

The Black Belt Book of Life - Topic #6

To Become Everything We Must First Become Nothing

In the game of life,
whether pauper, prince or king,
the fact remains —
To Become Everything
We Must First Become Nothing.

This is a strange statement, isn't it: *To become everything we must first become nothing?* Yet, it is true and possesses great mystic meaning. If martial arts teaches anything substantive, it is to integrate the body, mind and spirit. Nothing will help us with the integrative process more than surrendering our egos to the Great Power that exists, the Power which created and sustains us; which gives us life.

Interestingly, contemporary thought is that to become something, we must be somebody or accomplish some great thing or be some acknowledged celebrity or famous icon among the masses. Spiritual thought, which is the true basis of martial arts thought, runs contrary to this concept. Remember, *our accomplishments are not our life; our life is our accomplishment.* Life trumps accolades. It is far better to live a life-filled life than a trophy-filled life. As the famous 1st Century Latin writer and philosopher, Publilius Syrus, commented: *God looks at the clean hands, not the full ones.*

Becoming everything by becoming nothing is like the analogy of the single drop of water and the ocean. When we exist as a single drop of water, we are separated from our source. We have limited power. We may be something, but it is a little something. However, when we merge into the ocean, we become the ocean. We lose our little identity, our ego, and reflect the Identity of All that is. We move from the separated drop of water to merging into the great ocean of life and thereby acquire its power which is infinite in relation to the "little drop of us." There is no longer separation. There is union, oneness with the power of all powers. We become complete and whole, unfettered by the issues and problems of the little self, the little identity, the little thing. Instead, by merging with the All, the Power that is, we become everything. *Therefore, to become everything, we must first become nothing.*

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