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Training is Waiting
by David M. Valadez

Deshi: I believe I am too anxious in my training.

Sensei: How so?

Deshi: You often speak of finding patience in our training, and of how patience is actually a virtue we are to cultivate through training. Yet, I am discouraged by my rate of progress, so much so that ironically it is one of the things that make me not want to train more.

Sensei: So, you see the irony?

Deshi: Yes, I do. I am in a circle, with my ego as the axis. I am in a circle where I am discouraged by my rate of progress, so I do not train more, and so I do not progress at a different rate – ad infinitum.

Sensei: Ah, that. Yes, that is there too. However, that is not the irony of which I speak. I am not sure I would even call that circle ironic. It is better labeled, “pitiful.” The irony of which I speak involves this oversight: Training, in its very nature, implies a wait. Training, at its very core, implies that nothing will come but through Time passing. If progress was not a maturing process tied intimately to the passing of Time, and if that passing of Time was not implied in Training, we would need no training at all. There could be no such thing as training. Things would resemble more a science fiction movie where one could simply “jack” into one’s body/mind the virtues and attributes of the seasoned martial artist. When one trains, one waits. If one is not waiting, then one is not training. To expect otherwise is not merely a matter of being impatient or even being over-demanding. It is worse. It is more akin to believing that one can fly while staying firmly planted on the ground. Such a thing is not possible – such a thing subverts its own stating.

Deshi: Then how should I train, by waiting?

Sensei: Waiting to train and having waiting be an integral part of one’s training is not the same thing. Waiting to train is an extremely passive action. Having waiting be an integral part of one’s training is a very proactive thing. When you make training waiting, and when you make waiting training, then you will know how to train. You will also know how to wait.