

Way of the Baby

A Book of Five Grins

www.samuraibaby.com

Seiya Kuramoto

Translated by **Brian Hutchins**
Illustrations by **Yasuhiro Suzuki**

iUniverse, Inc.
New York Lincoln Shanghai

The following excerpts include some of the techniques for mastering the parent as described in the Way of the Baby



Caught in a Rip Current

When you sense hesitation, act quickly while the parent is unprepared and follow through, pushing your advantage. Making a swift and strong move early, you can sweep the parent up and into your momentum before a counter can be made, as if coming from out of nowhere.

If the parent approaches with a wavering spirit, hold your gaze steady and flash a wide grin, while letting a soft sound slip from your mouth. Keep your body still, and radiate warmth through your expression. Once sucked in, carry the parent along with a current of positive emotions. As previous plans being considered fade into the distance, the parent will be happy to flow along with the activities you have planned.



The Breaking of the Dam

In this method, when the will of the parent is being asserted, respond with an outpouring of energy, shaking your body, turning your head around and about, watering your eyes, and screaming from the void. Release your mind and allow your body to move instinctively. Let the power of your spirit gush forth and overwhelm the parent with a flood of action and sound. Drown out any coaxing, diversions, or tricks the parent may try. This is one of the most important methods of getting your way, and it should be perfected.



The Fluid Glance

This technique is used when you are comfortable and in close proximity to the parent, but signs of disengagement begin to emerge. At the moment the parent attempts to withdraw and slip away, catch the parent with your eyes, staring intently while slowly tensing your body and face. If done correctly, the glance is all that is needed to bring the parent back into the flow of the current activity. This move is especially useful when the parent attempts to put you to sleep before you are finished being held. Meet and hold the eyes of the parent as you are being put down, and you can send the signal that holding time is not over. Timing is important and must be practiced.



Closing the Gap

The meaning of closing the gap is to get into a position that is within arm's reach of the parent, where you have the advantage of touch. Lure the parent to you when lying down, or move in close and take hold unexpectedly. Grab a finger, clutch at clothing, or wrap your arms around a leg. The feel of your touch will have a warming affect and brighten the mood of the parent, encouraging more attention to be directed toward you. This move can also be a good defensive maneuver. When the parent starts to drift away from you, reach out a little arm and grab on to something to prevent escape.



Sinking Sands

The meaning of sinking sands is to position yourself so that it is difficult for the parent to disengage, both physically and emotionally. When being held, snuggle close with the head, body, and arms. Seek not only to rest your head, but also to press the whole length of your body against that of the parent. Refrain from moving or shifting the body unnecessarily, while concentrating on sinking deeper into the arms holding you. If done correctly, your body will feel light and warm to the parent, resting peacefully and moving effortlessly with rocking and swaying movements. Looking down at the tranquility of your expression and pose, the parent will be soothed and become reluctant to put you down.



Neck of the Crane

This means to signal and position to be picked up. Like a crane about to fly with extended neck and raised wings, angle your head back and stretch your neck and arms upward while looking intently into the eyes of the parent. Going up on your toes or performing stepping movements with your feet can add to the effect. You can also pull yourself up on things, which is especially useful when looking to get over a barrier or out of a confined space.

When you are lying on your back but want to be carried or be moved around, stretch your whole body, bridging your neck and tilting your head backward, as if to create a space under your neck for a hand to easily slip into. If further coaxing is necessary to get the message across, roll your eyes toward the top of your head, and let out a concentrated grunt, urging the parent toward you.



Sweet as Honey

The aroma and sweetness of honey can attract and brighten the mood of even the grumpiest of bears. The parent is no different. When the parent appears caught up in other activities, use a combination of soft cooing and babbling sounds to attract attention. Then when the nose of the parent starts poking in your direction, serve up the cutest expressions and sounds you can muster. Lay it on thick and you will have the parent lapping up your sweetness. Continue to pour on your moves with the gentle stickiness of honey to keep the parent bound to you.



The Swatting Hand

The swatting hand is a technique where the movement of your arm and hand becomes a focal point of communication and exploration. Strike your hand several times in sequence on an object or surface, focusing the direction of your eyes in accordance with your goal. Depending on the situation, this move can be used to signal you like or dislike something, you want or do not want something, you seek attention or holding, or that you are just in the mood for swatting. Either way, it is interesting to watch the parent try to figure it out and react. You will also build strength and control in your arms and be able to investigate the variety of noises different things make when hit. The swatting hand move also yields exceptional results when applied to water, whether it is in a tub or in a glass left within your reach.



Three Maneuvers for Countering a Loincloth Change

The changing of the loincloth is an event that occurs frequently. While the actual replacement of the loincloth itself is beneficial, you do not need to let the process become boring, especially given the amount of time you will find yourself in this position. There are three maneuvers that can be applied toward the goal of enlivening the activity:

One is to animate the legs so that they are difficult to hold and wrap the loincloth around, or stretch them both out straight and hold this position so that the loincloth cannot be easily pulled up between them.

Another way is to reach out and grab hold of the arms, hands, or clothes of the parent, forcing a change in tempo and the course of the approach.

Thirdly, wriggle and attempt to roll your body, twisting from side to side, making cleaning up and putting on a fresh loincloth more challenging.

These are three primary maneuvers. Remember to keep in mind the main objectives of making the experience more interactive and seeing how deftly the parent can respond to these counters rather than blocking the change itself.

One other tactic that can be done on occasion entails producing a little fountain of fluid and watching the parent scramble to contain it. Use this special move sparingly to maintain its element of surprise.



To Grab the Face

When in close proximity to a parent whose energy or attention appears to be waning, to grab the face can produce interesting results. Lean toward the parent with arms outstretched and wide innocent eyes. Then when your hand gets close, clench your fist tightly around a nose or lip or anything you can get a hold of and pull abruptly and with force, watching the change of expression in the face of the parent. This move is useful for spurring the parent to action, and from here you can get the parent to shift you into a new position or activity. A related technique when the face is out of reach involves seizing hair or digging your fingernails into the neck.



To Aim at the Heart

To aim at the heart means to resort to making a last ditch lunge for a soft spot in the parent. Close your eyes and allow your body to go limp while letting out a feeble, whining moan. Draw the cry out, wallowing in your tears and lethargy, while waiting for the parent to do something to remedy your pitiful condition. If sitting, a body flop forward or slouch to the side can enhance this move. This technique can be helpful when there is something distracting the parent and making progress difficult or when your resources are wavering and you are becoming tired.