

# The Way of the Sword

## *Basics I.*

### **Holding the Sword -Proper grip**

Left hand rests at the base of hilt

Hands are one fist apart

Right hand rest right behind the hand guard or suba

Both hands are rung inward and placed on the hilt from the top

*Don't grip from underneath*

*Don't place right hand too far up the sword or extend index finger.*

### **Proper Stance – Kamai (integration of mind, body and spirit)**

- Proper breathing- breathe in through the nose and out through the mouth
- Don't only think about the swords tip. When we are relaxed our thought concentration and energy move through the sword and flow out the swords tip to infinity.
- The sword forms a connection, an energy bridge between on person's center and another. Having established this bridge one closes off an opponent's opportunity for attack.
- Proper Kamai leads to control of the sword. When deflected, the sword quickly and naturally returns to center
- The power through the sword originates with a strong center. With a strong center one is very stable
- Proper Kamai -knees relaxed, shoulders and arms are relaxed and there is a clean strong focus.

### **Five Basic Kamai**

1. Segan – tip is pointed at throat
2. Gedan - lower
3. Haso Jodan -
4. Haso Gyaku - Reverse haso
5. Haso Gedan

### **Suburi Tanden Ho**– Suburi are basic, uncomplicated sword movements

1. Shomen suburi – weight of entire body moves with the strike
  - a. The sword, the body, the mind and the spirit all move together
  - b. Ones energy harmonizes with the movement of the sword

- c. Being razor sharp, the sword cuts, it does not hit or chop (weight of the sword is used in the cut)
  - d. If the sword blade deviates too greatly from vertical it cannot cut
  - e. The swordsman should observe and respect the sword's line
  - f. The beginning of the cut must always be relaxed and extended like casting a fishing line
  - g. At the top of the strike the sword extends out, its power moving through it
  - h. The body follows the cut down naturally
  - i. The sword, shoulders and the hips all stop together
2. Samurai wore helmets and could not raise their swords over head. Old style suburi the sword is brought to the side of the head and the cut is diagonal
  3. Yokomen and Guard (block)
  4. Tsuki and Shomen
  5. Haso Gaidan and Reverse Haso
  6. Haso cuts diagonally downward and reverses the blade and then cuts upward

### **Paired Practice**

Develops one's ability to focus and harmonize with an opponent's movement

<b>Partner 1</b>	<b>Partner 2</b>
Shoman <i>alternate</i>	Shomen
Haso jodan , haso gyaku (diagonal cuts) <i>Start with haso gedan</i>	Shomen
Looping : -haso gedan and haso jodan -haso gedan and haso gyaku (strikes four times for every two shomen)	Shomen
Tsuki, rebound defensively <i>alternating</i>	Tsuki, rebound
Deflection not true strike <i>alternate</i>	Deflection not true strike
Yokomen, block <i>Same time</i>	Yokomen, block
Same as above but alternate	
Three Yokomen loops on one side and then alternate	Shomen