

My First Atlanta Gi Yu Dojo Workshop:

Shinden Fudo Ryu Jutaijutsu & Jinen Ryu NiTojutsu

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There were few goals I wanted to achieve at the Atlanta Gi Yu Dojo workshop this past week; to focus on training, build constructive relationships and learn something new. All of these goals were met and more.

It is a true gift to have the opportunity to concentrate a few days on one objective and separate oneself from the daily routine. Training in Shinden Fudo Ryu Jutaijutsu and Jinen Ryu NiTojutsu was outstanding and challenging. The physical impact of consistently training was most noticeable the following Monday when I went back to work. I noticed that my posture was dramatically improved, the way I move around the office has changed and the way I look at people is different, perhaps more aware. If this is an impact of condensed training then it seems to be important to continue to train, to maintain and grow within and without, this is definitely not a static art.

Getting to know Sukh Sensei, W.S. Sensei, Jordan and the members of the Atlanta dojo was important to me because it helps me have a better understanding of the community of people I am training with. Building a constructive relationship has helped me feel more confident in the way I train with my fellow martial artists, especially since we are all passionate about what we are learning at the Gi Yu Dojo. I thought of some of the things that Sukh Sensei said. Thoughts that are so profound, that unless I did not take opportunity to travel eight hours with him and the other students down to Atlanta, I may not have had the chance to hear. To ask, listen and learn from him. He said, *"The farther you get from the source of what you want to learn, the more dedicated and focused you must be, unfortunately, many folks cannot hold themselves to this level of intent. They will say they can, they will lie, even small ones, to those around them and to themselves. But we must realize we must be honest in ALL things at ALL times, because people are not stupid, they see through your deceptions, worst of all, your lies to yourself will destroy your spirit"*.

I also thought about the time spent learning martial arts, and a by-product of just not learning how to fight. I thought of my husband who was "holding down the fort" with the kids and dog while I was gone training. I realized how appreciative I am to have someone who supports my endeavors. Not that I don't appreciate him as my spouse, but this was one of those moments that you realize how important it is to have a good positive and supportive partner in your life. Of course, since he also trains at the dojo, I will give him the opportunity next time to go and I will "hold down the fort".

Finally, I learned a great deal about the history of our school. I have a much deeper appreciation of where our school's lineages come from and the sacrifices that have been made to maintain the strength and consistency of our art. It is very humbling to know that I get to be a small part of this story. No other martial arts school I have ever been to has offered a historical perspective on the specific movements that are taught, which only makes the Gi Yu Dojo that much more impressive.

I leave you with a few inspirational Haikus of my time at the Atlanta Dojo:

The sheathing of swords

Silent tabi cause trauma

A gift from Sensei

Weapons bite loudly

The cheetahs dance silently

Focus rules the day