



March = Improved randori skills. Pick one or some of these and create a practical learning experience for yourself.

1. Kill a Gremlin.
Find a persistent gremlin and finally, this month, annihilate it. If your sasae would work if only you'd turn your head with the throw... If your uchi-mata is still just a leg-lifter... If you don't point the support foot in the right direction... More pull, get lower... whatever your nagging flaw is, work it into oblivion.
2. Relax, relax, relax.
 - ❖ Ask your partners to tell you if you're too rigid and defensive.
 - ❖ Open and close your hands from time to time.
 - ❖ Go totally non-defensive in your head and mentally dare your partner to throw you. Let them, or discover why they can't even if you don't care.
3. Learn to control your partner.
 - ❖ Change directions and speed to your patterns and choices.
 - ❖ Find chances to create circular direction changes (and hence, throwing chances).
 - ❖ Stop, don't move. Let your partner start and don't comply with it, but redirect.
 - ❖ Forget your hands and pull and push your partner using their grip and arms.
4. Take some falls, but take them for a reason. See if you can avoid the attempted throw by not being where your partner expected, by shifting your mass, or pulling back an arm or hip checking. Do it calmly, though, and take the fall if it doesn't work. Now, perfect it.

You can take these same concepts and apply them to ne-waza randori.

All of these will create an opportunity for you to avail yourself of a skill by training the body and mind. See if by April 1st you find yourself at least once exclaiming, "Ah-ha! It worked!"

The secret keys to victory are not hidden, merely cloaked in simplicity.

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Naoki Murata – *Director of the Kodokan's Judo Museum and Library:*

"The theory behind judo is not ideological but rather a practical one that functions through the skills and concepts of judo. That is to say, it is a theory of skill by which one trains the body and mind. As a theory of life it is an extremely practical methodology that directs one's thoughts to the right path. Kano was a man who championed practical learning over idealism."