

Newsletter "The Source"

Enhance Your Training

By Rich J. Van Donk, Shihan

How dedicated are you to your training? Do you practice once a week? Twice a week? Daily? I highly suggest that you create a personal goal list of the things you want to learn from this art. List them in a sequence that is easy for you to maintain. Put a carrot on a stick out in front of you in the way of a reward. Treat yourself when you have reached a goal. Most of all get a notebook. My students who get a notebook and write out their learnings after every class grow about 10 times as fast as students who don't. Using a notebook will teach you to think and to draw. Don't worry if you don't know how yet, you will soon enough.

Let's say you want to learn footwork. A suggestion would be to practice walking many different ways using different muscles in your legs to strengthen them and to stretch them. Then maybe you would watch Ninjutsu tapes of mine or Soke Hatsumi's and just do the legs movements and foot work. Write out the patterns and draw diagrams of how the feet move. Stick figures are fine. Create personal drills to enhance your foot work, like short kicking control of a ball against a wall. Study boxing footwork, play soccer, watch or practice different dance steps. Then go back to the Ninjutsu system and do the footwork again to ground yourself into your art. You will be amazed at how much your studies will improve your art. This kind of study on each phase of your training will enhance it tremendously.

Be your best,
—Shihan Van Donk