

# **The Densho of Wa Shin Ryu Jujutsu**

**(System, Philosophy & Principles )**

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## **Introduction**

Forged on the battlefields of Feudal Japan Jujutsu is the original integrated "mixed" martial art. Rooted in this classical tradition Wa Shin Ryu Jujutsu retains the best of the old ways, but as an evolved system for the 21st century its **NINE MAJOR GOALS** are:

- 1. Physical and psychological empowerment (tapping into internal and external sources of power)**
- 2. Development of effective defensive and offensive skills and strategies (for combat and self defense)**
- 3. Development of good health and fitness**
- 4. Development of superior ways of moving (quality of movement)**
- 5. Development of inner peace and harmony**
- 6. Development of deeper insights and personal understandings**
- 7. Development of essential psychological attributes such as focus, control, discipline, persistence, , honor and commitment, among others**

## **8. The development of "warrior-scholars"**

### **9. To learn to live the Budo Way and to make Jujutsu a lifelong path to self actualization**

At the higher levels training in Wa Shin Ryu Jujutsu transcends the acquisition of deadly skills and combat techniques. The system aims to develop the individual holistically and focuses on the "perfection of character" and the attainment of self actualization in the physical, psychological and spiritual domains. Such self actualization focuses on the need to develop the whole person on both the physical as well as the intellectual level. That is, we aim to develop individuals who can fight if circumstances demand it, but who are also educated about the intricacies, history, philosophy, principles and ways of their art. Hence we employ the concept of the "warrior-scholar" to describe what the system is about.

Effective teaching in Wa Shin Ryu Jujutsu integrates, therefore, the study of skills and techniques with history, philosophy and ethical principles, and stresses the development of the whole person.

The system is based on, and driven by several major principles.

**(A) The 12 Universal Guiding Principles** (Code of Honor or the Budo Way of Wa Shin Ryu Jujutsu) speak to ethical forms of conduct, personal responsibility, expectations and desirable forms of behavior. They outline the ideals of the system and help lay out guidelines regarding the kind of people we strive to become as martial artists.

**(B) The 7 System Principles** address various technical areas regarding combat strategy, execution of technique, power generation, and the like.

### **Short and Long Term Goals Of Wa Shin Ryu Jujutsu**

Wa Shin Ryu Jujutsu has both short and long term goals. These are:

#### **Short Term Goals**

To acquire effective combative and self defense skills and develop strength, speed, flexibility, endurance, coordination and good health. At this stage we also aim to place the student on "the path" to self actualization by laying the foundations for

subsequent growth and development in the physical, psychological and spiritual domains.

### **Long Term Goals**

The practice of Wa Shin Ryu Jujutsu contributes to mind body harmony, self control and discipline, self confidence and inner strength. **It harnesses and harmonizes the power of the mind and body and enhances the power of the will.** It is a means of empowering the individual and contributes to self actualization in the physical, psychological and spiritual domains.

To attain the goals of Wa Shin Ryu Jujutsu we employ an approach called the **Four-fold Path.** This involves:

- (i) Meditation and introspection
- (ii) Rigorous, diligent and frequent training in Wa Shin Ryu Jujutsu under the tutelage of a certified instructor
- (iii) Practice and application of all the principles of the system
- (iv) A commitment to, and application of the philosophy of the system both in the dojo and in everyday life.

## **The System Of Wa Shin Ryu Jujutsu**

The System Comprises 24 Interrelated Domains. These are:

**Domain 1: Postures (Dachi), and Fighting Stances (Shobu Gamae)**

**Domain 2: Movement Patterns (Taisabaki)**

**Domain 3: Striking Techniques (Ate Waza)**

**Domain 4: Kicking Techniques (Keri Waza)**

**Domain 5: Strangling/Choking Techniques (Shime Waza)**

**Domain 6: Throwing Techniques (Nage Waza)**

**Domain 7: Joint Locking Techniques (Kansetsu Waza)**

**Domain 8: Holding Techniques (Osae Waza)**

**Domain 9: Escape Techniques (Hodoki Waza)**

**Domain 10: The Bokken**

**Domain 11: Pressure Point Techniques (Kyusho Waza)**

## **Domain 12: LEVELS OF RESPONSE IN:**

- (i) In SELF DEFENSE
- (ii) In PLAY (kumite/randori/sparring) AND,
- (iii) In COMBATIVE CONTEXTS (offensive initiatives)

Wa Shin Ryu Jujutsu helps develop skills for self defense, for playing with rules (as in randori/kumite) and as an offensive combat art. As a Budo System it is also a path to higher goals in the psychological and spiritual domains (e.g., ki power, higher level insights and understandings).

Basic self defense skills are typically non-lethal but they can help the jujutsuka deal with attack situations by means of various verbal and non-verbal strategies that help defuse a situation, or restrain and/or cause pain to an assailant.

Wa Shin Ryu may also be practiced with rules for play, recreation, skill development, and health and fitness. Under such situations only "legal techniques" may be used to restrain, control or submit another person without causing injury. Sparring in the standing position (distance or close quarter) and on the ground are examples of such forms of play. Training under such conditions also helps with hand-eye coordination, contributes to quality of movement, helps develop faster reactions and enables students to learn and apply the technical principles of the system. Such training is not intended to develop athletes for competition. Rather, it is used as a form of preparation for engaging in defense, as well as in combat situations. This is one of the highest technical goals of the system in the physical domain and students should keep in mind that Wa Shin Ryu Jujutsu is first and foremost an urban and battlefield art, NOT a competitive sport. This of course implies that Wa Shin Ryu has no "illegal techniques" in the way the martial sports are driven by such rules.

It should be evident by now that since Wa Shin Ryu Jujutsu is a combat art and not a sport, and the ultimate goal of the system on a skills/strategic level is to take students through to level 7, the highest level of any combat art. However, Wa Shin Ryu is not simply a combat art (bujutsu); it is also a budo system that stresses the development of higher goals, values and attitudes and behaviors. These speak to discipline, control, respect, empowerment, focus, self understanding, loyalty and responsibility, among others, as

outlined in the 12 Guiding Principles and the NINE major goals of the system (see beginning of this document).

On a skills/strategy level, Wa Shin Ryu Jujutsu recognizes and trains students in the use of SEVEN broad categories of response as they apply to (i) Self Defense (no rules); (ii) Play (kumite/randori) (with rules); and (iii) Combat Contexts (no rules).

## **(i) Self Defense Contexts**

### **Levels 1-3**

1. Walking away from a confrontation. Best option if the situation permits.
2. Defusing the situation by apologizing to the potential aggressor, attempting to reason with them or, when necessary, by imposing your will (application of shin power) which may intimidate the potential assailant and cause him to stand down
3. Engaging in an appropriate response from Levels 4 to 6 below. Level 7 is restricted to life-threatening combat situations

## **(ii) Play Contexts** **(kumite/randori/sparring)**

### **Levels 4-5**

4. By Restraining/Controlling the opponent through various techniques that restrain, or cause minimal pain or discomfort. The application of such techniques will help ensure that the opponent is no longer willing to continue fighting.

Many such techniques are appropriate in kumite/randori (when sparring).

5. Causing Moderate or Severe Pain that is non injurious to your opponent through joint locking, choking, pressure points and with the use of non-injurious controlled strikes or kicks. The application of such techniques may help convince the assailant that continuing the

attack will not produce favorable results. In effect, such techniques help demoralize your opponent or assailant.

### **(iii) Combat Contexts**

**NOTE: Training for Levels 6 and 7 is restricted to senior brown and black belts and must be taught by a Licensed Instructor with the rank of Yodan, or higher.**

## **Levels 6 and 7**

**6. Causing Moderate or Severe Injury** to the assailant. These are combat level fighting responses requiring control and good judgment. Such techniques are to be applied ONLY when the threat level is perceived to be high but not life threatening. The application of such techniques ensures that the assailant is unable to continue the attack. Such responses are not appropriate for randori/kumite situations (although such techniques may be simulated and practiced slowly in training).

### **7. Lethal Responses in Life and Death Situations**

Lethal responses are obviously irreversible. Therefore, whenever possible jujutsuka should attempt to control or injure a dangerous assailant. Lethal responses may be applied ONLY when absolutely necessary as these are to be considered "options of last resort". The threat level to life is perceived to be extremely high (assailant using a knife or handgun, for example, especially when more than one assailant is involved in the attack) and the only perceived option available is a lethal response. Clearly, such responses are not appropriate when engaging in randori/kumite situations (although such techniques may be simulated and practiced slowly in training). Finally, it is best to view this level of response as appropriate in military urban, or battlefield combat situations, where other options of response are simply not possible because of the life threatening situation one may be involved in.

Training students in levels 6 and 7 requires specialized knowledge and skills on the part of the instructor. Further, training should be conducted in separate workouts that emphasize the application of such

lethal skills under controlled and simulated conditions. Such skills and techniques should not be taught to students below the level of Nikyu and it is expected that instructors should hold the rank of Yodan, or higher.

Once a combative situation develops, students in Wa Shin Ryu Jujutsu may then employ appropriate defensive responses or combative initiatives as indicated in the next section below.

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** Any student found to employ lethal techniques in non combat situations will be stripped of rank, expelled from the system and may also be subject to criminal prosecution.

## **Domain 13: Combat Initiatives** **(attacks) and Defensive Responses** **(defenses): (Major Principles)**

Include Jodan (high), Chudan (middle) and Gedan (low) forms of attack/defense.

In Wa Shin Ryu Jujutsu a jujutsuka may employ a number of initiatives and/or responses in dealing with an attacker. They are listed below in **increasing levels of difficulty/complexity**. Such initiatives/responses are grounded in, and reflect the following **8 principles**. These principles explain and define the workings of the following EIGHT Offensive Initiatives and Defensive Responses.

These are **KEY PRINCIPLES** that contain/subsume both theoretical and technical knowledge about skill execution and strategy:

### **Combat Initiatives and Defensive Responses** **of Wa Shin Ryu Jujutsu**

#### **(i) Blocks with counters (Uke Waza)**

- (ii) Escapes - Hodoki Waza (from wrist grabs, bear hugs, neck holds, on the ground, etc.)**
- (iii) Evasions with counters (Kaihi Waza)**
- (iv) Deflections with counters (Sorasu Waza)**
- (v) Joining and following through, or countering (Aiki Waza)**
- (vi) Sen (taking the initiative - first to attack using single technique or combinations)**
- (vii) Sen No Sen (near simultaneous interceptions as a response to an attack initiated by Uke. Also known as Bogai Waza)**
- (viii) Sen Sen No Sen (taking the initiative and controlling Uke by luring him/her into attacking - basically setting them up). The key component of Sen Sen No Sen, however, is that Uke is manipulated and controlled by Tori into believing that a real opportunity for attack actually exists. It doesn't!**

At the higher levels students are expected to employ the above initiatives and responses in various combinations and not simply rely on a single type of offensive or defensive strategy.

## **Domain 14: Application of Kiai and proper breathing**

## **Domain 15: Combinations (Renraku Waza and Renzoku Waza)**

## **Domain 16: Break-falling Ways (Ukemi)**

## **Domain 17: Formal Sequences (Kata)**



## **Domain 18: Live Sparring (Kumite/Randori) in Distance, Close Quarter and Ground Contexts**

Live sparring is viewed as an essential component of the system in helping to prepare students for the realities of real combat (offense and defense). While set routines and kata teach essential principles and techniques, which is how most classical systems used to train their students, effective application requires that students be trained to apply these under relatively realistic conditions. This is a more modern approach and aligns with the realities of living in today's world.

It should be noted here that Kano's success with judo over the traditional jujutsu systems in the now famous 1886 tournament was attributed primarily to his "new" method of training judoka, which he called randori. Of course, the fact that atemi was prohibited in the 1886 tournament undoubtedly served to handicap the jujutsu fighters even further and helped undermine their ability to hold their own against Kano's judo students who trained in a free-format environment called randori.

## **Domain 19: Innovation, discovery and exploration of new techniques, sequences and strategies**

## **Domain 20: The 12 Universal Principles of Wa Shin Ryu Jujutsu (Code of Honor)**

The system has TWELVE Universal Principles (Code of Honor) and SEVEN System Principles. The 12 Universal Principles serve as our Code of Honor.

## **Domain 21: The 7 System Principles**

- (i) Eight General Principles of Combat Strategy (Heiho)**
- (ii) Four Principles of Movement (Taisabaki Jo)**
- (iii) Seven Principles of Technique Execution  
(Kake Jo)**
- (iv) Ten Principles of Power Generation (Ryoku Jo)**
- (v) Six Principles of Distance Fighting (Tohma No Waza)**
- (vi) Eight Principles of Close Quarter Fighting (Chikai No Waza)**
- (vii) Seven Principles of Ground Fighting (Newaza)**

## **Domain 22: Meditation and Introspection (methods of)**

## **Domain 23: Wa Shin Ryu Theory, Philosophy History and Research**

- (i) History of Jujutsu**
- (ii) History, origins and lineage of Wa Shin Ryu Jujutsu**
- (iii) Theory of warm-up and training principles**
- (iv) System, Philosophy and Principles (Densho)**
- (v) Effects of martial arts training on psychological growth and development**
  
- (vi) Role of Wa Shin Ryu Jujutsu in the modern world**

## **Domain 24: Shuchu Ryoku (advanced aspects of applying focused power)**

# **The Three Contexts of Combat in Wa Shin Ryu Jujutsu**

These are:

**1. Tachi Waza Distance Fighting** (Tohma No Waza; 1 Zone- Distance fighting only)

**2. Tachi Waza Close Quarter Fighting** (Chikai No Waza from standing position)

Close quarter fighting may take place in either Zone 1 (as in Kote Gaeshi or Zone 2 (as in Ogoshi)

**3. Ne Waza Ground Fighting** Includes Zone 1 and Zone 2.

Ground fighting integrates joint locking (kansetsu waza), strangling and choking (shime waza), holding/immobilization skills (osae waza), atemi waza and pressure points (kyusho waza).

## **What Are Zones of Fighting?**

In Wa Shin Ryu Jujutsu there are three Contexts of Fighting. These are Distance, Close Quarter and Ground fighting.

**Distance Fighting** has one zone and fighting in this context typically relies on the use of hands/arms and feet/legs for striking and kicking from some distance (typically about four to six feet).

**Close Quarter Fighting** may take place standing or on the ground and is divided into two zones. These we call Zone 1 and Zone 2.

These zones are characterized by the way Tori's body parts are used for leverage in the execution of technique. Typically, Zone 1 close quarter fighting from the standing position employs the application of leverage to the opponent's joints (e.g., the wrist or elbow) using mostly one's hands or

arms. The **absence of a tight fit** between Tori's and Uke's bodies characterizes this method of fighting. Kote Gaeshi is a nice example of Close Quarter Zone 1 fighting. Zone 2 requires the use of one's major body parts (e.g., thigh, hip, shoulder) for leverage. Typically, Zone 2 techniques require Tori to apply a tighter fit against Uke's body before/while executing technique. The Ogoshi is a fine example of Zone 2 Close Quarter fighting.

In ground fighting (newaza) Zone 1 is typically characterized by having the defender on his/her back, or side, and the attacker (Tori) attacking from a standing or kneeling position. The defender (Uke) may attempt to defend by blocking, kicking or tripping the assailant using his/her own legs and/or feet, or by striking with fists or elbows. In Zone 2 ground fighting both attacker and defender are down on the ground, often in some form of entanglement where one's body is tightly pressed against the other's.

\* Distance, Close Quarter and Ground fighting are taught in Wa Shin Ryu Jujutsu by emphasizing the principles associated with each of the three Contexts of Fighting. These principles are expressed in three kata called the Ikkyo No Kata (for Distance Fighting), the Nikyo No Kata (for Close Quarter Fighting) and the Sankyō No Kata (for Ground Fighting). These kata are paths or frameworks to the first, second and third set of principles of combat and their purpose is to prepare students to understand the complexities associated with Distance, Close Quarter and Ground fighting.

## **The Use of Ate mi (body strikes)**

Wa Shin Ryu Jujutsu is an urban and battlefield combat art that relies mostly, but not entirely, on unarmed combat techniques. It also employs atemi as a prelude to entering for nage waza, shime waza and kansetsu waza. Ate mi is also used when initiating escapes from holding techniques. Thus, while atemi plays an important role in the system it is, nevertheless, a secondary one to kumiuchi (close quarter) style fighting. Ate mi is to be thought of as an essential strategic tool which may be used to weaken, distract or temporarily incapacitate an assailant (to achieve mental and physical kuzushi) before applying close quarter fighting techniques. Several other systems such as Takenouchi Ryu, Hade, Koppo, Kenpo Taijutsu and Shubaku, among others, also employ atemi as a precursor to kumiuchi.

# Levels of Transmission of Knowledge

## **(Shoden, Chuden and Okuden)**

The system is taught on three levels. These are: Shoden (First level transmissions) which includes all subject matter in the mudansha syllabus (non black belt); these corresponds to the ranks of Rokyu through Ikkyu. The Shoden level emphasizes the acquisition of technique and basic theoretical understanding.

Chuden is the second, or intermediate level of transmission. This level corresponds to the ranks of Shodan through Sandan and the emphasis is on the development of technical competence and effectiveness, and the acquisition of higher level theoretical insights.

The third level is Okuden (major or deep level transmissions), and is characterized by superior technique, an in-depth understanding of the theory and principles, and a demonstration of an intuitive feel for the art. This level is ordinarily associated with the rank of Yodan and higher.

The system does not possess "hidden secrets" (Okugi or Hiden) since there is no longer a need to maintain that level of secrecy to ensure one's survival. However, in Feudal Japan the keeping of hidden transmissions was clearly a necessary practice because it helped ensure survival (and at times victory) on the battlefield.

Similar to Kano's early judo, the goal of Wa Shin Ryu is the actualization of the individual in the physical, psychological and spiritual domains. It is a system that contributes to the development and harnessing of the powers (and potential) that we all possess within us. Thus, the goal of the system is to empower us by helping develop all our faculties and abilities in the physical, psychological and spiritual domains. As such, it may be viewed as a system of "**empowerment education**". Thus actualized, we are then better able to be of value to ourselves and contribute to the betterment of society.

The development and personal growth goals of the system are clearly incompatible with the possession of "hidden transmissions", which are primarily taught to a few select insiders, or members of the same clan or group. The goals of the system, which focus on personal growth and development in accordance with the 12 Guiding Principles, are also

incompatible with the frequent quest for medals and trophies. The pursuit of such rewards is seen as interfering with the higher **intrinsic** goals of Wa Shin Ryu because such a pursuit focuses attention on **extrinsic** rewards and recognition, training to win in contest, and the like. The mindset and approach to training required for sport competition takes students in a different direction; a direction which is not totally in harmony with the goals of a martial art such as Wa Shin Ryu. Thus, while such goals and emphasis may be appropriate for martial sports, they have no place in true martial Budo Systems that stress self actualization. Having said that, if a student chooses to compete a few times a year, and does not make competition the focus of his/her training, then this is acceptable because it is seen as a way of testing the effectiveness of one's skills, and thus an extension of in-club sparring.

In both classical and traditional systems all knowledge is transmitted through a document (this may be a scroll or, in today's world, an electronic medium) called the Densho. The word means den = to transmit or teach and sho = a document. Thus Densho means a document that transmits the essential knowledge of a system from Soke to Soke, and from one generation to another. We should note that among the earliest classical systems such transmissions were mostly in oral form which, today, have been sadly lost to us.

## **The Role of Empowerment**

Empowerment in Wa Shin Ryu Jujutsu is not just about learning to handle yourself in combative situations. It is about the development of all our potentialities in the physical, psychological and spiritual domains. More specifically, these domains can be further broken down in the following manner:

### **The Physical Domain**

The diligent and rigorous practice of Wa Shin Ryu Jujutsu contributes to the development of strength, speed, balance, coordination, timing, flexibility and endurance. As such, it also contributes in significant ways to the maintenance of good health.

## **The Psychological Domain**

Wa Shin Ryu Jujutsu is an extremely challenging martial art. By successfully meeting the challenges posed by the system students develop confidence, will-power, commitment, discipline, perseverance, focus, self control and inner strength. **Jujutsuka simply don't quit in the face of adversity.** In addition, the system teaches, as part of its philosophy, a code of honor that includes the concepts of loyalty, commitment, keeping one's word, integrity, a caring for all living things, and a strong disdain for cruelty and gratuitous violence. Our philosophy also stresses the concept of succoring. As empowered individuals we are obligated to go to the aid of those less fortunate and provide assistance, be it in the form of protection, or emotional support. We do not stand by and abrogate our responsibilities while someone weaker is in need of our skills and help. We also stress the need to combine succoring with good judgment.

## **The Spiritual Domain (Ki and Shin Power)**

The spiritual domain is not to be confused with any particular religion, or religious doctrine. Spiritual development in the martial arts, and in Wa Shin Ryu Jujutsu in particular, is about tapping into the life force/energy that we all possess and employing it in the development of inner strength. Such inner strength is also associated with Shin (mind, spirit or heart).

The discovery of Ki Power and the development of Shin are both noble and worthwhile journeys that may take years to discover and develop. Without the guidance of a qualified instructor their discovery may never happen, or it may take considerably longer to tap into these sources of power.

## **Philosophy of the Founder**

The founder believes that all knowledge and skills are forms of power. Thus, they should be used to do good in the world. While this lesson is sometimes difficult to illustrate in everyday life, Wa Shin Ryu teaches this in no uncertain terms in combative situations. Once the lesson is learned that jujutsu knowledge is power, and power used wisely can be a force for good, the Wa Shin Ryu student will want to empower himself/herself by acquiring the knowledge and skills necessary to be able to do good in many spheres of human endeavor.

While many of the skills and techniques of Wa Shin Ryu (as with all martial arts) are clearly not appropriate in non violent situations, the inner strength, the mindset, and the psychological and spiritual attributes acquired, carry over to all spheres of life. Thus, Wa Shin Ryu practitioners are likely to succeed in most areas of life they choose to concentrate on. These attributes are exemplified in our 7 virtues of Wa Shin Ryu Jujutsu. These are:

***Honor, Discipline, Responsibility, Achievement,  
Loyalty, Commitment and Resourcefulness***

Clearly, to feel empowered and be able to do good in other spheres of life a person must also be a "black belt" in the skills and knowledge of life. We teach, therefore, that students should seek to develop themselves to their fullest potential in different areas of human endeavor. **We say, "be teachers, be lawyers, be engineers, be physicians, be politicians, be police officers, be leaders in your communities. Develop your intellect and your technical and critical thinking skills to the fullest; be a black belt in all walks of life, for, that is the way to help others and shape the course of events for yourself and your loved ones. Knowledge is a powerful weapon, and the more skilled you are in a variety of life's weapons the more empowered you are to bring about change, and help those less fortunate" (Yiannakis Sensei, 1982).**

Wa Shin Ryu Jujutsu initially demonstrates in the dojo what empowerment really means. Once students understand the meaning of empowerment in jujutsu they wish to feel empowered in other spheres of human endeavor as well. And, the psychological and spiritual attributes that Wa Shin Ryu develops (discipline, focus, self control, self confidence, perseverance and inner strength, among others), combined with living in a strong and healthy body, can make that happen for them.

With empowerment come certain responsibilities. In some sense, it is like giving a person a loaded gun. It is relatively easy to teach them how to use it. However, it is more difficult to help them develop the good judgment to know when to use it, if at all. There is a need, therefore, to pass on a philosophy, a set of guiding principles that both guide and restrain the martial artist so that he/she may employ the powers of Wa Shin Ryu wisely, sparingly, and with control. In the hands of the unprincipled Wa Shin Ryu becomes a dangerous weapon (as is true of most martial arts) that can cause immeasurable grief and pain.



It is the founder's purpose, in developing this method of combat and self defense, to help students work toward self actualization by empowering them physically, psychologically and spiritually. And, to provide them with a philosophy and a code of honor that will help them apply their empowered status in society wisely.

Empowerment places jujutsu students in a unique position in life because it gives them the choice of deciding, and shaping their own destiny. They develop the mindset and the psychological attributes (in particular, an internal locus of control, as some psychologists refer to it) that make them proactive in life. This is a rare gift and they have a responsibility to share it with those less fortunate; otherwise, all their training and years of hard work are merely for personal aggrandizement! And, personal aggrandizement as an end in itself is a selfish and empty goal and not compatible with the higher goals of Wa Shin Ryu!

Finally, the development of inner strength, and the ability to achieve a greater measure of control over their life enhances self esteem, diminishes the likelihood of falling into "the victim role", helps develop a more positive attitude, and generally helps enhance mental health and life quality.

## **THE PRINCIPLES OF WA SHIN RYU** **JUJUTSU**

The term "Principles" refers to the characteristic attributes, laws or assumptions underlying the workings of a system (from principium - beginning, and princeps - initiator). The term may also be used to suggest "source" (something that initiates), or "essence" of a system.

Thus, the term principles refers to those essential components which define how a system is supposed to work in an integrated and internally consistent manner. They are the "underlying rules" that determine/influence effective technique application and serve as guidelines for how we should live our lives.

## **Our Code of Honor: The 12 Universal Principles of Wa Shin Ryu Jujutsu**

An honor code spells out for us how we should live our lives as empowered individuals. For, without such a code the awesome power of jujutsu may be put to ill use. This is not what the founder wishes for his system.

The following 12 Universal Principles of Wa Shin Ryu Jujutsu reflect the founder's belief that Wa Shin Ryu Jujutsu is capable of transforming individuals by empowering them to be better people, and to do good in the world. Clearly, this form of "empowerment education" has implications that go well beyond combat and self defense, and the confines of the dojo. The need for a guiding philosophy is paramount, therefore, if students are to be able to put their empowered selves to good use in the world.

### **The 12 Universal Principles (Code of Honor or the Budo Way of Wa Shin Ryu Jujutsu)**

**Thus, an empowered martial artist:**

- 1. Has respect for self and opponent**
- 2. Avoids gratuitous violence**
- 3. Has a caring attitude and is IN HARMONY with all living things**
- 4. Is loyal to one's friends**
- 5. Is committed to one's word**
- 6. Helps the weak or those in need**
- 7. Thinks before acting and exercises good judgment**
- 8. Embraces the positive in change but respects the best of the old ways**

**9. Focuses his/her inner strengths wisely. Perseveres in the things that really matter**

**10. Is generous in all things, for in helping others he/she gives back to the art**

**11. Combats unfairness and injustice to the best of his/her ability**

**12. Has a questioning mind and thinks for himself/herself.**

## **The 7 System Principles Of Wa Shin Ryu** **Jujutsu**

Wa Shin Ryu Jujutsu has SEVEN System Principles. These are:

- 1. Eight General Principles of Combat Strategy (Heiho)**
- 2. Four Principles of Movement (Taisabaki Jo)**
- 3. Seven Principles of Technique Execution (Kake Jo)**
- 4. Ten Principles of Power Generation (Ryoku Jo)**
- 5. Six Principles of Distance Fighting**
- 6. Eight Principles of Close Quarter Fighting**
- 7. Seven Principles of Ground Fighting**

The above 7 System Principles are further discussed below:

# **1: The 8 General Principles of Combat Strategy (Heiho)**

The Principles of Combat Strategy speak to those strategic elements or requisites in a combative situation involving the effective application of cognitive action plans and/or mental maps, for the purpose of attaining superiority over an aggressor. These are:

- (i) **Ma-ai**: Estimation of Distance between Tori and Uke
- (ii) **Metsuke**: Perception, or the ability to "read" the aggressor
- (iii) **Damashi**: Deception pertains to the use of stealth, feinting and dissimulation to deceive, mislead or unbalance an aggressor psychologically so as to confuse and cause their judgment to fail
- (iv) **Yoshin**: Psychological Flexibility. The ability to switch quickly and effectively from one plan of action, or technique, to another, as demanded by the situation. To yield with a purpose or to be flexible psychologically (similar to the concept of "ju" in judo)
- (v) **Fudoshin**: Presence of Mind, or the ability to remain calm and clear headed under pressure
- (vi) **Hanekaeri**: Rebound, or the ability to bounce back and recover quickly from setbacks or mistakes during a combative situation
- (vii) **Kime**: Decisiveness, or the ability to think and act decisively without hesitation
- (viii) **Zanshin**: Vigilance or the ability to demonstrate focus, readiness, vigilance/follow-through in a combative situation

## **2: The 4 Principles of Movement** **(Taisabaki Jo)**

**The way a jujutsuka moves and executes technique** provides the teacher with important qualitative information about the extent to which the student has been able to train the mind and body to function as one (to demonstrate mind-body unity). It is an external indicator of how well a jujutsuka has been able to integrate and apply the Principles of Movement.

Untrained, or poorly trained martial artists move their body through space in an ungainly fashion; they appear awkward, they cross their feet, they bounce up and down when they move, and they fail to lower their center by bending at the knee. When executing technique they often break at the waist and they fail to demonstrate strong "centered action". Thus, the way one moves and executes technique is a **key indicator of movement quality**.

When moving, or executing technique, a well trained jujutsuka demonstrates the following:

### **(i) Centered Action (Shizentai)**

(Shizentai, or natural posture). A natural posture in Wa Shin Ryu Jujutsu has certain features and attributes. Centering is the first one.

Centering is a function of mind-body unity. Thus it reflects a mental state, a certain posture, as well as a way of moving. In the physical domain this involves lowering one's center of gravity by bending the knees, keeping the back relaxed and relatively straight, and moving from one's hara (using centered action). In ground fighting, centering involves the use of one's center, or hara, to initiate action, to establish control, as for example, in three point contact holds, in escapes, and in the application of force against Uke's arms, legs, chest and other "fighting" body parts. In the psychological domain a centered jujutsuka **feels one with his/her body, is highly focused on the task at hand, and mind and body respond as one. The ability to perceive, or sense and act instantaneously is a characteristic quality of the centered martial artist.**

(ii) **Control**: Both mental and physical

(iii) **Fluency**: A qualitative dimension of effective movement that is characterized by smoothness, effortless, flow and grace

(iv) **Coordination and Effective Timing**

## **3. The 7 Principles of Technique Execution**

### **(Kake Jo)**

**(i) Debana** (Timing; moment of opportunity): An essential component in both offense and defense. If a technique (or movement) is attempted too early, or too late, its effectiveness is diminished. Timing requires good judgment and an ability to read (Metsuke) an aggressor's body language and movement patterns/reactions with accuracy and precision in order to discern the "right" moment of opportunity

**(ii) Kuzushi**: The physical and psychological destabilizing of an aggressor

**(iii) Rikiten**: Power point. The actual over-balancing point (the end point of good kuzushi) in the execution of technique. With proper kuzushi and leverage Tori is able to take Uke through to a "teetering point" (Rikiten) which then enables Tori to execute technique with little effort (most efficient use of energy and power)!

**(iv) Tsukuri**: Proper positioning for technique execution

**(v) Tekosayo (Leverage)**: Based on the application of proper mechanical principles in technique execution

**(vi) Shuchu Ryoku**: Focusing of multiple sources of power

**(vii) Kake**: Execution phase that follows Shuchu Ryoku; it speaks to the way a technique is actually executed (e.g., crisply and deliberately, without hesitation, demonstrating follow-through)

## **4. The 10 Principles of Power Generation (Ryoku Jo)**

In Wa Shin Ryu Jujutsu the execution of technique can be greatly enhanced by employing/tapping into several sources of power. Power in Wa Shin Ryu Jujutsu enables practitioners to **generate maximum force with relatively minimal effort**. Jujutsuka who have developed such an ability appear stronger, faster and more controlled and are able to execute technique with relative ease. The power they are able to generate is very real and is experienced by Uke (person on the receiving end) as an overwhelming force that cannot be stopped. Tori appears to be invincible, as though possessing super-human powers.

To achieve such a high level of effectiveness a lengthy and considerable amount of proper training is required. That is, training that deliberately focuses on the development and harmonization of the sources of power described below.

### **Sources of Power in Wa Shin Ryu Jujutsu**

Listed in increasing levels of difficulty to develop

- (i) **Chikara/Riki**: Use of physical strength. As one improves in skill, and in the ability to use the other sources of power (see below) this source becomes less important
- (ii) **Kiai**: Application of breath power (rudimentary efforts to harmonize Ki and generate power)
- (iii) **Tekosayo (Leverage)**: Based on the use of effective mechanical principles that enhance the execution of technique through superior efficiency of effort
- (iv) **Hayasa** (Speed): Controlled application of speed as a generating source of power

(v) **Aiki Jo**: Principles of joining (and re-directing) one's movement pattern(s) and energy with the attacker's

(vi) **Renraku Jo**: Employing the principles of action and reaction; these reflect varying degrees of deception (Damashi). Literally this is based on the idea of connecting techniques.

(vii) **Shin**: The power of the mind, the will, the heart. Also interpreted as determination, assertiveness, power of the will or persistence; a no quit mindset. The development of a strong Shin may be used to control and intimidate an assailant by projecting one's strength of will onto the assailant

(viii) **Use of Centered Action**: Generating force by initiating action from the Center

(ix) **Ki**: Effective projection of one's life force/vital energy which, with training, can be focused and directed

(x) **Shuchu Ryoku** (focused power): The harnessing/focusing of all above sources of power.

With proper training all the above sources of power can be enhanced by employing the ways of the Four-fold Path. Further, see "A Systematic Approach to Tapping Into and Developing Power In Wa Shin Ryu Jujutsu" (this paper is available only to my advanced students).

It should be pointed out that different individuals develop their powers at different rates. Further, some sources of power take longer to tap into and develop than others. A good sensei is able to monitor a student's progress and help him/her work toward developing, harmonizing and focusing such sources of power. Mastery and power are said to be achieved when a jujutsuka has developed all his/her sources of power and is able to tap into them with consistency, and at will.

Finally, as greater mastery is achieved some sources of power become less important, or even necessary (e.g., the use of physical strength).



## **5. Principles Of Distance Fighting (6)**

(IKKYO - Pathway to the 1st Set of Principles)

### **1. Principles of Deception. (Damashi Jo)**

- (i) Attack/response combinations (renraku waza)
- (ii) Misdirection (misdirecting attacker's attention)

### **2. Principles Governing Combat Initiatives and Defensive**

**Responses** (Blocking, Evading, Deflecting, Joining, Sen, Sen No Sen and Sen Sen No Sen).

**3. Principles of Perception (Metsuke).** Monitoring, tracking and reading an aggressor's intent, movement and attack/defense patterns and body language

**4. Principle of the Shifting Center** (use of centered action (balance, posture, movement patterns (taisabaki), etc.)

**5. Principle of Ma-ai** (speaks to ability to correctly estimate aggressor's distance and changing positions)

**6. Principles of Transitioning** from one technique to another and from distance, to close quarter and ground fighting

## **6. Principles Of Close Quarter Fighting (8 principles)**

(NIKYO - Pathway to the 2nd Set of Principles)

### **1. Principles of Deception**

- (i) Action and Reaction (Renraku waza)
- (ii) Misdirection (misdirecting attacker's attention by feigning an attempt to secure some part of his/her body other than the one targeted for attack, or by attacking/striking one body part and then quickly shifting to another). Jodan Uraken Uchi to Gedan Uraken Uchi is a fine example of this principle.

- (iii) Joining and Redirecting (Aiki Waza)
2. **Principles of Kuzushi** (off balancing) and Rikiten (power point/teetering point)
  3. **Principles of Centered Action** (speak to balance, posture, centered movement, etc.)
  4. **Principle of Additive Effects** (using additive sources of energy from multiple arcs, when throwing or applying any technique)
  5. **Principles of Reversal** and counter attack (Kaeshi waza)
  6. **Principles of Leverage** (Tekosayo)
  7. **Shuchu Ryoku:** Principle of Harnessing/Focusing selected forms of power for applying technique
  8. **Principles of Transitioning** (from technique to technique and from one context to another)

## **7. Seven Principles Of Ground Fighting**

(SANKYO - Pathway to the 3rd Set of Principles)

- (i) **Principle of Three Point Contact**
- (ii) **Principle of the Shifting Center**
- (iii) **Principle of Overloading**
- (iv) **Principle of Redirecting (a defender's resistance)**
- (v) **Principles of Deception**
  - (a) Action and reaction (renraku waza)

(b) Misdirection (misdirecting attacker's attention by feigning an attempt to secure some part of his/her body other than the one targeted for attack or by attacking/striking some other body part)

(c) Feigning joining and then redirecting (Aiki waza)

(d) Reversals and counter attacks (Kaeshi waza)

## **8. Principles Specific to Joint locking, Strangling/Choking and Pressure**

**Points.** An important principle governing joint locking is the idea of securing the intended body part with one hand and then applying technique with the other (as in toe and finger locks, for example). These techniques often require the use of Damashi as well

## **9. Principles of Transitioning and**

**Continuity** from one technique/position to another while on the ground

## **Advanced Methods of Training**

The different styles of jujutsu/jujitsu worldwide appear to be practiced on two levels.

**Level I** is characterized by the employment of speed, strength and force as the primary "principles" that drive the execution of technique. Many categorize such styles as being **External Systems**. A less kind characterization defines such systems as reflecting a "tough guy jujitsu approach" (note spelling), an approach most commonly seen among systems developed by Westerners that are devoid of any traditional Asian moorings (Japanese or Chinese). It is often a rough and crude approach to jujitsu and is associated with street fighting, and the training of military unarmed combat personnel. Unfortunately, training in a system that functions mostly at this

level tends to hinder future progress and the attainment of higher level fighting skills, and often fails to develop more advanced attributes of combat strategy (e.g., Heiho) such as Maai, Metsuke, Yoshin and Zanshin, or such concepts as joining (Aiki Jo) and Kuzushi to Rikiten (this is the teetering or breaking point of Kuzushi). Systems that fail to teach and develop such principles must inevitably rely on speed, strength and force, which is what one sees in today's "tough guy jujitsu" systems.

**Level II** is characterized by an emphasis on training by principle and is associated with key attributes found in Internal Systems. Internal Systems teach jujutsuka to learn to generate power from internal sources; they stress yielding to force and redirecting an attacker's energy; they stress the development of centered action that is combined with breath power and the application of Ki; they teach jujutsuka to fight strategically by using the Principles of Combat (Heiho) in offensive initiatives and defensive responses; and they stress the development of inner harmony and control, an important and essential psychological area that is often poorly taught in External Systems.

A major characteristic and end result of training in Internal Systems is characterized by superior quality of movement and execution of technique. Jujutsuka trained by principle often make technique execution look easy, and effortless, and such techniques lack the crudeness and force one often sees in Level I Systems.

Level II Systems lay the psychological and technical foundations for achieving higher levels of growth and development, especially the ability to fight in complex environments. This concept is further developed below:

### **Preparing Students to Function Effectively in Complex Fighting Environments**

Knowledge and skill development at the higher levels of Wa Shin Ryu Jujutsu involve more than simply learning all the techniques, kata and theoretical aspects of the system. In this paper, I attempt to clarify the contents, training ways and goals of the system as these apply to higher levels of functioning and performance (fighting in complex environments).

It is a given that as students advance in rank their depth of theoretical knowledge is expected to increase, and their skills are expected to improve considerably. They are also expected to show **a superior quality of**

**movement**, and their ability to demonstrate control, generate power, and apply the principles of the system (both Guiding and System Principles) must become more evident.

As students come closer to achieving these goals there is a need to ramp up the quality and quantity of their training so that they may be able to enter the next phase in their development. **Proper training in Level II should have already prepared them for this next phase.** This phase stresses:

1. Training under conditions of increased complexity
2. Training that stresses the application of multiple principles in interactive and shifting fighting contexts
3. Training that places a greater emphasis on innovation and personal discovery
4. Training that develops the ability to draw on a number of relevant strategic plans, sources of power generation and combat strategy by thinking both vertically (linearly) as well as laterally. Vertical thinking is the type of thinking that is developed through kata and continuous sequences. We sometimes refer to these as "closed skills". Lateral thinking requires the jujutsuka to branch off and think in terms of multiple combat actions as a response to the same attack. These are the skills and mindset required to function in what some call "open environments" where the shifting demands of an attack/defense situation cannot be predicted, or easily controlled. Open kumite/randori/sparring-type training sessions contribute to the development of lateral thinking but such training must be preceded by training in limited, or controlled training environments where the skills to be developed are introduced and integrated gradually, in clearly defined and delimited contexts
5. Training that develops the knowledge, skills and psychological and strategic flexibility to switch smoothly and effectively from one technique, or pattern of techniques to another in order to fit the demands of a shifting, and **unpredictably changing** combative environment
6. Training that develops deeper understandings and enables advanced students to teach and demonstrate the deeper levels of the system. These deeper levels can best be described as an interactive matrix of principles,

strategy, techniques and mindsets that characterize the highest levels of Wa Shin Ryu Jujutsu.

## **7. Preparation for Life**

Training in a Level II System isn't just about learning to fight. It is also about the development of psychological attributes that make us better people, and provide us with such prerequisites for success as:

***Honor, Discipline, Responsibility, Achievement,  
Loyalty, Focus, Commitment and Resourcefulness***

These are the cornerstones for success in most of life's endeavors, and a major driver in Traditional Jujutsu. Another way of putting it is:

In today's world the goal of internally driven jujutsu systems is to develop "warrior-scholars"; that is, individuals who can fight when they have to, but who also possess the higher values, knowledge, and attributes that enable them to succeed in life. Thus the traditional dojo becomes a place that helps develop the whole person by laying a foundation for health, inner power and success, both in the dojo and the world beyond.

## **SUMMARY**

In summary, higher level training, if it is to develop "warrior-scholars" must take place in environments that stress:

- 1.** Increased levels of complexity
- 2.** Application of multiple principles in interactive and shifting fighting contexts
- 3.** Innovation, creativity and personal discovery
- 4.** Linear and lateral forms of thinking/mindsets
- 5.** Development of Psychological and Strategic Flexibility (Yoshin)
- 6.** The ability to teach, demonstrate and explain the deeper levels of the system to advanced students

7. The development of higher forms of knowledge, values and attributes and behaviors

**Thus the highest levels of the system require:**

1. A complete knowledge of the system
2. The ability to apply variations and combinations in multiple fighting contexts
3. The ability to transition smoothly and effectively from one technique/strategy to another
4. The ability to generate power by drawing on multiple sources
5. The ability to continually innovate and create new patterns of movement in various combinations and permutations, and demonstrate these in fighting contexts in the dojo
6. The ability to demonstrate the development of inner strength, determination, focus, honor, and responsibility (among others) consistent with the principles of the system
7. The ability to apply multiple principles in shifting, interactive, and unpredictable fighting contexts
8. The development of higher levels of knowledge and understandings consistent with the concept of the "warrior-scholar"