

“Where the head goes, the body must follow”

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“Where the head goes, the body must follow” is an old phrase that I’m sure most people have heard at some point in their life. This phrase has over whelming truth and weight for me after this year’s seminar along with my personal training over the last year for my Ni Dan test.



The physical sense of the phrase was demonstrated throughout the whole No Gi grappling session of the seminar. All throws greatly rely on the ability to take your opponents balance whether it is forward, backward, or to one side or the other. The main throw we practiced Thursday night was Osoto Gake or “outside leg “break/reap”. The success of this throw greatly relied on the ability to get the Uke up on their toes and getting your hips low and behind theirs. The movement for disrupting the “kuzushi” or balance for these techniques, when done properly, was the key to getting yourself and the uke in the position to throw them. Throughout the Shin Ken Gata Jujutsu techniques, we used this same type of movement to throw our opponent. The opening movement we utilized was to grab the ukes throat and push them up; creating space for you to get your hips behind your uke as well as forcing your ukes head up and slightly back to break their balance to throw with Harai Ogoshi or rear hip throw. You then continue that motion with your ukes head backwards and then down, once in proper position, to drive your uke to the mat. Which goes back to what I originally started this brief commentary with... “where the head goes the body must follow”.



The mental sense of the phrase was prevalent in every individual who challenged themselves for their next rank exam. It is important to know your techniques, but it is equally important to have the mind set of what you are going to accomplish. “Not arrogance” as Sensei says, “but confidence”. If you go into your test second guessing yourself it will show in your techniques. Having the privilege of watching others test, I’ve noticed when people are confident and have the correct mind set it appears their techniques are significantly better. When you focus your mind to achieve a certain thing, you do so and refuse to let anything or anyone stop you from being successful. Your body will follow your thoughts! Be that a specific technique, testing, or challenges you face in your day to day life. It was even said multiple times by Sukh Sensei during tamishi giri “imagine you have already cut the tatami before you begin your movement and you WILL cut through it.” My personal experience with having the correct mind set has been something I have had to significantly push for every time I train. Some days are better than others, but it is something I have been striving for in every keiko opportunity at the dojo. The ability to switch that “killer instinct” on and off is incredible. I have noticed growth in techniques as well as in my personal life since working on having proper intent and the proper mind set.



These simple things of focus and intent/ mind set may not seem overly important and often times are overlooked. However, I feel they may be two of the most important things to train on while training. “Where the head goes, the body must follow.” Whether it is pushing your ukes head up and back to take their balance and drive them to the mat, or it is your intent/mind set to accomplish a technique or goal. This phrase rang true and was demonstrated throughout the entire 9th Annual Gi Yu Honbu Kyo Kai Dojo Seminar.