

**HKF Weapons Intensive:  
Shunyata/Shunya -Takegiri  
Saturday, July 17, 2010  
C. Curtis**

Good morning. When we were training with Shinichi Tohei Sensei recently in Boulder, the theme of the seminar was "What and How." He mentioned that people tend to get confused about what it is that we are doing, and how to do it. So I am going to add a little more to that subject this morning and hopefully not confuse you further, but throw some light on it.

You can see that I wrote some words on this board here, words you are very familiar with: Suzuki Sensei's four basic principles; So What, Do Nothing, Be Natural, and Don't Worry, Be Happy. And these correspond directly, quite precisely actually, with Koichi Tohei Sensei's Four Basic Principles; One Point, Completely Relaxed, Weight is Underside, and Ki Extends. I did write them a little differently here than you are used to seeing them. Normally we say Keep One Point, Relax Completely, Keep Weight Underside, and Extend Ki. I hope that, as I explain this, you will see why I wrote them a little differently.

So I want to ask you to help me here. If we look at So What and then One Point, which correspond, what would you say should go in a third column, expressing this in today's colloquial language?

(Here someone comes in late) Dave, come on the mat. You were late last night. Why is that?

*Student: I had to go back into the house for something.*

That happens to me all the time. Sometimes I have to drive back to my office and get my phone, or some notes, or a drawing. And the older you get the more that will happen. So what's the solution? When you know something like that is likely to happen, and you still want to get somewhere on time, you leave earlier. Hello? But when you are in denial about your absent-mindedness, you think, "I'll just leave on time, no problem." And then, "Oh, I forgot the thing. This never happens to me." And then you are late. So...two days in a row? Leave earlier.

So, I was explaining last night what this So What means. What does this mean?

*Student: Let things be?*

OK. When we have a challenge, what's the danger of that challenge?

*Student: That it will disturb us.*

That it will disturb us. That it affects us in a disturbing way. So can we say No

Disturbance here? Let's try.

*Student: How does No Disturbance relate to One Point?*

Maybe this will help. One time I was teaching in Holland and we were doing the Q & A at the end of the seminar. One of the students there is both an Aikido player and a Judo player. And so he asked me, "Sensei, can you help me? I figure I should be able to take something from Aikido to my Judo training. What is it?" I said, "Keep One Point. What's the danger when you are a Judo player?" And he said, "Becoming disturbed." "Oh, well then just Keep One Point." Keep One Point just means No Disturbance. It means this One Point just doesn't come up to the upper body. When you challenge me and I react by taking a quick breath and my chest comes up, where is my One Point? Right up here in my chest. But when I am calm, and not disturbed, So What, my One Point stays down here where it belongs.

Don't forget, these four principles are fundamentally no different than each other. But there is a reason why we have four, just like there is a reason why Suzuki Sensei had four. And you are going to see that there is a reason why we are supplying an additional four.

*Student: I was thinking that it would be more like Awareness.*

Yes, well probably it was the thinking part of your sentence that caused the problem. You were thinking. Look, there's thinking and there's thinking. There's thinking that leads away from what we already know, and there's thinking that leads us to what we already know. Every one of you already knows what I am going to show you today. There's really nothing to "know," in terms of knowledge. But all of you know in your gut every thing we are going to learn today. Today we are practicing *Takegiri*, bamboo cutting. And when you are done cutting the bamboo, you will know that you know it, I hope. That's why we are doing this practice. But if you begin trying to figure this out, then that's of course the danger of all this kind of spread. This is a big conceptual meal here, see. Don't over eat. Don't try to figure it out. Let's lay it all out, and I am going to ask you to help me do it, because I do want you to try to see what is the relationship here. Why did Suzuki Sensei say that these four are the same as these four?

OK, please allow me, give me the benefit of the doubt, and allow me to leave the No Disturbance there for now.

Number two: Do Nothing which relates to Complete Relaxation. What shall we put here?

*Student: No tension?*

No tension. What makes us want to do something, to make something happen? What, in us, makes us want to change something, to do something to make something different?

*Student: Our ego?*

OK, our ego.

*Student: What makes us do something is our need to react.*

Yeah, why do we react? What are we going for there? What are we trying to accomplish?

*Student: We want to manipulate?*

We want to manipulate our lives. We want to control what happens in our lives, so they come out making us feel and look good. Anybody doesn't do that here? OK. So we could say here No Control. Do Nothing, Completely Relaxed, No Control.

Number three: Be Natural, Weight Underside, and...? When we are just natural, everything is fine, every atom in our body is naturally resting with its weight underside. How are we, in relation to the world that we experience, when we are like this? Let's say, in relation to something that arises in our life, how do we treat that? When we are completely natural and our weight therefore is completely underside?

*Student: No separation?*

Yes, but that's the forth one. I mean from my point of view it is. Look, they are all interchangeable here. Tracy's right, you can put No Disturbance everywhere here. You can put every one of these everywhere. But there is a reason why I am putting them where I am putting them. You will admit, as I am asking you about this, I am trying to lead you to seeing what I saw when I was sitting this morning so you can see how it all comes together. Remember we started by talking about the What and the How.

*Student: Accept it?*

Exactly. Accept everything. When we are natural and our weight is underside, we Accept Everything.

So let's review:

<u>Suzuki Sensei</u>	<u>Tohei Sensei</u>	<u>Us</u>
So What	One Point	No Disturbance
Do Nothing	Completely Relaxed	No Control
Be Natural	Weight is Underside	Accept Everything
Don't Worry, Be Happy	Ki Extends	No Separation

Why No Separation? Do you see? When Suzuki Sensei says, Don't Worry, Be Happy,

you could say that's just Accepting Everything. Or, when you are very happy, you don't have to Control anything. And certainly you are not Disturbed. You almost have to see Suzuki Sensei say this, Don't Worry, Be Happy in order to see how this is Extend Ki and No Separation.

You know, someone asked Otsuka Sensei, "What is Extend Ki really like?" And he said, "Oh, do you know Suzuki Sensei? When this man walks into a room, the room lights up. That is Extending Ki." It lights up for us when we see Suzuki Sensei because we know that he is not worried and he is happy. That means no trouble for us. We want to hang out with that guy. So this is the same as Extend Ki because it makes no one different than him. It makes no thing different than him. He accepts everything so there is no separation between him and others. Ki Extends. You said to me last night that One Point is everything. So when we Extend Ki, that's like recognizing One Point, or recognizing everything as non-separate. This is Extend Ki.

It is a very beginning level to say that I am extending Ki to you. Shuup! Shooting something from me over to you. No one here still has this idea, right? This is parochial. This is a junior level. It's not wrong. It's OK. And sometimes it is actually quite useful in teaching a technique. When we shift our attention, we move or direct our energy. So this is what we mean by Extend Ki in this beginning way. It's an activity. I shift my attention from Celine to Harry. That's not wrong, I said. Yes, that's Extending Ki. I am Extending Ki here and now I am shifting to you and Extending Ki here. So my attention shifts. So attention, the way we use it in our world, often is like concentration or focusing. And this is limiting. In other words, when I Extend Ki to you I lose every one else in the room.

Actually Extend Ki, when we are talking about it in the real sense, which is why I like correlating it with Don' Worry, Be Happy and No Separation, has a much bigger meaning. Truly Extending Ki, truly using attention, is not exclusive, but inclusive. It means including everything in our world of experience. By this is meant our actual world of experience, not our imagined world of experience. Not the imaginary world out there, which we don't even know exists because we are not experiencing it. The only thing that we can be sure IS, right now, is what we are experiencing. When I go home to Maui, my house may have burned down and it's gone. I imagine it exactly how I left it, walking in, where the cats are and everything else, but that is my imagination. I can't know. It could already be gone and they just haven't called me yet. We don't know what is going on "out there." All you can be sure of is what you are experiencing now in your world of experience. When we say "Extend Ki" it means "No Separation" or "Don't Worry, Be Happy" about that world. And if we are completely in this world of experience we call this Mind/Body Unification.

So when Shinichi Sensei introduced this subject to us, he said the What is Unification, One with the Universe. This is the universe here, which is the universe of your experience, that we are not separate from. We worked on this last night when we shook hands. This is not separate from any aspect of the world you are experiencing. As soon as you separate yourself from one aspect of it by turning away, you separate yourself from all aspects of it. As soon as you are separate, you are separate. You are not unified. You can't break it up into bits. It's all or nothing, folks. Right? So that's the

What.

The How, according to Shinichi Tohei Sensei, is the Four Basic Principles. Now, Tracy Reasoner said something very interesting to me yesterday, which I will share with you. He said, "But wait a minute. You can't Keep One Point, if you are not Unified. You can't relax, experience weight underside, or Ki extending, unless you are already unified. So how is that the How?" Can anybody help Tracy out here?

*Student: When you think about it you are actually trying to do it.*

Ah, yes. I said I was going to explain why I wrote the Four Basic Principles this way: One Point, Completely Relaxed, Weight is Underside, Ki Extends. This is inactive. These are not prescriptions. They are not telling you what to do. They are descriptions. If you have Mind/Body Unification, you will experience One Point, you will experience Complete Relaxation, you will experience Weight Underside, and you will experience that Ki is Extended. So, that sounds an awful lot like Unification and Four Basic Principles are both What. So, if that is the case, then what is the How?

*Student: Something to do with being able to recognize it?*

Can you recognize something that is not occurring to you?

*Student: Are you saying we don't have those conditions?*

No, no. We always have Mind/Body Unification. Mind and body are originally one. We always have Mind/Body Unification, it's just that we don't experience it. These four principles are descriptions of experiencing it.

*Student: Wouldn't the How be what you have been teaching about "Showing up, opening, serving, and accepting?"*

Yes, exactly right. Would you summarize that a little bit for us?

*Student: Well, what I was saying is, if you have been following the podcasts on curtissensei.com, he's been going over awareness. First you have to show up, then you have to be completely open, serve what is true, and then accept the results. So that would actually be the How.*

Does that ring a bell with anyone here? Do you all know what he is talking about? What everybody is really saying is that you have to recognize it. No matter what is going on, if you are not participating in that consciously, then it may as well not be happening. So how do you recognize it?

Well first you show up. If you are not here, you are not going to recognize it. You open your eyes, your senses, your mind, your heart, you open fearlessly to whatever will happen. This is faith. You just open. No fear, no worries. And number three, you

follow along and serve whatever is happening. You serve the moment without reservation. Right? Because the moment is continuing. It's moving and it's changing and you never know what is going to come next, what he is going to say, what he is going to try to do. You don't know. In a physical sense we practice this in *randori*. We don't know what's coming next. We are just always present and aware, right? So life is *randori*. Every moment of living life is *randori*. You don't know what's going to come next, so you are present in that and are serving that. And then number four is accept the results of whatever it is that happens, again, without reservation. And then you're back to number one. If you accept the results of what happened, and then you stop and think for a minute, "Oh, that was lovely. I did a really good job there." You aren't showing up for the next moment and you are already dead in your tracks.

*Student: So this is just like being fully present in the moment.*

Yes, just like that.

OK, so we have many different ways of talking about this. But from my way of seeing things, it's very difficult to pin down the What and the How. The What and the How are so integrally related. And that's still making two of them to even say that! Very dangerous. Can you see where I am going with this? So that's why I wanted to do this, so that you could see this from a little different perspective. And I'm so glad you brought up those four aspects of practice.

But what Suzuki Sensei says here, and what Tohei Sensei says here, and what we have said here, are all four ways to be, and they are all experiences of being. It's not necessarily something to do, which is what it sounds like when you say "Keep One Point." OK, Keep One Point. Are you keeping it? Have you got it? Now keep it! I don't think so. As soon as you try to Keep One Point, you isolate it and you make it separate from everything else. That's not Keeping One Point. Keeping One Point is the way you already were before you were born, before you started thinking all of this nonsense.

*Student: Well Sensei, it sounds like you are saying it already is, and our thinking is taking it away from us.*

That's correct. Our thinking, our everything. All the things we get involved in as a human being, tend to take us away. That doesn't mean that thinking is wrong or any of those other things are wrong, but that when we are engaged in any aspect of our lives, which let's admit is always changing and unpredictable, we experience the Four Basic Principles. In other words, we experience this unification.

They made this wonderful film in Japan called "Empty Mind." It's a documentary. Do you know this? It is a series of interviews with many different martial artists in Japan, as well as some Zen and other spiritual teachers. There are a lot of different approaches there, but every single one of them, when interviewed, comes up with empty mind. So what does "empty mind" really mean? Would you please make your mind empty now?

Can you do that? Can anyone do this? What does that mean, empty mind?

*Student: No separation?*

OK. What else?

*Student: Being truly in the moment.*

How is that empty? Wouldn't that be full?

*Student: Being open.*

*Student: Not adding anything to what is already there.*

*Student: You can do something without thinking about it.*

That's definitely what they are talking about in this movie. What else?

*Student: No judgment.*

No judgment. This is thrilling. What else? We have this phrase "*Shunyata/Shunya*." Ever heard that phrase before?

*Student: Yeah, it's on your Facebook page.*

It's on my Facebook page? Oh, that's right, it is. You know on Facebook, in your profile, they ask for your religion. I wrote *Shunyata/shunya* is my religion. So this is important to me. Thank you for reminding me how important it is.

My first awakening in this life-time was into *Shunyata/Shunya*. This was the first real experience I had. I thought I had finished everything then. I didn't know that this was just the beginning. OK? What is this, do you know? It is Sanskrit. It means "empty/full." It is all those things you folks said. You are all right. Literally it translates as empty/full. And when I had this experience I was sitting in my friends' home, he was sleeping on the floor and his wife was on the couch across the room, and I was sitting on a chair, she was nodding off and I was just sitting there. And uh....I can't tell you. I can't say. You know the problem with me telling you is that I am telling you my memory of the experience, which is not the experience. What happened is I was experiencing my body sitting in the chair, and then my sense of myself began to expand until it filled the whole universe of my experience, the whole universe that I knew at that moment. And then I saw that there was nothing in that universe, no thing separate from another. I heard a teacher say once that emptiness means exactly this that we experience, but with no borders, no boundaries drawn around each thing. No separation. No separation means no borders. And even today, forty years later, when I even mention this experience, immediately the more crystal clear you become. My sensual experience of you here, my visual experience for instance, almost becomes what you

could call psychedelic. The more you drop into *Shunyata/Shunya*, the more clear and vibrant everything is. So it is not a denial in any way of anything. It's not saying that something isn't.

I think the bottom line here is that we want to remember that when we talk about states of being and we talk about rules or approaches or practices, we have to take it very lightly and be careful. Because you can grind away on some kind of practice, you can work at something, and just get further and further away from it. You have to recognize how to work. We are going to do some Ki Breathing this morning, and so this is a prelude to that. We have to understand how to do a practice without disturbing ourselves, without trying to control it. Accepting it just for what it is, not making it very special and not making ourselves separate from the experience, separate from the exercise, which means self doing something which is subject/object, which is separation.

OK. Thank you.