

Are you at class 100%?

Contributed by Administrator
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What is your answer to the question above? Most people will say, "Yes, I am always at class 100%, 100% of the time!", and it is not true. I have seen many people stumble through technique after technique because they were 'distracted' by ...

- "The girls that were walking their dog(s)"
- "I have a date later"
- "I am having problems at work"
- "My girlfriend/boyfriend is doing such and such.."
- "A plane crashed 20 years ago and I have never been the same ever since.."
- "I like the color red.."
- "My training partner's gi smells really bad and I can't concentrate under these conditions.."
- "I was mauled by circus lions.."

The list goes on and on. Training is a learning process and you learn in stages. At first when you begin training, it is difficult to stay focused on anything at all, let alone a single technique. As you come to class and train more and more, you SHOULD be able to focus 100% on what you are doing. This is easier said than done. With the world as busy as it is... everyone has millions of things going on in their lives, etc., most people find it hard to really focus on what they are doing, even for the short time they attend class every week. It takes a great deal of effort to focus all of your self and intentions, etc, on any one thing. Once you discover how you can make this work for YOU, then it becomes easier and easier to avoid the distractions offered by our busy world and lives.

Try the following ideas and exercises the next time you attend your class. It doesn't matter what your rank is or how long you have been training. Give it a try and see if anything improves for you. These things take some effort.

#1) Picture yourself back in 'The Old Days' when Ninja/Samurai were actually alive and part of the culture. Picture yourself living at that time. See yourself doing the training you are doing now, but back then. They didn't have MTV or most of the distractions we have today. Do Uke Nagashi. In your mind, think of having to do this technique because your life depended on it. If you don't do it right, you could actually die.

#2) When you start to enter the dojo, take all of your worldly worries,/problems, and put them in a little mental basket and leave it outside the dojo door. When you enter the dojo, think of it as if you are entering another world. You are free to pick up all of your

problems/worries when you leave.

#3) Every time you pick up a weapon, think in your mind that it is a real weapon. If you pick up a kyoketsu shoge, think of the dagger/hook end as being razor sharp with the hook end of it like a large fisherman's hook. Think of the ring at the end of the rope as being made of steel. Think of what will happen to the person who gets hit in the head with this thing.

#4) When facing an opponent with a sword, think in your mind that you are already dead. If you are already dead, then there is nothing to fear.

I have personally used the exercises listed above and they really helped me to be able to focus a lot better than I was ever able to before. My training took on a new meaning once I was able to focus and be there 100%, instead of 98% or 99%. Even at 99%, I thought I was doing good. Once I was able to do techniques or flow with the opponent while I was 'in the moment' 100%, everything was much different.

If you have had the good fortune to train with Hatsumi Sensei, he is actually 200% into the moment! He is already thinking of what is next. He started with being in the moment 100% first and then graduated to a much more advanced way to be 'in the moment'. Watch the next time he does anything with multiple attackers. One person punches, the next kicks, and then everyone is dead somehow and there is Sensei, off on the side somewhere. It seems that he already knows what is going to happen before it happens. I don't know that there is any way to explain this other than him being completely aware of what is happening at any given time. I do know that your training is only sub optimal when you are not into the moment. Make your training the best that it can be by being into the moment 100%.