



# Ken shinryu 流神劍

TRADITIONS FOR THE FUTURE

An Initiative of **Compass**  
INSTITUTE INC.



VOLUME 26 ISSUE 06 THE INSTITUTIONAL

JUNE 2016

## Kancho's Corner -

### Technique Workshop – Aikido



With the Federal election coming up it seems timely to talk about the difference between 'good spin' and 'bad spin'. Mind you, politicians will never make good Aikidoka because they are all guilty of permanent bad spin!

So what is bad spin in the Aikido world, where does it occur most and how do we cure it? Bad spin is any turning action that places us at a disadvantage against our opponent because it exposes us to our opponent's weight or force. As for where it mostly occurs, think any *Tenkan* technique.

Bad spin has a couple of defining features. One is timing and the second is the mechanics... and they are interconnected. To simplify this a little, think of there being three points of contact that our opponent has with the mat. One through either leg and the last through us back to the mat. Breaking down our goal to throw them effectively, what if we could 'uproot' one of these (*kuzushi* – unbalancing) **and** make them dependent for their balance on us (*tsukuri* – positioning). It's easy to see this allows us to attack (*kake*) and throw or control them effectively.

So, back to bad spin. The turning action in *Tenkan* is designed to 'take off' and redirect the power of our opponent's attack and our goal as above is to

uproot / unbalance them in that motion. The problem occurs when in doing so we also become unbalanced through the premature commencement of the turn involving moving our (usually) back foot. The point of contact often becomes heavy and unwieldy for both parties and we certainly gain no advantage.

Try this exercise. Starting in *migi hanmi*, step in with your left foot and then leaving both feet stable on the ground, pivot your body (leading with your eyes) strongly to look to your rear right diagonal corner. Repeat on the opposite side focusing on a stable and open hip position. Now practice commencing your spin from this position turning 180 degrees while leaving your weight over your front knee.

When you feel confident, try having your training partner attack *ryote mochi* (two hand grip) and repeat the exercise with appropriate hand movements for *Tenchinage*. You'll notice the initial movement floats your partner up and around you with no sense of heaviness – you have achieved the *kuzushi* while remaining stable yourself so now you can spin as above while your partner is still floating round the corner. A small adjustment as required to the outside and you have achieved the *tsukuri* element leaving your partner ready for *kake*.

You'll notice that when you don't use this timing / mechanic the point of contact occurs while you are spinning on one foot – never a promising beginning for any technique. Now, for variation, try the same 'good spin' method in *katate mochi shihonage tenkan*.

Happy Spinning!

*Sensei David*



Kenshinryu — 5 Briggs St Palmwoods Qld — Ph: +61 (07) 5457 3716

[www.kenshin.com.au](http://www.kenshin.com.au)

## Deshi's Diary

June

Osu I hope you guys aren't too cold with all the rapid weather changes that have happened. Winter is here and you know what that means.....It's time for our **Winter Gasshuku!**

The dates fall toward the end of June:

- Friday the 24/06/2016
- Sunday the 26/06/2016.

This also coincides with our next Armidale and Lismore trip which will be from **Wednesday the 29/06 /2016- Sunday 3/07/2016.**

As you may also know, we are coming up to our 25th Anniversary for the Dojo and for this were going to take a look at when our members started training. Aikido and SMR:

<b>Stuart Mac</b>	-	<b>05.05.1991</b>
<b>Steve N (Jnr)</b>	-	<b>28.06.1996</b>
<b>Tim A</b>	-	<b>04.04.1997</b>
<b>Josie P SMR</b>	-	<b>03.04.2001</b>
<b>Aaron W SMR</b>	-	<b>09.04.2001</b>
<b>John D SMR</b>	-	<b>09.05.2001</b>
<b>Tamara B (Jnr)</b>	-	<b>07.05.2004</b>
<b>Rob B SMR</b>	-	<b>08.07.2007</b>
<b>Stu R</b>	-	<b>13.08.2008</b>
<b>Jamie S (Jnr)</b>	-	<b>11.10.2008</b>
<b>Kurek A</b>	-	<b>12.07.2009</b>
<b>Trent E</b>	-	<b>11.01.2012</b>
<b>Phil B</b>	-	<b>07.03.2012</b>
<b>Paul B</b>	-	<b>15.06.2012</b>
<b>Mike W SMR</b>	-	<b>11.12.2012</b>
<b>Paul T</b>	-	<b>17.07.2013</b>
<b>Dylan A SMR</b>	-	<b>09.01.2014</b>
<b>Alyce W SMR</b>	-	<b>07.02.2014</b>
<b>Deborah H SMR</b>	-	<b>11.02.2014</b>
<b>Adam S SMR</b>	-	<b>01.03.2014</b>
<b>Don S SMR</b>	-	<b>07.02.2015</b>
<b>Mark E SMR</b>	-	<b>24.02.2016</b>
<b>Ted C SMR</b>	-	<b>18.03.2016</b>
<b>John SMR</b>	-	<b>30.03.2016</b>
<b>James SMR</b>	-	<b>10.04.2016</b>
<b>Sean C</b>	-	<b>09.02.2016</b>



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For some fabulous Kenshin memories!

*James*

## Dojo Doctor

What's the difference?



**Some people are healthy and some aren't  
Some can make new habits and some can't**

Some find time each week to exercise and some don't. This list could go on endlessly and cover almost any aspect of life. Most people have areas of their lives where they seem to do well and others in which they struggle, so what is the difference?

It has been written as far back as 80 years ago by Albert E.N Gray in his book the Common Dominator Of Success, success lies in the fact that he or she formed the habit of doing things that failures don't like to do. In these days when we all get a reward for participating, the word failure is considered unfair. But if you want change in your life and you don't do what it takes to make it happen then I'm not sure what else to call it.

This certainly doesn't include those things where you do your best, and still not succeed, that is just life teaching you a harsh lesson. I'm most interested in why we don't do the things we know need to be done. I think there are two reasons

- ⇒ We don't have a purpose strong enough to form the necessary habits.
- ⇒ We have unconscious resistance which block us from moving forward.

E.g. if you want to be healthy, the first thing is to be clear on why you want to do it. Your purpose must be more powerful than the allure of your favourite sweet or fried snacks. Then when your unconscious resistance surfaces, acknowledge it for what it is. It's just fear of the unknown, or change or missing out on something. Then bring back your purpose and all the benefits of your new habit. Just do this as many times as necessary to succeed.

*Jan Newton*

For your Free online energy and Wellness go to

<http://roadmaptovibranthealth.com/>

## Member's Corner



### “Fear” – Are you prepared?

It is nearing the end of term two in the schooling calendar and Kenshinryu has just completed its second course of Women's Self-Defense training. What I found particularly interesting in this round was the focus on fear in a life or death situation. I have no idea why, but fear seems to be a subject that is rarely discussed or addressed when it comes to self-defense training. Yet it plays a vital part in our survival.

In a real life threatening situation, there is no ifs ands or buts about it - you will be scared. When it comes to self-defense, the failure to acknowledge fear and its part in survival is preparing for failure. You must understand how fear works, how you react to it, and how you can make it work for you. Any instructor, trainer or fighter who underplays fear in educating you for any survival situation is in essence putting you in a dangerous place.

Fear is not only natural, but you can set a timer to its appearance in any type of strenuous situation. For example, someone asking you to push your comfort zone or try something new... immediately you will feel uneasy at your core. Unless you are confident of your ability. Accepting that you will experience fear is an important step to trying to overcome it. The adrenal dump we experience in the fight-or-flight mode sympathetic nervous system is the very core response from our fear. While the experience of fear and the adrenal dump aren't exactly the same, nine times out of ten they will occur at the exact same time when attacks occur. In these types of situations the physiological effects of adrenaline are important to recognize. The adrenal dump can stop an individual dead in a violent encounter.

## Member's Corner

Our heart rate increases, breathing becomes quick and shallow, legs shake, and the mouth will go dry. We experience tunnel vision, time distortion, and auditory exclusion. We will lose the basic ability to verbally communicate in whole sentences, and lose the function of our fine motor skills and there will be a slowing down of decision-making and data recall. When talking to people that have been hit before or have experienced some sort of adrenalin inducing situation, they will always say something similar to “you are never fully prepared for the physical exhaustion of it, but you can mentally prepare to push through it”.

So from this perspective, that same fight-or-flight response can also make us stronger, faster, and more willing to look past the pain if we mental and physically prepare for the outcome. The adrenaline dump can actually rally us for action if we are able to control it. This survival response is hardwired into our body to help us and gives us the opportunity to influence the outcome of a situation. So when entering the dojo, it might be worth considering whether you are training effectively enough to defend yourself in real life?

And whether you are mentally preparing yourself, because in the end, who are you more afraid of... The guy who walks in and can produce five black belts or the guy who says it doesn't matter what you do to resist, but I'm never going to stop attacking you until I bite your ear off?” Who is your money on? And can you be that person if your survival depends on it?

*Tamara Burriss*

You gain strength, courage, and confidence by every experience in which you really stop and look fear in the face. You must do the thing which you think you cannot do.

Eleanor Roosevelt

## Kancho's Extra Corner

Osu!

Over the past couple of months we've reinstated training again on Thursday nights for the seniors in the Shinto Muso Ryu group. One of the goals is to bring the next group through to Omote and into the Ryu. It's a wonderful opportunity to revisit all the many essential elements Nishioka Sensei instilled in the practice and that we have endeavoured to keep intact and strong. The *spirit* of the practice is perhaps the key aspect – it captures the purpose for the practice and enshrines the relationship between the two practitioners and between the teacher and the student group.

Nishioka Sensei was very much the perpetual student and in that way provided a great role model for us. I vividly recall him at age 84 telling me he was still working on *maki otoshi* and I observed him making small improvements to *kuri hanashi* around that same time. This is some 70 years after he commenced his study... The purpose of practice is no more evident than in the above example - to ceaselessly polish ourselves.

One of Sensei's greatest concerns was the decline in the standard of *Uchidachi* – the attacking or teaching role. He talked about this on two levels. The first was technical. If *uchidachi* does not comprehend the full context of each set of *kata* and each individual *kata* they are unable to lead *shidachi* along a progressive path where each step is in its place. If *uchidachi* does not understand the progression of targets, distances and rhythms and/or cannot demonstrate the correct cutting line and grip, the *kata* will be warped. Nishioka Sensei is on record as stating that he had come to realise in his later life that practising with a poor *uchidachi* was worse than not practising at all.

The second level was to do with the relationship between the two practitioners. He described this as being the feeling that should exist between parent and child. For those of you who would like to read this in his own words please refer to his article in the lovely book edited by Dianne Skoss – "Sword & Spirit" Classical Warrior Traditions Vol 2. In summary however, Sensei pointed out that this spirit had become warped to such an extent that it is now common in Budo for the *shidachi* / *shitei* to be seen as the key person egotistically cutting or striking *uchidachi* / *uke* at will.

Another important element we've focused on has been his particular footwork. When I first watched Sensei teaching in Sydney in 1997 it provided one of the most dramatic moments in my martial arts life because right in front of me was the answer to a question I'd been asking of myself for at least a decade – how can we move, change direction and vacate a line in the most powerful and efficient way. I think it's too difficult to describe this in an article – it needs personal instruction to be

communicated I believe – but it's evident to those who now use this footwork just how important it is in Aikido and SMR.

I've slowly come to realise just how unique our situation was in Palmwoods during the decade or so Sensei was focused on the expansion of Shinto Muso Ryu. A senior Australian practitioner told me once that he could see that Nishioka Sensei treated Palmwoods Dojo as his 'nursery'... and that is exactly how it felt. In the earliest days I asked Sensei to please consider the Dojo as his own and me simply as a caretaker in his absence. He responded by really starting at the beginning and, feeling no urgency, took time to outline his vision and then made us invest time in acquiring skills and understanding methodically in line with that vision. Our goal now must be to maintain the vision, the method and the skills as this is certainly the only way in which we can honour and repay his investment.

On another note, I was talking with the Aikido crew during class a few weeks ago about the need for genuine attention to the *kihon dosa*. This translates into English as 'basic exercises' however Nishioka Sensei stressed that a better rendering is 'Essence'. 'Basics' are easily undervalued whereas 'Essence' is clearly worthy of respect and focus. Actually, talking probably wasn't what I was doing – it was much more of an expletive riddled, loudly voiced reference to my expectations that all students will discipline themselves to practice the *kihon dosa* to the best of their ability. The tendency to be slack around *kihon* can easily grow alongside the years of practice, so this advice is most pertinent to the senior students as they are also the role models for the others. My point was that lazy *kihon* can NEVER result in good technique... only good *kihon* can do that. As a student of Budo I have seen this truism become reality EVERY time. As a teacher of Budo, I don't see myself as a provider of discipline – discipline is something I expect from the student and something I have always sought to bring to the mat myself.

To wrap up this edition, we are printing the anniversary dates of all current students so you can celebrate your anniversary alongside that of the Dojo. These dates determine your seniority inside the Dojo and in Budo in general. There was some confusion expressed about this some months ago with a claim that age was somehow a factor in seniority however this is completely incorrect.

Remember the Gasshuku is on later this month – get your name down and I look forward to seeing you on the mat.

*Sensei David*