

A Traditional Dojang

This article is directed to all Chayon-Ryu students. In Chayon-Ryu all rank levels are students. This includes black belts and Masters. Unlike a Gym, like 24 Hour Fitness, YMCA or a community center, we are a Traditional Dojang. Many students don't know, misunderstand or ignore that the responsibility for maintenance of the Dojang is up to the students, instructors, black belts and Masters. This includes cleaning and repairs. It is part of your training. It is learning to be humble, learning humility and duty.

We don't have a staff dedicated to wait on us, clean up after us, bring us a hot towel or a clean dry one when we are sweating and wipe down our equipment for us and take care of our laundry.

All too often, before and after class there are groups of students standing around in the Dojang talking, joking, and laughing. From the time you enter the Dojang and bow, you are training. You should be sincere, quiet, meditating. If you see something that needs to be done, do it! If a mirror is dirty, clean it. If someone has left dirty socks or underclothes lying about, pick them up and dispose of them. Just because they are not yours does not excuse you from this duty. I remember after one rank test, a dirty diaper had been left in the hallway. It was not until almost everyone was gone and we were ready to close that it was disposed of by me and another student. How many walked by and simply ignored it? This was very disrespectful.

Many people who see a student that shows off difficult techniques flawlessly, spars very well, and kicks very high think, "Wow, he is a great student! He's good!" Without sincerity, he is not a true martial artist. He is merely an actor with good physical capabilities, a Musul In.

A student who is sincere, dignified, humble, knowledgeable and dutiful is a true martial artist who is on the right path. A Mudo In.

High ranking students must set a good example for lower ranks. Instructors should not teach their students like a drill sergeant, like we are in the military. Do not be mean. Do not intimidate by showing how skilled you are and how unskilled and vulnerable the student is. Be approachable, be humble, and be kind. Your duty as an instructor is to be helpful to the students, help them learn, help them grow physically and mentally. Share your knowledge.

A writer for a martial arts magazine once came to interview me. He asked, "Who is your best student?" He was obviously looking for who had won the most trophies, the most matches, who was the toughest. My answer to him took him completely off guard. I told him, "My best student is the one who pays dues on time, is humble, sincere, cleans and takes care of the Dojang." Trophies are meaningless. You can be a bad student, a bad person, a bad martial artist and have many trophies.

Please keep this information in mind as you enter the Dojang and share it with others.

Sincerely,



Founder Chayon-Ryu International Martial Arts Association

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