

WARRIOR MIND



武士道

• GI • YU • JIN • REI • MAKOTO
• MEIYO • CHUGI • JISEI

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*The student must become a true warrior
in an age where there are no more warriors.*

Kensho Furuya

I have seen many amazing martial artists do things with their bodies that can simply boggle the mind. I have seen some of the best fighters in the world and have trained with many martial arts instructors and other practitioners. I have also been involved in more physical confrontations than I care to remember.

In short, I have witnessed and experienced a lot when it comes to the physical side of the martial arts, but with all my experience, I have found one subject that seems to always get little or no attention in the world of martial arts – **how to live a life of character.**

Most martial arts classes are completely focused on self-defense, fighting, sport applications, tournaments, and katas. While all of these are important parts of the martial arts, there is something even more important missing from this list – **character training.**

This is what modern Bushido is all about – how to live the life of the superior man.

Bushido Explained

While this may sound like an elitist statement, it isn't. Living the life of the superior man is simply a way of saying living a life based on character, honor and integrity.

It is living the warrior lifestyle the way it should be lived, according to universal standards and principles which make someone a superior human being. When I say the words “superior human beings,” I am not referring to someone being better or more important than someone else.

The phrase “superior man” was used frequently by Confucius to indicate someone who lives according to high moral standards as opposed to someone who gives little regard to such things. The superior man is not superior because he is richer, more educated, comes from a better family, or anything along those lines. He is superior because he lives his life in a superior way.

He lives by higher standards than the average person.

This has always been the ideal behind the philosophy of Bushido. Literature from the 13th through the 16th centuries in Japan had many references to the ideals of Bushido. The actual word “Bushido” was first used in the 17th century, but the ideals of Bushido have been around as long as there has been a warrior class, not just in Japan, but throughout the world.

Bushido Origins

Bushido did not necessarily start out as a specific set of rules that must be followed, but rather moral principles which were meant to guide the life of the warrior. More frequently than not, the principles of Bushido were simply taught to children of the warrior class from an early age as a way of life that was expected from them.

The philosophy of Bushido evolved over the centuries, but it never lost its primary focus which was **living life according to the high standards expected from those of the warrior class**. It is a philosophy of how to live your life as a

true, complete warrior. The word “Bushido” literally means the way of the warrior. This philosophy did not limit itself to merely martial subjects.

On the contrary, the philosophy of Bushido covered subjects such as how to raise children, how one should dress, how to treat your family and other people, financial issues, as well as how to conduct yourself as an honorable warrior.

Bushido Today

Today the Bushido Code is commonly simplified to 8 virtues (*more discussed in the coming pages*)

But these virtues do not cover everything which Bushido entails; there is much more to Bushido than these virtues. The teachings of Bushido were meant to cover all areas of the warrior’s life, not just a handful (however these prove to be the foundation and start)

In the grand scheme of things, limiting Bushido to only these seven virtues is doing a disservice to this noble philosophy.

Learning character traits, which will guide your actions throughout your life, is an important part of the martial arts, but unfortunately this is also a part that has been neglected over the years, especially in today’s society where it is needed more than ever. Self-defense is merely one part of the warrior lifestyle.

The warrior lifestyle is multifaceted and entails much more than martial arts techniques. It is a complete way of life, not simply a term which encompasses anyone who practices some type of martial art. There is much more to being a

true warrior than knowing how to fight. You can teach a dog to fight, but that doesn't make it a warrior.

The Warrior Life And Warrior Re-defined

On the contrary, the warrior lifestyle is a complete way of life. It is a way of living a life of character, honor, and integrity in every area of your life. It includes martial arts, but it is not defined by martial arts.

One of the definitions of the term “warrior” is **a person engaged in some struggle or conflict**. The word “warrior” is not limited to someone who participates in an actual, physical battle between two armies. Many people disagree with this statement, but it is true nonetheless.

To take this definition even further, the word “war” doesn't always refer to a conflict between two countries or two groups of people. The term “war” can be defined as a struggle or competition between opposing forces or for a particular end. True warriors are not limited to those who have been in the military.

Being a true warrior is dependent on how you live your life, not on what you do for a living. The true warrior is the man or woman who endeavors to live the warrior lifestyle and who lives his or her life by the code of the warrior.

And have no doubts about it, they are at war. Their struggle may not be against some opposing army, but rather it is a struggle between the opposing forces of living according to their principles of honor or living without honor. The true warrior, whether in the military or driving a garbage truck, must decide to live a life of honor and integrity according to the principles of warriorship.

What you do for a living is simply what you do for a living; it is not who you are. Everyone decides for themselves whether they will live life as a true warrior or whether they will live their life in some other way.

Being a true warrior is a lifestyle, not a profession. It is not a fraternity where you have to be in the military to be considered a member. A person is a true warrior because of what is in his or her heart, mind and spirit; all the rest simply consists of the tools which the person uses to develop the warrior spirit in order to live the warrior lifestyle.

The concept of Bushido, the way of the warrior, is not some outdated, romantic notion. It is a way of living life to the fullest, with honor and integrity. It is the cornerstone of the warrior lifestyle, and it is just as important today as it ever was.

*Do nothing to make you lose respect for yourself,
or to cheapen yourself in your own eyes;
let your own integrity be the standard of rectitude,
and let your own dictates be stricter
than the precepts of any law.*

Baltasar Gracian

What Bushido Can Do for the Modern Business Man

When people think of Samurai, they conjure up images of neatly done top knots, wooden sandals and long katana strapped to their hips. In Japan, however, Samurai are equally renowned for their virtue and commitment to honor.

Even casual Japan enthusiasts have likely heard of Bushido, the set of principles by which Samurai lived and died. But for those unfamiliar with the concept...

Bushido literally means “the way of the warrior”

Loosely analogous to the European concept of chivalry, the virtues underpinning Bushido can still be applied to everyday life.

Entrepreneurs may find Bushido to be particularly inspiring and worthwhile approach to life. Here are ways that businessmen can apply Bushido to their professional lives.

Rectitude or Justice



This is the strongest virtue in Bushido and should be a core tenant for any businessperson. This concept has traditionally been defined as “a person’s

power to decide upon a course of conduct in accordance with reason, without wavering; to die when to die is right, to strike when to strike is right.”

Entrepreneurs live in a world of injustice and amorality. To recognize what is just and to act accordingly can make all the difference in both business and life in general. Upstanding moral values is never unwelcome, after all.

Courage



In Bushido, the difference between bravery and courage is clearly defined. In his Analects, Confucius commented that: “Perceiving what is right and doing it not reveals a lack of courage.”

For entrepreneurs, the needs of others must be placed above pursuits of ego-driven goals. This makes courage vital to one’s development since it allows entrepreneurs to break through moral obstacles that they will undoubtedly encounter.

Benevolence or Mercy



Benevolence manifests as love, sympathy, affection for others and graciousness. It is the highest attribute of humanity according to Bushido. It takes benevolence or mercy for a person to stand out in a cutthroat world like ours.

This is especially true for company leadership; after all, who would want to work for a boss that is the opposite of benevolent? It's important for leaders to inspire love or loyalty.

Politeness



This virtue closely aligns with benevolence. Ideally, it's the manifestation of one's regard for the feelings of others. Business, more often than not, is a collaborative effort. Without politeness, it is doubtful that an entrepreneur would be able to get far with his or her goals.

This virtue applies to relationships with partners, colleagues, superiors, customers and others not directly involved in one's professional life.

Honesty and Sincerity



Nitobe Inazo, author of *Bushido: The Soul of Japan*, states that, “politeness is a farce and a show” if it lacks sincerity and honesty. The implications of these virtues in business can be both subtle and obvious.

Entrepreneurs who practice honesty and sincerity are more likely to earn the respect of their customers and to nurture trust with those whom they work with.

Honor



The Samurai are characterized as rigidly upholding a sense of honor. Described as a “vivid consciousness of personal worth and dignity”, Samurai were raised to value not just the privileges of their profession but also its moral responsibilities.

Many self-driven entrepreneurs adopt a similar mindset. Looking at one’s skill and responsibilities as blessings is a step in the right direction for anyone looking to get into business.

Loyalty



Homage and fealty to a superior were likewise distinctive features of Samurai. It comes as no surprise that Bushido places heavy importance on this quality. In a corporate context, loyalty applies to both employees and company leaders.

Staying true to one's mission and vision can be difficult at times so loyalty towards your own cause is of paramount importance.

Character and Self-Control



Unlike the business world, there are no negotiations when it comes to Bushido. The code requires warriors to adhere to an absolute moral standard that is not subject to interpretation. Right and wrong are clearly stated.

It may be rigid, but there's no denying that it strengthened the character and self-control of practitioners. Both are essential for succeeding as an entrepreneur.

Constantly adhering to all of these principles requires a good deal of discipline. But as the saying goes, nothing good comes easy and few would dispute Bushido's moral virtue.

Samurai may be a thing of the past but that doesn't mean their influence can no longer be felt. If anything, we should hope their best qualities inform our judgment for generations to come.

Family Values

"For warriors, taking good care of parents is fundamental. If people do not take care their parents, they are not good, even if they are exceptionally smart, well-spoken, and handsome."

The Code of Bushido not only says it's a good idea to care for one's parents, it is essential. The reasoning is that one's parents are like the roots of a tree. A tree without roots withers and dies. Similarly, a human must maintain a good relationship with their parents in order to be a good person. This sense of duty is about appreciation for the care that one's parents gave you as a child.

So, much like the Judeo-Christian ethic of "honor your father and mother", Bushido says, even if grandpa is moody and unreasonable, you still have to take care of him because family is family. Suck it up, buttercup. Family is through thick and thin.

The Code also says employers can find dutiful employees by finding good sons. In other words, the loyalty someone gives to their family proves that they can give loyalty to their employer.

Order and Cleanliness

The Code contains many specific rules about how Samurai are to dress and maintain order in their houses. Military equipment was expensive, and custodianship of swords and armor was an important duty of a warrior.

They were also told to shave every day, keep their clothes clean, keep their hair groomed, etc. Bodily purity has historically been an important Japanese

ethic. Samurai of this time wanted to appear diligent, organized, orderly, and civilized. They were to study a variety of arts, not simply the art of combat. They were expected to behave courteously, or at least, that was the ideal if not always the reality.

However, the most important thing was that Samurai had to be prepared for an emergency crisis, such as assassination attempts or war breaking out. This prescribed order and attention to detail was seen as necessary, or else in an emergency a Samurai could not perform their essential duties.

Not a warrior? Well, everyone should strive for an organized life!

Value of Things

In ancient times, people chose horses as valuable tools for combat. Now, the author is saying, people try to buy untrained or hard-to-break horses and then train them and turn around and sell them at a profit. Think of flipping houses. This is worse than having no interest in horses at all. It reflects a Japanese cultural suspicion of merchants and the mercantile mindset. The Code stresses on things be appreciated for their value, not seen as commodities to be bought and sold.

Women and Marriage

Marriage in Japanese culture was historically a simple matter of one partner living with the other. In this era, wives typically moved in with husbands, and divorce meant sending the wife back to her parents, which was a big disgrace to her. But even though women have little power in this system, the Code argues that the wife is to be honored as "mistress of the house", and that wife abuse is certainly unbecoming of a knight.

Loyal Friendship

When it comes to loyalty to family and friendship, the Code prescribes that one take care to not abandon others during a time of hardship or need. Now, to do this is human nature, but people should try not to, to prove themselves true friends.

Money

The interesting thing here is that the Code prescribes balance between saving and spending. People should not spend too much money on things they don't need, only to end up broke. A lot of people need to learn that. But it also says it's bad to be too afraid of spending money when needed. A Samurai's job is to be ready to give away his "one and only life", so a knight who cannot stand to spend money now and then cannot be trusted to do that, it is reasoned. Cowardice in one area of life usually predicts cowardice in others.

Criticism and Talk

Warriors have less cause to complain, to be "big talkers" or to criticize, as they live their whole lives without ever actually seeing combat. Warriors of the past, he says, had more right to criticize and boast, because they had actually been war heroes. Basically, if you're going to talk the talk, you better earn that right. The Code makes several warnings against lies, gossip, slander, complaining, and abusive language - all of it can come back to bite you!

Contemplation of Death

The Code says that the origin of morality is to contemplate death. The idea is that this won't make you depressed, but it will help you think about your

actions in the bigger picture context of your life and the kind of legacy you want to leave when you die. The idea is that people who contemplate death regularly will be morally superior in their actions, because they have a sure understanding of what kind of person they want to be remembered as.

While there is a lot of advice on the Code of Bushido that is largely just insight into cultural conditions of the past in Japan, there is a lot of advice that is relevant for nearly everyone, even in an era where people don't brandish swords or fight brigands that often.

The Samurai Code

Bushido is the proper term for the Samurai Code. It means "The way of the warrior." The Bushido held restrictions on the Samurai, prohibiting them from doing many things and to live a very honest life. This is not only good for Samurai, but for everyone as it will make each who follows a truer person. There are SEVEN virtues of the Bushido.

1. "Gi"- Integrity. To do the right thing by yourself. A Samurai must be smart in making choices and always chose what is good for the clan. He will make the right choice even if left alone. Practice Gi in everything you do.



2. "Yuuki"- Bravery and courage. To show courage every moment of living, in danger or not.

3. "Jin"- Kindness and compassion. To show everyone kindness and show compassion for all regardless.



	<p>4. "Rei"- Politeness. Politeness is different in Japan, politeness is more than just being kind, its about caring about others, and some say it borders an almost love-like feeling.</p>
<p>5. "Makoto"- Honesty. Be true by the actions you show, and by the words you speak. Follow the laws of the universe and you will become a honest person.</p>	
	<p>6. "Meiyo"- To enjoy the honor. A Samurai must earn honor and enjoy it if he is to satisfy the codes of the Bushido.</p>
<p>7. "Chuugi"- To be loyal. To be trustful, loyal, and show this unconditionally to others.</p>	