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## **The Four Men** by David M. Valadez

Sensei: This technique, it is not so important if you can do it.

Deshi: What do you mean? Shall I make no difference between doing it right and doing it wrong then? What is the reason of doing it then?

Sensei: Well, is not the technique important to you already; are you not already with a reason behind your training? And yet, are you not still doing it as if there is no difference between right and wrong - since you have practiced it wrongly all these years in the face of instruction you have yet to heed? In statistical reality, if you are training for martial reasons, know this: But a little bit of training, mostly of mind, and some good physical conditioning, will suffice in nearly any violent encounter. Everything is like this. In today's world, it will never take much. For the most part, we can do without many things and many virtues and still live a comparatively productive life. Modernity lets few fall so low that the spiritual maturities of ages past are inevitable. Today, falling or not, few are moved to self-cultivation by any kind downward descent. Thus, all reasons outside of the care of our own spirit, all reasons by which we usually determine significance, will never really bring the importance we need in order to motivate ourselves into doing things correctly.

Deshi: So why should we strive to do this technique one way as opposed to another - or at all?

Sensei: We must do the technique thusly because we have said we will do it. We have chosen to devote ourselves to it. Our reasons can never go beyond this choosing. It does not need to. It is after all a choosing of one type of Man among four. There is the Man that says he will do it but will not because he will not do the work necessary to fulfill his devotion. This is the Man of fear. There is the Man that says he will do it but cannot because he lacks capacity of both mind and body. This is the Man of ignorance. There is the Man that says he will do it but will not because he believes himself, as he is, to already be that which he said he would be. This is the Man of pride. And, there is the Man that says he will do it, and he will do it. This is the Man of principle. When we train, we are faced with a choice. Training will never be anything more. That technique is not so important. Nevertheless, you should do it, and do it right because you have devoted yourself to the choice of being the last kind of Man of which I speak, and not one the former three.