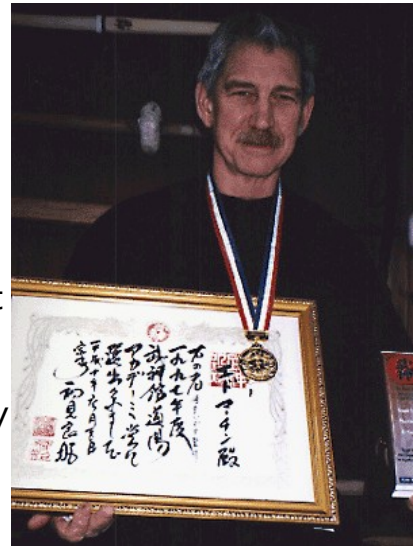


Ed Martin

## When Something is not Right

How do we handle the situations we face in life when the situation just isn't "right"? I've seen many people just run away, leave and take no steps to bring about change. That is one way of handling the situation, but what has been changed? Nothing! All that accomplishes is to leave the problem to grow and the injustice to hurt many others. If we really did live only within our own skins, if we really didn't need other people for a quality life, then that may be a valid choice. A choice of non-action. We, however, do need others! The well-being of other people has a direct affect on our well-being. Without them the quality of our life is seriously damaged. Just try to live without contact to any other human or without that which was made by another human. You will see that even if you can stay alive, which is quite a skill in itself, your quality of life will be non-existent. You will be struggling just to have enough food and sufficient shelter to stay alive. Simply, we must realize that we do need others, their well-being is our well-being. Only when they abrogate this need by their unacceptable choices to hurt their fellow humans do we "get rid" of them by putting them in jail or terminating their life.



The choice then to "run away" from a problem is a very poor choice. It is far better to face the problem and seek a solution. If in seeking the solution we bring others into the task of solving the problem, we have the very best of human community. We have cooperation. There are times when a person just cannot do it themselves. I myself have been in such a situation, without the aid of others my life would have ended. Whether or not we as individuals recognize it, we have ALL been in such situations. What if the technician who produced the brakes on your car had done a substandard job? The brakes would fail just when you needed them most. Consider the "rules of driving" and what happens when those standards of behavior are violated. We depend on others acting in an acceptable way in order for us all to live in proximity to each other. We depend on each contributing their skills to the common pool of human needs.

In the martial arts there will always be those who do not understand this principle of cooperation. There will be those who seek to use others without any concern for their well-being. What is the most effective way of "handling" these unjust and unfair situations? We might do as the Amish do for those of their community that violate the communities' mores, "shun" them. Well maybe not to the extent that the Amish do but at least the student should begin voting with his/her feet. Leave, find someone else to train with. An isolated human is a vulnerable human. Dr. Hatsumi emphasized that "a good heart" was an important part of his requirements for sho-dan. A good heart I believe, refers to just this understanding, recognizing and respecting the rights and well-being of others. The willingness to work together for the common good. Those that won't, no matter what their rank or claims of expertise,

should be isolated and left to wallow in the world they created for themselves.  
Individually anyone is vulnerable, together we are strong.