



## Essence of Pain

“The Commanding Pain of Control and Respect”

*The Art of controlling an attacker with pain!*

**W**ebster's dictionary defines pain or (*itai* in Japanese) as (1) an unpleasant sensation occurring in varying degrees of severity as a consequence of injury, disease or emotional disorder. (2) A physical or emotional distress or discomfort caused by illness or injury, which signals the nervous system to the brain that something is wrong!  
*In general, pain comes in three forms:*

- 1) Mentally, psychologically and emotionally; it creates feelings of *anguish, sorrow, torment, agony* and *anger*.
- 2) Physically it can feel *sharp, dull, throbbing, aching* and *irritating*. Without pain we are doomed, as it is the alarm that identifies danger. Pain also teaches us discipline and builds character. Talking back to one's mother may earn a father's *Itai* across your ... you-know-what! Sharing the warmth of a blanket to a stranger that is cold can bring about a warm and compassionate heart. Missing out on these experiences may be missing valuable opportunities to learn the true nature of one's self.
- 3) A third type of pain, though physical in nature, makes most other forms of discomfort pale by comparison. This pain I speak of is a "*commanding pain of control and respect*" of obedience delivered by *Tori* (giver) to *Uke* the (receiver)! Through the application of *Te-Waza* (by hand) or *Buki-Waza* (by weapons), pain is applied purposely to specific areas of the body (pressure points, nerves and joints) for the purpose of achieving specific results of control by pain and is understood by only a few, primarily those who practice the martial arts of *Jitsu* or *Jutsu*.

**T**his third type of pain is one that must be felt as an explanation alone is insufficient to be understood. In simple terms, it is; *an intense and excruciating pain that momentarily blocks or short circuits conscious thought to the recipient through correctly applied pressure of nerve, artery and pressure points against a hard surface (bone and or ligament) and others specific parts of the body*. This is the specialty of the *Jujutsu* families and is executed through the knowledge, understanding and science of *Kansetsu-Waza* or joint-locking techniques. Actually, there are two types of locking-techniques ... **leverage** and **joint!** The difference being:

**Leverage-Locking:** A system of restricting or confining a part(s) of the body from movement through the process of leverage applied too, against, over, under or around a muscle and the tendons and ligaments which support a joint! Correct leverage and strength is required to maintain a restrictive hold on *Tori* and most locking applications are executed on the ground. **Note:** The resulting restriction and slight pain, though significant, is bearable and does not interrupt an attacker's train of thought. This means that an attacker, using strength ... may, can and will escape from a leverage lock should the hold not be completely dominant! *Leverage locking is predominantly ... muscle to muscle and strength against strength!* Arm wrestling, a bear hug or headlock, are examples.

*“A crank is worth a thousand pictures”!*

**Joint-Locking:** like a leverage lock, the physics of a fulcrum is used, but the similarity ends there! Joint locks do not require great strength by the defender (*Tori*) as the joint of the attacker (*Uke*) is attacked directly, along with pressure point (ulnar, radial, meridian, sciatic etc) application to nerves and arteries. This produces excruciating pain of such intensity that the attacker is put into temporary shock and at the same time takes away any logical thought. Also at this moment the supporting tissues (muscles, tendons and ligaments) are quickly extended outward due to natural reflexes.

Capture of the joint is then quickly applied, continuing the extension of a joint and it's supporting tissues beyond their normal limitations. This is executed before the attacker has time to recover back to a normal and aggressive posture. When a joint lock is properly executed, strength by the attacker is lost and conscious thought to escape is replaced by a fear to survive. Though no words are spoken, the attacker immediately understands who's in charge! Another unspoken condition is implied: the attacker's brain sends the message, "If I just cooperate the pain will stop". Upon its release, the attacker's emotion of anger or to retaliate is no longer an issue. This level of pain or the "*commanding pain of respect and control*" is again, understood by only a handful of individuals. Until one has been cranked (*tekubi-gaeshi*), there is no true understanding of *Itai*! If ... "A picture is worth a thousand words," then "**A crank is worth a thousand pictures**"! RBM

### *"It Happen to the Biggest & Strongest"*

**T**he above description of joint-locks with pressure points is the pain we seek and attempt to recreate through purpose, which one does by accident. Think about the last time you struck your funny bone, jammed a finger or twisted your ankle. The pain was sharp, shocking, unexpected, immediate, intense and often associated with having a numbing effect. Instantly you probably said something appropriately like "Ouch"! At that moment your mind was void of thought and you were unable to concentrate on continuing your task, stopped what you were doing and waited for the pain to subside! This is what happens under normal and natural conditions when properly applied (*Atemi-waza*) points are struck and *it happens to the biggest and strongest!* Also, this is what pressure points and joint-locking techniques of (*Kansetsu-waza*) is all about; it's the specialty of most Jitsu's and Shobudo in particular. While the possibility of permanent damage to joints and vital organs exists, it is not sought. The philosophy of Shobudo is to teach its practitioners to use what force is necessary to stop a conflict. We prefer to control an attack rather than destroy it, *but the option is available when warranted!*

There is another pain associated with joint-locks that must be avoided. Its that *irritating pain* which when applied, *uke* wants to resist and fight back even when released from a lock or hold. It's a pain which induces anger, revenge and resentment and does not take out the will to fight. *Sankyu* or *Sankajyo* in *Aikido's* 3<sup>rd</sup> wrist-lock plus finger locks are prime examples. If applied incorrectly (squeezing the fingers) it has a pinching, annoying and irritating effect. However, when applied correctly (extending the fingers etc, beyond their extremities), it is sharp, excruciating, immediate and lets *uke* know who's in command! *Sadly to say, this is where the training and learning curve drops!* Though the techniques are the same or similar from *Ryu* to *Ryu*, (school) pain is not a learning experience or a primary involved factor.

### *Itai must be introduced!*

A few thoughts concerning training must be shared here. In the initial stages of executing the many *waza's* required, students will go along with a technique in an effort to assist their partner in the learning process. This is necessary for learning and also to avoid injury. Eventually however, the student must be introduced to *Itai* and its tolerance must also be increased in proportions to proficiency. *Uke* must understand that when applied properly, a technique (no matter what direction is taken) allows for no escape and is commandingly painful. By experiencing this taught concept and applying it in practice, one will understand its importance and will be capable of correctly applying it to their partner, knowing that a subject is in controlled *Itai*. In reality, ***an attacker will not give you a second chance!***

### *An inward calm & peace:*

**U**nlike many martial arts available today, Shobudo Bujitsu is strictly a self-defensive art. There are no divisions separating junior from senior or men from women with rules of restrictions or height and weight classifications. Well-applied technique is our great equalizer *for an attacker cares not your physical make up!* We train early in *Kansetsu-waza* and religiously exercise our wrist in order to prepare us for the painful regimen that is our art. This builds a tolerance level required for advanced and compound techniques, which also develops strength, power, *Ki* and flexibility. When perfected, (Dan levels), "Commanding Pain" will come on and off to its extreme limits, like a light switch just short of the point of injury. This high level of proficiency cannot be learned over night or through books and videos. Unseen and not felt, there are many detailed and fine points (angles, degrees, and direction changes) that make up a technique. Only time on the "mat" can teach that ... along with practice, practice and perfect practice until its execution is performed without thought, or *Mushin-No-Shin*. Through regular exposure to well-controlled pain, we develop a sense of *inward calm and peace*. It is an intricate element that is expected and accepted, and *its absence is regarded as a disappointment!*

This also applies in the use of common everyday items for self-defense (unique only to Shobudo) in the use and application of the *Mijikai Shaku-Bo*. Proficiency can only be obtained through constant and continued training. *Shodan* is not the end of one's knowledge, only the beginning as you will never stop learning a Martial Art or the Martial Way.

**T**he bottom line and point to all this, is ... if you're not being taught and trained in *Itai* (not torturous or irritating pain), but "Commanding and Controlled Pain", you are being cheated from learning REALITY! Not experiencing take down and lock through pain, you will never know or have an attacker under control. The justice system of giving one a slap on the wrist is not a deterrent. A severe sprain or break to the wrist may have one thinking twice! As pain comes in many forms, so does crime and it will find you when you least expect it! *When it happens you will probably be on your own, and ... alone.* For this reason you must be prepared and remember the good book ... "it's **better to give than to receive**"!



尚  
武  
道

Respectfully  
In Itai,

Robert Morton  
Kaicho

*Shobudo Bujitsu Kai*