



The 2018 Gi Yu Dojo Atlanta Workshop:

By: Bryan Strait Mu Kyu Gi Yu Honbu Dojo 11/18

“Opportunity, Friendship, Growth and Reflection”



Foreword: I would like to thank Sukh Sandhu Sensei, WS Sensei, all my Sempais, all fellow students and my wife and family for the opportunity to train, learn, grow and be a part of the Gi Yu Dojo family. My respect, thankfulness, and reverence for Sukh Sensei, WS Sensei, the Gi Yu Dojo Atlanta and Dayton family exceeds my literary expression of thanks. Participating in this workshop, all the annual seminars, weekly training, and learning from all of you over the past few years and from those who walked the path before us has been a gift and true honor. In this paper, I hope to offer encouragement to fellow students and prospective students by the positive experiences I have had training and at the Atlanta workshop as a new Gi Yu Kyo Kai Dojo student.

Opportunity: The 2018 Atlanta Workshop was an impressive training experience. This rare opportunity presented a feeling of an overwhelming gravity consisting of wisdom, knowledge and techniques passed along to us from Sukh Sensei and many of the Sensei before us. Experiencing this event presented a unique opportunity to not only learn and train but, to *feel* the years of wisdom passed down to us through our pursuit of this Budo. As this was an immersion of training over a full weekend of training, the workshop provided a truly unique experience of martial arts, one of which I couldn't have experienced by just individual training or studying alone.



The workshop focused on Togakure Ryu Ninpo Taijutsu and Jinen Ryu Nitojutsu. The workshop provided a chance to practice using a shuko in conjunction with basic disarmed techniques we've studied in the past at the Honbu Dojo. It also provided a great opportunity to train using two swords in situations with multiple attackers. For many of us, this was the first opportunity to train with the shuko or handling two swords. Handling these weapons offered a new perspective and appreciation of the time and effort required of those swordsmen to master the arts of combat with dual swords and multiple attackers.



Sensei's training conducted outdoors was well suited for learning techniques from the Jinen Ryu (school of nature). Training in the elements of nature offered a unique perspective to the training. There were many external stimulators present which forced us to focus more deeply in our movement, positioning and technique. Each of us learned to perceive how the direction of the sun, shadows and the rain affected how we conduct and receive techniques in this dynamic environment. Training on uneven ground and within the vicinity of the homes of *Solenopsis invicta* (fire ants) offered a new perspective of Kuria Dori and forced us to keep awareness of foot positioning throughout the training session. Throughout training, Sukh Sensei's approach to training these techniques focused on awareness, attention to movements, flow and repetition.



Training with WS Sensei and our fellow students of the Atlanta dojo was a great opportunity to experience training with different Ukes of different levels, size, and capability. It offered a fresh

perspective on my own training by exchanging ideas with those who have or had challenges accomplishing techniques. I look forward to the opportunity to training again with the WS Sensei and the Atlanta Gi Yu Dojo in future seminars and workshops.



Friendship: The Atlanta workshop was an amazing opportunity to spend time with our fellow Atlanta Gi Yu Dojo students. WS Sensei and his family's gracious offering to host and allow the Dayton students to train for the weekend, provided a chance to enjoy time with fellow students and build new friendships outside of the training sessions. There was a pleasant dose of insightful conversation, laughing, playing cards, watching football, helping with homework, discussing techniques, attending Mass, covert nerf gun war operations, stories of workshops/seminars/training and history of events that formed what the Gi Yu Dojo is today. Sukh Sensei, WS Sensei, Chris Sempai and Mrs. Bumgarner cooked five-star-worthy meals and deserts for all of us all weekend. Even the trips to and from Atlanta were memorable, filled with great stories and deep topics and conversation. These many moments of conversations, fun and friendships I certainly will not soon forget.



Growth: The Gi Yu Dojo has nurtured a new personal perspective and understanding of my (our) own warrior spirit. The warrior spirit: a concept which is seen as dated or sometimes conflicting with modern day perspectives, yet it gives us strength to overcome physical, mental and spiritual obstacles in life. The wisdom we receive from training, Sensei and from fellow students has helped my perception and awareness of my personal (sometimes overt and subtle) weaknesses. This has allowed me to address and improve many personal mental and physical weaknesses in a direct, honest and constructive manner for myself.

Reflection: The Gi Yu Dojo has provided an invaluable opportunity to train and grow by studying Budo and the lineages of The Gi Yu Dojo. The workshop, weekly training and seminars have presented a new perspective of who I am in the great scope of the universe. My physical and mental self and situational awareness has continually grown as I continue to train. As a mu (white belt) student, training and testing over the past year has far exceeded my original expectations of growing in self-defense techniques, improving my physical fitness, balance and controlled strength. I am continually humbled by Sensei and fellow students' endless selflessness and offering to help each other improve.

Sensei's method to teaching often correlates to how the training we conduct in the dojo applies to our personal lives. This is a huge benefit that often times in many other martial arts schools is lost. These lessons and pearls of wisdom are not thought of by many martial arts students. This goes beyond physical training and learning techniques. It is this training, to which many of us with the desire to become better men and women to our families, society and in our individual faiths, collectively benefit and grow. It is for this reason, the opportunity to study Budo under Sukh Sensei and with the students at the Gi Yu Dojo, has been a unique and true source of personal growth.

May we all find wisdom in training.

