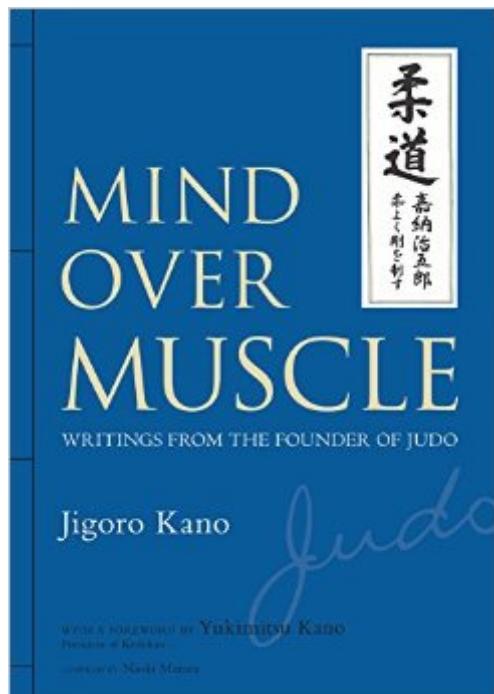


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Mind Over Muscle: Writings From The Founder Of Judo



Synopsis

In 1882 Jigoro Kano (1860-1938) founded Kodokan Judo at Eishoji Temple in Tokyo. It was the culmination of a lifelong devotion to the jujutsu of the past, which he reorganized while taking great care to retain its classical traditions. Historically, martial arts were practiced only by the elite in Japan. Kano, a renowned educator as well as a sportsman, is credited with popularizing the martial arts, and in particular, judo, among people in all levels of society. When he was young, Kano studied jujutsu, a martial art practiced in Japan since feudal times, which involved throwing, hitting, kicking, stabbing, slashing, choking, bending and twisting limbs-and defenses against these attacks. After years of studying, he realized that although many different jujutsu techniques were taught, there was no one core value holding them together. Kano identified an all-pervasive principle- to make the most efficient use of mental and physical energy-and combined only those techniques in which this principle was correctly applied into modern judo. "Ju" means gentleness or giving way. "Do" means principle or the way. Judo, therefore is the Way of Gentleness, which implies that first giving way leads to ultimate victory. The Kodokan is literally, "the school for studying the Way." This book is a collection of Kano's essential teachings, selected and compiled from his wealth of writings and lectures spanning a period of fifty-one years. Today the International Judo Federation has 187 member countries and regions. As an official sport of the Olympic Games, judo has inspired young people of all nationalities, and Kodokan is universally recognized as the Mecca of Judo.

Book Information

Hardcover: 160 pages

Publisher: Kodansha USA; 1 edition (April 26, 2013)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1568364970

ISBN-13: 978-1568364971

Product Dimensions: 7.5 x 0.8 x 5.2 inches

Shipping Weight: 9.6 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.7 out of 5 starsÂ Â See all reviewsÂ (28 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #265,553 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #470 inÂ Books > Sports & Outdoors > Miscellaneous > History of Sports #634 inÂ Books > Sports & Outdoors > Individual Sports > Martial Arts #4017 inÂ Books > Health, Fitness & Dieting > Exercise & Fitness

Customer Reviews

Jigoro Kano did far more than simply found the art of judo. By reorienting martial arts and infusing

them with a philosophy consistent with modern, Westernized Japan, he allowed the martial arts not only to survive but to flourish after the Meiji Restoration of 1868. MIND OVER MUSCLE provides an explanation and discussion of this philosophy as well as its applications to areas of life outside of the dojo. It is a necessary read for anyone interested in the theory behind modern martial arts and my high rank is based on the exposition of this philosophy, not on whether I personally agree with every word and idea. The book has three chapters. The first chapter discusses the development of judo as it evolved out of jujutsu. The major focus of Kodokan judo is that it is not only a fighting method but also a method for physical education and mental training, including intellectual and moral development. A practitioner does not merely imitate the movements of the instructor. Rather, one considers the methods and trains in accordance with detailed principles. The second chapter explores the spirit of judo and it is here that the basic principle of judo is introduced. This is seiryoku saizen katsuyo (shortened to seiryoku zenyo) which means to make the best use of one's energy. One achieves the best results by putting one's energy to work rationally. This concept subsumed the jujutsu principle of softness controls hardness, which may be consistent with the principle of making the best use of one's energy, but may not in certain circumstances. Kano continues by applying judo's main principle to physical education, intellectual training and moral development. The third chapter discusses judo training.

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