

# The "D" Line

(Source: [\*The Black Belt Book of Life\*](#) – Topic #34)

In seeking patterns of success and a strategy to win,

The "D" Line offers five clear maxims:

Desire, Dedication, Determination,

Discretion, Discipline.

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*A strong passion for any object will ensure success,  
for the desire of the end will point out the means.*

Henry Hazlitt

*Desire is the key to motivation, but it's the determination  
and commitment to an unrelenting pursuit of your  
goal—a commitment to excellence—that will  
enable you to attain the success you seek.*

Mario Andretti

*The question isn't who is going to let me;  
it's who is going to stop me.*

Ayn Rand

*Discretion is the perfection of reason,  
and a guide to us in all the duties of life.*

Sir Walter Scott

*We all have dreams. But in order to make dreams come  
into reality, it takes an awful lot of determination,  
dedication, self-discipline, and effort.*

Jesse Owens

*Never give in! Never give in! Never, never, never,  
Never— in nothing great or small, large or petty.  
Never give in except to convictions of  
honor and good sense.*

Winston Churchill

*Perseverance is a great element of success.  
If you only knock long enough at the gate,  
you are sure to wake up somebody.*

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

*Nothing in the world can take the place of Persistence.  
Talent will not; nothing is more common than  
unsuccessful men with talent. Genius will not;  
unrewarded genius is almost a proverb. Education will  
not; the world is full of educated derelicts. Persistence  
and determination alone are omnipotent. The slogan  
'Press On' has solved and always will solve the  
problems of the human race.*

Calvin Coolidge

Developing success in any venture, especially becoming a Black Belt, doesn't just happen. Besides hard work and correctly applied effort, there are five principles beginning with the letter "D" that are key to success. They are: *Desire, Dedication, Determination, Discretion, Discipline*. Let's take a look at each of them.

## **1. Desire**

Desire is the fire in the belly. It motivates us to move in a particular direction and engage in specific activities. Without desire, we would go nowhere. It is desire that sustains us. Whether that desire is to become spiritually illumined and free, a great martial artist, parent, teacher, writer, athlete, painter, mechanic, media reporter, contractor, lawyer, doctor, nurse, whatever. Desire is the fire that moves us in that direction.

## **2. Dedication**

Dedication is devotion to the task at hand, a whole-hearted absorption in pursuing its manifestation. It is dedication that keeps our nose to the grind stone and our heart engaged. If we're to become a quality Black Belt, our heart, mind and spirit must be saturated with its achievement. The same goes for being the perfect parent, spouse, friend, business partner or leader. We must be totally focused on being the best we can be and making the appropriate sacrifices to achieve our goal.

If we're truly dedicated, we will sacrifice anything, even our lives if necessary, to fulfill our dreams. How many people, for example, sacrifice, have sacrificed, and will sacrifice their lives for freedom? How many will sacrifice their worldly pleasures for spiritual gains? How many parents will sacrifice their own dreams for the well-being of their children? How many musicians will sacrifice their time and social activities to spend countless hours practicing their art? How many teachers will give up their weekends for their students? On and on it goes. If we're dedicated to a cause, a person, a pet, a relationship, an ideal, a project or an activity, we will make the appropriate sacrifices necessary to nurture that dedication in order to manifest the goal which is fueled by our initial desire.

## **3. Determination**

Determination is the iron will and heavy hammer, the relentless pressing forward until the goal is reached. When we're determined, we bite the bullet and march onward. If necessary, we even crawl on our bellies in mud and debris to reach our destination . . . but we never quit. Along the way we may have to endure incessant setbacks, enormous pain and seemingly endless suffering, tread water in an ocean of tumultuous tears set to the orchestral background music of sorrow-

laden cries, chest-thumping lamentations and plaintive wails, but we press on because we simply and matter-of-factly refuse to quit, refuse to give in, refuse to suffer the indignity of failure and defeat. It is determination that makes us tough and daunting, a force to be reckoned with, a force that sets us apart from the "also-rans" and "couldn't-be-dones," a force that relentlessly persists and pursues its goals until it triumphs.

#### **4. Discretion**

Discretion is the ability to discern, discriminate, perceive and reason. By exercising discretion, we make choices between good and bad, healthy and unhealthy, wholeness-engendering or wholeness-obstructing. A wise man always looks ahead to the results of his actions *before* he executes them. A fool acts without thinking of the consequences of his actions and thereby suffers because of his lack of forethought. Sir Walter Scott, the famed Scottish novelist and poet of the 18th and 19th Centuries, offers this sage advice:

*Discretion is the perfection of reason,  
and a guide to us in all the duties of life.*

#### **5. Discipline**

Discipline is the regimen, training and structure needed to insure success in any pursuit in life and, indeed, in life itself. Discipline is the crux of success. Without structure, without order, everything becomes chaotic and happenstance and goals don't materialize.

Becoming a legitimate Black Belt requires a strict regimen of study and practice for years. The word "legitimate" is used because in today's society there are those charlatans who peddle belts for a price to a stream of eager buyers desirous of skirting the required work in order to claim the prize without effort. Such individuals are only fooling themselves. They live in delusion, thinking that great skill can be achieved without the study, struggle, sweat, exertion, energy, and long-term devotion needed for legitimacy.

For those who are the "real deal" and who reflect the true nature of a legitimate Black Belt, their path is one of immense discipline. As discussed earlier, *there can be no excellence without effort* and it is discipline that sculpts that effort and creates a true work of living art in a living artist.

Don't be deceived. The Five "Ds" are necessary ingredients to success in life, as well as in the successful accomplishment of one's projects and goals in life. Embrace them. There is no other way to success.

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