

TOTW – Be an Active Observer

Week of December 6, 2009

When watching someone or a group demonstrate Kata try to actively observe what they are doing. It is often nice to watch the group as a whole do Kata, but instead try to focus your attention on one person. This way you can really see what that person is doing.

When watching a group that is the same or lower rank than you look, for technique corrections you could work on with that person at a later time. It could be their stance, a bent wrist, their posture, or any number of things. This should be done in a nonjudgmental way. Remember when we get up to demonstrate we are making numerous errors ourselves. Additionally, we should remember that we are models for the lower ranks and their mistakes are most likely ours.

When watching a group of a higher rank doing Kata look for how you want to emulate the person you are watching. I have often found myself looking at someone doing Kata in a state of awe. We should try not to do this. Instead look for similarities to the Kata that you are doing. Hanshi recently went over the fact that the first 6 moves of Kusanku (the highest Kata in our system) is the same stance (Zenkutsu-Dachi) just like the first move of Fukyugata ichi.

I know when we go to class we all want a great workout and want to keep moving the whole time. This is understandable. Sometimes the person leading class gives us a “break” to observe others. This does not mean that our mind is given a break. Use these moments to gleam as much as you can. Karate is 90% mental.

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