

Thoughts on training?

Over the years I have tried to explain to students the importance of their own commitment to karate. Sometimes it is very hard to put into words so everyone understands. So allow me to try a different approach, I hope this will make sense and be of help to at least some of you.

Let's look at the dojo in a different light. Let us assume the dojo is a petrol station! You the student are car owners and you guessed it, your Sensei is the petrol attendant!! Now starting from the very beginning, to travel anywhere you must fill your car up with petrol. To continue your journey you must constantly fill your car. Pretty simple so far?

Yes I am stating the obvious. However, I am still asked questions by students, which I felt they should already know the answer to.....let me explain.

The journey of karate begins when you enter the dojo (petrol station), the Sensei (attendant) will teach you the foundations of karate (fill your car with petrol). When you find yourself continuing this journey, your Sensei will advise; correct; and nurture you along its path (continue filling your car; offering help and directions).

However, there are several travellers who expect their journey to continue, even when they are not calling into the station that often!! To put it bluntly, if you go on a journey with no petrol.....you will not get very far. Gichin Funakoshi once said "*Karate is like boiling water; without constant heat it will become cold*".

Assuming you decide to continue your journey. You are constantly filling your car with petrol and you have a good idea of the route. Can you or the petrol attendant say how long the journey will take? No!

We may have a good idea of how long a journey will take. However, on any journey there can be obstructions or situations which pro-long the journey. For example: Road works; diversions; traffic jams and accidents. These problems are very much like the adversity one has to encounter in karate.

Road works / Diversions

Road works and diversions are a pain in the backside, why can't they just leave the roads alone? Yes when we are in the middle of them we can not see the benefit. However, the main reason for the road works is to **improve** the condition of the road and make travel easier and safer. Like learning new techniques or just improving existing ones, we must all improve and evolve. The diversion is taking the long way round; remember there are no short cuts in karate!

Traffic jams

With any road work or improvement, there will always be jams, hold ups and slow moving traffic.....sounds familiar? Your karate will not always be 100mph, open road with no obstacles. You will slow down and you may even come to a standstill. You must look forward to the end of the journey, do not give up on the motorway. Do not leave your karate on the “hard shoulder”, be patient.....perceiver.

Accidents

These are very similar to injuries, nobody means for them to happen, but it is a fact of life that they do. Sometimes it is your fault and sometimes it is not. If you have an injury you must be patient and sensible and allow the injury to heal. If you continue to train (travel) this will hinder or worse finish your training (journey).

I know most of you understand the concept of “you get out, what you put in” but very few actually practice it!

Safe journey
Sensei
Graham Palmer