

## *Preface*

*Originally this was titled "The Courage to Care" but after much consideration it evolved into its present title. Please read this article with as much care and precision as it was written with.*

### **In struggle lies truth....**

Nidan Essay by  
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The true reckless abandonment seen in the randori used by some Dojos may appear to be out of control and completely sadistic. Perhaps even superficially lacking the "technique" that most Aikido practitioners have become accustomed to seeing. But, with great scrutiny and much consideration this is in seeming only, for under the rough surface lies the possibility to see a deeper purpose. For, in this way of randori, only the sincerest and most courageous participation is truly accepted. You must be so absolutely for your training partner, your friend, that nothing else except total disregard for the attachment to the physical self will allow the genuine being to thrive and grow.

The courage to be absolutely sincere in attacking your training partner, with only THEIR interest at heart is vital to this training. Beyond the attachment of what happens to you physically or them physically, you go through them for "them". With ruthless compassion you do this for them and the opportunity that they can learn genuinely, "them". This is not to satisfy anyone's ego or foster some self-constructed concept, but to see the truth of what really is there. It is this very struggle for the reality of what is, that they stand in this moment where anything less than genuine will be torn off and dragged down. The individual's true nature, often times, comes through only in the most trying of times. Allowing the possibility to find in this moment of chaos who they truly are, while the rest simply washes away in the sweat and tears of this practice.

All this for the chance that they learn the lessons that they must learn. You put aside the possibility and embrace fully the experience. You must consciously choose to live this lesson, and be only in this moment for your training partner with total commitment. To have this, as your courage is necessary and nothing less will do, for if the slightest bit of insincerity is present, "they" will find it and attach to it. For it is the only way they have to "survive" in tact. You must not be an out for them, their reason to choose not to create themselves genuinely in this moment. Doing so would

ultimately not serve the purpose of being for "them". So you must absolutely have the courage to care completely, for it is this purpose in which you must go forward, undistracted. Hopefully it is this purpose for which they stand. Because anything less will be relentlessly tested and not survive. Nothing less than the truth will rise from such chaos, and this purity. And "no one" less than genuine will stay standing.

You are where you are, undeniably. There is no winning, no losing only the purpose for which you all share --Getting beyond them, beyond you-- It is in this randori that recklessly abandoning all attachments and embracing this practice and what it can forge from the human spirit that this is taken on. After all, you live with what is being done as it is in the doing. In this way of randori, one's falseness and ego is ruthlessly challenged so that what will survive is this courage to care. For in this struggle, lies the truth of what is genuine. Sincerity clings ruthlessly to the true nature of our "being" and not to the falseness of one's ego or self-concept. Whether that be pleasant or unpleasant is of little significance. In struggle, life is true and you must have the courage to see what is, tempered only by the compassion to care for that truth regardless of what it reveals.

With clear motivation, this purity, you can relentlessly be a part of this process for an other. You can be in this lesson, for someone else's opportunity to "see" themselves as they are and the reality of who they are choosing to be. Collectively providing the moment for their theory and their practice to come together for the purpose of allowing them to choose which they will be with. What recklessly becomes abandoned is assumptions and preconceptions about being a student of martial arts. This clarity becomes the backdrop, providing the foundation for which technique can then be laid for being a martial student. One who will fully embody being a martial artist in its truest sense. The practice of randori can push the limits of our own humanity and our very willingness to be present in the moment. This practice provides a physical platform for that sincerity to be tested and its depth questioned. Faced with others willing to be absolutely present and completely for you, forces one to be challenged in the deepest of ways. This is possible in the practice of randori; this is the possibility of the human spirit.

*I am interested in your feedback to this article. Please feel free to contact me with your comments, questions and/or thoughts. I can be reached at: [issan@psnw.com](mailto:issan@psnw.com)*