



Mushin, by Vernon Kitabu Turner

The idea of marital arts was that a person who is working for the good of humanity does not develop an aggressive nature but a peaceful center, and his purpose is to defend, not to attack -- to defend his own body, to defend loved ones, to defend those who are weaker than himself, and never to desire to do harm even to the one who is attacking you, never to allow yourself to become like the evil ones who would destroy you. It's when you've developed that resolve that the spiritual path reveals itself to you and begins to lead you in the right direction. You'll say, "No, I will do no harm to others. I will not be a person who is aggressive and violent. But neither will I sit here and watch someone be destroyed when I know I should reach out and

offer a helping hand." That's exactly what happened with me. When the bullies saw me sitting under a tree or reading a book, for some reason they couldn't stand that, and they'd come over and kick the book out of my hand and fight me. I used to get beat up all the time. So one day I initiated this prayer in which I said, "Teach me how to defend myself." [...] Then I went out in the backyard and I began to work out and practice, believing that I would be led into the right moves and that I would come to understand. And the result of that was that eventually the bullies couldn't defeat me anymore. Now when you take that spiritual path, the action does not come from you. I remember the first time I became aware that my body could move but that I wasn't moving it because when a person threw a punch, my hand blocked it and

threw them, and I didn't even know that move. And then as I began to let go more and more, I found out that the mastery was already there; I just had to get out of the way to let it emerge, to show itself.

Pretty soon I was able to use this as a platform to teach others about spirituality as a practical reality. The Japanese call it "mushin" -- the art of no-mind. That's when there is no conscious attempt to act, and yet you move anyway, when the action comes from such a deep place

that there is no one to take credit for it. The experience of this coexistence -- of this protection that is there within you -- is very powerful, and it reaffirms many of the ancient works and scriptures that say, "He who is within you is greater than he who is in the world." --Vernon Kitabu Turner

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