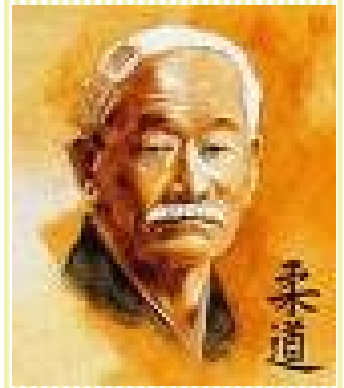




The Judo Compass

March 2012



Judo as Ikebana



The path, the "do", the way, can seem sometimes rough, gnarled, and twisted. Life presents challenges, rewards, disappointments, successes, hardships and tragedies, pleasures and happiness. Sometimes, we only see the gnarled branch. Other times, the flowers and their buds about to blossom garner our attention.



Judo is like that, as well. What can be said below about *Ikebana* works for judo, and it is possible to substitute "judo" and other words that fit.

Ikebana is the Japanese art of arranging cut stems, leaves, and flowers in vases and other containers into beautiful patterns. *Ikebana* evolved in Japan over seven centuries. To arrange the stems and flowers exactly to suit ones artistic intent, a familiarity with many different ways of fastening and positioning them is necessary. People attend *Ikebana* classes to learn, and artisans and *Ikebana* masters spend a lifetime in the endeavor. Usually, three to five years are required to minimally acquire these technical and expressive skills.

Seven hundred years of evolution has developed many different styles of arrangement. Among the most common are the *rikka* (standing flowers), *seika* or *shoka* (living flowers), and *nageire* (flung flowers) styles when making arrangements in bowl-shaped vases and the *moribana* (piled-up flowers) style when using dish-like containers.

The above was paraphrased from: <http://web-japan.org/kidsweb>

The more one sees the flowers, absorbs their beauty, the more the journey is valued. Judo training can be like that.



I believe, this *Ikebana* is like life's struggles, seemingly rough and gnarled, with highs and lows, always endeavoring to reach upward. At certain points, beauty blooms, irrefutable and worth all the rest.



The *Judo Compass* is conceived, written and sent by Tom Crone. www.northstarjudo.com

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