

DAO of Martial Arts - Spiritual Path

by Doshi Richard Van Donk

Is being a great martial artist more than just knowing how to kick someone's ass?

For me that is an emphatic, **YES!** Martial arts are so much more.



50 years in the arts training and teaching worldwide to thousands of students has given me great insights that I would love to share with you. I was fortunate to study with so many really great masters. My thirst and quest were deep, and this led me to make over 50 trips to Japan, India and China to achieve top level Shihan or Grandmaster levels in 3 separate systems. I tell you that not to impress you but to let you know that I

have traveled the distance and perhaps inspire you to do the same, or at least go deeper into the arts to embrace the spirit to be more than just being a good fighter. Martial arts over time become a way of life and in the process of studying the arts the training gives you many hidden life enhancing qualities.

Let me share with you my short list of what I like to see in my students in their reaching a BlackBelt level besides mastering the technical physical movements and techniques. Yes, of course you will need to learn to fight and how to defend yourself.

But first let me say this.

Of course, there is no greater feeling as a martial artist, *or as a person really*, than knowing that you can not only handle yourself in being safe but that you can own a room. And that whether they know it or not everyone there is a little safer because you are there. That state of being alone gives you a human value that is beyond most people that you will ever meet. And your knowing who you are and what you are

www.BushindoUniversity.com for more works by Doshi Richard Van Donk

Page 1

DAO of Martial Arts - Spiritual Path

by Doshi Richard Van Donk

capable will only get others to respect you for your abilities as you will be a role model due to the qualities that being a martial artist brings.

Here are the qualities you will learn on your journey to a Martial Arts BlackBelt.

Qualities of a Martial Arts BlackBelt List

- Self-Assuredness
- Willingness to learn
- Perseverance
- Focused mind
- Strength in Body, Mind and Emotions
- Mental Concentration
- Courage to Act Powerful
- Overcome inner fears
- Dependability - Dedication - Determination
- Personal Discipline
- Commitment to Action
- Health conditioning
- Enhanced Confidence
- Ability to think ahead
- Self Defense skills
- Increased Awareness
- Flexibility
- More Balanced and Centered
- Self-motivating
- Leadership Skills
- Ability to Deal with everyday problems from a new perspective

I know that is quite a list but it is built into the training for you to develop them. Every moment that you train will be enhancing who you are. Every technique will bring

www.BushindoUniversity.com for more works by Doshi Richard Van Donk

Page 2

DAO of Martial Arts - Spiritual Path

by Doshi Richard Van Donk

new qualities to how you handle life. It is a natural byproduct of studying martial arts and you're taking the journey on the warrior's path. It will not always be easy, but the results are well worth your effort.

What would it be worth to you to have all these qualities in your life, if you could just buy them? \$50,000? \$100,000? \$1,000,000. Personally, I think they are priceless. In fact, for years while teaching seminars all around the world, I asked Blackbelt's if they would trade their BlackBelt and all the internal value from lessons that they gained on their journey to becoming a BlackBelt for \$50,000? for \$100,000? for \$1,000,000. Everyone said an emphatic NO... Well, except a young 23-year-old who said respectfully he would take \$1,000,000 because he was young and he would just start over traveling around the world training with the money. That says it all! So, remember that when you are faced with seemingly high dojo fees. Know that you are really making an investment in yourself and who you are.

This brings me to the real question of WHY do people studying martial arts? What hooks them into saying yes I will dedicate my life to that?

Having studied and taught the Martial arts for 1/2 a century I already had my own ideas about why people study martial arts but I wanted to know from others the deep internal reasons that actually drive people to the arts and keep them training.

So recently, I did a survey of several hundred martial artists of all rank levels to see what got them involved in martial arts in the first place. The survey statistics are very interesting and some of the percentages even surprised me.

I also found out that people may start for one very conscious reason that in reality, actually fulfills some deep inner need that is not so conscious to them. But people continue in the arts because training gives them so much more than what got them started in the first place. Like those top 20+ qualities of becoming a BlackBelt that I

DAO of Martial Arts - Spiritual Path

by Doshi Richard Van Donk

mentioned earlier. They are a heavy hidden influence on keeping people in the arts and so are their Sensei / friends / training partners that encourage them when they don't show up for training (*Do your best to get a training buddy and a great mentor*).

Martial arts for most of us become a way of life- it kind of gets in our blood if you will. For me now, it is just plain fun. I do love being very creative and going deep in the studies. I love to learn and I am constantly learning something new. Budo is in my blood. Do you like me ever feel that too?

Let's get right to the survey results -

34% of the students surveyed said they started martial arts because they wanted more self-confidence in order to feel stronger and to be more empowered. Self-confidence is about being more connected to who you are and accepting who you are at the core. Being a spiritual being is also about being fully connected. Also, nearly 100% of those people surveyed confirmed that martial arts training empowered them in multiple ways.

21% said it was the aspect of being on a spiritual path that drew them to the arts. This large of a percentage was actually surprising to me even though it was one of the main reasons that I sought out a dojo when I started in the arts. I was deeply attracted to the concept of the temple arts and wanted to learn to meditate. I never found that at the Karate dojo but I did find the path that lead me to what I wanted and more. Beginning the journey is the more important thing. Besides traveling it as a way of life. Most everyone clearly stated that they were not seeking a religious path but a spiritual one, with many of them wanting that spiritual path to not be in conflict with their current religion.

It is interesting to look at the word **Budo** 武道. **BU** 武 means Martial. **DO** 道 is the way or path. The Japanese Do 道 in this context is same word as Dao/Tao 道 in Chinese. Daoists prefer to understand the Dao as the way of Nature, as a whole. In the Bujinkan

DAO of Martial Arts - Spiritual Path

by Doshi Richard Van Donk

arts and in my Bushindo System we deeply study one's nature in relationship to all things both martial and life itself. So Budo can also be a spiritual path that is not defined by a specific religion. It is a study of nature, your nature and the path of life you embrace. More on that later.

17% said that it was a martial arts or action hero movie that inspired them got them to sign up for lessons. Now I feel that, who isn't inspired by Bruce Lee - Jackie Chan - Jet Li - Ninja movies or a Marvel super hero? Who doesn't want to be able to do all those cool fight moves, right? We've all come out of one of these movies wanting to Kung Fu something or someone. Fess up now and raise your hand on that one. If not, it is back to basket weaving, or Yoga for you and not martial arts. lol

15% said it was because they were either bullied or lost a fight and did not want to be picked on, pushed around or to ever lose another fight again. I really think that this need for being able to defend yourself is really at a deeper core than what is represented in this number. Who wants to be weak and helpless or to get the crap beat out of them? No one. Nothing is really more disempowering, and the mental wounds are usually 90% more challenging than the bruises that heal much quicker. If you are lucky you will learn to fight back sooner than later in life. I can tell you from personal experience it is a great feeling to know that you can own the room.

11% said they wanted to be able to defend their family. This really may be at the core really being able to defend themselves naturally extended to their home and family. I think far too many people rely on having a gun to do this. 90% of all incidences will be in places where one may not have a gun, nor would it be advisable to use one. For me I am the first and main line of defense for my family even though my wife is highly trained. It is great to know that wherever I am people are a little safer because I am there. Even if they do not even know it.

DAO of Martial Arts - Spiritual Path

by Doshi Richard Van Donk

A small 2% said that it was a friend that got them involved but it still doesn't tell us the personal reason and the personal gain from starting the arts. So this number should really be divided into one of the above categories. But having a training buddy is super as it adds fun and depth to the training.

I personally think at the core, martial arts builds our self-worth by overcoming our inner weakness and truly empowers us. People train because it makes them stronger in so many ways..... physically, mentally, and emotionally, as well as spiritually.

Martial arts practiced correctly builds personal presence. In time, martial arts with the right Sensei will transform your ego and help you overcome all inner battles. If you look deep your real goal inner goal is to have peace and harmony be at the core of your life which will require stripping away all your illusions of any injustice or inner battles within you.

The toughest battles that you will ever fight are between your own two ears. It has got to get right on the inside before it ever gets right on the outside.



Martial arts begin and end in respect. That should start with you, then with the art you study, then with your teacher and then to everyone that you train with. When you respect you enter the Dao and allow the teachings to come forth. You drop your ego,

www.BushindoUniversity.com for more works by Doshi Richard Van Donk

Page 6

DAO of Martial Arts - Spiritual Path

by Doshi Richard Van Donk

come to a now moment and open yourself to learning what is being born. To me it is a spiritual bonding as respect is an honoring at the core of yourself of who you are in relationship to that which is seemingly external. A humbleness to the source within you.

This is the true place that we go when we bow in. It is not about below higher or lower than someone else. It is a recognition of one's internal nature and witnessing that in someone or something outside of you.

Some would call that the **Tao or Dao** 道. As stated before, In Japan, the same term is **Do** 道, simply meaning path or way.

Budo 武道 is a Japanese term for martial arts. Bu (*meaning martial*) and Do 道 (*meaning Path or Way*). When we are studying the martial arts we are studying a Warriors path – the Martial Way. In experiencing budo we are learning many aspects about ourselves and our relationship to conflict. We are learning about how to fight and overcome injustice in all it's forms. It takes courage to persevere. It also takes courage to remove all that harms us on every level. What good is it to be able to beat someone else up but still beat the crap out of our own selves with a weak body, and poisoned troubled mind? Martial lessons are for both the inner world and the outer battles that may challenge us.

We study the martial arts in a Dojo 道場, meaning the place of the way. Your place of practicing and experiencing the Way. In China and Japan the place of training (dojo, dojang, wuguan) was usually inside a temple. Where meditation and humble living was also taught. Hmmm.. maybe the spiritual door has always been there.

We study in a DoGi 道着, - Uniform of the way. Commonly shortened to Gi.

So to sum this up we study the martial Dao in a place of the Dao while wearing a Uniform of the way.

The Dao is all encompassing and without many knowing this is the core of the martial teachings.

DAO of Martial Arts - Spiritual Path

by Doshi Richard Van Donk

I invite you to learn your nature as you travel the path and always know that the journey is the destination. Learn for you. Share it with others. Live it as an example from who you are and not from a pumped up ego self. When you can live the “way” while you are influencing and impacting others in a positive uplifting way you will be a living example of Budo, as a true role model, known as a Shihan 師範.

Temples Arts > India - Tibet - China - Japan

Martial Arts began mostly as temple arts. Historically, a dojo was a room in or adjacent to a spiritual or religious temple. Most notably would be the Shaolin Temple in China. In Japan, Zazen meditation halls were first called zendo and then later as a dojo. Of course the arts during war were practiced outdoors in nature as well but the martial spirit remained the same.

The culture that you are born into influences your religion and personal beliefs which directly influence the way that you view the world. In India the arts like Kalarippayattu have a Hindu Shiva influence. In China it is Daoism and Buddhism. In Japan, Shinto or Zen Buddhism have their influence. Your own dojo can have its own religious or spiritual influence or not. I invite my students to balance the Asian influence with statues of Jesus or Mother Mary, if that is their strong faith. You must make the art yours. Again, the Dao is all encompassing and not confined to any one belief system. Learn your nature and live YOUR nature.

The more I traveled worldwide studying with so many masters of different faiths it opened me to a greater universal spiritual knowledge. I no longer judged and just embraced only what resonated with me. The rest was really not my concern. I only took what was useful to me. So much of the spiritual nature of these different belief systems were really the same thing with different names or a different way of describing the same thing. I quickly learned that they were more just a coding system than the true knowledge itself. Many perspectives of the one. What is most important is your relationship with you and your relationship to what allows you to breathe.

www.BushindoUniversity.com for more works by Doshi Richard Van Donk

Page 8

DAO of Martial Arts - Spiritual Path

by Doshi Richard Van Donk

As stated, in the Japanese dojo, training was done in a special room in a part of a temple complex. The training room was specifically built to create a sacred space where one could study oneself as they practiced inner arts like meditation and martial techniques. The entire training was about personal evolution. Everything in the dojo space had meaning and a purpose for empowering the space and the people training there. This was very carefully thought out especially in relationship to the transmission of power and all the relationships that would be experienced by everything and everyone that came into the place to study the Do/Way. Even proper ways of lighting a candle or burning incense to how one enters the room and how or where that they sit.

The dojo is divided into four seats of power, distinct sides, and the direction orientations in the following order:

1. Kamiza - Upper side - South Seat of spirit or God (Kami 神)
2. Joseki - East sidewall
3. Shimoseki - West sidewall - window to let in sunlight on shrine
4. Shimoza - Lower sidewall - North - students enter here, at the inferior seat, into the mat space.

Kamiza 上座 being the superior seat of the dojo space is the place of honor and is usually decorated with the sacred shelf known as the kamidana, (meaning spirit shelf). The kamidana can be as simple as a small wooden shrine or an elaborate self with many shrines, candles, incense, plants, ofuda (blessing plate), calligraphy, pictures of a master (living or past), swords and other symbols of the school on it.

When bowing in the class the Sensei 先生 (*one who has gone before*) sits themselves directly in the center of the space facing the kamidana (seat of power), about one-third distance of the dojo back from the kamiza. Sitting in this position the Sensei will receive the light of the sun off of the mirror that is reflected from the window of the Shimoseki wall so that they will be mirror of light for the student as they say a prayer blessing, clap and a bow them into the Dao/Do or "Way".

DAO of Martial Arts - Spiritual Path

by Doshi Richard Van Donk

This is one of the reasons why the highest-ranking students sit closest to the teacher as they have earned their way to be closest to the teacher and the closest to the seat of power. Never sitting in front of the teacher. One day by the grace of the spirit and master they will sit in that place and bow the students in. I will never forget my first time bowing in about 100 students for Bujinkan Ninja Grandmaster Masaaki Hatsumi's personal class, in his Japan hombu dojo. *(to clarify he was running a bit late and called asking me to do this)*. It was a high honor.



Rei or bowing is entering Zero and paying respect to the art, the space and to those that have gone before you, Sensei *(one who goes before)* and did you know in India that the bowing of the head to the master was for the master to check the crown chakra of the student to measure their progression and feeling deeply into the student's energy system to measure where they were at in training and in life. This gives the master knowledge in which to teach the student.

In my Dynamic DeCuerdas Eskrima system, it is customary for the head master to lay his hand on top of a perspective student's head to see if they have a hot head *(checking the crown chakra and energy system)*. If their energy is too fiery, they will not be taught the arts, or we will selectively share with them only to a certain level. A teacher is responsible for what he teaches others. Monks in China do this through measuring the bodies energy and learning the energy systems of the body. The Shaolin monk will overcome this unbalanced energy by channeling into body exercises and extreme conditioning. Harnessing the power and mastering it.

Martial Arts masters of India, China and Japan have since the beginning tempered the

DAO of Martial Arts - Spiritual Path

by Doshi Richard Van Donk

power that they taught students with meditation. Ninja Grandmaster Soke Hatsumi once recommended that I train only with women for 6 months to balance my hard style Karate energy. I need the feminine balance. It did wonders for me on so many levels and changed my martial arts forever.

Stretching the body is opening up the energy flows in the body to free any blockages in the body, mind, spirit system. This Yoga method comes from the Nath Yogis that used stretching the body to open the Nerve channels so that they could meditate longer.

Even the Archangels are pictured with swords. Saint Peter cut off an ear in front of Jesus. Arjuna fought for Krishna. Mohammad led armies. All this is a rise against injustice. That is the greatest reason for martial arts. To overcome injustice in all its forms.

In learning marital arts what are we really protecting?

The longer you train the more that you really realize that the toughest battles that you ever have are between your own two ears.

Even if you can beat 100 trained men in battle and your anger is always out of control making you and your life suffer then you are no better off as a warrior as you are constantly defeating yourself.

Martial Arts are also about personal empowerment. Again, the Do in Budo is the same as the Tao/Dao meaning way or path. Learning to still your mind or focus your thoughts is important in life and imperative in a life-threatening situation.

The masters of these ancient Do teachings use them to develop incredible physical and nonphysical strength in great inner powers. They used them to evolve their lives and become healers. They use them become in tune to God and nature. They use them to do what others would call superhuman feats. They use them in battle for survival. They

www.BushindoUniversity.com for more works by Doshi Richard Van Donk Page 11

DAO of Martial Arts - Spiritual Path

by Doshi Richard Van Donk

use them for inner peace. The teachings of the way have been in place for thousands of years. Some teachers mark this path well for their students and others do not. One must realize that all instructors are also at their various stage on the path and that they may have not learned and embodied all the vast aspects of the training that they seek. I learned this very quickly when I joined Karate to also learn meditation and my very skilled as a fighter who was Captain of the USA Karate team thought meditation was pretty much nonsense. So I studied Karate with him and sought out a meditation master.

At one time the arts were only taught as a complete holistic way not just in parts and pieces as it is today. When you were accepted to train at the temple you would be required to working on refining your own inner self first and establishing great body conditioning even before you start learning the martial portions of the art. It was imperative to have a pure peaceful heart that was worthy of defending. In reality, the martial arts are really meant to be taught integrated this way as one thing, even if that's not what being taught to you. People can only teach what they know.

There is no right or wrong in this is just a matter of what your own desire is in budo and how far you want to go on the path. I personally feel that personal enlightenment can only come about through total immersion in the martial arts tradition as a way of living.

This Enlightenment is characterized by the development of the benevolent heart stronger than love itself, the benevolent heart is capable of encompassing all that constitutes universal justice and all that finds expression them the unfolding of the universal scheme. Because you must connect with other people to learn, what we do is actually a study of humanness. So through your training you will actually come to understand your own Humanity. One must decide just how much power that they should even use while defending yourself against an attacker. Once your awareness and skill levels rise you will find yourself not having to be so defensive and will remain calm in

www.BushindoUniversity.com for more works by Doshi Richard Van Donk Page 12

DAO of Martial Arts - Spiritual Path

by Doshi Richard Van Donk

times of uncertainty taking advantage of the other persons aggression without the force that you would have used when less skilled.

In the Bujinkan Ninjutsu arts we have a term “Shidoshi” (*one who removes ignorance and shows the way*) for a fully licensed teacher, which is only given at 5th degree BlackBelt after taking a test referred to the “Sakki” of Godan test. For this prestigious test, the student sits in front of a senior DaiShihan (*Judan-5th level*) in seiza with their back to the administrator of the test. The student sits silently and waits for an undetermined time a sword cut striking at the crown of their head. The student must not only feel that sword strike but they must move completely out of the way without being struck anywhere on their body by the sword.

There is much more going on in this test other than just sensing the strike and avoiding it. Done properly by the DaiShihan this test is much deeper. It is important for the student to connect to the DaiShihan and trust that the art will take care of them by dropping all ego and all thinking. The more that they both enter a zero state and let the muse of the Do/Dao flow through them the more beautiful the experience is.

In giving the Godan test myself many times and studying Soke Hatsumi giving hundreds of tests I know before they sit in front of me what chance that they have to pass this test on the first try. When giving the test, I do my best to internally connect my energy to the student by sending energy down through the top of their head and down the spine of the student. I synchronize breath. I do what I can to help them achieve the state of zero. No thinking and just trusting. When I feel that they have made a connection with me and that they can be moved by the cut I center inside myself and go to zero less thought. I keep the feeling connection and then just let the sword move on it's own. I do not guide it anymore, but this is after years of studying in doing this test. When a student truly tunes in they are moved by this downward strike instead of moving themselves. It is an unforgettable feeling. This process is really about resetting a person's humanity by

www.BushindoUniversity.com *for more works by Doshi Richard Van Donk* Page 13

DAO of Martial Arts - Spiritual Path

by Doshi Richard Van Donk

clearing all negativity out of their spine. The experience for many is deeply spiritual, even when they get hit on the head and fail. I still remember my fifth dan test that was way back in 1987. I was among the first foreigners to ever be given this test by Soke Masaaki Hatsumi and to pass on the first attempt. I did not move some how I was moved out of the way rolling. It felt as if I was pushed by an invisible force. I will never forget it. With great honor I was one of the first to give this test outside of Japan, on the Soke's behalf and one of the first to administer the test in front of Soke in Japan. For me it is a continual study of the way and the guiding of energy of true budo.

Before the 5th dan we study the Omote or outer side of the art. The more physical. At the 5th dan we begin to study the Ura or the inner side of the arts. We begin to learn more about Yin and Yang of the arts. And about Kyojitsu, the art of knowing the difference between truth and falsehood. We study this in the world by first mastering it in ourselves. There comes a time on the journey that Budo is Life.

There is a lifetime of travel on the journey of self-discovery. The further you travel the more that you learn that there are no mistakes, no real surprises and there is no separation. This is why the Chinese have a saying about the Way, (Do in Japanese and Dao/Tao in Chinese) which goes, "The Dao that can be told is not the true Dao."

For a better understanding of where you may be on the path, I have carefully marked 5 Torii entry gates on the journey. I've divided the progression along the way into several different stages, which I will call Torii Gates.

The Stages along the Warriors Path or what I call the 5 Gates are:

Torii 1. Practitioner

Torii 2. Teacher

Torii 3. Scholar

Torii 4. Healer

Torii 5. Shihan / Sage

www.BushindoUniversity.com for more works by Doshi Richard Van Donk

Page 14

© 2/2019 Van Donk

DAO of Martial Arts - Spiritual Path

by Doshi Richard Van Donk

For this writing I will give a brief summation as an overview. If you are interested in a greater in-depth understanding on this please refer to my work the Shidoshi Teachers Training Course or upcoming book on this.

If your training in the martial arts you've already gone through the first Torii gate, that of a practitioner. In time you'll begin to share the art with others, and you will develop into a teacher, the second Torii gate. Being a teacher naturally creates a desire to learn more details of the art scholar, third Torii gate, so you can share them with others. The more you understand about the past and its teachings the more you begin to heal the inner and outer aspects of yourself others will witness your new abilities and the change in you and will want your help for issues in their lives. Students will bring you their troubles to be healed and they will trust your judgment as you have already traveled this path yourself. This will bring you to the Healer stage on your path, the fourth Torii gate. You may even learn a healing system like Acupuncture, Herbs, Massage, Traditional Chinese Medicine or Yoga. Soke Masaaki Hatsumi clearly states that medicine and budo are the same. Especially if you are healing your life through your budo practice.

The 5th Torii gate (Sage, Shihan), Well very few will continue on this far on the path as a martial arts as a life practice is required but if you do, after many years you'll be you will have mastered your art as a practitioner, you will have taught many to high dan levels so that you will be very respected as a teacher, you will have helped many students and people in your community with physical, mental or spiritual healing to a level that you will be referred to as a role model. The Japanese word for that is Shihan Some refer to Shihan being a Master when it really means Role Model and you should be a master of the arts before reaching Shihan level. The Chinese word for this would be translated as Priest or Sage. Sometimes as Sifu or Daoshi. At this point the wisdom that you have gained on the path to achieving a Sage level will teach others more as a transmission of who you are that any technique ever will. Your presence in the room

DAO of Martial Arts - Spiritual Path

by Doshi Richard Van Donk

changes the room and the way that people feel. All the highest teachings are really nonverbal. Presence of being speaks volumes. Your martial skills will also embody this. This infinite budo path unveils an evolution of human potential that is unlimited. Living the way fills my destiny and enriches my soul. I am sure that it will for you as well.

I personally use the term ***Doshi*** as a title. Since the "Do" equals the way. "Shi" is to show or guide. So ***Doshi*** is a "Shower of the Way or a "Way Shower". In Budo that is exactly what I am. I do my best to be a role model. By everything that I am. Showing the art is really just giving guidance on presence of being and goes on much farther than the techniques that I teach. Of course, this presence shows up in my martial ability and it should yours. But then again, I always remember that I personally am on a journey of my own self perfection. Often but not always it includes others. The difference often is that I know this consciously in everything that I do while a student may not have even reached this level of understanding yet. So, I don't expect it I just guide them to it. Sometimes it takes a whack on the head or even a kick in the butt. It is all part of the journey for both of us. I also know that every student is my mirror and a reminder of where I once was on the same path. That measurement is what gives me insight in showing them the way. I also live by a principle that everything is my teacher. I am so grateful to all my teachers.

For a more in-depth view of these 5 gates see my work Shidoshi Teacher's Training Course. <https://store.bushindo.com/shidoshi-teacher-training-course/>

How far should this level of personal perfection really go? When we surrender to who we really are we transcend ourselves don't we? We then enter a spiritual realm. Our path is to be pure as the Dao. This is the ultimate harmony. To do this we must learn and know our own nature.

I dove deep into my own nature and into the arts. I loved training and exploring it so much that it was all that I wanted to do day or night. So much so that I figured out ways

DAO of Martial Arts - Spiritual Path

by Doshi Richard Van Donk

that everything that I did could relate somehow to some aspect of the training. I would even go around the house picking up stuff with my hanbo (short wooden staff). Over time budo became my way of living. It can become yours too – if it is not already. I mean this from the standpoint that everything in life can be training. The true way of learning is to grow in awareness. Although we study information the teachings are not really in the information itself. Information comes and goes out of your brain but when you gain awareness on more level's knowledge is automatically obtained without conscious thought. Once knowledge is incorporated as a part of you it becomes natural and no thinking is required. This is why Ninjutsu Master Soke Hatsumi is always reminding students, "Don't think – feel."

Martial arts is a feeling art And so is life.

Your life will never change if you do not change your attitude towards it. Life is what you make it and how you respond to it. Indeed no one is better than anyone else that is for sure.

Some people see life as lemons and others will just add a little sugar to it and make lemonade.

I do hope you find the life you truly want. And yes, Peace can exist even in Chaos.

Own yourself fully. Be empowered. Will you be white belt level empowered? Or will you be a BlackBelt level empowered? Or will you be Master Sage level empowered? It really is your choice. But you will be graded more by others than by yourself.

Your study in our own nature we are study in our own flow in life.

Is not just studying the martial part of the art it is what you become in the process. Will these great arts, will this path of a Warrior build your ego or will it strip away all the false allusions of who you are and lead you to a pure heart? That choice is yours.

www.BushindoUniversity.com for more works by Doshi Richard Van Donk Page 17

DAO of Martial Arts - Spiritual Path

by Doshi Richard Van Donk

Thank you for being a part of my path.

Much Respect - See You On The Mat!

Doshi Richard Van Donk, *GrandMaster*

Bushindo Ryu - GrandMaster

DeCuerdas Eskrima - GrandMaster

Budo Taijutsu - DaiShihan 15th dan / Shin Gi Tai Ichi

Ninpo Taijutsu - 9th Dan

Enbukan Iaido/Battojutsu - Senior Shihan

www.ninjutsu.com

www.bushindo.com

For Online Courses and Teachings go to www.bushindouniversity.com