

# SAMURAI DAYORI

These are words from my calligraphy master to all of her students. I thought this message holds true for anybody who is leaning anything, including martial arts.

Ohashi sensei has the same opinion. He thinks it is good to know that the mental attitude is same whatever you study. That is the reason I introduce this message on this newsletter.

You can replace the specific references to calligraphy to whatever you study.

“Many people don’t think back to the old days when their skill became higher, but at some point you realize how difficult the basics are. It means you develop having an eye. On the other hand, if beginners think the basics are too difficult and they can’t do it, their eyes and mind are closed. They have an illusion that they could write beautiful letters soon without giving themselves plenty of time to practice each single line of one letter. The important thing is to develop your eyes to watch carefully the copy your teacher writes for you. On one line in a letter there are fat and thin parts, straight parts and curved parts. All these parts make one letter. If you don’t pay attention to each small part, you won’t be better even if you practice 100 times. Do not think you can write good shaped letters from the beginning. Even if you can’t write good-looking letters now, if you keep practicing with care all the small details, you certainly will become better.

When you write calligraphy, tell yourself “I can do it” strongly. After you’ve finished, step back and look again at what you wrote carefully and modestly. You will find what you need to study more. People who write without confidence and don’t search their conscience will never be better. Please believe in yourself and keep practicing. You will be a good artist.”



“ga shou”  
A Happy New Year

## Q. What is the meaning of ‘DAYORI’?

A. Original Japanese word is ‘TAYORI’. It means a letter, news or an information.

TAYORI’s first ‘TA’ turns to ‘DA’ when another word comes to front of it.

## MUKUSHIN-RYU MEDITATION

*Tachi-Zen* (tachi means standing)

Keep standing under a big old tree in the night. If you could clear and empty your mind and become a part of nature completely, you would hear the tree sucking up water from the ground.

Ohashi sensei’s experience---- There is a tree called “a thousand-year-old cedar” in the precinct of a shrine in *Obama*. “This is the one”, he thought. He went there to try *Tachi-Zen* one night. He was walking in the precinct of that shrine with his sword. Was he successful in his meditation? The police found him. They set him free after his explanation.

The police found him twice. He also chased a guy trying to steal money from *Saisen-bako* once. (It is a box at a shrine that people throw coins into when they make wishes.)

Ohashi sensei’s advice---- You are better off not walking around with a sword in the middle of night. If you would like to try *Tachi-zen*, find a place no one can see you or do it in your backyard...but it has to be under a big old tree.

## ABOUT JAPANESE SWORDS

Real Japanese swords (*nihon-tou*) return to their original shapes after while when they are bent.

Keep the blade in *Saya* if the bend is not too bad and the sword can be insert *Saya* by force. If it is not possible, leave it without *Saya* until it returns to the shape enough to put back into *Saya*.

## RECOMMENDED MOVIE

*Twilight Samurai* starring --*Sanada Hirokyu*

You can see the real life of lower rank samurai and great movement of *Toda-ryu Kodachi*(short sword) techniques.

*Sanada Hirokyu* played in *Last Samurai*. Since he was young, he was one of the most popular action actor in Japan. His martial arts skill is great.

This movie was recommended by *Ohashi Sensei* too.

## INTERESTING FACTS

It took three generations to complete the construction of *Edo* castle. First *Tokugawa* shogun *Ieyasu* started to built it 1592 and Third shogun *Iemitsu* finished it 1638. When *Ieyasu* started this construction he wasn’t shogun and *Edo*(*Tokyo* now) wasn’t capital of Japan yet.

The building for government and Shogun’s living area is called *Honmaru-goten*. There is a note on the floor plan of that area. It says: From April 1st to September 9th no *Tabi*

From September 10th need to wear *Tabi*

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## Q. I would like to know about the time Mongol attacked Japan.

A. In the 1268, 1271 and 1274 the Mongol emperor of China, Kublai Khan, sent envoys to Japan with demands for the payment of tribute. The Japanese imperial court was going to accept this because China was a great country and worthy of respect. But a regent\* of *Kamakura Bakufu* (*Samurai* government), *Houjou Tokimune* refused those demands by the advice of Chinese priests who escaped China. *Samurai* society welcomed them, especially Zen priests from China, and government was influenced by their opinions. They said Mongolian's plan was to make Japan be a dependent state of Mongol.

The regent *Houjou Tokimune* called all warriors to defend the country. They pitched their camp on northern *Kyuushuu* where closest to Korea.

Meanwhile Kublai Khan ordered the Koreans to build him 900 ships for an invasion of Japan.

In October 1274, Mongols set a sail with 30,000 soldiers and sailors. First they landed *Tsushima* Island, a half way between Korea and *Kyuushuu*, then *Iki* Island. At last they landed *Hakata* Bay in *Kyuushuu*.

When Mongol and Japanese armies met face to face, one young horseman came out from Japanese side and yielded something that Mongolians could not understand, then he shot a whistling arrow, and charged towards the Mongols. He fell under a shower of Mongolian's arrows. To *Samurai* it was a rule that someone must begin a battle by introducing himself (his name, the place he was born and ancestors) and shooting a whistling arrow. But Mongol didn't have such a manner of battles. The different way of the battle gave a hard time to Japanese *Samurai*. The weapons Mongols called "Tetsuhou"\*\*\* scared them. Tetsuhou was iron or ceramic balls filled with gunpowder.

After suffering severe losses, Japanese army retreated inland to the place where they prepared to make a last stand. On the other hand, Mongolian commanders had been shaken by the bravery of *Samurai*. They were afraid to be attacked in the night. They went back to their ships to spend the night. That night heavy rain and storm winds struck the fleet in *Hakata* Bay. The next morning Japanese found no Mongol ships in sight. They had withdrawn with the loss of more than 200 ships.

### EVERYDAY JAPANESE

*Onegai shimasu*---"Please do [something] for me"

Use when you ask something of other person, or when somebody is going to do something for you. If you want to be more polite, add "*Yorosiku*" in front of this. "*Yorosiku onegai shimasu*"

*Arigatou gozaimasu, Arigatou gozaimashita*----"Thank you"  
*Arigatou gozaimashita* is a past sense. You may use both after the things done both. But use only "*gozaimasu*" when somebody just decided to do something for you.

Kublai Khan didn't give up yet. The regent *Houjou Tokimune* ordered to build the defensive wall along the shores of northern *Kyuushuu* to prepare for next Mongol's attack.

In July 1281, 900 ships including new warships built in China headed to Japan again. They were divided in two fleets. One headed to *Iki* Island to fleet. Another one took the same course as the first time, *Tsushima* Island, then *Iki* Island. But they pressed on to *Kyuushuu* without waiting for reinforcements. The troops attempted to land on *Shiga* Island, at the tip of the northern arm of *Hakata* Bay, but met fierce resistance from the soldiers of *Otomo Yasuyori* and *Adachi Morimune*. The Mongols anchored close offshore--only to suffer repeated day and night attacks by Japanese in light craft, who formed daring boarding parties and set many ships on fire.

The fleet moved westwards to *Takeshima* Island and anchored off the Island for their supply and treated their wounds. July was a rainy season in Japan. The hot, wet season. While they were waiting a month for reinforcements on their ships, they lost some 3,000 people by sickness.

In mid-August the fleet stopped at *Iki* Island finally headed to *Kyuushuu*. Japanese force made repeated and damaging attacks on the Mongol's ships throughout the night of 19th and 20th of August. On 22th the typhoon which was known as 'divine wind' \*\*\*struck them.

Another fleet waiting at *Takeshima* Island didn't receive much damage. The Mongol generals demanded to continue this battle. Chinese commanders didn't agree them. Chinese were transferred to a safe ship and returned to China. Thousands of troops, left behind *Takeshima* Island, were hunted down by *Samurai*. All Mongols and Koreans were killed but Chinese.

After this invasion Kublai Khan planned several more attempts but distracted by Chinese and Vietnamese rebellions. His dream of conquest Japan never came true.

\*Around this time there was no *Shougun*.

\*\* *Tetsuhou*---When guns were brought into Japan later, they were called "Teppou". *Tetsuhou* and *Teppou* are very similar in Japanese writing.

\*\*\*Divine wind-- '*Kamikaze*' in Japanese which became famous during World War II. This word had been used in Japan since Mongol attacks.

*In this next letter:*

*Japanese names are written by Japanese way. Family name comes first, then given name.*

*Japanese surnames are written close to Japanese pronunciations and writing, i.e. Noutou instead of Noto or Shougun instead of Hogen.*

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