

Loyalty

Those testing for 4th and 5th dan in February 2007 were asked to write on the subject of loyalty. These are their essays.

Mr Dave Ballard

MEANING: FEELING OF DUTY: a feeling of devotion, duty or attachment to somebody or something.

Loyalty, the changing face of how we see and think about it. Not so long ago our parents or grandparents would have started work with a company and stayed with them for many years. Today the average time spent with a company before seeking change is two years. Marriage was something to honour and stay with your partner for life, today we can move from relationship to the next with ease.

They had a stronger sense of King and country

Our society is changing and there is an effect on our martial arts as we all have far more options for sport and recreation, fitness, social clubs and the affects of a more busy and stressful environment. The day to day demands on our time means that we more prone to chop and change our leisure time to meet the requirements of work, school and home.

The time frame required to achieve first Dan Black belt is such that these daily demands impact on the number of students we are turning over on a yearly basis, this could be viewed as a lack of loyalty but is loyalty lacking or is society dictating our way of life.

When beginning with a new club you should be made to feel welcome, made to be apart of the club and as an Instructor we must gain the students trust in what we are teaching. Trust plays a huge roll in getting loyalty from people and with out trust it is natural for people to start to look towards other clubs where they feel more secure. As students we are all drawn to natural leaders and as such Instructors must lead by example, we must gain and keep students trust and in turn gain loyalty.

As an organisation we should be active in promoting loyalty, students should not be allowed to chop and change from club to club with out just course. This is worse for the cities that have many clubs close making it easier for a student to change and in some cases changing several times in a two or three year period.

Is it not enough that a student can freely train with another club and should be welcomed to attend but not encouraged to change clubs. New clubs opening in an area can draw existing members from clubs which does the new club no favours and can be damaging to a region.

I think the worst thing we can do as Instructors is actively head hunt students from other clubs even if this is done as a soft sell approach, this will promote ill feeling for both student and Instructors.

We should all follow courtesy when dealing with a student who wishes to change from one club to another, find out why someone wishes to join your club, offer advice, ring the Instructor where the student trains and ask if this was known, any problems with the student and if they can transfer.

This can give you a good insight into this student and they may in fact not be worthy of joining your own club.

So, right or wrong there may be times when students can and should change to another club but there are many times that the student should not be allowed to change and this should be totally discouraged.

While we look forward to the growth of ITFNZ we need to ensure that we do not lose sight of our basic principles such as courtesy, integrity and LOYALTY.

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