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An invitation to study Budo for the disabled – Is Budo good for the disabled? Is Budo for the disabled good for Budo?

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Abstract

Nowadays, a majority of people thinks that a person with disabilities can practice Budo. However most people believe that Budo teachers have to prepare some special care and overall privilege for the disabled students. Indeed it may be so, but it should not be a matter that burdens the Budo instructor: through practicing with the disabled persons the teacher becomes aware of the original intention of Budo techniques. The body movements of Budo were made for actual battlefield combat, in ancient Japan. This means that Budo had, since it originated, been an open system for persons with disabilities. Indeed, Samurai had to think about how to fight after receiving injuries on the battlefields. From that point of view, we are confident that we can share the Budo training methods with disabled people and others. For instance, the coaching methods used for the mentally challenged can be benefic for the beginners and the elderlies as well.

I have collected many testimonies from disabled participants regarding the rehabilitative benefits of Budo practice. However I could not get scientific evidence through the comparison of two large groups of disabled - those who practiced Budo and those who did not. The main reason is there are only a few people with disabilities who practice Budo. In order to increase the number of disabled people practicing Budo, I would like to invite you to consider this research field. There is such a wide range of symptoms, conditions, or needs, even for people who suffer from the same disability. This makes designing large studies (which usually require a certain homogeneity) practically impossible. Therefore, this field is very rich in term of study possibilities. There are many opportunities for single case studies and they all help forge the future of the disabled and Budo.

Keywords: body movements • injuries • rehabilitative benefits

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