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I would like all of you that are receiving my bulletins; please send me an email confirming you are receiving my information. A YES or NO would suffice.

If anyone has a specific question or topic you would like to be addressed; please let me know. Only through communication can

I hope everyone had a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year and let's all make this New Year one to remember.

All the information you get from my bulletins is from my own personnel experiences and my observation of others over the years and listening to their own experiences. From this, I draw my own conclusions based on knowledge of what I know to be factual and what is not.

I research articles that have been thoroughly verified to be as factual as possible and are without bias. I stay away from articles that tend to make their style and history as the ultimate form of martial arts. Too many of these articles start with the history of the martial arts and then leave out pertinent information, and quote only those statements that fit their agenda.

I am not Japanese; I will not act or try to emulate a Japanese; It's not in my DNA. That is not to say that I don't try to achieve the same goal that our Asian counterparts are trying to do, and that is enlightenment in the martial arts. ***Is that not the ultimate goal?***

I began my training in 1974 and during the late seventies. I woke up to the reality that some of the training I had been receiving may not have been everything that I was led to believe. Being in my early thirties, I was cognizant enough to know the training I was receiving was better than anything that I knew at the time, but I saw things that did not make sense.

As time went on, I started questioning a lot of the training I was receiving. The response given to me was. *Give it time, and you will know.*

That answer had some truth to it, but it could have meant they did not know. I want to believe that my instructors were merely teaching what they had learned from their instructors and may not have had the mindset to be able to question their instructors Kyhon and Waza.

So what is right and what is wrong? And who is right and who is wrong? That is the million-dollar question.

In my opinion, what is right is what works, and who is right? Is he who teaches what works. I am still searching for both.

The fact is, the more you learn, the more there is to learn. The difficult part will be to admit to yourself that you may not be as good as you think you are and **some** of the knowledge you have is less than perfect. **To**

learn what is right is to know what is wrong, and the willingness to change that which is wrong. Many will stay complacent because change is hard. ***I believe a person should think critically, but where it takes you is your choice.***

During the mid-nineties, I asked myself why do so many martial artists, clammng the same style yet have so many differences in what they do. More noticeable to me was the generation that had several years ahead of me in training, were changing what they had taught in such a way to make it their style, claim titles, and rank with none having substance. " EGO "

So after extensive research in Asian martial arts history and talking to GI's and government workers who studied martial arts in Japan and other Asian countries, I came away with one big question.

If you were Japanese and your country just went through a war that killed thousands of your countrymen and had witnessed the destruction of homes, business, and so much more. Would you be so ready to welcome these foreigners with open and loving arms? **"I don't think so."**

"Let's take this concept one step further."

After the war came the reconstruction period, and as an instructor, you reopened your dojo. A foreigner came to you and

wanted to learn this unique form of fighting he had seen. **What would you say or do?**

“The Japanese dilemma.”

He would say either Yes or No. If the answer were yes, I would think it was more about having the opportunity to make money off of these foreigners. This put the instructor in control of *what, when, where, and how*. Most of these instructors were laughing all the way to the bank. They now could get back at those who they considered being **Gaijin**, (literally “outsider, foreigner”) and the Korean **Wehgukin** (literally “foreigner”)

- 1- These foreigners would never know what is or is not.
- 2- The head instructor would most likely let one of his lower ranking belts teach. Knowing the foreigner would be getting less than quality instruction.

The question I would ask some of these foreigners would be. Do you honestly think that you can learn in just a few years what they have been doing for a lifetime? Do you honestly think you were getting quality instruction? **“How could you know.”**

I do believe in some rare cases, some of these foreigners may have begun to receive quality training because of a personal bond created through attitude, respect, and loyalty to their master.

After the war, many returned to the states or country of origin. They began opening up schools and introducing to the public what they had learned. Some keeping with traditions while others saw the opportunity to exploit what they had learned and to make it profitable.

The martial arts experienced a surge of popularity in the west during the 1970s, and the rising demand resulted in numerous low quality or fraudulent schools. There were also numerous fraudulent ads for martial arts training programs.

Early in the seventies, lower rank colored-belts were given to show progress. Many schools adopted this procedure because it proved to be commercially profitable. This created martial arts degree mills, or as many have heard the term “McDojos.”

Many of these Dojo instructors then began to make up Waza’s that was without substance, and open hand kata and Kobudo kata that resembles a circus act.

To many of the older generation have become complacent, and many of their followers are following in their footsteps. The older crowd knows what they have is less than perfect but has no desire to change **because change is hard.**

A student will only know what his or her instructor has shown them. Most students take what they have learned as gospel because they can't think beyond what has been shown. Monkey see Monkey do.

On the other hand, you will have some students that will question why things work the way they do. This type of student should be encouraged. (*With the understanding they know there is an order in all things.*)

This thought process, when properly channeled, will make the difference between a knowledgeable instructor and an instructor who has become complacent.

It will boil down to a person's ability to explain how, what, when, and where, and with an open mind allows anyone to challenge him or her on what is being instructed. This is important if you plan to be a good and knowledgeable instructor.

“The courage to change is simply not one of virtue, but the form of every virtue at the testing point.”

If you wish to be removed from the e-mail list, say so. Or if you know someone who would be interested in this bulletin, forward it to them. **Remember, you don't know what you don't know.**

Kaicho Davis