

Reflection on My Journey

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Is it really that times goes by more quickly as we get older?

When I wrote a paper as part of the preparation for my temporary black belt test, I mentioned three key factors: structure, citizenship (teaching others, tenets), and family. As I continue my journey, those same concepts remain, though perhaps I view them through a slightly different lens.

As a black belt, I have become more responsible for my own training and learning. Much more class time and energy is focused on teaching and helping others. An old proverb states, "In teaching others we teach ourselves." I have definitely become more conscious of precision and progression as I teach, both for those I help and for myself. I thank the others black belts for providing me opportunities to both lead class as the instructor and to work with individuals or small groups for shorter periods.

A second area of change is in the provision of leadership. Tests used to be for demonstrating skill, knowledge and attitudes to warrant promotion or perhaps to watch a specific person or test group. However, I believe I have participated in as many tests the past two years as I did the prior two. A new role, assisting with all aspects of the test, has become part of my broader view of being an active martial artist. This extends to my participation outside the Do Jang. While I participated in tournaments and regularly participated in demonstrations, as a black belt the focus has again changed. Participation is still a part, but organization, leadership, and creating a positive environment for others to succeed and enjoy is now at the forefront.

Third is a continued thankfulness that we come together to help and support each other has been strengthened. I would not be here today without those who have helped, encouraged, and laughed with me along the way, including my daughter, who also plans to test the same day! She is precious to me. Fortunately she has enough of her father, the love of my life, in her to help keep me balanced.

Pil Sung!