. We see this character used in everything from chado (茶道), the “Way of tea,” to shodo (書道), the “Way of Japanese calligraphy.” It implies that studying these activities goes beyond those specific arts and includes the art of living itself—life lessons if you will.

It’s in this sense that practitioners of shodo, budo (武道), and other Do forms say they’re practicing a Way of life. Yet, frequently they *just say it*, but often don’t live it or effectively teach it.

Strong words, but after decades of studying various Japanese arts in Japan and the USA, and after writing several books on these age-old disciplines, I’m starting to understand a bit about this topic. What’s more, although I sometimes criticize teachers of these subjects (including myself), I also believe that we really can discover a new, better way of living by practicing budo and similar arts. If I didn’t feel this way, I wouldn’t have written books about those arts and taught several of them for over 50 years.

So, it concerns me that some teachers of these arts, and their books as well, offer up “fortune cookie philosophy.” This is the idea that a few brief and

superficial sayings about the Way will allow people to travel along this path. It rarely works, and it’s a problem in Japan as well, where sensei favor less verbal instruction. There are valid historical, cultural, and philosophical reasons for this “learn it by copying it” approach, but that method also allows teachers to hide deficiencies in understanding the Way.

Sure, most sensei pay random lip service to the idea that mastering an effective approach to living is possible by studying the Way of calligraphy or the Way of flower arrangement, kado (花道). But do they actually teach this or even demonstrate it? When critically evaluated, it becomes clear that many do not.

But some do, and I fortunately practiced martial arts with that sort of special individual while growing up and continuing into adulthood. I’ve belonged to various Japanese and American martial arts associations over the years, and while I benefited from involvement in these groups, I also saw behaviors that were opposed to the spirit of the Way that my teachers and sempai, “seniors,” taught me.

There wasn’t always, for example, much in the way of jita kyoei (自他共栄), an important principle espoused by judo’s founder emphasizing mutual welfare and benefit: the simple idea that we benefit



*“The Way.” Japanese calligraphy by the author*

by working together instead of against each other. And I wasn't the only one that felt this way.

As I continued to teach and practice traditional Japanese martial arts, I met other lifelong practitioners in some of the above-mentioned and unnamed associations, who'd come to similar conclusions. Some of these folks I met in Japan, others in the USA, and still others I reconnected with in the United States after they returned from living and training in Japan. We all loved what we'd spent most of our lives practicing, but we were concerned about whether these arts that were rooted in traditional Japanese culture would survive undamaged into the 21st century.

So, we decided to do something about it. You can guess what came next.

### **THE SMAA IS BORN**

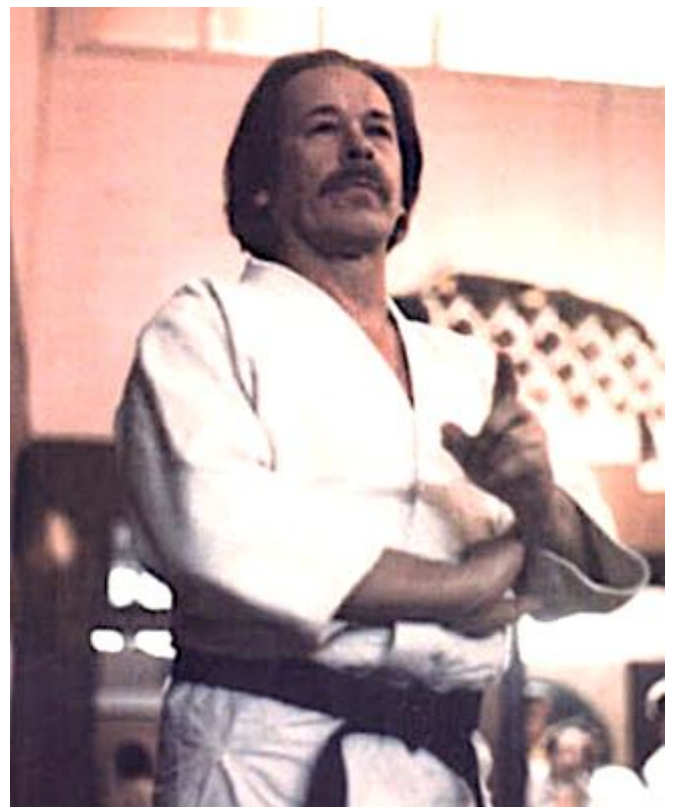
During the course of studying and teaching budo I met one of the true pioneers of Japanese martial arts in the United States: Walter Todd Sensei. I discovered that my friend taught judo, aikido, and karate-do, arts he learned in Japan under legendary experts.

My late dad, Victor Davey Sensei, started studying jujutsu under Japanese teachers back in 1926; he later took up judo and aikido. A captain in the US army, he lived in the Kyoto area for seven years after WWII, where he continued to learn traditional jujutsu. After he'd been in Japan for some time, he met a young enlisted man named Walter Todd, who came to the Kodokan Judo Institute. My dad trained at the Kodokan upon its reopening (after the lifting of the ban on budo), and he was surprised to see another American arrive.

Unlike my father, Todd Sensei had no budo background, but he was very motivated, learning to speak Japanese and visiting every dojo he could find. With the help of his Japanese girlfriend, he trained at the Kodokan with top teachers, and he

studied Wado Ryu karate-do under its founder. Unlike my dad, he didn't stay in Japan, but his job with the military allowed him to regularly return for extended visits.

In the 1950s, he was part of a U. S. Strategic Air Command (SAC) group that brought an assembly of legendary budo sensei from Japan to America. They included Tomiki Kenji Sensei of aikido and judo, Obata Isao Sensei of Shotokan karate-do, along with important teachers of judo as well as other arts. Todd Sensei was also part of an ongoing SAC combatives course at the Kodokan, which employed senior martial arts experts, from varying disciplines, including Kotani Sumiyuki Sensei (judo 10th dan). The late Todd Sensei received high ranks in judo, aikido, and karate-do from well-established federations in Japan, and he started one of the longest running dojo in the U.S. We met in the 1980s through a Tokyo-based budo group, and I reconnected Todd Sensei with my dad.



*Todd Sensei*

Todd Sensei's dojo wasn't that far from mine in California, and I'd sometimes have dinner with him when we both finished teaching. On one occasion we were complaining about the excessive politics in many budo groups, how martial arts training outside Japan had lost its meaning, and other issues facing budo in the West. Todd Sensei was especially disappointed in the way martial arts federations were organized:

- American and European associations that had lost touch with the original spirit of budo and were lacking in technical understanding as well
- Japanese federations that rarely acknowledged the mastery of longtime Western exponents with legitimate training
- Eastern and Western groups that were so disorganized students never received regular newsletters, membership cards, certificates, and other items they paid for, not realizing that this lack professionalism was an indictment of their understanding of budo principles
- Excessive complexity and administrative hierarchy, all to serve the fragile egos of association officials
- Unnecessary competitiveness between Japanese and Western budo organizations, with each side failing to realize they could accomplish more working together than apart
- And a whole bunch more

We often had conversations like that, but this time, in the autumn of 1993 I said, "Sensei, if you don't like it, why don't you do something about it? You have high ranks in multiple budo, you've got connections with top teachers in Japan, so why not

create a better association, one we'd both like to be part of? In fact, why don't we do it together?"

Todd Sensei said, "Well, the two of us don't really amount to much of an association." I reminded him that given our decades of training, we both knew many talented and legitimate budo sensei, and I had friends that were teaching koryu bujutsu. I volunteered to approach these genuine experts to see if they'd help us start a new association.

Todd Sensei agreed, and we knew that it was more important to find professional level sensei to lead the association than to attempt to get lots of members. The foundation needed to be laid before anything meaningful could be built on it.

### CREATING THE SMAA

This conversation took place late at night sitting in my tiny sports car, and we decided that SMAA Directors would need at least 20 years of training and a minimum rank of sixth dan (or an equivalent classical teaching license). Todd Sensei offered to lead the judo and aikido divisions. His rank in judo was eighth dan, with the legendary Mifune Kyuzo Sensei, 10th dan, being one of his key teachers. In aikido, he held sixth dan, having studied under Tohei Koichi Sensei, 10th dan. So those two divisions were well taken care of.

Todd Sensei asked me to lead a division for traditional jujutsu and I agreed. We thought at the same time to ask Karl Scott Sensei to join us. Scott Sensei had decades of training in the USA and Okinawa in karate-do and aikido, quite a bit of which was under the guidance of Mr. Todd as well as Shimabukuro Eizo Sensei, 10th dan. I called Scott Sensei in Michigan, a seventh dan in karate-do, and he agreed to help. We asked him to head the karate-do division.

I suggested contacting Nicklaus Suino Sensei, a friend I'd met in Japan, who'd recently returned to



*Suino Sensei, iaido eighth dan*

the U.S. (Michigan) armed with a high rank in iaido. Moreover, Suino Sensei had just become an attorney, and I figured he could offer legal advice to the fledgling federation. He agreed to help and head our iaido division.

Now we had five divisions covering some of the most popular martial arts. In January of 1994, certificates were issued in the name of the new association that appointed each of us as division directors, and the SMAA was born. We had some simple, but important objectives:

- No unqualified teachers and no promoting people to high ranks just to launch the new group. We knew of Japanese and Western associations that lowered their standards “just to get initial members and get the new association off the ground.” This never worked in the long run.
- No selling rank, literally or metaphorically. Along similar lines, no honorary ranks; we’d seen this cause trouble for the budo community around the world.
- No over emphasis on rank, colored belts, fancy titles, and the like. All of this trivialized the Japanese martial arts
- No over emphasis on sports in the budo that feature this element. There were plenty of sport budo associations. The world wasn’t in dire need of one more.
- No annual membership cards. This was a time-consuming hassle for groups we’d been in, and it wasn’t needed, especially for an association that was not heavily focused on tournaments.
- No levels of administrative bureaucracy to sift through, no district directors, no regional directors, no national directors—every member worldwide would deal directly with the SMAA HQ. This would streamline and speed up communication.
- No dojo memberships to be annually renewed. This is unnecessary if each dojo has a certified teacher. The teacher’s certification is enough, and anything more is to make money off the instructor and students. We’d find other ways to fund the new group.
- Create and distribute regular newsletters to members. This was needed to serve one of our goals: educating the public about budo history, philosophy, and theory. Plus, it would help to create a sense of community among members.
- Establish relationships with reputable sensei in Japan. The goal wasn’t to create an American martial arts group, despite the fact that the initial officials were Americans. We wanted an international association that merged Japanese and Western leadership to create something new.
- Reasonably priced annual memberships for full members with rank and associate members, who chose not to be evaluated and ranked by the SMAA
- Offer affordable seminars to members and the public

- Thoroughly test candidates for teaching certification, but once these individuals were certified it would be important to support them, giving them the authority to recommend their students to the SMAA for promotions within one rank of their own.
- Create a logo and gi patch, but avoid a ton of different patches for every rank and level of teaching certification. The SMAA wasn't the Boy Scouts; we didn't need multiple budo merit badges. This plethora of patches trivialized budo and was mostly to make money and bolster brittle egos.
- We could avoid the pitfalls of groups we'd been in by keeping expenses low, which would eliminate the need for ever increasing amounts of income. We'd accomplish this with a streamlined approach, no membership cards to be printed and mailed, a digital journal with no printing and mailing cost, advertising online and via social media, and the creation of a nonprofit, tax exempt organization.

We eventually achieved all of these goals and more. But to do it we needed help.

## DEVELOPING THE SMAA

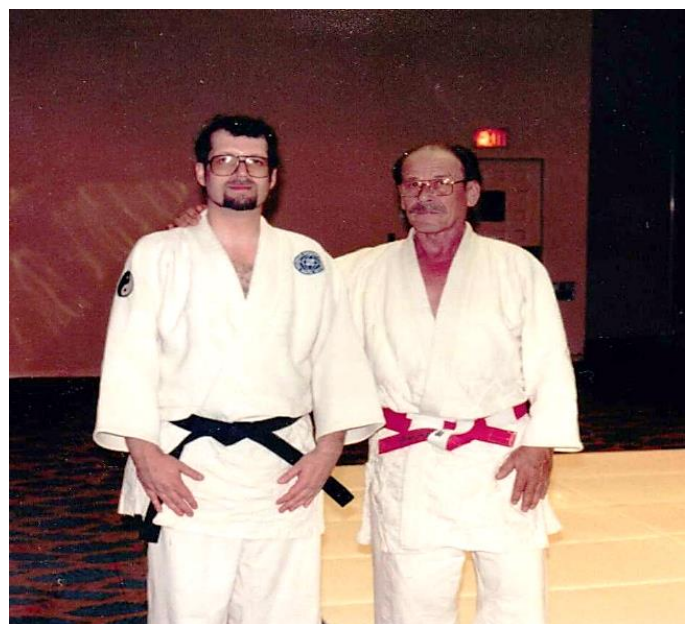
Too many martial arts federations emphasize attracting members more than developing qualified teachers to lead their associations. They end up with profitable groups, with many members, most of whom have a shallow understanding of budo. This is inevitable when the leadership has a poor understanding themselves. We didn't want that.

We wanted to be respected because of what we taught and who taught it—not because we had a lot of members. In traditional Japanese culture the quality of the students was thought to be more important than the number of students. We felt the same.

So before attempting to gather masses of members, we focused on creating an elite board of advisors, who'd guide the new group and avoid the pitfalls of some associations we'd been part of. To that end, I reached out to friends I respected, some of whom were also known by other SMAA division heads.

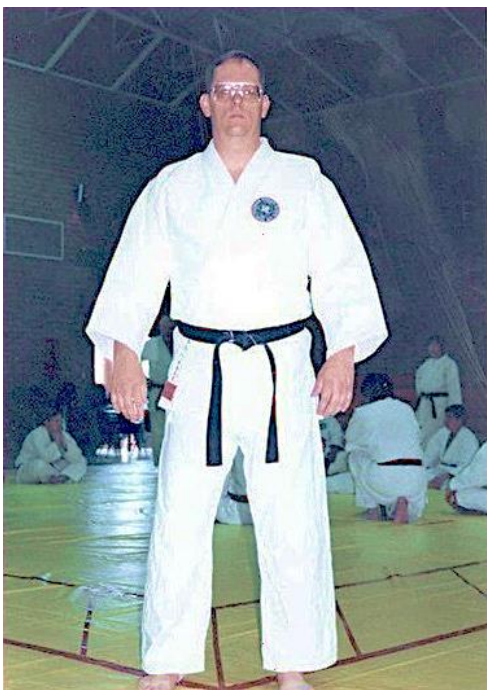
In the mid-90's, I asked Mike Donnelly Sensei to join the SMAA Board of Advisors. Donnelly Sensei lived in New Hampshire, was a lifelong aikido practitioner, a fourth dan, and an attorney. I figured his legal skills could be useful, and I respected his judgment. He helped fund the early newsletters when they were still being folded and mailed, he helped create our logo, and he offered legal advice. Donnelly Sensei for a time was the general manager of the SMAA, handling our daily affairs and doing a bunch of work for us, the same position Suino Sensei holds today; bringing him in was a good decision. He's since passed away, but he was a key member and my friend.

About the same time, I asked Richard Burkland Sensei, who's based in Colorado, to join the SMAA Board of Advisors. He practiced judo and jujutsu



*Donnelly Sensei (left) and Todd Sensei*





*Burkland Sensei*

from an early age under well-known teachers from Japan, and he was a lieutenant colonel in the US Army. Highly educated, Burkland Sensei also holds a PhD, and like Mr. Donnelly, I respected his advice. He's written for our journal and made a number of contributions to our group.

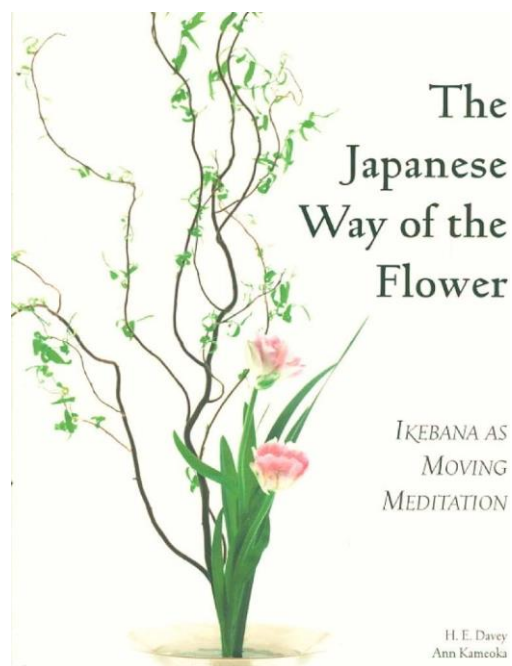
I also asked Kevin Heard Sensei, who lives in California, to join our board of advisors at this time.



*Heard Sensei*

One of the original members of the SMAA, he now has over 40 years of training in Saigo Ryu, a system of Nihon jujutsu that incorporates multiple traditional weapons. Ranked sixth dan in the SMAA Jujutsu Division, he was the assistant editor of our journal for many years, the creator and webmaster of our website, and the producer of our certificates. He did all of this for free.

I asked my wife Ann Kameoka Sensei to join the SMAA Board of Advisors about this time. Ann has extensive training in Ikenobo flower arrangement, the oldest ikebana system in the world. She's also the co-author of *The Japanese Way of the Flower: Ikebana as Moving Meditation*.

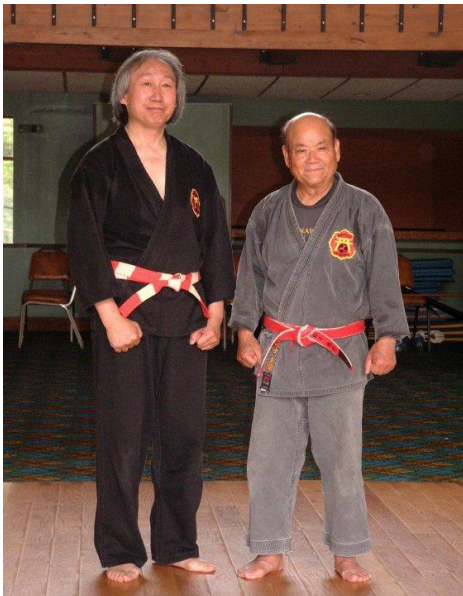


*A book co-authored by Kameoka Sensei*

Along with a teaching certificate from the Ikenobo headquarters in Kyoto, she's studied Shin-shin-toitsu-do, a system of Japanese yoga and meditation, for decades. Japanese yoga and ikebana have principles that overlap with budo, something recognized by the other SMAA officials, who supported Ann's appointment. (While I've recruited many SMAA Directors and Advisors, I've never approached this one-sidedly, and each nominee has been approved by our officials.)

While I was doing this, Scott Sensei contacted Herbert Wong Sensei about becoming an SMAA Senior Advisor. Wong Sensei was living in California, he held two PhDs in psychology and an eighth dan in Shorin Ryu karate-do. He's also passed away, but he represented the type of leader we wanted: someone as successful in his personal and business life as in martial arts. And Wong Sensei was just that, with years of training in Okinawa under the late Shimabukuro Eizo Sensei, who promoted him to hachidan, a rank also issued to him by the SMAA.

About this time my writing career was getting off the ground. I started writing for martial arts magazines, then I branched into automotive journalism, and later began writing for Japanese



*Wong Sensei and Shimabukuro Sensei*

newspapers like the *Hokubei Mainichi* and the *Nichibeï Times*. But given my budo background, I first offered my writing to martial arts publications. I wrote for some mainstream ones, trying to present an alternative viewpoint and an explanation of what authentic budo was all about. But I eventually found publications that were more interested in the culture, spirit, and meaning budo than who was in the latest kung fu movie I had no interest in watching.

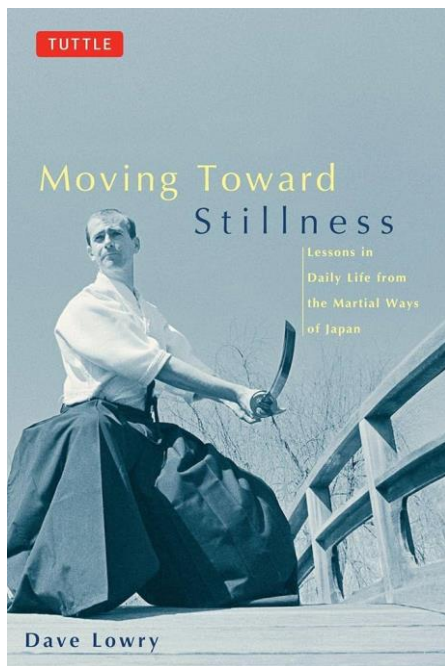


*Power Sensei in front*

To that end, I began contributing to the *Journal of Asian Martial Arts* and the late, great *Furyu* magazine, perhaps the best Nihon budo-specific publication ever. Guy Power Sensei was doing the same thing in California, having recently returned from living in Japan and studying swordsmanship in the Nakamura Ryu and Toyama Ryu traditions. I'd seen his articles, and he'd seen mine, especially stuff I'd written about the SMAA. I answered his email inquiring about membership, and we later talked on the phone for a long time, happy to find another person that could relate to our mutual experiences of studying budo in the classical style.



*Muromoto Sensei (left) in Kyoto*



*One of many books by Dave Lowry*

Power Sensei, Nakamura Ryu seventh dan, joined the SMAA Board of Advisors, and he eventually became the Co-director of the SMAA Iaido Division with Suino Sensei.

Wayne Muromoto was the editor and publisher of *Furyu*, a magazine based in Hawaii I wrote a fair amount for. He did too, logically, and we became friends. My wife is from Hawaii, where *Furyu* was headquartered, and I enjoyed hanging out with my editor when we'd visit my in-laws on Oahu and occasionally in San Francisco, near where I live, when he'd visit with his wife. Mr. Muromoto started studying various budo when he was a kid, same as me, and he's now a leading teacher of Takenouchi Ryu, a rare and ancient form of jujutsu and related weapon systems, as well as a senior teacher of Urasenke tea ceremony. And you guessed it—he's a member of the SMAA Board of Advisors.

Mr. Muromoto introduced me to his friend, Dave Lowry, who was also writing about budo and koryu bujutsu for *Furyu*. Mr. Lowry, who's based in Missouri, has had a monthly column in Black Belt

magazine for a very long time, where he writes about classical Japanese martial arts and culture. He's also had a slew of acclaimed budo books published, and he's a respected teacher of Yagyū Shinkage Ryu swordsmanship and Shintō Musō Ryu jōdō. I admired his writing, and he'd seen my articles. We started emailing each other and talking on the phone, establishing a friendship that led to Mr. Lowry also joining our board of advisors, writing for our journal, and teaching at our events.

And one time I was reading *Furyu* when I spotted an excellent article on koryū jūjutsu by someone who'd studied Hontai Yoshin Ryu under its headmaster in Japan. His name was Stephen Fabian Sensei, and Mr. Muromoto helped the two of us connect. Fabian Sensei had just returned to the U.S. after living in Japan, and like me, he was discovering that it was tough to find anyone practicing authentic Japanese jūjutsu outside of Japan. We gravitated toward each other, writing letters, chatting on the phone, sending email, and even exchanging videotapes of each other demonstrating budo. It was a cure for feeling isolated due to practicing an art that many thought they knew, but few had actually ever seen. In the end, we asked Fabian Sensei to join our board of advisors, and in time he became the Co-director of the SMAA Jūjutsu Division with me. He currently lives in Portugal.



*Fabian Sensei*

Later, I asked Ohsaki Jun Sensei, my friend of many years to join the SMAA Board of Advisors. Ohsaki Sensei grew up in Tokyo, where he studied Kodokan judo from a young age. He later took up traditional jujutsu, along with practicing Nakamura Tempu Sensei's unique Japanese yoga and meditation. With decades of training in budo, Japanese yoga and meditation, and classical Japanese calligraphy, he made a great addition to the SMAA Board of Advisors.



*Ohsaki Sensei with Troy Swenson,  
SMAA Journal assistant editor*

I also approached Mark Colby Sensei about joining the SMAA Board of Advisors. We've known each other since we were children practicing judo together. He moved to Japan over 40 years ago, where he studied judo with celebrated authorities and won important judo championships. Aside from a lifetime of training in classic judo in Japan, he's a successful business owner and entrepreneur.

Guy Power Sensei recommended the SMAA to his friend in England, John Evans Sensei, who also spent years studying swordsmanship in Japan, much of it



*Colby Sensei*

under the famed Nakamura Taizaburo Sensei, tenth dan. Given his extensive training in Japan under top teachers, his knowledge of Japanese language and culture, not to mention his seventh dan in Nakamura Ryu, Evans Sensei was a natural choice to become an SMAA Senior Advisor. He's taught at SMAA Seminars in England, the USA, and Australia.

I also asked my friend from Tennessee, Joe Rippy Sensei, to join our board of advisors. Rippy Sensei



*Evans Sensei*



*Rippy Sensei*

and I met each other years ago through a budo umbrella organization in Japan. He'd studied directly under the founder of Wado Ryu karate-do, who promoted him to sixth dan after decades of training. When I saw him teaching karate-do, I was stunned by his speed and flexibility, and I'm tough to impress. Even more striking was Rippy Sensei's kindness and intelligence. More than just my friend, the late Rippy Sensei was a fine addition to our growing assembly of martial arts experts.



*Kosslow Sensei*

Through Rippy Sensei and other SMAA members, I kept hearing about an exceptional karateka, someone with years of training in budo and a PhD to boot. His name was Tom Kosslow Sensei. Based in Georgia, he was a seventh dan in Wado Ryu under the late and legendary Suzuki Tatsuo Sensei (although he's now ranked eighth dan). I contacted him, and we also asked Kosslow Sensei to join the SMAA Board of Advisors.



*Monday Sensei*

Guy Power Sensei came into play again when he introduced us to Nyle Monday Sensei, who resides in California. Monday Sensei started practicing judo in 1965. He later studied three different systems of Japanese karate-do. In 1972, he met the late, great Donn Draeger Sensei in Japan, who introduced him to koryu martial arts, which he studied extensively. Given his exceptional background, Monday Sensei was a natural fit to become a Senior Advisor.

Later, John Quinn Sensei of Virginia, another student of the renowned Draeger Sensei, also joined our ever more prestigious board of advisors. Quinn Sensei studied budo in Japan for 20 years, and he's a disciple of the late Nawa Yumio Sensei, a well-known martial arts expert in Japan. He's one of few people in the West legitimately teaching Masaki Ryu,

a samurai era martial art using a weighted chain and a chain and sickle (kusari gama).

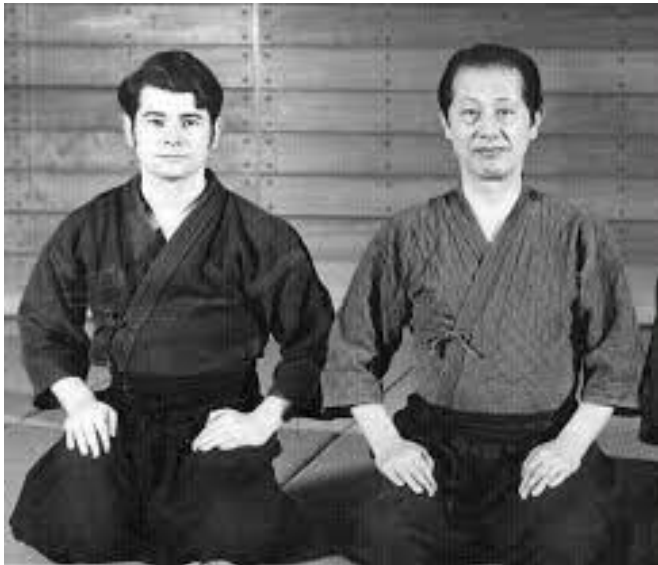
One day, Quinn Sensei told me that he was having a seminar at his dojo with an incredible teacher from Japan, who had remarkable skill using antique Japanese throwing spikes (bo shuriken). That teacher was Otsuka Yasuyuki Sensei, the current Soke of Meifu Shinkage Ryu, who lives in Chiba. Quinn Sensei and I spoke with Otsuka Sensei, which led to him joining the SMAA and becoming a Senior Advisor. He's a highly respected teacher of historic weapons in Japan, and he travels the world teaching Meifu Shinkage Ryu.



*Otsuka Soke*

rare feudal era martial art. Kobori Ryu focuses on samurai swimming and water combat.

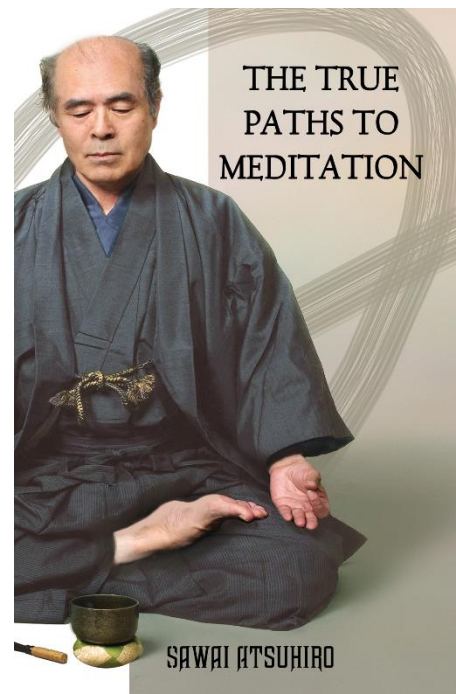
Since Sawai Sensei held the highest rank in Kobori Ryu, he knew its current Soke well. That's how Iwasaki Hisashi Soke came to join our board of advisors. Iwasaki Soke is one of the highest-ranking



*Quinn Sensei and Nawa Sensei in the 1970's*

I also asked one of my Japanese yoga teachers to join the SMAA Board of Advisors, in that SMAA Senior Advisors needn't be martial arts teachers. Budo is just one of many Japanese cultural arts, and all these art forms have principles that overlap. They're mutually supportive. Budoka benefit from studying brush calligraphy, flower arrangement, tea ceremony, and more. All of which at least some samurai practiced as a supplement for bujutsu training.

That said, Sawai Atsuhiko Sensei, who's based in Kyoto, is also a Shihan in Kobori Ryu suieijutsu, a



*A book by Sawai Sensei*



*Suieijutsu*

teachers of martial arts in Japan, and what he teaches is uncommon and unique. Of course, we asked him to join our group, and after Sawai Sensei visited him in Kyoto to explain what we were doing, he was eager to help.

Sawai Sensei and I knew Omi Koji Sensei, a fellow teacher of Nakamura Tempu Sensei's distinctive Japanese yoga, an art that influenced a number of prominent budo sensei in Japan, especially aikido experts. Aside from holding the highest rank in



*Omi Sensei*

Japanese yoga, Omi Sensei headed the largest association representing Nakamura Sensei's teachings in Japan. But more than that, Omi Sensei was a famous and respected Japanese politician. He was a member of the House of Representatives of Japan and the former Finance Minister of Japan, among other current and past posts. After Omi Sensei traveled from his home in Tokyo to visit me in California, he became an SMAA Senior Advisor. Having a prominent politician endorse a budo organization, and the ranks it issues, is common in Japan. The late Omi Sensei fulfilled this function for our growing group.



*Yamamoto Sensei*

Mark Colby Sensei and I knew an important teacher of classical judo in Washington, someone we studied under in the past. Richard Yamamoto Sensei was a seventh dan, certified by the Kodokan, the birthplace of judo. Yamamoto Sensei practiced judo since childhood, and he spent decades teaching children and adults after working each day as an electrician. He never accepted money for teaching judo and concentrated instead on helping his students grow as people. One of the highest ranking Kodokan-certified teachers outside of Japan, he was

the senior member of our judo division, endorsing our ranks and activities, until he passed away at over 90 years old.

It was Burkland Sensei that introduced Warren Agena Sensei to our group. The two practiced judo together in Colorado, where Agena Sensei is the head instructor of the Northglenn Judo Club, the oldest judo dojo in Colorado. It's also one of the largest judo dojos in the USA. Agena Sensei is a sixth dan with the Kodokan, and he's now a member of the SMAA Board of Advisors.



*Agena Sensei*



*Suzuki Sensei*

Nihonto Bunka Shinko Kyokai. He works with many sword institutions in Japan, including the Nihon Bijitsu Token Hozon Kyokai, providing translations for books and exhibitions.

Over the course of all of this, Todd Sensei passed away. His student Karl Scott Sensei, aikido sixth dan, became the new Director of our aikido division. Nicklaus Suino Sensei, then judo sixth dan and now

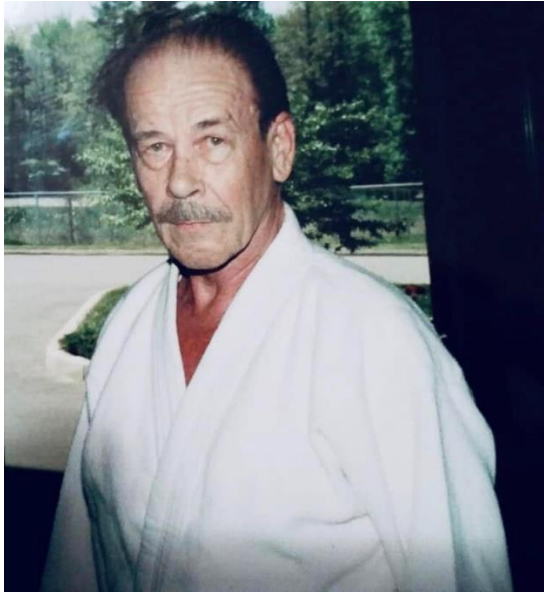
Evans Sensei suggested contacting his instructor in Kanagawa, Suzuki Kunio Sensei, about joining the SMAA Board of Advisors. I agreed, knowing that he was one of the highest ranking budoka in Japan, an eighth dan, and a senior disciple of the founder of Nakamura Ryu swordsmanship. Suzuki Sensei came onboard. He's taught at SMAA events in the United Kingdom.

Later, Evans Sensei helped out again when he recommended Paul Martin Sensei as a Senior Advisor. Martin Sensei started karate-do as a child in England, winning European championships, but for years he's focused on Japanese sword arts, which he studied in Japan, where he's lived for a long time. Presently fourth dan in kendo and a fifth dan in iaido, Martin Sensei is a Trustee for the



*Martin Sensei*





*Todd Sensei in his old age*

seventh dan, became the next Director of the SMAA Judo Division. And like most major decisions in our group, these appointments were approved by our Directors and Advisors.

Assembling this impressive group of budoka took years, but some of our general SMAA members are just as remarkable. They may not be Directors or Advisors, but folks like Hunter Armstrong Sensei are valued members. Mr. Armstrong is an expert in koryu bujutsu, focusing on Yagyu Shinkage Ryu swordsmanship and the spear art of Owari Kan Ryu. He lived in Japan for years, and he's also essentially the successor to Donn Draeger Sensei, an American budo pioneer and a celebrated exponent of judo, Tenshin Shoden Katori Shinto Ryu, and Shinto Muso Ryu.

In addition, Troy Swenson Sensei has been a great help, working tirelessly for many years as the assistant editor of this publication. Swenson Sensei is a member of the SMAA Jujutsu Division.

And while I was involved in bringing a number of the illustrious individuals above into the SMAA, this isn't about me (aside from the fact that I'm reminiscing about my involvement in our group.) A quick read

of the previous information makes it clear that a group of people have contributed to the SMAA, and this isn't the Davey Martial Arts Association. It's because of members like you and our leaders that our nonprofit organization has lasted 30 years and acquired members in many nations around the world. Now what are we going to do with the next 30?

### WHAT IS "SHUDOKAN?"

The Shudokan name, for decades, has been used for various dojo in Japan and other nations, which feature judo, karate-do, aikido, and other budo. We call our particular group Shudokan Martial Arts Association, and kan simply means 'building, institution.'

But shudo is to "cultivate the Way." This isn't the Do of karate-do or really any budo at all, but rather the Way itself, the path that links all Do forms from budo to shodo. If SMAA members don't grasp the significance of cultivating the Way, our association will become hollow even if it continues 30 more years. And we'll have let down our members who've passed on, because from Walter Todd to Richard Yamamoto and others, each of them sought to find and follow the Way in their lives. So how can we do that, too?

Let's start by understanding that modern budo and ancient bujutsu aren't equivalent to fighting. "Fight, combat" in Japanese is sento (戦闘) not budo or bujutsu (武術).

And sento isn't about finding and following a Way. It isn't focused on delving deeply into the martial arts to discover the art of living itself, which is the main difference between fighting and budo. One is a Way; the other is not.

But these are just definitions. Understanding how words are defined, in English or Japanese, isn't necessarily to understand what they aim to indicate. The definition is never the thing being defined but

an approximation. Case in point, most of us can define the word “peaceful,” but how many are at peace?

Comparably, most Japanese can use the word “budo” in a sentence, but not everyone—even people supposedly practicing this art—deeply understand what budo is. As proof, note some people’s inability to distinguish fighting from budo. But don’t some forms of budo—and especially koryu bujutsu—teach how to defeat an opponent, sometimes under battlefield conditions? They do, but fighting still isn’t equivalent to the traditional martial arts.

Because fighting is just fighting. It’s nothing more than combat techniques.

Budo is a Way, a path beyond the purely functional act of combat. It melds physical art with classical Japanese culture and aesthetics, blending in philosophical elements that improve performance not only in martial arts but our lives as well. Of greater importance are the spiritual benefits of budo, something rarely found in self-defense courses.

Fighting deals primarily with the hands holding a weapon. However, SMAA authorities feel that budo includes the mind, echoing sentiments of martial artists eons in the past. It’s my mind that influences my hands holding a sword, and my mind gives birth to movements so efficient and so rooted in traditional Japanese aesthetics that they can be described as martial *art*.

### AN ACTION PLAN FOR FOLLOWING THE WAY

To understand the Do, and how to cultivate it, is to grasp the spirit behind the Shudokan Martial Arts Association. In this article I outlined some crucial concepts that can make it easier for you to find, follow, and develop the Way, an idea that resists written descriptions, that must be discovered firsthand during training. You’ll need to work with

these ideas and principles yourself to deeply understand the Do and to help you do that here’s some hints:

- Discover in life and martial training the difference between fighting and budo, between something solely utilitarian and an art that transcends its utilitarian function to arrive at something more. In the same way that brewing a cup tea doesn’t equal chado, the “Way of the tea ceremony,” combat training doesn’t equal budo.
- The mind controls the body, and the body reflects the mind. We approach the Way when we realize this and look deeply into what our body movement is saying about our subconscious habits. Are they positive or negative?
- To look deeply we need to concentrate and calm the mind. Meditation can help you do that, and it can help establish a correct posture that facilitates coordination of mind and body, something that’s advantageous in budo and life. I recommend reading *The True Paths to Meditation* by Sawai Atsuhiko Sensei, SMAA Senior Advisor.
- With enough training you can bring the concentration and calmness experienced in meditation into martial arts practice. This makes it easier to see yourself clearly through awareness of what your body expresses during budo. It can also help you discover do chu no sei, “calmness in action,” and to notice when this quality is lost.
- If your kata and techniques express lack of confidence, nervousness, and other negative patterns, use your new found awareness to restructure the manner in which you perform. Do this to consciously create a style of movement that projects focus, calmness, and positivity. Work long enough and seriously enough on trying to look poised and you’ll find poise within yourself, but

you'll need to use your awareness of your techniques as a form of biofeedback, as means of seeing into the depths of the mind.

- Our subconscious mind is altered through repetition; it records repeated actions and suggestions. That's how we get habits good and bad. Use meditation to cultivate a mental state that will let you notice what your martial movements express. Change them to create positive, calm, confident actions, and then repeat this style of movement as much as possible to further implant positive suggestions into the subconscious and alter your habits. Daily dojo training is best.
- Finally, the Do isn't just the right and natural way of doing a particular thing; it's a Way of living. Take the positive habits that you've cultivated in budo into daily life, and you're beginning to genuinely follow budo as a Way that benefits your whole life, not just a particular part of it.

All of this is just the tip of the iceberg when it comes to cultivating the Way, but it can help you get started. It's helped me.

## NOW WHAT?

So, 30 years ago Todd Sensei and I decided we should launch a martial arts association that we'd like to be members of, one that would help budo and budoka, one that wouldn't embarrass us in the future.

There's nothing special about that.

Martial arts groups spring up all the time. They disappear just as fast. And that comes down to dysfunctional leaders, which in turn points to them not getting the message of the arts they claim to teach.

But the SMAA is still here after 30 years. That's somewhat special.

Yet longevity alone is meaningless in martial arts associations and even people's lives. It's not how long you hang around, it's what you do with your time and how you do it. Quality more than quantity.

And we've got that quality. The SMAA is a remarkable partnership of Japanese and Western experts, who've by their example helped create a unique association that expresses cultivating the Way. Many are successful professionals, others are highly educated, while some are respected authors. But they all are exceptional sensei that can pass on the time-honored Way through the practice of classic martial arts.

Aside from divisions for modern budo, SMAA members and officials practice Hontai Yoshin Ryu, Takenouchi Ryu, Masaki Ryu, Kobori Ryu, Yagyu Shinkage Ryu, Shinto Muso Ryu, Ono-ha Itto Ryu, Kashima Shinto Ryu, Owari Kan Ryu, Tenjin Shinyo Ryu, and other feudal era bujutsu. That's fairly rare in Japan. It's almost nonexistent in the West.

But more than that, in 30 years nobody has ever been expelled (hamon) from the SMAA. No SMAA official has ever resigned, especially not in anger. I've never seen or heard of a nasty argument at an SMAA event. No bad politics has infected our nonprofit, we've never compromised our principles for money, rank hasn't been over emphasized and certainly not sold, our certified teachers are qualified, and I've yet to be embarrassed by our organization.

And all of that is very special.

But no association is perfect, and we can help our group continue to improve. Here are some personal suggestions, which I outlined at the time of our 25th anniversary:

- The leaders of the SMAA are aging. (Not me, of course, but those other guys.) In the next 30 years, let's develop and promote younger folks into positions of leadership.



*The author teaching Aiki Nage*

- Several wonderful SMAA Senior Advisors have died, most of whom were my friends. In the next 30 years, let's find and appoint new board members to help our group flourish.
- We don't have enough diversity among SMAA officials. In the next 30 years, let's try to correct that and especially get more female leaders in the SMAA.
- We have exceptional budoka in the SMAA, who inspire our membership, but only a few people are putting real time into our organization. And that's all too common in nonprofit groups. In the next 30 years, let's all make contributions to the SMAA—maybe even host an SMAA Seminar or two.
- Our journal is something members enjoy but not many people contribute to. In the next 30 years, let's have more articles written about a wider variety of martial arts, by a wider array of writers.

Budo has been a huge part of my life since I was in kindergarten. In practicing it I've met incredible teachers and seen the high points of human

existence, but I also saw human shortcomings displayed in several martial arts associations I was part of.

The SMAA is the group I hoped I might find when I was young. It's what I dreamed of, and yet I never dreamed I'd play a role in creating it. But I did . . . and not by myself.

I'm grateful to my friends in the SMAA that helped bring this dream into reality, who put up with my quirks, and to our members who've patiently waited for issues of the journal that didn't come out as frequently as we'd like, and to the SMAA members and teachers that treated me well when I've taught at our events. I hope this group is your dream too, and I really hope you realize that the dream isn't finished.

Each of you need to contribute to share in this dream, to make an even greater SMAA and ultimately a better world. As the founding members of the SMAA—like me—turn to dust and merge with the universe, another generation needs to continue to cultivate the Way and share it with society through the practice of budo. Just as we've shared it with you, you have a responsibility to pass this Way onto others, and I hope you'll do it within the SMAA.

**About the Author:** H. E. Davey is one of the original members of the SMAA, a Director for the SMAA Jujutsu Division, and the Director of the Sennin Foundation Center for Japanese Cultural Arts. With over 50 years of training, in Japan and the USA, he's earned an eighth-degree black belt and the title of Shihan from the SMAA. One of three SMAA Primary Directors, he specializes in a form of Japanese jujutsu that also includes various weapon systems. On several occasions he has presented bilingual lecture-demonstrations in Tokyo, and he's the author of multiple books on Japanese culture, traditional arts, and forms of meditation.

## IN MEMORIAM

On the occasion of our 30th anniversary, we should remember and reflect on the lives of SMAA leaders, who have passed away. These people, in a way, represent a part of the budo keizu, the martial lineage, of our association.

### MICHAEL DONNELLY

Michael Donnelly Sensei's interest in Japanese culture began with his exposure to the art of aikido at the New Jersey School of Aikido in 1976, while in the U.S. Navy. He was a fourth-degree black belt in aikido, affiliated with the SMAA Aikido Division. In addition, Mr. Donnelly was an SMAA Senior Advisor.

Donnelly Sensei, while primarily interested in budo, was also interested in the history of medical ethics in China and Japan and their legal and philosophical interactions with Western medical ethical models and practice. He expanded his martial arts

background to include dabbling in tai chi chuan and arnis.

Mr. Donnelly lived in New Hampshire with his wife Jayne. He worked as a New Hampshire attorney and, in many hospitals in multiple states, as an ASCP certified pathologists' assistant. He served as our legal advisor.

Donnelly Sensei was one of the first people to join the SMAA. He actually paid for our newsletters and partially funded the SMAA for the first couple years of its existence. He also hosted the first SMAA Seminar, bringing the late Walter Todd Sensei to his dojo to teach aikido.

He helped with the design of the SMAA logo and patch as well. And at one point, he was the General Manager for the SMAA. Donnelly Sensei did all of this for free.



*Donnelly Sensei (with hat) and his aikido students*

Eventually health problems made it difficult for him to teach aikido, but he remained passionately devoted to the SMAA and budo. Even after his dojo closed, he encouraged his students to remain in the SMAA, and several of them are SMAA members to this day. Not every SMAA member knew Donnelly Sensei personally, but all of us have benefited from his contributions to the SMAA.

On July 20, 2012, Michael Donnelly Sensei passed away suddenly from heart-related issues. He was 61 years old.

## OMI KOJI

Born on December 14, 1932 in Gunma Prefecture, Japan, Omi Koji Sensei was a member of the House of Representatives of Japan. He was, in addition, the former Finance Minister of Japan. He also served as Japanese Minister of State for Science and Technology Policy and Minister of State for Okinawa and Northern Territories Affairs. Omi Sensei passed away on April 14, 2022.

Omi Sensei was also a direct student of the late Nakamura Tempu Sensei, founder of the Shin-shin-toitsu-do system of Japanese yoga and meditation, which you can learn more about at [www.japanese-yoga.com](http://www.japanese-yoga.com). Omi Sensei was the Chief Director of the Tempu Society, one of the groups that oversees the teaching of Shin-shin-toitsu-do in Japan.

His support of the SMAA illustrated the close ties our group has with Japan, and the degree to which the SMAA is respected in this island nation, the birthplace of budo. Omi Sensei's desire to join the SMAA validates the unique and important work our association is doing to promote and preserve genuinely traditional Japanese martial arts and ways.

The presence of people like the late Omi Koji Sensei, SMAA Senior Advisor, among our leaders gives added weight to the ranks that our members can receive from the various SMAA divisions. They also



*Omi Sensei (left) with the Secretary-General of the United Nations*

serve to further emphasize the international nature of the SMAA and our group's close connection to Japan.

The following is a short list of Omi Sensei's many accomplishments:

- 1956 Graduated from the Faculty of Commercial Science, Hitotsubashi University
- 1956 Joined the Ministry of International Trade and Industry (MITI)
- 1970 Served as Consul at the Japanese Consulate General in New York until 1974
- 1981 Served as Director-General, Guidance Department, Small & Medium Enterprise Agency until 1983
- 1983 Elected to the House of Representatives (up to the present)
- 1990 Parliamentary Vice-Minister of Finance
- 1995 Chairman Standing Committee on Finance, House of Representatives
- 1995 Drafted and enacted Science and Technology Fundamental Law
- 1997 Minister of State for Economic Planning until 1998
- Acting Secretary-General, Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) until 2001

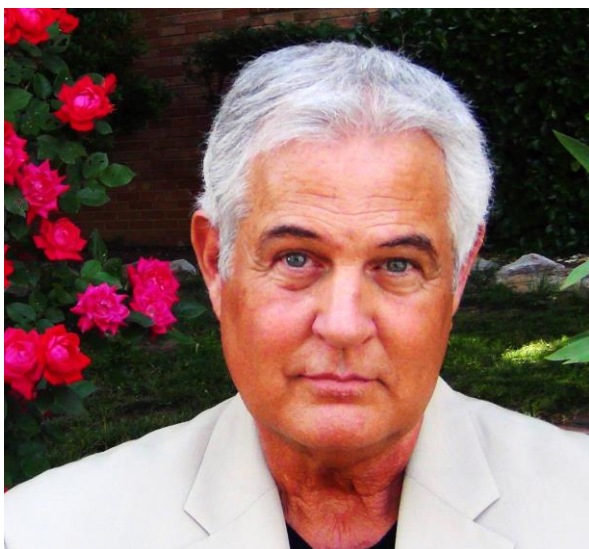
- Minister of State for Science and Technology Policy
- Minister of State for Okinawa and Northern Territories Affairs
- Minister of Finance

Omi Sensei passed away on April 14, 2022. He was 89 years old.

### JOSEPH RIPPY

Joseph Rippy Sensei was born in 1946 in California. He, however, lived most of his life in Tennessee. Rippy Sensei received a degree in Asian Studies (Japanese) in 1980. His interests included Chinese metaphysics and the art of Wado Ryu karate-do, which he taught privately to children and adults.

The name Wado Ryu is composed of three characters: Wa means "harmony," do means "way," and ryu means "system." From one viewpoint, Wado Ryu might be considered jujutsu rather than karate-do. When the founder Ohtsuka Hironori Sensei first registered his art with the Dai Nippon Butoku Kai in 1938, it was called Shinshu Wado Ryu Karate-Jujutsu, which reflects its hybrid nature. To the untrained observer, Wado Ryu might look similar to



*Rippy Sensei in his later years*

other styles of karate-do; many underlying principles, however, are derived from koryu jujutsu. Wado Ryu is one of the four major styles of Japanese karate-do (as opposed to the original Okinawan systems).

Rippy Sensei began karate-do training in 1964, when he was invited to join Wado Ryu by Cecil T. Patterson Sensei. In 1968, Rippy Sensei met and trained under Ohtsuka Hironori Sensei. He later studied directly with Ohtsuka Sensei, who tested Rippy Sensei for his third dan in 1976. Ohtsuka Sensei was a licensed Shindo Yoshin Ryu jujutsu expert when he met the famed Okinawan karate-do exponent Funakoshi Gichin Sensei, founder of Shotokan karate-do. After learning karate-do from Funakoshi Sensei, Ohtsuka Sensei merged Shindo Yoshin Ryu with karate-do to create Wado Ryu.

In 1979, Rippy Sensei began practicing with Suzuki Tatsuo Sensei (eighth dan). He continued to study with Suzuki Sensei from 1979 to 1988, primarily when this teacher visited Tennessee and Florida each year. In 1984, Rippy Sensei successfully represented the USA at the 50th Anniversary Wado Ryu Invitational Tournament in Tokyo, Japan. While there, he trained at Sakai Kazuo Sensei's dojo in Yokohama. Sakai Sensei (tenth dan) was then Wado Ryu Chief Technical Director, and he further practiced with Sakai Sensei whenever he visited the USA.

In 1988, Rippy Sensei received his sixth dan certificate from Ohtsuka Hironori II (Saiko Shihan, or Grandmaster, of Wado Ryu, who succeeded his late father). In 1989, he also trained with Osaka Toshio Sensei (seventh dan) of Salt Lake City, Utah. Rippy Sensei continued to receive direction from Ohtsuka Kazutaka Sensei, the son of the second grandmaster and grandson of the art's founder, for the rest of his life.

He returned to Japan in 2008, where he continued his lifelong study with the Ohtsuka family. Rippy

Sensei, SMAA Senior Advisor and sixth dan, passed away in 2016 at the age of 69.

## WALTER TODD

Walter Todd Sensei's budo career spanned more than 50 years, and although he generally avoided the limelight, he was highlighted in many martial arts magazines. He began training in traditional martial arts in 1945 while stationed in Tokyo with the American military. He married a Japanese woman, and lived in Japan off-and-on throughout the 1940's, 50's, and 60's.

Todd Sensei studied under Mifune Kyuzo Sensei, tenth dan, and Abe Ichiro Sensei, tenth dan, at the Kodokan Judo Institute. Mifune Sensei, a fabled figure, was the last living holder of the tenth dan awarded by Kano Jigoro Sensei, the founder of judo. He accepted Todd Sensei as his personal student.

In 1948, Todd Sensei became the first foreign disciple of Otsuka Hironori Sensei, founder of Wado Ryu karate-do and tenth dan. 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 Sensei, founder of Shotokan and the person responsible for bringing karate-do to Japan from Okinawa. Funakoshi Sensei is commonly regarded as the "father of Japanese karate," and Funakoshi Sensei approved Todd Sensei's black belt certificate, making him the first foreigner in history to obtain a dan rank in Shotokan karate-do.

After returning to the USA, Todd Sensei trained in karate-do and aikido under Takahashi Yoko Sensei, a direct student of Toyama Kanken Sensei. Toyama Sensei, the celebrated founder of his own system of karate, appointed him as Shibuchō ("Branch Director") for the U.S., giving him authority to rank students in Toyama-style karate and direct the development of karate in America.

Todd Sensei also studied aikido under two world famous instructors—Tomiki Kenji Sensei, founder of



*Todd Sensei with his judo shodan certificate from the Kodokan*

Tomiki aikido (a.k.a. Shodokan aikido), and Tohei Koichi Sensei, the only man to receive a tenth dan in aikido from the art's originator, Ueshiba Morihei Sensei. In fact, Ueshiba Sensei personally approved and signed Todd Sensei's first and second dan certificates. He eventually received a sixth dan in aikido.

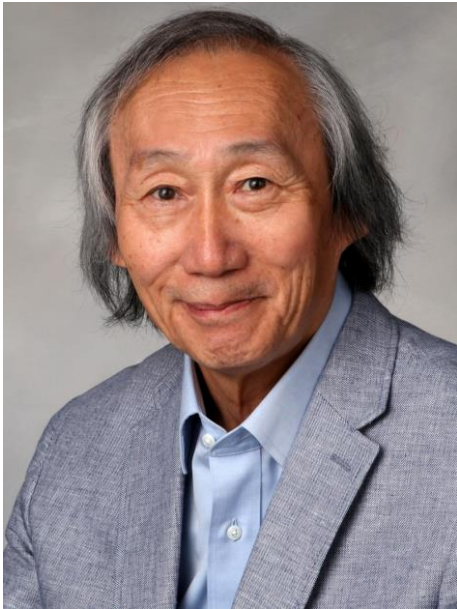
In June of 1993, Todd Sensei was awarded an eighth dan in judo. Even in Japan, ranks above fourth dan are difficult to achieve; and back then, it was rare to find a foreigner ranked sixth dan or higher. All of Todd Sensei's ranks came from well-known martial arts groups in Japan.

Despite battling back from a near fatal automobile accident, and surgery to install two artificial hips, Walter Todd Sensei, a rugged, solidly built senior citizen, continued to teach and subdue opponents one-third his age. His students saw him as a living testament to the power of perseverance and the vitalizing capacity of authentic budo. Walter Todd, the first Director of the SMAA Judo and Aikido Divisions, passed away in 1999 at 72 years of age.

## HERBERT Z. WONG

Herbert Z. Wong Sensei's first exposure to martial arts occurred in the Chinese schools he attended as a boy in San Francisco's Chinatown. Martial arts were taught as part of the cultural arts curriculum





*Wong Sensei, eighth dan*

and on an ad hoc basis at Chinese community centers.

In 1959, Wong Sensei began formal martial arts training in karate-do with Walter Todd Sensei at the International Judo, Karate and Aikido School. He was one of the first group of students at the school to earn a black belt, which he received in 1961. He continued to train diligently and was awarded his second dan in 1963.

The United States Army drafted Wong Sensei in 1963 and sent him to Okinawa. During that time, he began training with Shimabukuro Eizo Sensei (tenth dan) in Shobayashi Shorin Ryu karate-do. While he was in Okinawa, Wong Sensei trained almost every single day. Because of this dedication and his previous experience, he earned his black belt in Shorin Ryu near the end of 1964. He was awarded his Shorin Ryu second dan in August of 1965, shortly before he finished his military service and returned to the United States.

After returning from Okinawa, Wong Sensei resumed his undergraduate studies at San Francisco State University and continued to practice Shorin

Ryu. In 1965, he started the Asian Martial Arts School in San Francisco with Andrew Chan Sensei. He also began training in Sil-Lum Hung Gar (Tiger-Crane) kung fu under Master Y.C. Wong in San Francisco that same year. He continued to train with Master Wong and teach at the Asian Martial Arts School until he left the San Francisco Bay area to pursue graduate studies.

In September of 1970, Wong Sensei started in the doctoral program at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor. While simultaneously pursuing his doctorate degrees in clinical and organizational psychology, he was also teaching classes in Okinawan karate-do and Chinese kung fu. (Karl Scott Sensei, the Director of the SMAA Karate-do Division, was Wong Sensei's karate-do student for decades.) In 1974, Wong Sensei was made the head of Shorin Ryu for the Midwestern and Southern Divisions of the United States by Shimabukuro Sensei.

After receiving his doctorate degrees, Wong Sensei returned to the San Francisco Bay area in 1975 to run a psychiatric clinic and psychology training center. A few years later, he started doing consulting work in addition to running the clinic.

And he continued to visit Okinawa to train with Shimabukuro Sensei. He received a number of promotions over the years and was awarded his eighth dan in 2005. He was also awarded the title of Shihan by Shimabukuro Sensei, and he received the same ranks from the SMAA. Wong Sensei, SMAA Senior Advisor and eighth dan, passed away on May 23, 2018; he was 78 years old.

### **RICHARD YAMAMOTO**

Richard Yamamoto Sensei started practicing classic Kodokan judo since he was sixteen years old. One of the pioneers of judo in the Northwestern part of the US, Yamamoto Sensei was the chief instructor of Seikikan Judojo for many years. Seikikan was established in the 1930s, making it the second



*Yamamoto Sensei at 90 years old*

oldest judo dojo in Washington State, and one of the oldest in the USA. Its first home was the basement of a hotel run by Yamamoto Sensei's parents. He more or less lived in the dojo, with judo being a constant presence in his life.

Yamamoto Sensei practiced in with a number of famous judo teachers, including Kotani Sumiyuki Sensei (10th dan), Fukuda Keiko Sensei (10th dan), Daigo Toshiro Sensei (10th dan), and others. His first judo teacher was Horiuchi Keiji Sensei, a member of the Nanka Judo Yudanshakai Hall of Fame and a Kodokan eighth dan. Horiuchi Sensei was one of the highest-ranking members of the United States Judo Federation (USJF) and a USJF Life Member. He passed away in 2006.

Yamamoto Sensei held high levels of referee certification through the USJF, and he was one of the highest-ranking members of this association. For many years, he also served as an official in the Northwest Judo Yudanshakai, a USJF affiliate association. He was a USJF Life Member as well.

For decades, Yamamoto Sensei devoted countless evenings each week (and quite a few weekends) to

training young judoka. He did this for free, believing that his teaching was a way of building a better society based on the judo principles of seiryoku zenyo ("best use of energy") and jita kyoei ("mutual welfare and benefit"). Over multiple decades he taught hundreds, if not thousands, of students at Seikikan Judojo and in public clinics. Among his students were people from all walks of life, from US national champions to people just starting judo. They all learned that classic judo is a way of developing one's character.

Yamamoto Sensei lived in the U.S. Pacific Northwest, and he was one of a number of prominent teachers of traditional budo and koryu bujutsu that make up the prestigious SMAA Board of Advisors. Among the members of this elite board are top martial arts leaders in Japan and other nations, experts in other Japanese cultural arts, and important members of Japanese society.

Their presence in the SMAA speaks volumes about the legitimacy of our group, and they are our most valuable assets. In a video interview for Densho Digital Archive, a nonprofit association that documents the Japanese-American experience, the ever-humble Yamamoto Sensei said, "I guess I was one of the good judoists, or anyway one of the judoists that liked to do judo. I wasn't very perfect, but then I enjoyed it, because I could throw some of the people some of the time." To his many students, Yamamoto Sensei was always much more than just "one of the good judoists," having devoted a lifetime to this form of budo. For decades, he positively influenced a huge number of judoka, while helping them to improve their health and strengthen their spirit.

We were honored to have Richard Yamamoto Sensei on our board of advisors and grateful for his endorsement of SMAA ranks and events. The SMAA Judo Division is dedicated to his vision of judo; it's judo as much more than a sport. It's judo as a traditional martial art, an important aspect of

Japanese culture, a means of self-defense, and a philosophy that can benefit society.

At 90 years of age, Yamamoto Sensei was a very active senior citizen, and a seventh dan with the Kodokan in Tokyo, when he passed away on New Year's Eve 2014.

## ON THE 30TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE SMAA

It's both wonderful and amazing that SMAA is 30 years old! The rich history of this organization reads like a roll call of accomplished, traditional budoka, including many who have risen to prominence by pursuing their passion over decades. I'm blessed to have met and trained with a few, including Paul Martin Sensei, one of the foremost experts in the field of Japanese swords, the late Joseph Rippy Sensei, and Dave Lowry Sensei of Autumn Lightning fame. From our early training days with the late Walter Todd Sensei—a true pioneer in bringing Japanese martial arts to North America—we've built strong connections worldwide, which helps us share our mission of protecting and propagating legitimate, heritage Japanese budo. With the help of martial artists far and wide, the next thirty years will be even more wonderful and amazing!

– *Nicklaus Suino, SMAA Judo Division Director and SMAA Iaido Division Co-director*

It has been an honor to be associated with the SMAA since I made contact in 2010, and it gives me great joy to offer my congratulations to all those involved, for thirty years of service to the community of practitioners of authentic Japanese martial arts taught in an authentic way. In 17th century Japan, after four decades of peace during which sword skills were no longer required for nor tested on the battlefield, the famous swordsman Miyamoto Musashi lamented the way in which commercialization had led to the degeneration in martial technique and teaching in most sword schools. It is all too easy to fall into the trap of trying to attract students with gimmicks and flowery

techniques while neglecting the slog of mastering basic technique so as not to lose them. The SMAA through its articles, seminars, newsletter, and presence continues to remind those who are genuine seekers, that only by upholding the core values of these traditional arts can one gain real and lasting benefits. The challenge is to find creative ways to bridge the huge gap in culture and expectation without compromise.

– *John Evans, SMAA Senior Advisor*

Kokoro and kimochi. Two essential core concepts of life and relationships in traditional Japanese culture and society. And very much alive in the SMAA now for 30 awesome years!

Kokoro [心] is a complex concept that can be translated as “heart” or “mind”—but in its various nuances can relate to the entire spectrum of human internal states of being. Kimochi [気持ち] is most literally “feelings” with a common emphasis on good feelings, usually expressed within a specific social context and suggesting an especially positive and comfortable relationship.

Both of these core cultural concepts are at the heart of training and participation in the budo/koryu bujutsu systems embodying the SMAA. As such, active training and participation in the SMAA not only advances our technical development but also helps us help each other cultivate the totality of our external and internal selves while contributing to overall positivity and improvement in our world.

Congratulations to the Shudokan Martial Arts Association on its 30th anniversary! Especially because of the SMAA's dedication to preserve and promote both the technical and conceptual components of traditional Japanese budo/koryu bujutsu, I've been proud to be an active member for 20 years.

– *Stephen Fabian, Co-director SMAA Jujutsu Division*

## A JUDO JOURNEY—REDUX

By Richard Burkland

It has been twenty years since I wrote this piece. In that time a great deal has happened, so I propose to revisit and revise some elements. Let's start by discarding this shallow and self-indulgent intro as well as the majority of what followed. ~~My retirement from the Army precipitated an unexpected existential crisis. I reviewed my life and asked myself: Have I served well? Have I upheld and personified the principles that we hold most dear? Was I a good man? A good soldier?~~ When I wrote this, I was reflecting on the end of my active-duty Army career and wondering what lay ahead for me. Another twenty years has passed and there have been many changes and challenges in my life which lend to this reflection.

### IN THE BEGINNING...FOR ME

In 1969, inspired by the novel, *Once an Eagle* by Anton Myrer, I dedicated myself to becoming an American soldier. I aspired to be being a kind, caring, and a selfless servant to the Army, my troops, and the nation. Tactically, morally, and ethically sound, and committed to self-improvement.

In the summer of 1970, I began my study of judo and found it to be a lifelong joy and fascination. Judo helped me by teaching me balance, perseverance, and flexibility. As my training progressed, I found myself attracted to the profound philosophical aspects of judo. I began to drift away from the "sport oriented" judo organizations in search of classical judo. Any definition of traditional or classical judo is subject to interpretation and individual experience. Based on my studies I characterized it as a tradition of study that considers judo as a complete martial way of self-defense and self-perfection.

Mochizuki Minoru Sensei once wrote, "Judo is a great innovation as a means of education for

fostering both mind and body, but it is after all a *budo* and we should carefully reflect on Jigoro Kano Sensei's strict admonition against the conversion of judo into a sport...Budo is a means for cultivating the intellect, virtue, and courage and for seeking social justice..."

Eventually, I found the Shudokan Budo-Kai (SMAA), which is keeping alive and actively promoting the more traditional martial arts aspects of judo. Traditional judo, as advocated by the SMAA encompasses its competitive aspect, where the objective is to throw the opponent, immobilize the opponent with a grappling technique, or cause the opponent to submit via locking the elbow or a choke hold. However, it goes much further by emphasizing meditation, atemi-waza (striking), kata, and the study of judo's spiritual basis and its philosophical application to life. The Shudokan Budo-Kai provided me a real connection to the roots of the Japanese martial arts and a unique opportunity to learn authentic budo.

### INSIGHTS FROM A LIFETIME OF BUDO

Accepting the premise that the highest object of budo training is to achieve balance, growth, and harmony in life and that it can be a method to achieve spiritual transformation perhaps some personal insights derived from budo will be of value to others. And what exactly have I learned?

- That there is a personal evolution of training from bujutsu ("martial techniques") to budo ("martial way") to bushin ("martial spirit"). The practice of the physical techniques is merely the vehicle to approach the two higher levels of ethical behavior and spiritual enlightenment. Ultimately, we seek, "...human perfection through Judo and the betterment of mankind in the spirit of

mutual prosperity.” (Kano Risei, *The Illustrated Kodokan Judo*, 1956.)

- That ju, or the flexibility of body, mind, action, and response, requires a connection to the opponent both as a physical feeling and as a mental state to feel his strengths and weaknesses, to blend with the direction of his attack and then control it. This enhanced awareness and sensitivity to others leads to greater empathy and ultimately to the making of better a human being. Conflict can be minimized or avoided through this greater empathy; or more efficiently dealt with if conflict is unavoidable.
- That for a leader imbued with ju, his greater intuition into the mind of the enemy results in the ability to predict his actions and take steps to shape the battle, gain decision superiority, maneuver decisively and dominate the enemy. “For Kano, the principle of Ju was never without practical physical implications. For the body, directed by the flexible mind, is to react with similar mechanical flexibility as it adapts itself to a situation encountered suddenly.” (Donn Draeger)
- That kan (“intuitive response”) goes hand in hand with ju and enables a leader who has experienced this ability to perceive feelings, emotions, and sentiments through his budo training to then exercise committed, caring, and compassionate leadership of others. Leadership is a difficult balancing act. Ultimately it is an art involving complex human emotions. You must look and feel deeply before you make decisions and take actions that affect people’s lives. The essence of command is to lead not to drive. Only genuine leadership can motivate others to success.
- That you may be lucky enough to develop the imperturbable and immovable mind of

fudoshin. Having met the challenges of life through budo, you will be free from anger, fear, and doubt. Your example of calm leadership and skillful decision-making during crisis will inspire confidence and optimism in others. “Mental calmness, not skill, is the sign of a matured samurai.” (Tsukahara Bokuden)

### FREEDOM FOUND IN CONTINUOUS CHANGE, FAILURE, AND REDEMPTION

When I retired from the Army I was rated as “disabled” (70%). Another twenty years and a few more misadventures have furthered that condition (90%). When I reflect on this, I hope to emulate the philosophy embodied in the art form of kintsugi.

Kintsugi is the unique Japanese art of repairing broken pottery. The method is not to just glue the broken pieces back together and then hide the repairs behind fresh paint. Instead, the fractures are highlighted in the restored form by joining the broken pieces together with gold. The fractures and imperfections are not hidden, they are now part of the design. Kintsugi thus represents the wabi-sabi aesthetic of accepting that life is ever changing, fragile, and evanescent. Nevertheless, despite being damaged, objects and people can still have beauty and meaning. Accepting our failures, we can stoop and pick up the pieces and begin anew. “Kintsugi symbolizes how we must incorporate our wounds into who we are, rather than try to merely repair and forget them.” (David Wong)

This approach to life accepts our imperfections and flaws and cherishes our errors and the resulting scars that shape our lives.

### REFLECTING ON THE PAST, MOVING TOWARD THE FUTURE

Being a budoka is a unique way of life. It demands commitment, discipline, and sacrifice. If you follow the path diligently you will develop a set of values that will include:

- Honor and integrity: doing what is right, ethically, morally, and legally
- Courage: overcoming fear, danger, or adversity, both physical and moral
- Duty: fulfillment of your obligations and acceptance of responsibility for your own actions and those who follow you.

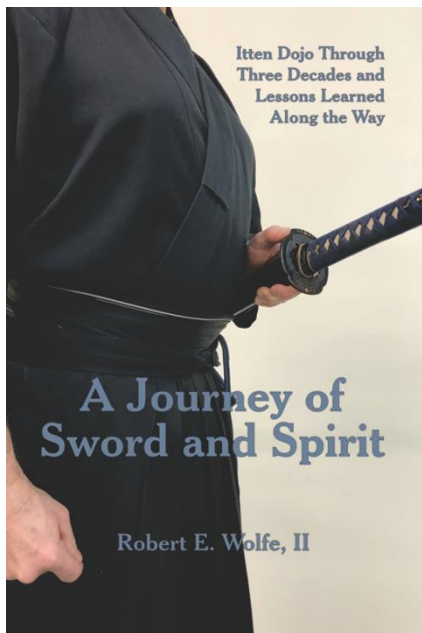
The true budoka will be ever mindful of the awesome responsibility they have to uphold the living tradition they are heir to. As Sato Shizuya Sensei said, “Through judo we learn to maintain

both physical and emotional balance, as well as gaining in human insight. The true test of a persons’ understanding of budo is in the way they live their life and by their actions.”

**About the Author:** Richard Burkland Sensei, PhD. has studied traditional judo and jujutsu for decades. He lives in Colorado. He’s a member of the SMAA Board of Advisors as well as the SMAA Judo Division and SMAA Jujutsu Division. An early supporter of the SMAA, he’s contributed a number of articles to the *SMAA Journal*.

## A JOURNEY OF SWORD AND SPIRIT: ITTEN DOJO THROUGH THREE DECADES AND LESSONS LEARNED ALONG THE WAY

*Book Review by Tracy Geist*



*A Journey of Sword and Spirit: Itten Dojo Through Three Decades and Lessons Learned Along the Way*, by Robert E. Wolfe II, is a profound exploration into the intersection of martial arts, personal growth, and resilience. Through the lens of Wolfe’s experiences at Itten Dojo, this book offers readers a compelling narrative filled with valuable insights and lessons.

At its core, *A Journey of Sword and Spirit* is a testament to the transformative power of martial arts practice. Wolfe takes readers on a journey through the history of Itten Dojo, from its humble beginnings to its evolution into a respected martial arts institution. Along the way he shares anecdotes, reflections, and teachings that highlight the dojo’s guiding principles and philosophy.

Wolfe also reflects on the deeper philosophical underpinnings of martial arts practice. He draws parallels between the principles of budo (the “martial ways”) and broader philosophical traditions, highlighting the universal truths that underpin all authentic paths of personal development. Through his own experiences and those of his students, Wolfe demonstrates how martial arts can serve as a vehicle for self-discovery, personal growth, and awakening.

In addition to these philosophical insights, *A Journey of Sword and Spirit* is also a captivating narrative filled with colorful characters and memorable stories. Wolfe introduces readers to the diverse community of practitioners who have

passed through Itten Dojo over the years, each bringing their own unique backgrounds, motivations, and challenges to the practice. From seasoned veterans to wide-eyed beginners, the dojo becomes a microcosm of the human experience, where individuals come together in pursuit of a common goal.

One of the most compelling aspects of the book is Wolfe's honesty and vulnerability as a narrator. He doesn't shy away from sharing his own struggles, setbacks, and disappointments. By revealing his own journey of growth and self-discovery, Wolfe invites readers to reflect on their own paths and to embrace the inevitable challenges and obstacles that arise along the way, and to rise above what seems to be a dead end and into a more transformative adventure.

Ultimately, *A Journey of Sword and Spirit* is a testament to the enduring power of martial arts as a path of personal transformation. Whether you are a seasoned practitioner or someone just beginning their journey, this book offers valuable insights, advice, and inspiration for anyone seeking to cultivate greater discipline and awareness in their lives. Robert Wolfe has crafted a compelling narrative that is sure to resonate with anyone inspired to embark on their own journey of self-discovery and personal growth. *A Journey of Sword and Spirit* is available in hardcover, paperback, and e-book editions from Amazon.com.

**About the Author:** Dr. Tracy Geist, LPC is a member of the SMAA Iaido Division. She lives in Pennsylvania, and this is her first contribution to the *SMAA Journal*.

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