

Midori Yama Budokai: *Hanshi's Corner*
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Ichigo, ichi e: One life, one meeting

Jozai Senjo! Always Present on the Battlefield!

The motto given above is used by Kenneth Lones, head of Integrated Martial Concepts Associates (IMCA), one of MYB's affiliated schools. It was from a calligraphy brushed by Nakayama Hakudo, founder of contemporary *iaido*. Hakudo's motto in full was: "Always present on the battlefield of life, ready to meet any challenge." As warriors, we should always be present on life's battlefield, and we should be prepared to meet any challenge. Any less and we are no longer warriors. To be ready requires that we become fixed on a decision [*ketsudan* = "fix decision"] with an indomitable spirit [*tamashii*] and never give up. This, in turn, requires goal setting [*mokuteki o motte hajimeru* – "see target, hold and begin"] through a plan of action [*kodo keikaku*]. In addition we must remain on the path of constant and never ending improvement [*kaizen no michi*]

Kuzushi/Tsukuri or Balance-breaking/Fitting-in

Judoka contend that *kuzushi* is approximately 75% of the technique. *Tsukuri* is given much less attention. If one studies the old *judo* texts, *kuzushi* was the precursor to *tsukuri*, and the two were not considered separate, but a continuation of the same movement. Texts referred to *tsukuri* and *kake*, but seldom *kuzushi*. Even Professor Kano, who did include the *happo no kuzushi*, makes the following statement: "To break the opponent's posture or balance so as to make one's attack easier while holding oneself ready at the same time to attack the opponent, is called *Tsukuri* or 'the fitting action for attack.'" "To attack the opponent with effective technique, while his posture has already been broken by *Tsukuri*, is named *Kake* or attack." *Kuzushi* is what is happening, or has happened, as *tsukuri* is being made. It is the actual direction of unbalancing as *tsukuri* is made. The misunderstanding of *kuzushi* is based on the model for the demonstration of the eight directions of off-balance. These off-balance positions are shown from a stationary position. Throws, to be effective, must be done while moving. Abe Kenshiro went against tradition by stating that there were only two directions of off-balance – either forward or backward. Movement is the key. Any experienced *judoka* realizes that very little may be done against a static, braced opponent. However, when that opponent can be made to move, no matter how slightly, one may fit in as his or her balance is lost. The other factor of movement is the placement of the feet. When *uke* does move, his or her center of gravity (CG) changes. Rather than being centered, there is movement in which the center is – no matter how briefly – lost. The direction of the throw should be 90° opposite the direction the feet were facing. For example, if *uke* is standing in *hidari shizentai*, the directions s/he would be weakest would be to the right front or the left rear. The most stable direction would be the left front, with the left foot as base, and the right rear, with the right foot as base. To throw, *tori* would have to get *uke* to move either the right foot forward or the left foot backward. This is because of a principle known as the "third point." Force is applied to *uke*'s weak direction ("third point"). If *uke* is thought of as a stool, s/he is missing one leg (of a three-legged stool). Where the third leg should be is the "third point." If *uke*'s balance is broken toward this point, *uke* will "fall" into a void.

This point may be determined as follows: From *uke*'s center point, one shin's length (of *uke*) from that point outward is where *uke* may easily become unbalanced. This is based on two factors. First, to be in balance, the hips and shoulders should be aligned. If the hips are not directly beneath the shoulders, the body is out of balance. Try walking with the left leg and left arm moving on the same side. What will usually happen is the shoulders will lag behind or totter forward when you step. At this instance, the hips and shoulders are not aligned and you are off-balance. If *uke* steps forward with the right foot and you pull his or her right arm, while pushing against his or her left shoulder, the hips and shoulders are no longer in line with one another. At this point, you may pivot in to apply any hip or shoulder throw. Conversely, you may do *ko uchi barai*. You are still pushing the left shoulder and pulling the right arm, with the hips and shoulders out of vertical alignment. With the hip or shoulder throw, *uke*'s hips lag behind his shoulders, which are pulled forward. With *ko uchi barai*, *uke*'s upper body is driven backward with the shoulders behind the hips. Second, is the factor of the "missing leg." As *uke* moves to regain balance *tori* moves into the spot where the "third leg" would be and becomes the support for *uke*'s attempt at regaining his or her balance. As the movement, and misalignment, draw *uke* to *tori*, *tori* becomes the fulcrum over which *uke* is carried. If you want to know where this magic "third leg" would be, have *uke* kneel on one knee. The length of the upper leg is the outermost limit of *uke*'s balance. Anything beyond this point and *uke* will fall. This is usually 30o to 45o forward or backward from the vertical. *Tori* must move onto this point, effectively fitting-in while simultaneously taking *uke*'s balance.

***Sabaki* or Movement**

Sabaki, or movement, is usually part of a compound word such as *tai sabaki*, *te-sabaki* and *ashi sabaki*. However, these mean body movement (usually translated as pivoting), hand movement and foot movement. What is not translatable with the word "movement," is the concept of control. Implied in this control is the preparation for subsequent attacks. *Ashihara Karate* uses *sabaki* as the basis for its system. This system contends that with *sabaki* offense and defense are combined into one – "offense and defense are the same." For the percussive arts, the *sabaki* of "outside turns" should be used to place you in the "blind spot" of the opponent so a counter-attack may be made. Conversely, with grappling arts, control is through *kuzushi* and *tsukuri*, coupled with "inside turns" for hip and shoulder throws which place you in control of the opponent's movements. Other movements, such as obliquely stepping, either forward (for *o soto gari*) or backward (for *ashi barai*) allow you to control and utilize the opponent's movements with your own.

***Kansetsu Waza* or Joint-locking Techniques**

When I discovered the following concepts, I was amazed it had taken me so long to realize them.

Joint locks are the same: What may be done to the fingers (*yubi*) may be done to the toes (*ashi yubi*). The wrist (*tekubi*) and ankle (*ashi kubi*) may be manipulated the same. The elbow (*hiji*) and knee (*hiza*) are hinge joints and pressure may be exerted the same way on each. Finally, the shoulders (*kata*) and hips (*koshi*) are (simplistically) ball and socket joints and may have the same type of torque applied to each.

Basically, joint locks can be thought of in groups of two. There are two ways in which the elbow and knee (another group of two) may be manipulated. First is against the hinge -- a straight arm/leg lock (*gyaku*). Second is by bending and twisting the joint beyond its natural limits (*garami*). The ankle and wrists may be turned big toe/thumb out (in supination) or big toe/thumb in (in pronation). Alternately the foot/hand may be flexed downward or bent backward to apply pressure. The hips and shoulders may be rotated beyond their natural limits for pain compliance, or they may be dislocated to render the limb inoperative. Although the spine is singular, it may be flexed or twisted, causing damage. Once you realize there are only variations of the groups of two, techniques become easier to do. In fact, knowing the principles can lead to new techniques.

A corollary to “thumb in” and “thumb out” is of importance to law enforcement. If the “thumb in” is used, the perpetrator may be taken directly onto his or her stomach, making handcuffing relatively simpler. However, if s/he is taken down by using “thumb out,” s/he will land on his or her back. This means that to immobilize him or her, you must do at least one more step to get him or her onto his or her back. As long as s/he remains on his or her back or side, s/he may continue to resist.

From *An Encyclopedia of Judo (Jujutsu)* by Ron Rogers

- 1.1.1 ***Tai sabaki*** or body pivoting; also body control. Formally known as ***karada no sabaki kata*** or forms of body management. This may also be called *tai no tenkan ho*, or *hiori*. There are three major methods, each with two variations. Also, there is a fourth in-place pivot and a reverse form of the 180o pivot.
- 1.1.1.1 ***Sabake***, or turning 90o. This includes any turn up to 90o, but for practical purposes, 90o is correct.
 - 1.1.1.1.1 ***Mae sabake*** or turning 90o to the front. *Tori* begins in *shizenhontai* and takes one step forward, turning right (*migi muki*), or left (*hidari muki*) 90o.
 - 1.1.1.1.1.1 ***Migi mae sabake*** or right front 90o turning. Note: A turn to the right is always clockwise. This is true of a front turn or a rear turn. Although *tori*'s steps forward with the left foot the direction of the body turn classifies this as a right turn.
 - 1.1.1.1.1.2 ***Hidari mae sabake*** or left front 90o turning. Note: A turn to the left is always counter-clockwise! This is true for a front turn or a rear turn. Although the right foot moves forward, the body turn classifies this as a left turn.
 - 1.1.1.1.2 ***Ushiro sabake*** or turning 90o to the rear. Again, *tori* begins in *shizenhontai* and takes one step to the rear, turning right (clockwise) or left (counter-clockwise) 90o.
 - 1.1.1.1.2.1 ***Migi ushiro sabake*** or right rear 90o turning. This is the opposite of *hidari mae sabake*. *Tori*'s right foot moves to the rear.
 - 1.1.1.1.2.2 ***Hidari ushiro sabake*** or left rear 90o turning. This is the opposite of *migi mae sabake*. *Tori*'s left foot moves to the rear.
- 1.1.1.2 ***Maware*** or turning 180o. This includes any pivot from 91o to 180o, but 180o is the usual distance covered. Although only one form of this pivot (normally) is used for *judo* entry (*uchi irimi senkai*), there is a combat variation (*soto irimi senkai*) used to pivot outside an opponent's attack. The terminology in parentheses is that of *Aikido*.

- 1.1.1.2.1 **Mae maware** or turning to the front 180o. As for *mae sabake*, the movement is clockwise for a right movement, and counter-clockwise for a left movement.
- 1.1.1.2.1.1 *Migi mae maware* or turning to the right front 180o. The ball of the right foot is used as the pivot (*jiku*), as the left foot is moved in a 180o degree arc clockwise.
- 1.1.1.2.1.2 *Hidari mae maware* or turning to the left front 180o. The ball of the left foot is used as the pivot, and the right foot is moved in a 180o counter-clockwise arc.
- 1.1.1.2.2 **Ushiro maware** or turning to the rear 180o. Right turns are clockwise and left turns are counter-clockwise.
- 1.1.1.2.2.1 *Migi ushiro maware* or turning to the right rear 180o. This is the opposite of *hidari mae maware*. The left foot is the pivot as the right foot is moved to the rear.
- 1.1.1.2.2.2 *Hidari ushiro maware* or turning to the left rear 180o. This is the opposite of *migi mae maware*. The right foot is the pivot as the left foot is moved to the rear.
- 1.1.1.3 **Sammen kai** (*sanmen kai*) or turning 270o. This is the pivot usually used for any *makikomi* (wind-in), and for the classical *koshi guruma* (loin wheel). This is done from *migi-*, or *hidari-*, *shizentai* to *migi-*, or *hidari-*, *shizentai*. A right turn is clockwise and a left turn is counter-clockwise.
- 1.1.1.3.1 *Mae sammen kai*, or turning to the front 270o.
- 1.1.1.3.1.1 *Migi mae sammen kai* or turning to the right front 270o.
- 1.1.1.3.1.2 *Hidari mae sammen kai* or turning to the left front 270o.
- 1.1.1.3.2 *Ushiro sammen kai* or turning to the rear 270.
- 1.1.1.3.2.1 *Migi ushiro sammen kai* or turning 270o to the right rear.
- 1.1.1.3.2.2 *Hidari ushiro sammen kai* or turning 270o to the left rear.

NOTE: The three preceding forms of pivoting may be referred to as *tenkan ashi* or step pivots. That is, one foot must take a step to the front or rear, although the pivot foot (*jiku ashi*) turns in place. This is also true of pivot number four which follows, although it is done following a cross step diagonally forward or rearward.

- 1.1.1.4 **Ura maware** or reverse 180o pivot. Also referred to as *mae maware sabaki* or front turn-in. The rear form is used for *seoi nage* while retreating. The front form is used for all *mawari komi*.
- 1.1.1.4.1 **Mae ura maware** or reverse 180o to the front.
- 1.1.1.4.1.1 *Migi mae ura maware* or reverse 180o turn to the right front. *Tori* steps to the left front corner with the right foot, crossing in front of the left foot. *Tori* then uses that foot (the right) as a pivot, brings the left leg forward and in front of the pivot foot, turning 180o clockwise.
- 1.1.1.4.1.2 *Hidari mae ura maware* or reverse 180o turn to the left front. *Tori* steps to the right front corner with the left foot, then using that (left) foot as the pivot foot, spins 180o counter-clockwise.

- 1.1.1.4.2 ***Ushiro ura maware*** or reverse 180o turn to the rear. *Tori* steps to the rear corner with the right, or left, foot, using the opposite foot as a pivot point. At the completion, *tori* has placed the moving foot to the diagonal rear and beside the other foot, as a 180o turn is made. At the end of the turn, *tori* thrusts the stationary foot to the side. If *tori* were to bring the moving foot widely to the diagonal rear, then pivot with both feet in place, it would be a form of *ushiro sammen kai*. If the moving foot were to be placed widely beside the stationary one (either on the mat, or held in the air) it would be *ushiro maware*.
- 1.1.1.4.2.1 ***Migi ushiro ura maware*** or reverse 180o turn to the right rear. *Tori* moves the right foot backward to the left rear and slightly outside the left foot. *Tori* then spins 180o on the right foot, extending the left leg to the left side. The turn is clockwise.
- 1.1.1.4.2.2 ***Hidari ushiro ura maware*** or reverse 180o pivot to the left rear. *Tori* moves the left foot diagonally rearward to the right rear corner and slightly outside the right outside heel. *Tori* then uses the left foot as the pivot foot and spins 180o counter-clockwise, extending the right foot to the right side.
- 1.1.1.5 ***Sonoba maware*** (*tenkai ashi*) or 180o pivot in place. *Tori* pivots from *hidari shizentai* to *migi shizentai* or from *migi shizentai* to *hidari shizentai* without moving the feet in an arc – an in-place pivot. The pivot is always to the rear!
- 1.1.1.5.1 ***Migi sonoba maware*** or right in-place 180o turn. From *hidari shizentai* *tori* turns to face the opposite direction in *migi shizentai*. This is, of course, a clockwise turn. As *tori* turns the head with the body to face in the same direction as the body, it may be termed *migi muki* (facing the right).
- 1.1.1.5.2 ***Hidari sonoba maware*** or left in place 180o turn. *Tori* turns counter-clockwise from *migi shizentai* to face the left (*hidari muki*) in *hidari shizentai*.

Kata Study

Your *hanshi meiyō kyōju* has been working with different persons on the study of *kata*. He has received interesting correspondence from *Yudansha* Jason Babiuch, who states he thinks he can now do *Heian Nidan* four different ways (*omote, ura, go, ura go*). This was the old way of studying *kata*, and one of the reasons the old Masters only did two or three *kata*. *Omote* is the “normal” direction – the one we always do. *Ura* is the reverse direction, beginning to the right if the “normal” direction begins to the left. *Go* begins the *kata* with the last move and works backward to the first move. *Ura go* begins with the last move in mirror image to *go*. This would mean that for what we consider one *kata*, the old Masters actually did (a minimum) of four. Jason goes on to state that *Tekki Sandan* was “a bit tricky done backward.” Now, Jason is working on *Sōchin*. He goes on to say in his study of *Hangetsu*, he discovered the following application at the end of the form “where you do the elbow down, crescent kick, punch low, and finish with the double palm ‘block.’” It hit me that the crescent kick is not a kick. It is a throw. Which makes more sense to punch low. And the double palm “block,” to me, is a neck break. I remember you asking me on my last test, what that last move was in that *kata*. I always thought it was a neck break but the how you got there puzzled me. So I guess this is my answer to that question. Jason was congratulated on his efforts and informed that there were a minimum of two more levels. Jason expressed excitement that there was more to

learn in relation to *kata*, stating that, “I am in a whole new world right now. Things are starting to come together. I never had this much fun training and understanding. It’s keeping that fire lit” Jason use three principles for his study of application: Avoid attack, control the opponent, [and] neutralize the opponent. He states he realizes this is the bare minimum, but he “didn’t want to cloud the basics.”

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