



Jan '98, Vol 5 - Issue I

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**Shimbun Internet Editor:** [José Tigani](#) & [Brian Berenbach](#)

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### In Memorial

This past year, just prior to the holiday seasons, we lost a great man of inspiration, dedication and strength to a long term illness. We will sorely miss Peter Murray aka dai-ichi-no-kiro (first cut). Peter exemplified all that karatedo represents. His foresight in convincing his friends and fellow students to join the Kyokai and become part of the family proved beneficial in fostering Shorinjiryu. As a small token of our respect for Peter we will change the Peter Murray Spirit Adult/Youth Award to the Peter Murray Memorial Spirit Award. Rest in peace, Peter.

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**President:** Myron M. Lubitsch  
**Vice President:** John Mirrione, Sr.  
**Shimbun Editor:** Brian Berenbach

### Article Submissions

The submission of articles, news- worthy events and letters is encouraged. Address all correspondence to:

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### Letter from the President

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Now let me see, is it 1997, 1998 or 1999? Where has the time flown? As a youth, I could hardly wait for the next event, driver's license, high school, voting, college, and the myriad of other milestones that we used to perceive as monumentally important. And, how did time drag as I waited for each event to occur? Now, that I am a bit older, time moves so rapidly that each year appears to come and go in a blink of the eye. Uh.

Well, 1998, is now here and we must look forward to another year of growth and expansion. The Kyokai continues to be the largest grouping of Shorinjiryu practitioners in the world. It has its own web site, advertising, insignia, newsletter, etc.

The participation of so many students in the last Shinzen Shiai and the Canadian Shiai only attests to the Kyokai's strength and its increasing popularity. Shorinjiryu is becoming a major factor in the world of karatedo. And, you, the students, are the ones responsible for the organization's growth. On behalf of all the instructors, thank you.

Allow me to wish each and everyone of you my heartfelt expression for a healthy and happy New Year. I hope to see you at the major gatherings where you can share with your fellow Shorinjiryu players that feeling of friendship and camaraderie which is unique to the Shorinjiryu Shinzen Kyokai.

Myron Lubitsch, President

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**from the President of the Aiki-Kempo Kan**  
by: Shihan Tony Diaz & students

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Dear Kyoshi Myron and Shihan Mirrione and the rest of the Shinzen Kyokai,

Hope all is well and that the Holidays have been good to you all. We here at the Aiki-Kempo Kan are looking forward to the coming new year and seeing all of our friends from the Shinzen Kyokai.

"Always in the Spirit of Budo"  
Shihan Tony Diaz and students

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**Editor's Message**  
by: Brian Berenbach, San Dan

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Last year brought some changes to the Shinzen. There were some well earned promotions, capped by a fabulous promotion ceremony and party for Troy Lester. If you weren't there, you missed the second best event of the year (The Shinzen tournament was the first). On a personal note, after having seen two of my 3 boys give up on Karate, it was rewarding for me to see my son Jason promoted to 5th kyu. Knowing how demanding his teacher is, I am sure his promotion was well deserved.

There are some very interesting health related articles in this issue. One by Peter M. Hiltz and Cathy Drinkwater Better, the other by our intrepid Vice President John A. Mirrione, Sr. So in keeping with the theme of this issue, I wish you all good health for 1998. May you practice harder.

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**Reiki: "Universal life Energy"**  
by: John A. Mirrione, Sr.

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I recently completed my second degree training in the Japanese healing art of Reiki. This very traditional art has been handed down from one master to another. Given my training in karatedo, I found it challenging to go from a military art form to a healing art.

The knowledge of Reiki would have remained lost forever had it not been for Dr.

Milao Usui who rediscovered the key that led to the recovery of this thousand year old tradition of healing.

Reiki is a method of healing oneself and others as we are all composed of this Universal Energy. Since Reiki means "universal life energy", it is the essence of life itself and all are born with it. In the Usui system, contact is made with this universal force. It then works automatically to heal the person on all levels and those who take the training soon realize it is an invaluable investment for it is everlasting, instantly available and helps to raise the level of ones' vitality for physical and mental health, as well as, enhancing spiritual awareness.

Whether you are a believer or not, some Reiki is better than none at all.

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### Hanshi Brian Aarons

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Dear Fellow Karate-ka,

Greetings from the land that sends you all that cold, snowy, bad weather.

On behalf of Shorinjiryu Kenkokan Karate-do I wish to extend my heartiest best wishes for 1998. I hope that you realize all your spiritual and material goals.

I'm truly excited to be part of the Shorinjiryu umbrella and gratified that the get together that our group has attended are based upon a positive sharing of fellowship, friendship, and forward-looking development and popularization of what I know in my heart to be the greatest martial art branch in the world. The accent is on the word art because just short of the world of professional boxing, kick boxing, etc. we are one of the few styles that allows each individual to test themselves to the limit of their potential by allowing striking in Shiai, perfecting and demonstrating basic yet dynamic Katas and working together in multi-person Kumites. What should be gratifying, especially, to the Mudansha, is that each and everyone up the ranks has experienced and gone through every learning phase of the Shorinjiryu experience. There are no slackers in this style; they usually leave, so if you are still practicing at the dojo or on your own-give yourself a hearty pat on the back.

Lastly, I'd like to extend an invitation to our Lancaster Annual tournament on February 8, 1998 in Lancaster, Ontario. If you come, we'll find lodging for you.

Maps will be sent if anyone's interested.

I'll just leave this note with my various addresses:

**Brian Aarons**  
**32 Boyce Ave.**  
**Ottawa, Ontario, Canada K2B-6H9**

**Bus: (613) 226-2234**

**Res: (613) 726-6980**

My e-mail address is [www.B.Aarons@sympatico.ca](mailto:www.B.Aarons@sympatico.ca)  
and shortly I hope to set up a web page for SKKK

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**From the West Coast:**

On behalf of the students, instructors and myself I wish everyone a happy New Year filled with good practice and training.

Michel Laurin, Shihan Shindo Budo Kwai

**Thoughts on Conditioning Exercises**

By Peter M. Hiltz with Cathy Drinkwater Better

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I always admonished to teach as I was taught, and I agree with that philosophy practice and teach the kata and kumite as they were taught to me. I also know that we, as perpetual students of karate, need to continually review what we do to ensure that it is correct, safe, practical, and efficient. For me this applies to all facets of martial arts training, including opening or conditioning exercises.

Until recently I did the conditioning exercises exactly as my teachers had done them. At the beginning of class, we did a fixed set of warm-ups that combined a lot of different exercises in a brief period of time. As I observed my students' progress and picked up tidbits of information about modern stretching theory from various reliable sources, it became obvious that our conditioning exercise routine was not fulfilling our needs as martial artists. In short, the old, "traditional" exercises were not working.

To improve our conditioning, I designed a set of exercises that met specific goals, was in agreement with modern stretching principles, and did not take too much time from practice.

The first step was to define the goals of the conditioning exercises: to provide a proper warm-up prior to practice, improve student's balance and abdominal strength, improve leg strength for kicking (students were having great difficulty raising their knees for front kicks.)\*, and improve flexibility.

The second step was to consult with sports training experts to learn all I could about warming up and stretching. I discovered three very interesting facts: warm-ups need to raise the body temperature by at least one or two degrees, stretches should be done when the body is warm, and you must use both correct form and hold the stretch for at least 30 seconds to gain any benefit.

To stretch correctly, you must extend the stretch till you feel your body's natural stop. When you reach the natural stopping point, exhale, relax, and hold the stretch. Don't force yourself beyond this point, as your muscles will rebel, preventing you from attaining the desired benefit. You should feel no pain, the degree of extension should increase little-by-little over the course of the stretch.

With that in mind, I designed the following exercises; and have been using them both personally and in my classes with great success.

**The following regimen is to be used at the beginning of class:**

**Jumping in Place:**

Jump in place with knees flexed for a count of at least thirty jumps to begin the warm-up process.

**Jumping Jacks:**

Do at least 30 double jumping jacks. A double jumping jack consists of one unit where the arms/hands rise to shoulder height with feet apart, combined with a second unit where your hands touch over the head with feet apart. Between each unit, the feet come together, hands are down and at the sides.

**Shoulder Twists:**

Standing with feet approximately shoulder-width apart, twist the shoulders from side to side as though throwing empi. Do at least 10 repetitions on each side, alternately.

**Hip Twists:**

Standing with feet approximately shoulder-width apart, and leaving the shoulders relaxed and loose, twist the hips back and forth. This is a fundamental motion in Shorinjiryu Karatedo, Tomiki Aikido and t'ai chi. We do at least 10 alternating reps on each side.

**Side Toe Touch:**

As a light stretch, spread the feet a bit wider, bend from the waist, and touch the left hand to the right foot for a count of at least 10. Repeat with the right hand to your left foot.

**Side Toe Touch:**

As a light stretch, spread the feet a bit wider, bend from the waist, and touch the left hand to the right foot for a count of at least 10. Repeat with the right hand to your left foot.

**Crunches:**

From a lying position on the floor, slightly raise the head and shoulders and feet, balancing on the buttocks. Simultaneously pull your knees in to the body while raising the upper body into a sit-up position. Do not use the arms to "pull up," but leave them at the sides. This exercise strengthens the upper and lower abdominal muscles, along with the upper thighs. Do at least 10 reps.

**Pushups:**

Place fists on the floor should-width apart, push legs out behind. Lower the body to just above the floor, raise until arms are all but locked. Do at least 10 reps.

**Knee Raises:**

Standing in a comfortable position, quickly pull the knee up to the chest, keeping the knee bent, as though trying to knee oneself in the shoulder. Do this at least 10 times then repeat with the other

**Balance:**

Stand quietly on one foot. If you lose your balance, lightly touch the other foot to the floor, concentrate on the spot just below the navel, and calmly regain balance. After a count of

leg.

10-20, repeat with the other foot.

**The following regimen is to be performed at the end of class:**

**Forward Stretch:**

Sit on the floor with legs outstretched and together, reach toward the toes without curling the back. Keep the backs of the knees against the floor, your back straight, and bend from the waist. Hold for at least 30 seconds.

**Forward Split Stretch:**

Spread the legs apart at a comfortable distance and stretch forward. Again, keep the back straight. Hold for at least 30 seconds.

**Side Stretch:**

Spread the legs apart at a comfortable distance, and stretch to the left. Hold the stretch for at least 30 seconds. Repeat for the right side.

**Abductor Stretch:**

Feet together, sole to sole, pull in to the body's center with knees out to the side. With the back straight, apply gentle pressure to the inside of the knees to stretch the groin. Hold for at least 30 seconds.

Try any or all of these exercises. If you have suggestions or comments, I'd love to hear them. Email me at: [petermh@qis.net](mailto:petermh@qis.net).

The other factor that caused an improvement in my student's kicks was using a different way of teaching method. This is another example of where being willing to change for the sake of improving has yielded tremendous benefits.

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Season's Greetings and Happy Holidays to the Shorinjiryu Shinzen Kyokai. May the holidays be merry and safe, and may the new year bring you peace, prosperity, and many opportunities to improve your Karatedo.

Best Wishes,  
Shorinjiryu Ake No Myojo Budo  
Ake No Myojo Budo, Inc.  
Tashi Peter M. Hiltz

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**Where Have All the Sempai Gone?**

Shihan Tom Carmelengo:

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As 1997 has graduated into 1998, we all reflect back on our deeds and sometimes misdeeds of the past and turn to the New Year for something refreshing... promises to ourselves for betterment in some way. Some promises live, but most go back on

the shelf.

When I look back over the years of training, I always ask, "Where have all the Sempai gone?" Scores of Brown Belts and even 1st and 2nd degree black belts have fallen by the wayside. Most disappear forever, and some reappear now and then with the promise of 'coming back'. Very few ever do. The high-ranking black belts you see now are but a drop in the bucket compared to the total amount that had studied over the years. Even when we eliminate those who moved away, suffered major injury, got thrown out and have passed away, we are still missing many.

1998 should be the year of recommitment of the Sempai (Purple, Brown and new Black Belts) to push on even harder in their study; to be at the dojo to lend a hand. This is what makes a dojo and system strong. The newer students always have their eyes on the Sempai and try to emulate them. No Sempai, or lazy Sempai, and the dojo and eventually the system itself will die.

I bow to the Sempai who are dedicated; those who are always there whether it be helping teach, running errands or small administrative tasks. They make the dojo run. A Shihan or Sensei cannot do it alone, the Sempai are the lieutenants and captains.

For those who know you have been laying back, make a commitment to yourself to get in to the dojo more. But Martial Arts should never come before school, family or work.

Our growth has been steady. Let's make 1998 a year of tremendous growth and dedication to the betterment of ourselves, and thus it will be betterment for Shorinjiryu.

**Shihan Tom Carmelengo**  
**Kenzenkai Dojo**  
**Staten Island, NY**  
**718-720-0501**

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The following was inspired by the promotional ceremony of  
Renshi Troy E. Lester

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**Circle of Light**

Circle of light seen from afar  
Fiery sol in frigid seas of night  
Touching it scalds; in staring, loss of sight  
Ebonized soul orbits a star.  
Shackled in fear, following near  
Photoactive; aversion, attraction  
Hanging fire suspended by nothing



Lambent dances so graceful, so fright'ning  
Wintry-type cheer, no feelings dear  
Lone surviving; empathic destruction  
Sun approaches, frozen panic  
Troubled reproaches, no time to fan it  
Tentacle flames scorch armored mane  
Burning, melting; nothing remains  
Shadows perish, no resistance  
Emotions flourish, reborn existence.  
Copious rays bathe and cascade  
Dark seclusion is living vanity  
Sparred oblivion, joined humanity  
Part of the circle... unafraid.

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Mudansha Hachikyu-December 12, 1997  
Ruben Dario Cruz, II

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**Shorinjiryu Then and Now**  
Tashi Brian Berenbach

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Let me begin this article with a disclaimer. The opinions expressed here are solely my own, and will, at the least, result in lively discussion, and, in the extreme, may result in my dojo being burned down by an angry mob of karate-ka.

When is then? Then is whenever I choose it to be, since I am the author. So let me start around the time of the Roman Empire. What? You say there was no Karate around 0 AD (or sometime before the year 2000 if you are Jewish). Ah yes, the Jews had their year two thousand problems some time ago. Well, remember that big to-do about the fall of the temple and the dispersion of the Hebrew tribes throughout the world? Well, now you know what you are in for in two years. But I digress. Back to Karate. Yes there was no Karate, but there were all kinds of weapons fighting, and they involved blocking, striking, and sometimes even throwing techniques. These techniques were refined over the years until through trial and error they neared perfection. And then came Karate.

There were two driving forces behind early Karate, the first being the desire of monks to travel the roads without being molested, and the second to fight off an armed attacker with no weapons. So around 1600 from the Shaolin Temple in China came a system of fighting which borrowed from weapons techniques, but was designed to ward off mostly unarmed thugs. When the Japanese, with their razor sharp Katana, occupied Okinawa, they confiscated all weapons. Now the Japanese warlords and their Samurai wore armor. So the only way the Okinawans were able to defend themselves were by using tools as weapons (the sai), and by developing techniques so powerful, if properly delivered they could put a dent in armor or snap a neck with a solid blow to the head.

So Karate underwent a change on Okinawa, and from the "Soft" techniques used to defend against an unarmed thug, evolved "hard" techniques for use against a

potentially armored opponent.

Loose fitting clothing in China and Okinawa permitted high kicks. So during the development of Karate on Okinawa, hard and powerful kicking techniques evolved.

When Karate went to Japan some changes had to be made. Delivering a high side kick in a kimono was not an easy thing to do. So if we look at Shotokan today, we find almost no kicks in the katas, and those that do exist, with rare exception, tend to be waist level or below.

Okinawan techniques tend to the "hard", that is slower but more powerful (kekome), and the techniques in soft Kung Fu and other derived Japanese forms tend to rapid snapping techniques (keage).

You might well ask, where am I going with this: To present day techniques, specifically in Shorinjiryu. Dr. Hisataka was intrigued by the generation of power with the human body. Why do we punch vertically? I posed this question to Dr. Hisataka and his son Hanshi Hisataka. The answer was quite simple. Punching with a horizontal fist simply doesn't work. Now practitioners of keage will not notice this. But a strong kekome black belt, on throwing the whole body into the technique against a sandbag will observe a tendency for the arm to collapse when the fist is held horizontally. Try this experiment. Roll up your sleeve. Then hold your hand out as if finished with a punch, palm down. Now rotate the fist until it is vertical. Watch your elbow while you are doing this. In Shorinjiryu, a strong practitioner should be able to generate enough force such that elbow position affects the force of the blow (an elbow in line with the direction of body motion).

The same applies to kicks. A whipping front snap kick is extremely fast, but if the opponent is wearing an overcoat, forget it!

What I am posing is that Dr. Hisataka crafted Shorinjiryu to be the ultimate "power" style, and my concern is that we are drifting from that goal. Look, I studied with Yamazake-Sensei, Dr. Hisataka, and his son, and while Dr. Hisataka was alive, all lunge punches were delivered to the side (sokumen tsuki). After Dr. Hisataka's retirement, the front punch from zenkutsu-dachi dominated.

Why? A conspiracy, of course. Actually the answer is simpler. With the onset of open competition, and the introduction of wazari, full body commitment was a losing proposition. When have you ever seen a judge call an ippon on an oi-tsuki technique? There are other problems associated with excessive shiai in lieu of basic practice. For example, techniques weaken as the objective becomes scoring a half point, and the ability to reflex block head shots is all but gone since points to the head are never awarded, even if the pulled technique is delivered to perfection.

I have heard the criticism that Shorinjiryu used to be "long range" Karate. This is simply not true. We have hiza-geri, empi, throwing and grappling, etc. I think that the reason for the confusion is the tendency we (us old fogeys) used to have to back off slightly in order to get enough room to throw the whole body into a technique. Well, in ippon only competition, not doing that just resulted in wasted effort and mashed

knuckles on those concrete protectors.

Other issues involve fighting style. I remember Yamazaki-Sensei giving me detailed instruction on how to break an opponents arm with a kick in order to open up access to the bogu. Well, this training stood me in good stead during fighting. I would imagine the opponent to be a tree, with the arms nothing more than twigs. I retired from competition about the time everyone's neighbor had a law degree.

I would love to see Shorinjiryu remain faithful to the vision of the founder, a style where punches and kicks are the ultimate power trip.

**May I suggest that:**

- In-dojo informal shiai be geared to "ippon only" fighting.
- Rather than emphasize open sparring, kumite with the shields on should be done frequently
- Sparring practice should be tightly controlled and emphasize strong combination techniques and reflex blocking.

Oh, how about an "ippon only" tournament? Sure, I'll participate. You'll find me in the "Over 50, out of shape with arthritis" category.

The Editor

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**Congratulations to the following Black Belts who have joined, have been promoted in rank or title or have come back to the family in 1997\***

BB8 - Aaron, Brian Hanshi  
BB8 - Lubitsch, Myron M. Kyoshi  
BB8 - Roberts, Douglas Hanshi

BB7 - Laurin, Michel Shihan  
BB7 - Mirrione, John Sr. Shihan

BB6 - Carmelengo, Thomas Shihan

BB5 - Bellazzi, Tom Renshi  
BB5 - Boggs, Wolf Renshi  
BB5 - Cable, Charles Renshi  
BB5 - Figueroa, Carlos Sr. Renshi  
BB5 - Hayes, Daniel Renshi  
BB5 - Joshi, Atul V. Renshi  
BB5 - Labelle, Gilles, Renshi  
BB5 - Lester, Troy Renshi

BB2 - Kharade, Machhindra B.  
BB2 - Mehta, Ashish  
BB2 - Piche, John  
BB2 - Pradeep, E.P.  
BB2 - Tigani, Jose D.

BB1 - Better, Drinkwater Cathy  
BB1 - Carriappa, K.S. Lt.  
BB1 - Chalse, Vinayak  
BB1 - Chauhan, Prashant  
BB1 - Chudiwala, Kushal  
BB1 - Cosgrove, Frank  
BB1 - Courville, Alaine  
BB1 - Dautpure, Chandrashekar  
BB1 - Govekar, Nikhil  
BB1 - Hawkins, Russell  
BB1 - Khan, Oaz  
BB1 - Krupp, Reinhard  
BB1 - Kulkarni, Girish

BB4 - Bayer, Janet Tashi	BB1 - Milana, Maurizio
BB4 - Black, Richard	BB1 - Norberg, Eric
BB4 - Berenbach, Brian A. Tashi	BB1 - Spaeth, Pamela
BB4 - Capers, Vincent, Jr. Tashi	BB1 - St-Denis, Marc Andre
BB4 - Cussler, Bob Tashi	
BB4 - Dore, Ghilain	BB Jr - Bhat, Amit
	BB Jr - Gama, Sagar
BB3 - Hiltz, Peter M. Tashi	BB Jr - Joshi, Anant
BB3 - Mirrione, John P., Jr. Tashi	BB Jr - Negi, Nidhi
BB3 - Bussiere. Paul Sensei	
BB3 - Orgee, Karen Sensei	*excludes renewals
BB3 - Rumke, Marcus Sensei	
BB3 - Panneton, Patrick	

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### Kagami Biraki

As usual the Kenryukan celebrated the New Year with its special New Years Eve class which was closed to all spectators. However, on the first day, each student, each black belt and each instructor rededicated themselves by performing the following simple activity: 1,000 jumping jacks, 1,000 crunches, 1,000 punches, 1,000 kicks and 100 push-ups. Afterwards, each signed off next to their name and we had a non-alcoholic beverage-kampai.

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### Reflections by Cathy Drinkwater Better

In the martial arts, as the student bows to the teacher to show respect and gratitude, so the teacher bows to the student to return the honor.

This is because--as any karate-do instructor worth her belt will tell you--a teacher is not a teacher without someone to teach. And a wise Sensei knows that sometimes she can learn as much from her student as her student can learn from her.

I am thinking tonight of a middle-scholar whom I once had the pleasure of teaching. He was a model karate-ka: not only a strong and determined martial arts student, but a young gentleman and a scholar as well.

It's been several years since we've seen him in class. As he grew older, his schoolwork, family and other pursuits took precedence. But that is as it should be; for life ebbs and flows, priorities change, and we must flow along with it like leaves on the surface of the stream, neither fighting the current, nor hurrying it along.

He kept in touch for a while, and sometimes wrote to assure us that he was well, and practicing his kata by doing his best in all areas of his life. Included in one letter, hand copied in his teenage scrawl, was a poem, A Warrior's Creed, written by an anonymous samurai during the 14th century. As he shared it with me, now I would

like to share the poem with you:

### **A Warrior's Creed**

I have no parents	- I make the heavens and earth my parents
I have no home	- I make awareness my home
I have no life or death	- I make the tides of breathing my life and death
I have no divine power	- I make honest my divine power
I have no means	- I make understanding my means
I have no magic secrets	- I make character my magic secret
I have no body	- I make endurance my body
I have no ears	- I make sensibility my ears limbs
I have no limbs	- I make promptness my
I have no strategy	- I make "unshadowed by thought" my strategy
I have no designs	- I make "seizing the opportunity by the forelock" my design
I have no miracles	- I make right-action my miracles
I have no principles	- I make adaptability to all circumstances my principles
I have no tactics	- I make emptiness and fullness my tactics
I have no friends	- I make my mind my friend
I have no enemy	- I make carelessness my enemy
I have no armor	- I make benevolence and righteousness my armor
I have no castle	- I make immovable mind my castle
I have no sword	- I make absence of self my sword

I have no sword--I make absence of self my sword I have been given a great and powerful gift: The distillation of the essence of inner peace, honor, courage and right-thought into a few succinct lines that speak to the heart and soul of the martial artist as no mere human voice ever could.

Every time I reread A warriors Creed, I think of the teenage boy who painstakingly copied it to send to me; and of how the teacher can become a student; and the student, a teacher. Thank you Kirk, wherever you are, for sharing A Warrior's Creed with me. In my heart, I am bowing to you Domo arigato.

**SHINNEN-O-MEDITO HAPPY NEW YEAR**

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