

PITTSBURGH BUJINKAN DOJO

12 SECRETS OF THE MASTERS



Seek genuine instruction: For centuries personal transmission has been at the core of our instruction. A good teacher will help you understand the purpose of training, correct mistakes, and guide your development.

Write out a schedule: A schedule can organize time. Writing it manifests your goals into reality. Always start with kihon. Some call these basics, but a better translation is foundation. A strong fortress requires a solid foundation.

Set goals: Not all goals need to be impossible. If a technique seems impossible at present, break it down into smaller components. Continue your attempts. Have persistence.

Concentrate: You can do more in 10 minutes of focused practice than in an hour of complaining. Concentrated effort takes practice, especially in our modern society.

Relax and practice slowly: Breathe. If you're breathing you're alive. If you're alive you can fight. Speed will come.

Practice difficult things longer: Confront your shortcomings; spend more time practicing what you find difficult. This is the path to improvement.

Practice with intent: Our conduct and demeanor establish our being. Do everything with proper attitude. Be in the moment.

Learn from your mistakes: Ever touch a hot stove or fire? You learned never to repeat that mistake. Those lessons are different than learning a skill. Failure leads to growth if you get up, analyze what went wrong and keep going.

Don't show off: It's hard to resist showing off when you can do something well. But if you're training for praise or accolades, that's the only treasure you will receive.

Think for yourself: Violence is high-speed problem-solving. Surviving ultimately depends on your ability to solve problems. Training drills are memory techniques the ancients used to pass on knowledge. Know when to break the form.

Have Hope: Optimism allows you to overcome mistakes. It also fosters your endurance. A positive attitude convinces you that progress is happening.

Relationships, Relationships, Relationships: If you develop the discipline it takes to become good at budo, that discipline manifests in other areas of your life. Training may build muscles, but it's really building a better version of you.

Inspired by Wynton Marsalis' Woodshed Guide for Musicians, 1996.

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