

## The Esoteric Principles of Judo

Since the fundamental principle acquired through the practice of Jujutsu has been elevated to a finer moral concept called Judo, ‘the Way of Yielding’, it may well be said that the primary object of practicing Judo is perfection of character (*Shinjin*). And in order to perfect one’s character one must be grateful for the abundant blessings of Heaven, Earth, and Nature, as well as for the great love of parents. One must realize his debt of gratitude to teachers and be ever mindful of his obligations to the general public.

As a member of a family, one’s first duty is to be filial to parents; to be helpful and harmonious with one’s wife or husband; and to be affectionate to brothers and sisters in order that the family may be a sound, successful, and harmonious unit of the community.

As a member of a nation, one must be grateful for the protection that one derives as a citizen. One must guard against self-interest and foster a spirit of social service. One must be discreet in action yet hold courage in high regard and strive to cultivate manliness. One must be gentle, modest, polite and resourceful – never eccentric, but striving always to practice moderation in all things. One must realize that these qualities constitute the secret of the practice of Judo.

Anyone who practices Judo should have no fear of facing stronger opponents, nor should he scorn weaker ones. With the skill that he develops, he does not oppose the strength of his opponent. For example, if a boat is floating on water then a single man’s strength is sufficient to maneuver it freely because the boat floats on top of the water. If the boat is on dry land, then even several men cannot move it. When a weak person faces a strong one, he should understand this principle.

Having developed skill in the forms and techniques that constitute the basic art of Judo, one should never use these arts against anyone without sufficient justification. Even though an opponent is small or weak, he must not be scorned. Arrogance is absolutely forbidden.

Every student of Judo should realize that Sincerity is the foundation of all virtues; that kindness is the secret of success in one’s work; and that amiability is essential to success. Working pleasantly is mother of health. Strenuous effort and diligence will overcome adverse circumstances. Simplicity, fortitude and vigor are the keys to happiness; and service to humanity is the fountain of mutual existence and common prosperity.

As aptly expressed in the poem....

*The boughs that bear the most hang the lowest (Shinjin).*

The more proficiency one attains in the Art of Judo, the more necessary it becomes to remember the virtues of humility. Furthermore, there is no distinction between literary and military Arts.

*There is stillness in midst of movement and movement in the midst of stillness (Shinyo).*

It is recorded in an ancient verse that there are rapids where if one thinks only of oneself one will perish, but by disregarding one’s Self, one floats by safely.

One must not forget the debt of gratitude one owes to parents and teachers, nor fail to value those who come after us. Giving guidance to younger students, after all, improves our own ability.

Like a drawing in *Sumi-e* of the Whispering of the Wind in the Pines (*Shinin*), the secrets of Judo can only be suggested. Only through personal experience can one comprehend the mystic ecstasy of such secrets (*Myo*).

It is said of Jujutsu that it requires ten years of practice to win victory over one’s self and twenty years to win victory over others.

A noted verse reads....

*For the lotus flower to fall is to rise to the surface.*

Emptying the self, one enters in the realm of dispassion and open-heartedness and for the first time is able to comprehend the secret art of benefiting both oneself and others in perfect harmony (*Shinjin*).

These are the Keys to the Esoteric Secrets of the Kodenkan into which I have the honor to initiate you.

H. Seishiro Okazaki

Judo Master