

## **HOLISTIC WARRIOR STUDY GROUP**

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**Austin Study Group  
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### **Applying the Power of Now Principles II**

The Austin Study met on Friday, January 21, 2004. The theme of that meeting was "Becoming a Warrior in the Modern World." If the best state of mind is obtained when we are in the "NOW," then, how do we maintain this state? We have explored several ways of obtaining the "NOW" in previous sessions, such as, (1) finding your center, (2) emotional release through recapitulation, (3) energy balancing, and (4) playing "Win-Win." We shall explore in this session, eastern warrior concepts that stimulate maintenance of the "NOW." One of the better warrior programs is the Bushido Warrior Program.

To better understand the Bushido Warrior concepts, I have downloaded an article from the internet and summarized the best points as follows:

#### **Excerpts from the BUSHIDO: WARRIOR CODE OF CONDUCT by Cheryl Matrasko**

The life of the Samurai not only became one of discipline and military education, but a rich cultivation of the spirit and mind through the arts of writing, painting, calligraphy, philosophy, etc. It was as if a Renaissance was being experienced within their social sect. Zen provided the warrior class with personal enlightenment, polish, and refinement.

The unwritten Samurai code of conduct, known as Bushido, held that the true warrior must hold loyalty, courage, veracity, compassion, and honor as important, above all else. An appreciation and respect of life was also imperative, as it added balance to the warrior character of the Samurai. He was often very stoic with a deep and strong philosophical passion. He could be deadly in combat and yet so gentle and compassionate with children and the weak.

Zen Buddhism influenced them greatly giving them enlightenment for good judgment, personal growth, and self-awareness. Their exposure and immersion into philosophy and the arts expanded their perspectives and lifted them beyond the limits of their own feudal rule and culture. This is where Bushido, the Samurai Code of Conduct has its origins.

Bushido is the unwritten code of conduct of the Samurai. Literally, Bushido means "warrior - samurai - ways". Bushi is a term for warrior, but directly infers a more prestigious or higher class warrior. The "ways" or "way" is a term used by most "do-martial arts" (such as: Judo, Kendo, Aikido, and Iaido), which means "the way to".

Influencing Bushido, Zen Buddhism lent to the Samurai a very Stoic disposition. This Stoicism was realized out of a genuine respect for life and also for death. Death, an inevitable eventuality of our own lives, is as much a part of nature as is life. It gives us an added level of thought and meaning to our existence. With the advent of death, there is the introduction of life. There are strong human emotions of anger, remorse, and detachment, etc., that are associated with death that complicate its understanding. However we are gifted by these very same feelings, that allow us to appreciate life and the things we enjoy and love. We most notably appreciate the things we take for granted once they are gone forever. The Samurai trust and faith in nature was because of the great admiration and respect for both life and death.

In tune with this level of consciousness, Shinotism also influenced the Bushido of the Samurai. To seek

honor by first looking inside the soul and confront the intimate fears that we hide from ourselves, and that plague our psyche in everyday life. This is the purification of one's soul --- " . . . to know thyself ". In addition, Shinotism brought a sense of filial piety and loyalty to the family and homeland. When you " . . . know yourself, you know your weaknesses and strengths, and most of all - you know where you belong." This sense of belonging has been attributed to the patriotic and nationalistic culture of Japan even to this day.

Another factor in the backbone of the code of Bushido was Confucianism. It bonded community and family relationships. These relationships had several different moral priorities or qualities to them. In feudal Japan, the samurai served various different lords and their loyalty was given to them. This association was that of servant and master. The samurai himself was the head of his family. The safety and well-being depended upon him. His role was that of head of the house, husband, father, brother, or son.

## **Application of the Warrior Concepts to Everyday Life**

And so, how do these ideas relate to the modern person like you or I? We are not at war with anyone or any individual. However, we have interactions with individuals in our day-to-day operations that rob or attempt to rob us of energy. We live in a win-lose world where in every interaction according to that system, someone must lose. Since at the same time, we are not taught to get energy on our own (i.e., connecting with ourselves, others, and our environment), we must get energy from somewhere. Therefore, we play games where we are constantly winning or losing depending on the power we can generate to play the games.

These games can be identified in several ways. Two or three comes to mind in particular, (1) insights four to eight (4-8) from the book, "The Celestine Prophecy" by James Redfield; (2) "Return of the Warriors" from the Toltec Teachings by Theun Mares; and (3) "The Master of Life Manual" by Dick Sutphen.

Most of us are trapped in these games, just as the peasants of feudal Japan were trapped in their way of life. The Samurai's life was a way out, using their disciplined lifestyle to avoid this trap. The information provided in the first two pages of this paper gives you an insight in the philosophy, teachings, and practice of the Samurai. Each Samurai warrior practiced a discipline that allowed him or her to stay focused and ready as seen in the motto:

### **Expect Nothing; Be prepared for anything!!!**

We can use these principles in our daily life as well. The problem is to devise a discipline to practice this system. I propose that we use at least three procedures as the basis of a system; (1) The Master of Life Manual; (2) "The Power of Now Material; and (3) The Connection Exercises from the Holistic Warrior's Manual.

In order to generate a problem registry, list the major issues in your life, along with the major players you have the most difficult problems or situations.

One of the problems we face each day is a one-to-one struggle with someone else. It may be as simple as, trying to pass a slow moving car (in the passing lane) on the highway, or someone who breaks in line ahead of you, or interactions with your boss or fellow employee, or with a family member. Most of these interactions are minor; however occasionally something happens that really upsets you.

Another problem may arise because of a project you are working on, trying to create a report, solve some difficult situation in your life, or you are just trying to find some thing that got lost or misplaced. Sometimes, something has been weighing heavily on your mind because of a health situation, financial difficulty, or something you want real bad but for some reason or another you can't find a way to get it, achieve, or get it to go your way.

Problems may arise because someone you care about doesn't act the way you want them to or think they should, such as, a teenager rebelling, a child not doing well in school, or a significant other doesn't seem to care about something the way you do. You can go nuts, trying to deal with these issues. It can cause stress, i.e., health problems, accidents, arguments, or any number of difficult situations.

So, the question you might ask yourself at any time is, "What would the warrior do?" "How would the warrior behave in this situation?" "How would the warrior resolve this situation?" Or, you might ask, "How would the warrior remain calm in this situation?" "How would the warrior keep from losing his or her cool in spite of what's happens around you?"

The above conditions or problems are a small set of the many difficulties we may face at any given time. They represent the conditions that constantly drain our energy, use up our resources, and make it difficult to make good decisions or at least decisions that work in our best interest at any given time. They also can be collectively described as the battles, large, medium, or small we have faced, face at this time, or will face in the future.

The poem "Invictus" by William Ernest Henley is as follows:

## Invictus

OUT of the night that covers me,  
Black as the Pit from pole to pole,  
I thank whatever gods may be  
For my unconquerable soul.

In the fell clutch of circumstance  
have not winced nor cried aloud.  
Under the bludgeonings of chance  
My head is bloody, but unbowed.

Beyond this place of wrath and tears  
Looms but the Horror of the shade,  
And yet the menace of the years  
Finds, and shall find, me unafraid.

It matters not how strait the gate,  
How charged with punishments the scroll,  
I am the master of my fate:  
I am the captain of my soul.

This is a great poem and sums up the mind set we need to have to deal with any condition in life. The problem is, "How do we do it?" We get all kind of advice about what we shoulda, oughta, coulda, woulda, do; however, we are not usually taught how we go about doing what we need to do.

We first need a philosophical base to work with. We can get this base from the article on "Bushido: Warrior Code of Conduct" described at the beginning of this paper. It can be further condensed as follows:

The Samurai Warrior,

- holds loyalty, courage, veracity, compassion, and honor as important, above all else
- has an appreciation and respect of life
- is deadly in combat and yet so gentle and compassionate with children and the weak
- strives for enlightenment for good judgment, personal growth, and self-awareness
- practices some type of martial art skill or something that helps him or her develop physically, mentally, emotionally and spiritually
- uses Death as his or her advisor not his or her enemy
- seeks to understand the phrase, "Know thyself!"
- seeks communal and family relationships and understanding the role of the servant and the master

**Bushido** has been further described as a uniquely eastern practice that has often been compared to the code of chivalry followed by the European knights. The following are eight principles of bushido:

- Jin - to develop a sympathetic understanding of people
- Gi - to preserve the correct ethics
- Chu - to show loyalty to one's master
- Ko - to respect and to care for one's parents
- Rei - to show respect for others
- Chi - to enhance wisdom by broadening one's knowledge
- Shin - to be truthful at all times
- Tei - to care for the aged and those of a humble station

The practice of the warrior can be taken from the following manuals and books, Sutphen's "Master of Life Manual, Tolle's "The Power of Now", Castaneda's "Journey to Ixtlan," and the "Holistic Warrior's Manual. A condensed version of Sutphen's and Castaneda's can be obtained from the Holistic Warrior's Manual. It can be found on the Website, [www.theholisticwarrior.com](http://www.theholisticwarrior.com).

The Power of Now can be described as the ability to focus your attention in the present. Most of us are preoccupied with either issues or events that have happened in the past or that might happen in the future. At any rate, there is nothing we can do to change the past except glean whatever understanding we can get from those issues and events and move on. One of the ways we can move on is through a process of recapitulation. Recapitulation is a process of fully experiencing the emotions generated by these issues or event to remove the

power they have over us. This process can only happen in the present.

Issues and events that may happen in future rarely happen the way we think they shoulda, oughta, coulda, woulda. Therefore, when we do what we need to do in the present moment, the future will take care of itself. Again, we can repeat the motto, "Expect Nothing, Be Prepared for Anything."

In other words, the only way we can take care of, create, or make things happen is in the present moment. Our ability to stay in the moment is also dependent on our ability to stay in shape physically, mentally, and spiritually. More about staying shape will be offered at a later date.

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