

The Black Belt Book of Life - Topic #27 – The Way Out Is In

Life is full of problems,
and when they settle in,
remember, for solutions,
The Way Out is In.

*We can't solve problems by using the same kind
of thinking we used when we created them.*

Dr. Albert Einstein

Every problem has a gift for you in its hands.

Richard Bach

No problem can stand the assault of sustained thinking.

Voltaire

*Don't tell your problems to people: eighty percent
don't care; and the other twenty percent
are glad you have them.*

Lou Holtz

In learning a new basic skill, technique or tactic, one of the best ways to really get to know it is to get inside it and pick it apart from as many angles as possible. We can't learn something by not committing ourselves to it. We must delve deeply into it. The same is true for any problem or issue in life. The way out of the dilemma is directly into it. Hence the phrase, *The Way Out is In.*

This may seem a logical solution, but often one choice in solving problems for some people is to run away, avoid or hide from them. This does nothing to actually solve the problems and can actually make them worse. How, for example, can a person learn to fight if he doesn't place himself in a combative environment and engage his opponent? Studying theory only goes so far in the education process. We need real-world experience. Getting in a ring, facing a challenger, butting heads, clashing fists, forearms,

elbows, knees and feet and staring into the onslaught of an oncoming attack is the only way to truly learn how to fight.

The same is true for any activity. If you want to learn how to ride a horse, you've eventually got to saddle up, get on and ride. Sure, you may get bucked off or thrown off, but how else can you truly learn? Watching from outside the corral surely won't get the job done.

True story. Mark was a great horseman. The things this man could do with a horse were phenomenal. People from far and wide would send him their problem horses to be trained or retrained. Yet, Mark's knowledge didn't come from books. It came at a steep and often dangerous price.

In learning to ride bucking horses, Mark once got bucked off the same horse eight times in fifteen minutes. Was he crazy to keep getting back on? That's debatable. However, when asked why he kept getting back on, knowing that he would probably get thrown off again, he said it was the only way he could learn how to ride a bucking horse. He had to learn why he was getting bucked off, what he was doing wrong. It wasn't his ego he was chasing, but knowledge. Mark's solution to the problem of learning how to ride bucking horses was not to run away from the problem, but rather to dive straight into it. For Mark, *The Way Out Was In*, and this problem-solving ability created a solid reputation for him as the man to see when it came to training horses. There was no better.

Another true story. Anna "Wildcat" Griffin is one of the toughest people you'll ever know. She's a Kiado-Ryu Black Belt now, an excellent fighter and martial artist, but it wasn't always that way. As a teenager with a brown belt ranking, she would spar with the brown and black belt men. One night during a match she got knocked out, cold. Her parents were informed and she was able to get home without incident. What is amazing is the very next night, Anna was back in the ring fighting . . . again, after being knocked out just twenty-four hours earlier! Grown men have quit karate after getting slightly clipped on the nose, let alone knocked out, but not Anna. She's as tough as her "Wildcat" handle implies.

Like Mark, the thing with Anna was that she knew the only way for her to learn how to fight was to get back in the ring immediately and learn what she did wrong so she could remedy the problem and improve her skills so she wouldn't get clocked again. Not only is she brave and courageous, she's smart, tough, wise and definitely not a quitter. Anna "Wildcat" Griffin is the stuff substantive people are made of. Such a tribute. Such a Black Belt. Her brother, James "Psycho" Griffin, also a Kiado-Ryu Black Belt, is no less courageous. Two tough individuals, brother and sister, from the same family is amazing and a tribute to their parents for raising them to be independent, strong, courageous.

Of course there are countless stories of individuals like Mark, Anna and James in all walks of life whose solution to a problem is to attack it at its very core, in spite of the consequences. They know the way out of their problem is, ironically, directly into it. It takes courage to manage life in this way, but the great ones do it because they know that in relation to life's many problems, the solution is to apply the adage, *The Way Out Is In.*

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