



# KOKORO

Vol. 17 # 5, June, 2010  
e-mail: [senseigk@budoshin.com](mailto:senseigk@budoshin.com)

Questions are an integral part of learning. They help me realize areas of study that require clarification. Here are more questions from BJJY members:

*Editor's Note:*

*A couple of you suggested that I have some of my upper black belts answer some of the questions submitted to me. To go one step better than that I've decided to add responses by my upper black belts where appropriate. In cases of BJJY policy/procedures my directions should be followed. In cases of theory, philosophy, execution of techniques, etc., you may end up with divergent opinions.*

*In case you're wondering who's answering the questions here's a simple code I will follow:*

AK: George Kirby = [senseigk@budoshin.com](mailto:senseigk@budoshin.com)

AT: Marc Tucker = [senseimt@budoshin.com](mailto:senseimt@budoshin.com)

*This will make each issue of Kokoro much longer, but it may also make it more interesting reading. ☺*

**Q: Is this real Japanese combat jujitsu or just gentle hippie style aikido? I am looking for real Japanese ju jitsu as I already do Brazilian jiu jitsu. 3/31/10**

AK: Budoshin Ju-Jitsu is a traditional form of the martial art taught against street attacks from day 1. Once you gain proficiency your potential can range from a simple "compliance" comealong all the way through putting your attacker "through the concrete". Control in either case is the key.

Traditional ju-jitsu is mainly standup although effective ground defenses are also taught. As my sensei [who was Japanese] said, "If you're groveling around on the ground for more than 15 seconds, it's chicken scratching." 15 seconds IS a long time for any street confrontation gone

**Would you like to write an article for the next issue of Kokoro?**

If so, either e-mail it to me or send it to me as an e-mail attachment in a format that MS Word or Publisher can read—or in pdf format. All articles are subject to editing. I am not responsible for any content or viewpoint presented by the author of any article written/published.

physical. Unfortunately I've had 3-4 students of mine who have been attacked over the years. In every case the altercation was over in 3-5 seconds & none of them ever went to the ground. The assailant was either seriously injured striking the ground, or, in the case one of my female students who had a knife pulled on her, the assailant ended up with a broken wrist before he hit the ground. Again, it's all a matter of control and you will have that ability.

## UPCOMING EVENTS:

### AJA Northern Regional Workshop & Shiai

July 10, 2010

Towson YMCA, Towson [North Blatimore], MD  
[www.daitoukan.com](http://www.daitoukan.com) for more info

### IIMAA [International Independent Martial Artists Association] Training Conference

[I'm teaching Saturday afternoon]

July 16-18

Kissimmee, FL

[www.iimaaconference.net/home.htm](http://www.iimaaconference.net/home.htm) or  
[www.iimaaconference.net/venuemainpage.htm](http://www.iimaaconference.net/venuemainpage.htm)

### Budoshin Ju-Jitsu Summer Camp

August 13-15, 2010

North Oaks Park, Santa Clarita, CA

Contact George Kirby @ [senseigk@budoshin.com](mailto:senseigk@budoshin.com)

### Camp Budoshin 2010

October, 2010

Santa Clarita, CA

Contact George Kirby at [senseigk@budoshin.com](mailto:senseigk@budoshin.com)

### Arlington YMCA Ju-Jitsu Seminar

November 6, 2010

Arlington, VA

Info: [thomas@budoshin.com](mailto:thomas@budoshin.com)

Check out [www.americanjujitsuassociation.org](http://www.americanjujitsuassociation.org) for  
AJA Calendar of Events

AT: Budoshin jujitsu is a traditional Japanese martial art and is a martial art that the samurai would have used if he had lost his sword and was unarmed. It is taught with the focus of self-defense and not for competitive fighting such as Brazilian jujitsu. Traditional Japanese jujitsu is the parent art of aikido, judo and karate; so many techniques in traditional jujitsu have some or all of specific aikido techniques. An experienced aikido practitioner can devastate an opponent so I think you may not have a good understanding of what aikido really is. I have never seen a gentle hippie style aikido so I do not know what that really is. The focus of all martial arts is to be non-confrontational, in fact both aikido and Budoshin jujitsu teaches all students to walk away whenever possible and to solve differences peacefully. The highest-ranking Japanese karate instructor in the United States, Hanshi Hiroyasu Fujishima, also teaches this very same concept to all of his students.

Fighting is a last resort and the techniques we teach in Budoshin jujitsu will defend oneself against any attack. The issue becomes what level of response you use against your attacker. The goal is to only use enough force to subdue your attacker, not to annihilate your attacker. As one progresses in the art, the student learns how to control the force used against an attacker and to maintain a dominant position in control over the attacker. Modern military forces use these techniques with the level of force determined by rules of engagement.

**Q: On the kata portion of the sankyu exam do combined techniques count? 4/1/10**

AK: As long as I see what I've asked for I don't worry about combinations unless the combinations do not support each other.

**Q: In other words, you ask for kubi nage and also kubi shimi waza right below it. If I do a kubi nage and then do a choke submission does that count for both? 4/1/10**

AK: Not necessarily. I still might ask for the other on a test.

Just an additional note here: You found the typo error that befuddles some, others ignore, but few ask about on the brown belt kata test. There is the kubi nage [neck throw] and then the tekubi shimi waza [neck strangling throw]. The English translation is in error. It should read [wristlock technique] as it actually refers to the wristlock lift comealong. In reality however, tekubi shimi waza is any technique that locks the wrist as a result of turning it. It could even be the basic wristlock takedown taught at the green belt level. Kubi shimi waza would actually be any neck strangling technique. A simple shimi waza would be a pain or strangling technique usually [but not always] used for a submission. Three of my students are currently updating the Student Handbook & will be taking care of typo

errors like this one. Thanks for bringing it out to everyone's attention

**Q: Does the same concept apply for the Te Tetake as a submission for a throw? 4/1/10**

AK: Te tataka are commonly used as finishing techniques after throws. If you use a couple on the test that's fine. If every technique ends up with a te tataka, rather than showing a different submission every time you do a submission, it tends to hurt your score.

**Q: Also do you require your student to learn Japanese phrases or do you go by English translation when it comes to techniques (Kata/Waza). 4/3/10**

AK: You are not required to know the Japanese terminology until you test for sankyu. Up until that time I always use the Japanese & English terms together. Students tend to learn the Japanese by "osmosis" over a couple of years.

AT: Yes, we do require the student to learn the Japanese phrases but until you reach Brown belt the use of the Japanese phrases are not required

**Q: Also do you test per Kyu or can you test for several Kyu at a time? 4/3/10**

AK: I prefer that you start with 6<sup>th</sup> kyu [Green belt]. This way I can spot errors before they become entrenched in your techniques & much more difficult to get rid of. However, you can test for as many kyu as you wish at one time, realizing that if you're messing up on basics your score will go down on higher level tests. Please also keep in mind that tests/evaluations are a measure of progress, not perfection. You'll be doing hip throws [koshi nage] or variations thereof all the way up through the black belt grades, hopefully getting better all the time. Therefore my standards on a 6<sup>th</sup> kyu test are more lenient than 5<sup>th</sup> kyu or 4<sup>th</sup> kyu or 3<sup>rd</sup> kyu, etc., etc. This is why it's important to submit an evaluation dvd for every kyu grade. It helps me spot & correct problems while they're still small & easily fixable.

**PLEASE!**

Come up with a simple yet "deep" Question & answer for "Yin & Yang" & it might appear in a future issue!

**YIN & YANG**

If I'm blindfolded will I "see" my attacker?

What do you think?

## **BREAKS, BUMPS, BRUISES, PULLS, STRAINS AND GROUND-STUN**

By Sensei Dave Clark, Shodan  
Dave Clark Jiu-Jitsu Consortium, Brandon, Florida

While I never broke any of my bones or any one else's bones on my way to earning a few black belts, I received or developed more than a dozen injuries that slowed or hindered my progress. Sometimes I was able to tape up or provide support for an injured body part and keep practicing. Other times, I had to listen to my body and avoid the practice mat until my injury or injuries healed sufficiently to return to the mat. I used the down time to study and observe. Forward progress happens mostly between the ears anyways...

Sometimes I blamed my injury on my tori or my uke, only to eventually realize that my incorrect stance, form or technique was the single direct cause of the injury. When I improved my stance, my form or my technique, I removed the opportunity for injury to occur. Placing blame on someone else was a pointless waste of my emotional energy.

Another very effective way to prevent injuries is to maintain a regular workout regimen. It is a proven fact that athletes who perform regular exercise incur fewer injuries and, when they do get injured, heal considerably faster than athletes who choose not to exercise regularly. Schedule regular workouts and meet your challenge. If you don't want to create the time to get to a gym, learn how to put together a very effective calisthenics and isometrics routine you can do at home in a very short amount of time using little or no equipment. Be sure to include a stretching routine.

Often an injury will not be noticed until you leave the mat, or even until the next day. This can make the detective work to determine when, where and how the injury occurred considerably more difficult. Do the work so that the necessary learning takes place.

If someone is not modulating the speed of a technique or a submission to your liking, speak up. You will be doing both of you a favor, because working out differences presents valuable learning opportunities for both tori and uke.

Catching an uke is very important when a technique is relatively new to either tori or uke.

Incurring and enduring some injury on your path to black belt and beyond is a normal part of the learning process. Be sure to learn from each of your injuries. Be slow to blame others for your injuries. Be quick to learn about preventative measures you can take. Be quick to accept responsibility for choosing to learn on the mat and the inevitable injuries that will occur, even in ideal situations under close qualified supervision.

AT: This depends entirely on the student's level of understanding and their ability to demonstrate the technique or techniques. So to answer your question directly, if a student has prior martial arts experience and they have demonstrated a clear knowledge of the techniques at a certain Kyu level, I will promote them directly to that Kyu level.

**Q: If I was reading correctly, the test submitted should be taken from the mat test and the general knowledge questions can be answered in writing, is that correct? 4/4/10**

AK: Yes.

**Q: What is the test topics used for? 4/5/10**

AK: From my understanding, based upon the yudansha who put the last version of the handbook together, the Test Topics page was to be used as a review list. Note the columns "recall" & "execute" to the right. It is fairly similar to the Technique Sequence page but there are some slight differences. Is it a necessary item? Probably not. But some students like it.

AT: the test topics or a list or guideline of items that need to be demonstrated either physically or by your own ability to explain a definition.

**Q: Did we need to perform all techniques right and left hand? 4/5/10**

AK: Nope. Generally if you can execute techniques right handed you're ok. I usually won't ask students to do techniques left-handed until they get to the brown belt level. Left handed people have no problem with this. It can become very difficult for right-handed people though as they have to actively think "opposite movement".

AT: Budoshin jujitsu is very detailed and our focus is to get the student to a proficient level as soon as possible. Once you reach Brown belt we begin focusing on both left and right side techniques and expect black belts to be able to perform the techniques on either side. I am left-handed so I always have an advantage when doing techniques on the

## **AJA REMINDER!!**

If you are a sankyu or higher grade in Budoshin Ju-Jitsu you must also maintain a current AJA [American Ju-Jitsu Association] membership of \$20/ calendar year.

As of January 2010 your AJA membership will also include a free AJA patch [\$6 value].

So go to <http://membershipreg.budoshin.com> to pay your AJA fee now.

If you already paid for your 2010 AJA membership an AJA patch will be sent to you shortly.

left side. During my training of the new students I begin to teach them footwork in both directions so that by the time they get to Brown belt going to the left side becomes easier.

**Q: I was reading that some people are jumping right to the sankyu test, how are they showing competence in the previous techniques? 4/5/10**

AK: This is not a recommended approach as it has a high failure rate because the basic skills aren't there or too many techniques are done wrong – again because the candidate didn't give me a chance to correct problems before they became entrenched. This is why I demand a pre-evaluation video showing ALL the kata and waza as listed on the brown belt test prior to testing. It does a pretty good job of covering all of the basics and then some. I don't like to formally test a person unless I know they can make it.

A test should be a formality [a chance to show one's high level of proficiency] – not a failure or disaster. The pre-evaluation video "sifts the wheat grains from the chaff" so to speak.

AT: this depends entirely on the students prior martial arts experience. Many times, a black belt in a different style of martial arts, can rapidly become proficient in Budoshin jujitsu. It really depends on the style of martial arts previously studied and how competent that person is during demonstrations. One of my students was already a fourth degree black belt in a Japanese karate style and knew many of our techniques already. If you have taken shotokan karate to a black belt level you will know that jujitsu techniques are taught to black belts and they focus on pure karate up to black belt.

**Q: The mats that I currently have are not the best quality. Do you have any problem with the use of an additional landing or crash mat? 4/6/10**

AK: I'm not sure what you mean by "additional landing or crash mats." Improper mats are a safety hazard whether they be too thick or too thin. If mats are too thin the filler will not absorb the impact force. If they are too thick they may also keep your feet from moving freely or properly thus causing falls from loss of balance or improperly stopping your necessary foot movements to execute tech-

niques. Straight foam is the worst, followed by mattresses. I've even had some students ask about using mattresses 2 mattresses deep. Ouch!!

What you really need are mats that will support your weight standing up, where your feet won't sink into them by too much. Regular exercise pads or gymnastic mats for kids won't do that. 2-4x8' proper quality mats aren't cheap but they will provide the best protection. [Putting carpet and/or carpet pad/foam under them helps the absorbency tremendously while maintaining the supporting surface of the mats.]

AT: mats are for your protection. Make sure they are firm but flexible. If they are too soft, your feet will sink in and cause problems.

**Q: So is the correspondence courses good? 4/7/10**

AK: I think so, but I may be prejudiced. :) Go to [www.budoshin.com/testimonials.htm](http://www.budoshin.com/testimonials.htm) for other people's thoughts.

AT: The coursework is excellent but you will need a diligent partner to practice the moves over and over. It is one thing to read and watch, it is another thing to do it. You must practice the techniques correctly so having someone to help you learn the nuances of a technique is key.

**Q: There is a hapkido school here I was thinking of joining but it seems lacking compared to Japanese jiu jitsu, so what do you recommend? 4/7/10**

AK: What is it "lacking"?

Hapkido and Jujitsu are very similar except for two differences. 1] Hapkido is Korean and Jujitsu is Japanese. 2] Jujitsu is purely defensive [although you could goad a person into attacking you] and Hapkido is defensive AND offensive [so you can initiate an attack on another person with it]. It all depends on what YOU want.

AT: Hapkido is very similar to Traditional Jujitsu with more focus on kicking in my opinion. It really depends on the instructor and all of the Hapkido instructors I have met are very competent. If you can watch the class and like the way that instructor teaches, then study from him.

What is really important is the reason you are taking a martial art. Make sure you know why first, then decide on the correct course of study that is most appropriate.

**Q: Are you planning on accepting credit cards on your website in the future? I use credit cards to order and pay for things all the time, but I get PayPal phishing messages at least once a week and am uncomfortable with it. Sometimes the English is even pretty good, and doesn't begin with "My Dear..." 4/11/10**

AK: No. Simple rule with PayPal or any company you might normally have relations with: If the email doesn't

## AJA NEWSLETTER NOW ONLINE

If you'd like to download a copy of the AJA Newsletter please go to:

[www.americanjujitsuassociation.org/AJANewsletter.htm](http://www.americanjujitsuassociation.org/AJANewsletter.htm) .

start with your name it's phishing. Yes, some phishing expeditions are really well done & may even have your first name. It's even happened with my bank. However, as you said, most phishers don't have the "best" grammar & they're still easy to spot.

My best advice [ & I've done this ] is that if the email looks legit and it's a company that you deal with, call them by phone to get confirmation of their email.

Also, anything of real importance that pertains directly to you will probably be sent via snail mail -- & then it could be junk snail mail.

I get about 200+ phishers a month but fortunately most go directly into my junk mail. I get about one from PayPal every 2-3 months. Unphortunately PDA's such as yours [ & mine ] are not sophisticated enough to sort out junk mail. So all mail comes up on the screen & we have to phish to separate the real phish phrom the phake phish. [ At least my new PDA allows me to delete all my email with one click. : ) ]

The only time you really have to worry is if a phishing email has part of a valid credit card number on it. Then you need to contact your credit card company by phone & you'll probably want to change your credit card number.

The internet is supposed to make liphe easier, but some things can be a real pain.

**Q: Do you have any more of your old BJJ T-Shirts - the ones with the large logo on the back? 4/11/10**

AK: Yes, all sizes except Large. They're \$16.50 including s&h

**Q: For reasons that are not clear, your email message has the name of the image superimposed on the text (e.g., BJJ-logo-tiny.jpg ) in my email viewer (Thunderbird).. 4/11/10**

AK: That may be my "business card" which is now attached to my emails by Outlook.

**Q: When I hit "Reply" to this message I see a very long code followed by @u.cts.vresp.com . 4/11/10**

AK: Because your device is receiving the email I sent through VerticalResponse as a text message, rather than HTML, you're getting a whole bunch of code dealing with links and how the email your getting is set up, etc.

If you can switch your internet reception to receive HTML format the problem will resolve itself.

**Q: Have you ever had a student from LONG ago in the past come back and start over? I would be too embarrassed at how much I've forgotten to do such a thing, but I am curious? What would a 1st degree brown belt from 33 yrs back come in as?....besides the title of**

**"old fool" or "creaky joint noise-maker? 4/19/10**

AK: If you gave yourself 3-6 months I think you'd be amazed at how much comes back & it's a geometric re-growth. The stuff is up there. It just needs to be wakened up. Whether your body can put up with it is another matter. From past experience "starting over" isn't appropriate as you'd be frustrated with white belts & your own memory patterns would reestablish themselves a lot faster. I'd say, come back at a belt your comfortable with and I'd move you up as your skill level & confidence returned.

AT: I have had students come back after many years absence, and they do not start over. They essentially begin where they left off, but I give them exercises to bring them back up to speed. You would be surprised how much knowledge is retained and was four months practice, It would be almost as if you never left. I personally was not practicing jujitsu for almost 10 years but after about four months of diligent practice I felt totally comfortable in the dojo again.

**Q: I am glad to hear you are 10th Dan, is that about the highest there is? 4/19/10**

AK: That's as high as it goes. After 5<sup>th</sup> it's all honorary anyway in ju-jitsu. At that point the issue becomes "what are you giving back to the community?"

**Q: Are you going to expand what you're doing even more or are the 2 positions you have now [College of the Canyons and North Oaks Park] where you plan to stay? 4/19/10**

AK: I hope that when the economy "recovers" the college will again offer two sections of budoshin JJ rather than 1 [8 -9:20am TTh]. I did have a second section from 9":30-10:50 but our governor & legislators decided to "cut the hand that feeds them" for lack of a better phrase. Needless to say [as an old "government" teacher, the voters enactment of term limits for legislators was one of the dumbest things the voters ever did. [My opinion & I hope I'm not insulting you here. : ) ] The dean has said that I could probably be teaching 4 sections if I wanted to, but then he'd have to bring me on the faculty at fulltime or kill me. I told him that I'm doing this for enjoyment & 2 sections are plenty so either of his options aren't even worth considering. What was really interesting was the job interview with the dean & PE dept chair. The dept chair was a student of mine during my first year at OV. His first comment was, "Mr. Kirby!" Mine was "Chuck!". I figure you can guess how that interview went.

**Q: Another book in the works? 4/19/10**

AK: Toying around with an idea. I need some computer time with "Inspiration". It's a software program the kids

started using during my last few years at Grant High School. It works with ideas, words, etc., that you put on a screen & then connect as you wish. Click a button & "poof" you've got an outline. English teachers hated it at first because they thought kids wouldn't learn how to outline – another skill lost in "education's" eyes. Surprisingly, not only were kids able to write more coherently, but they also got better at organizing their thoughts & outlining. I've used it to set up my last 2 books [because the program is limited]. It has cut my keyboard time in half. A couple of teachers even used it to write their MA theses for college. Great program. Needless to say I used technology as much as I could in the classroom. Unfortunately it's really hard for teachers [& education] to keep up with this stuff – but it has to be done if we're going to turn out competent graduates.

Better get off my soapbox.

*Two technology addendums:*

*When ballpoint pens came into use in the late 1950's we [as students] weren't allowed to use them because "they would cause our penmanship skills to deteriorate."*

*In 1961 when the first hand calculator came out [addition, subtraction, multiplication & division functions] we were not allowed to use them in our 12th grade calculus, trigonometry and introduction to college math [after trig] because "they would cause us to forget how to do basic math functions."*

*I have no doubt similar arguments arose when the first desktop/laptop computer raised its head, much less the first PDA.*

*I have no problems with tradition and sometimes the "old way is best." However, innovation is what has made America what it is and should be used to help us do things better. E.g., ask any math student in junior or senior high what kind of calculator they're REQUIRED to have for their class? How many schools "encourage" their students to have computers & the internet at home? Then again, how many people have good "penmanship" today? [When I was in school it was actually taught up through the 9th grade as part of the "English" class.*

*But I digress.....*

**Q: I have often thought of our time together when watching MMA, ultimate fighting etc, especially at the beginning a few yrs back when the Gracie Ju-Jitsu guys were more prevalent. Now, it seems that Gracie lineage is very respected but has been absorbed into the mainstream such that it is more fists than throws. When I first watched the Gracie's in ultimate fighting it was thrilling to see them take the power of a "puncher", and crawl over his back and win the fight with a choke move, it was fascinating. What are your thoughts on the whole MMA in all it's various incarnations? 4/19/10**

AK: Gracie jujitsu, in and of itself, is a very effective martial art, especially on the ground where it is designed to be

most effective. However, it has devolved as MMA has come into greater popularity. My personal feeling is that MMA will also eventually pass as one fad moves into another. I've seen this happen a few times in my 43 years in the art. The traditional arts seem to survive. Probably the same thing ultimately happens with music although music has a bit more "fluidity", if you know what I mean & thus perhaps has a greater ability to grow and adapt.

AT: MMA is a competition with certain rules that preclude certain techniques. It is one way of someone testing their abilities against another opponent. However, Budoshin jujitsu as we teach it is purely for self-defense purposes and not from a competition point of view like MMA. Our competitions are similar to an Olympic style scoring where the defender is scored on their ability to defend themselves and the quality of that defense. MMA scores both people. MMA today is a business and the competitions are put together to develop an entertainment point of view so that maximum viewing audience will participate.

**Q: I personally love watching MMA. But I was really enjoying your website and, when reading about the peaceful nature of Ju-Jitsu, I had the thought that all the current popularity of the MMA doesn't teach much about peace does it? 4/19/10**

AK: It's a sport & needs to be recognized as such. As a sport it has rules – for safety. Jujitsu, for self-defense, does not have any rules except self-preservation, hopefully with the least damage possible to your attacker. But there is a strong philosophy of non-violence & the avoidance of violence due to the recognition of the potential damage that can be done to the human body. But you know this.

AT: It might show them as respectful to each other as athletes, but there is no deeper message. Maybe it's not the place for such?

**Q: It might show them as respectful to each other as athletes, but there is no deeper message. Maybe it's not the place for such? 4/19/10**

AK: The goal with MMA matches is to win within the rules established. The public wants controlled violence and that's what the media gives. Sort of like the ancient Romans in the coliseums – but not as violent. ☺

**Q: Are there any media links online to photos from when I was in your Olive Vista Jr High Classes in the 1970's? 4/19/10**

AK: Not that I know of. However, I might go look in some of my old scrapbooks to see what I can find. – Good idea!!

However, I still need to get pix on my website from CB2009 plus others.

**Q: I am a Budoshin Ju-Jitsu sensei and I will be testing some of my students for Shodan [or higher grades] in the near future. Do they have to answer the questions on page 66-67 of the Black Belt Handbook and do they have to reanswer them for every yudansha rank they test for? 4/19/10**

AK: Short answer is: Yes—although the “yes” varies asd they test for higher rank. The reasons are as follows:

1. In my book any mat exam is a formality. It gives the belt candidate a chance to show how well he/she can do. I usually won't let a student test for higher kyu or dan grades unless I'm positive they can pass—because my reputation is on the line as well. Answering written questions is one way they can express their thinking process in a written and coherent manner—especially since they can do as many rewrites of their answers as they feel necessary—until they feel comfortable with their final presentation.
2. The questions are open-ended. That means that there are no wrong answers. As long as a candidate can explain/rationalize their answer it should be ok. Unfortunately many candidates look for the “right” answer because that's how they've been trained to respond to essay questions throughout most of their education. An open-ended question requires a bit more confidence and an increased responsibility to be able to express one's thoughts clearly.
3. When you test for a yudansha grade your written response to a question may result in your sensei/examiner asking you an oral question pertaining to your written statement. You may simply be asked to explain what you've written down or your comment might be used as the basis for a “what-if” question. You will have to verbally respond on the spot in a competent and coherent manner.
4. When you test for a higher yudansha grade your answer to certain questions might change. The examiner might look back at your previous written responses & then ask *what* caused you to change your response. All you have to do is explain yourself. There is no wrong answer. [BTW: If you ask a person *why* they did something it usually puts them on the defensive because the word “why” infers that they've done something wrong. Asking a person what their reasons were for doing something usually gets a better response & may result in a better understanding of the reasons for what they did [whether it was the right thing to do or not].
5. Ties into the ending of the previous reasons form the basis for this all important reason. As a sensei, students will ask you questions and you have to be able to answer them competently and coherently. You will

be put on the spot many times by students and you have to sound like you know what you're talking about.

I've used these questions for decades and they work well to help me get black belts who can explain themselves well, either to me or their students.

Just as a side issue I also require kyu grade students to do a few identification or short answer responses depending on the kyu grade they're testing for. The reason I went this route was because many years ago I was on an examining panel for a shodan and nidan candidate. [They weren't my students.] The shodan candidate could not define “ki” or even show a techniques that demonstrated the use of ki. The nidan candidate could not explain what “mushin” was in any form or manner. I voted not to promote either candidate for being unable to define simple terminology they should have known. [How would they answer their students if asked to define/explain.] Their sensei passed them anyway. At that point I vowed that I would do my best so that Budoshin JJ students would have a good understanding of basic martial arts terminology long before they ever tested for shodan.

**Q: I was going to attend a conference you were scheduled to teach at until I found out that I would have to pay the full “participant admission” price even though all I would do is watch the training seminars. Why is this done at certain events? 4/20/10**

AK: I can't really comment on what the event coordinator is charging for anything.

As an economics teacher I can tell you that prices are usually determined by what the market will bear. Whether a price is fair or not is a more subjective issue.

As an event coordinator I have seen people come to an event as an “observer” – for free – and then ultimately get on the mat. Also, even as observers, a “non-participant” is still learning skills [through observation, listening & remembering] while others have paid for this same information. Even at Camp Budoshin we're very conservative as to who gets in for free – to watch -- & keep an eye on them. At some camps we've even used wrist bands or rubber stamped the back of hands. Maybe the event coordinator has just been “stung” too often and just doesn't want to deal with the issue. I don't really know where the event coordinator is coming from with respect to this issue, but I'm sure the reasons are legitimate.

AT: this policy is based on the sensei that is running the program at his dojo. I do not control the fees or the policies of any dojo that I am visiting. Again, the fees and any dojo policies are subject to the sensei of the dojo.

**Q: You sent me the Student handbook via [www.yousendit.com](http://www.yousendit.com) . why does the files expire in 10**

## TEACHABLE MOMENT!

By George Kirby

*Note: A couple of sensei have asked me to start a series on how to improve teaching skills and student learning—as it applies to the dojo. So I've decided to launch this idea, with the hope of seeing it become a regular item in future issues of Kokoro.*

### ATTENTION SPAN

Their eyes are wandering, they're getting fidgety, and they're not paying attention. My lesson is shot. Aarrgh!

If your students aren't paying attention for a variety of reasons boredom probably isn't one of the core reason unless your standing perfectly still talking in a monotone voice with no inflection & you sound totally bored with what your saying and/or doing.

Regardless of subject, situation, age or maturity of your audience, your main enemy is their attention span. Unless your audience is really interested in what you're going to do or really turned on to the subject matter, you've got 20 minutes before their minds wander off to greener pastures — and that's with adults!

This is why "sitcoms" on TV are 23 minutes long, not including commercials. You can keep an adult mind mesmerized for about 20 minutes, but that's it.

As your audience gets younger the attention span gets shorter. The "ancy" factor also increases exponentially—and it's no one's fault. However, you, as the sensei, need to prevent that from happening.

So the question is, how do you do it? How do you keep your students' minds & bodies on track with your planned lesson [which rarely work out as planned anyway ☺ ].

Simple: You keep their minds and bodies working. With younger kids it means changing what you and they are doing every few minutes [5-10 max] due to their shorter attention spans. Kids really prefer physical activity as compared to a "presentation". Get them up off the mat to do simple steps before you put a technique together. [This also works well with adults too.]

Some skills can be taught as "games", which younger kids love — & they're still learning what you want them to learn. Teenagers will not fall for this ruse so your approach must be more sophisticated and subtle. In the case of "games" they'd much rather be treated as adults, but with a bit more leeway. Yes, some of the training exercises you give adults are actually "games" but more sophisticated. [It may be dealing with random attacks, multiple attackers, attackers using medium resistance, etc., but they're all still "games". ]

The word "games" is not meant to demean what you're teaching and it's a word NOT to use when dealing with older kids [teenagers] or adults because they'll see it as a

put down. The phrase "improving your skill level" is a far more acceptable to the older age groups.

This brings up another related issue. Keep sentences short with kids — and adults too when possible. If your rhetoric [big word] becomes so involved and convoluted so that it becomes difficult for anyone to maintain their attention long enough to figure out what concept you are trying to present, then you will be unsuccessful in accomplishing your goal because by the time you finish your sentence not only will your audience have forgotten what you are talking about, but so will you, thus leading a chaos and confusion in any discussion of your ideas that may follow. Got it?

In all fairness, the minimum age in my dojo is 10 years old. Professionally I had to get out of the 7th grade classroom my first semester of teaching jr. high. As I told the principal, by the end of the class I was further behind than from where I started because I couldn't get down to their vocabulary level. So he gave me 8th graders [13 year olds] which most jr high teachers avoid like the plague. We had a ball. They were crazy & my teaching approach fit right in with their sense of reality. Teaching that grade level made it possible for me to become a successful teacher and enjoy the profession. Adel, my wife, taught 3rd graders. That's a whole different ball game. She also taught high school ESL [English as a Second Language] and taught those kids the same way. I could never do that.

So, in addition to changing what you do frequently and getting them involved in the lesson, what else can you do to keep their attention? You must be interesting. You've got to be a positive, outgoing, and personable person. You have to be likable, which doesn't mean you have to be their friend. It means you have to be approachable and your students won't fear you. You have to have different ways to get students to learn the same ideas, concepts, or skills. You've got to keep the class moving.

My first principal told me that the worst place for a teacher to be is in front of the classroom. Instead, move around, work with the students, talk with them as individuals and involve them in the lesson. If you get good at this it's like being a ringmaster in a circus. It may look like chaos, but there is order and a method to your madness

You also have to be a good actor, Be emotional about what you teach. Show that you love the topic. I've even dropped down to my knees or grabbed at my heart & feigned a heart attack when I got abysmally wrong answers in the classroom or the dojo. The students knew it was an act and worked with me. You can be animated and you can still be serious. The student will see that your interesting [& perhaps unpredictable at times] and they'll pay attention — because they don't want to miss what happens next.

Enjoy what you're doing and you'll keep their attention too!

**days. 041810**

AK: YouSendIt's policy is to delete files after 10 days. Otherwise their "system" could get overloaded – I guess. Hopefully you will download the file within 10 days.

**Q: Can I save the file and will the password continue to work beyond the expiration? 041810**

AK: Yes, most definitely. Once you download the files they're yours & the password will work forever.

**Q: If not am I supposed to print it out? 0418010**

That's your choice. The printed page still has value and advantages over a computer screen in some ways.

**Q: Also do I need to keep track of my training hours and stuff? 041810**

AK: No. Doing so serves no long-range purpose and could even be frustrating if, at some point, you feel it's taking "longer than normal" [whatever "normal" is] to get to a particular rank or get a particular technique down. For example, hane goshi [inside sweeping hip throw] was the most difficult throw for me to learn. I was totally inept at it until after I earned my nidan. Then one night in Seki's class I got it. BTW: That's why I usually ask a student to do either harai goshi [outside sweeping hip throw] OR hane goshi from brown & black belt exams. My students tend to find one of them much easier to learn than the other.

AT: [this password is only for the service I use to download the file. Once the file is downloaded you can save the PDF file wherever you would like to schedule have full access to it without password. Keeping track of your training hours will help give you a record and help you and your sensei know what your accomplishments are. Just like a pilot or a truck driver has to log their hours, it's a good idea to keep a log as well as any detailed information you may find useful in your studies.](#)

**Q: When you reach the rank of Nidan or higher we signify our rank by putting strips on our Obi. When we tie our Obi what side should the stripes be on? 042510**

AK: My preference is on the left end only. Some sensei put it on both ends. Seki had us use ½" colored electrical tape & I've continued the tradition. It's cheap, stays on, and works. Seki used green for sankyu, black for nikyu, and blu for ikkyu. For yudansha grades he used red stripes with a ½" separation between stripes.

**Q: s this the same for Ju-Jitsu and Karate? 042510**

AK: It's not even consistent in ju-jitsu. It usually depends upon the ryu, organization, and or sensei.

**Q: Do you have any history on when the use of stripes on obi's began? 042510**

AK: Nope. It would be nice to have one though. I'm sure it's out there if you have the time to research it.

**Q: I need your advice on a DVD idea I got about teaching handicapped people who are in wheel chairs, artificial legs, etc or like myself and can't do all the Jujitsu throws etc. but want to learn self-defense. How I got the idea I was contacted by an Instructor who lives in New York about a student of his here in Florida who is Diabetic and lost both legs and is now in a wheel chair. He asked me since I said I had to modify my Jujitsu could I do it for his student. I said yes, I had my son contact the student by phone as well as I did by e-mail. The student told me he could not find anybody or Martial Arts school that would teach him self-defense because of his handicap, and that he new a lot of people that were handicapped and wanted to know how to defend themselves and there families if attacked. He asked me if I could make a DVD he could study until the next training section. My son has a friend at college that is a film major and said he could make the DVD for us. I contacted a martial arts dvd publisher. They told me to send a 10-15 min. sample or the full DVD and they would let me know if they would make it. I know you have made video's and DVD's and was wanting to know if you had to do the same thing? I just don't want them to steal the idea and get there own Instructor to do the dvd. 043010**

AK: This is part of learning the rules of CYA [Cover Your Assets]. If you've created something [written work, artwork, music, dvd, etc.] and it's not a "professionally done finished product" or it's just part of a complete item [10-15 minute rough video, chapter of a book, etc., and it's a legitimate publisher, you're "probably" ok in sending it to a specific person at the publisher. Be sure to keep a log of any prior & post phone conversations & keep all emails, letters [with postmarked envelopes], etc. to establish that you had "communications" with the publisher in case any problems arise.

If you have any concerns you can do what's called a "poor man's copyright" although its legal standing today is questionable. Again, I'm not an attorney here so don't quote me. To create a poor man's copyright you just stick whatever you want in an envelope or mailing container, go to the post office, pay to have it sent to you, registered, with a signed receipt required --- and pay for all of these goodies. Make sure the postal clerk rubber stamps the postmark wherever there is a seal on the envelope or container. [That will show if the item has been opened since it was delivered.] The postal clerk may just turn around, once you've paid everything & filled out everything, have you sign the return receipt card in his presence and then

give everything back to you. You just take it home and save it. Do NOT open the mail container or it will void the entire process. The post office may alternatively decide to actually mail the item to you at your home address, in which you'd still have to sign for it and then the return receipt would be mailed back to you by the post office. It's 6 of one or half-dozen of another.

What does a poor man's copyright get you? Probably not much except maybe to establish that you had the document before anyone else did.

I've done this with a few items in the past just to make myself feel better. Once you get to know a publisher you probably won't have to worry about this CYA rule which can be a PITA [pain in the anterior] if you get paranoid & start doing it for everything [very cost-ineffective].

Do not tell a publisher you've done this – because you don't need to. Also, if you tell them it creates a bad feeling of mistrust – bad for future business relations. Just keep it to yourself. Also, if you actually copyright an item [which is not hard to do] it is unlikely that a publisher will publish it as it creates some legal hurdles for them. Your best bet is to stick with established known publisher/companies because they usually are honest in this area – and in other areas as well.

The most difficult part of getting a publisher is getting your foot in the door. So expect a few bruised toes and don't let them discourage you. Just follow the "4-Ps". [Be polite, be professional, be pleasantly persistent, and be patient.]

You've got a good topic & I hope the project flies. I think there'd be a good market for it as well. Very few instructors have effective self-defense programs for physically handicapped people.

#### **Q: How do I use my new AJA card? 050110**

A: Simply follow the directions below the ID portion [top panel]. If you fill up the backside of the card just ask me for another one. This "log" is useful when you come up for promotion [especially sankyu & higher] or if your sensei uses the information to select an outstanding student or for other reasons. This "log" also means that you don't have to remember everything you've done because it's written down.

Just a reminder, anyone in the BJJY who holds at least a sankyu grade MUST also hold an AJA membership as a prerequisite for promotion. You must also secure an AJA certificate of rank for sankyu and above. The annual AJA fee is \$20/calendar year & AJA rank certificates range from under \$10 to about \$20-25 for higher dan grades [I'm guessing here.

**Q: I think Seki Sensei had it right. That's why I'm doing that for both karate and jujitsu. One sensei said that I shouldn't be teaching bunkai until the kids are around 12. I know 12 year old black belts who don't know anything. I think that's sad. I don't believe in giving black belts until either 16 years of age, or unless they know the proper bunkai for every kata. Otherwise all they know is dance. 050210**

AK: Neither Seki or I will give a black belt below 16 for a variety of reasons and it has nothing to do with technical knowledge. First, there's a certain amount of emotional and mental maturity that's required for shodan. Combine that with a balance of integrity, humility, and self-respect. Some young people can achieve that level of maturity around age 16. Seki & I also follow the same philosophy that I will not promote a student to ikkyu unless I'm seriously looking at them for black belt.

Second, black belt grades in Ju-Jitsu are teaching grades. So I'm also looking for some teaching skills, [even if the candidate doesn't want to teach at that point in his/her life]. Does the candidate have the communication skills? Are they willing to help lower ranks on a 1:1 basis. In addition, a person is not considered an adult until age 18 in most states and therefore not legally accountable until that time. A person younger than 18 shouldn't be teaching in any manner in your dojo without qualified instructor adult supervision.

Last, neither Seki or I believe in "junior black belts." Either you are a black belt or you are not a black belt. I do understand that there are some commercial dojo that grant junior black belts, but that's because they're commercial dojo. The junior black belts, in some rare cases may have the same technical knowledge and proficiency as an adult black belt, but they don't have the emotional or mental maturity necessary for such.

**Q: I am so impressed with your program because from the very beginning, it is usable. I can see it in my students. They now have a few techniques (throws and submissions) to go with their punches and kicks, and they tell me that they feel safer knowing the few things they know. That's what it's all about isn't it? 050210**

AK: Most techniques Seki taught had a direct street application because that was Seki's philosophy; ju-jitsu was the gentle art of self-defense. He did occasionally teach a technique without a direct street application but it was taught to present a concept or help you learn a skill that could be applied to other more street-oriented techniques. Feeling safe is important. And they're only going to feel safe if they're confident in their ability to better protect themselves. If you've helped them develop that skill you have been successful.

## Visit Budoshin @ CafePress

[www.cafepress.com/budoshin](http://www.cafepress.com/budoshin)

With costs going up and sales going down [in spite of price reductions] on my Budoshin Ju-Jitsu t-shirts it was inevitable that some changes had to be made. Over the past couple of years there have been requests for a color logo, different color t-shirts, and the availability of sweat-shirts and even hoodies. Although I didn't mind stocking one really slow-moving item, I just couldn't sink funds into maintaining a clothing store inventory.

Thanks to your suggestions I looked into CafePress as a viable alternative to maintaining a clothing inventory on my own. I checked CafePress out and was very pleased with the variety of goods I could sell with different Budoshin Ju-Jitsu logos. The prices were very reasonable. In fact, you can even buy a white t-shirt with a color logo for under \$12 + s&h. Also, the s&h charges are less than what I can charge—and even more so for multiple orders. Their easy store set-up process let me set up my entire store in about 4-5 hours.



What else could I ask for? No inventory, no overhead, no space requirements, and a great variety of products I could not afford to maintain on my own. It is a win-win situation for me.

It's also a win-win situation for you.

You have 63 different items you can choose from [as of 4/10/10]. You get prices that are lower than what I could sell the items for on my own. Your orders will generally be processed faster than I could do it. CafePress won't run out of stock. Your shipping costs are less. And you

can even get Budoshin Ju-Jitsu coffee mugs! If you bought one of everything it would provide you with a different article of clothing you could wear for at least 8 weeks, not including various combinations or whether you're walking around with a



coffee cup. What else can you ask for? ☺

Do you want to add your dojo logo onto any shirt on the back? You would need to send a photo file that will provide a crisp image at 10" diameter. There are other



details if you're really interested in this. Adding your logo to the back would add \$4 per item purchased. However, if I have to spend time making final fixes to your logo [e.g. blanking out the background, reversing colors to print on a dark shirt, etc.], there might be additional charge. You would have



to give final approval, etc., and you would have to find a way to recover your additional costs by adding to your sale price of the shirts you purchase.

I've posted some of my new items here just to get you interested.

Please visit my Budoshin @ CafePress store by going to [www.cafepress.com/budoshin](http://www.cafepress.com/budoshin).

