

DOZEN: meditation in motion

For those who practice Egami Karatedo, the state of mind with which the techniques are applied is of fundamental importance and it is equally important to understand how the mental state influences and determines the effectiveness or otherwise of the action. Our energetic condition determines the way in which we face an extreme difficulty and consequently determines the solutions we adopt to overcome it. It is therefore necessary to deepen the knowledge of our energy state and how to govern it.

The effectiveness in Egami Karatedo is not "against" but "with".

Shigeru Egami wrote: "Each of us is a small light, ten, a hundred people come together and become a great light. This is the truth of a sublime world. "

In these few words emerges the need to create strength through harmonious bonds and relationships, to improve people's lives and their relationship with others and with nature.

To realize this idea through practice, it is first of all necessary to eliminate from the keiko (the training of the spirit) any residual opposition, however "friendly", during the application of defense techniques with the partner. That is, we must avoid that so-called "healthy" physical opposition that some still think is necessary to remind us how dangerous real combat is and how hard life can be.

I believe that for us training in any form of physical confrontation, more or less real, hides a fatal trap, which, in addition to not improving the effectiveness of our actions, prevents us from understanding *heicho* and its extraordinary strength. Our training, in my opinion, should be understood as a gradual and constant exercise aimed at "removing", day after day, mental tensions and physical contrasts, to gradually discover soft and heavy strength. Only in this way will we be able to modify that uncontrollable need to always resort to physical strength by stiffening ourselves, every time we encounter an impediment. It is necessary to take a new path to get out of the world of conflict and to begin exploring the world of harmony. Each of us knows very well and on his own skin the conflictual dimension, which accompanies us and which tends to transform, in an uncontrolled way, everything in tension and anxiety; there is therefore no need to practice it to remember it. Instead, it is absolutely necessary to get rid of it, eliminating it from the mind and body.

We practitioners of Egami Karatedo have two diametrically opposed ways to choose from: staying in the conflictual dimension, continuing to struggle by simulating apparent gentleness in the techniques, without implementing, in a complete way, either the way of muscular strength and of physical ability, nor that of soft and heavy force; or try the way of the *Heicho* of Egami Sensei to the end, to gradually free ourselves from our inner conflicts, calming the senses and landing in the new dimension of peace and agreement, first with ourselves and then with others. The soft and heavy force, together

with the search for agreement, arises from our energy state, it is not a strategy or a technique: both are the expression of the result of the relationship we have with ourselves, which inevitably also reflects on others, as is practicing muscular strength and opposition to impose and prevail.

It takes courage to embark on this difficult path, because it involves putting all our strength into changing our needs, focusing on what is harmony, and gradually abandoning all that is conflict. Only in this way will we find ourselves in a position to glimpse and devise harmonic solutions, beginning to understand both the limits of physical strength and the power of mental calm and knowing how to move harmoniously together with all the elements of nature, including our aggressor.

Our effectiveness will begin to take shape when inner conflicts subside and a more harmonious relationship with ourselves begins. It is precisely the path of obstacles to achieve inner peace that will teach us how to win without hating the enemy and how to take care of him.

Shigeru Egami wrote: "***To win one must know how to love one's enemy.***"

This path is difficult and at the same time fascinating: it is like crossing the chaos remaining detached and silent, while the calm and undisturbed mind observes the scene and guides us towards a balanced and impartial solution, with naturalness and extreme lucidity.

This is "***dozen***": meditation in movement, a condition that will allow us to have a privileged view of reality, and from this new point of view we will be able to anticipate events and move together with others and with all things.

Our effectiveness is based neither on strength, nor on physical technique, or on speed, but on the strength of kindness, on the harmony of movements and on the beauty of form.

Shigeru Egami wrote:

"The rhythm of the movement of the body is music.

The lines drawn in space are a painting.

It is art and its canvas is the universe."

I think that the first step to achieve inner peace is to "open up": open the mind and "expand it" to infinity and then gradually apply this particular dimension of being, the "***dozen***", to techniques and all that we do daily. It is necessary to train incessantly for the *dozen* state to establish itself permanently and remain unchanged at all times: during the *taiso*, while we apply the techniques with a partner, during the execution of a *kata* and while we bow in the *rei*.

The difficulties and problems that we will encounter on our path must always find us "open", ready to "welcome" and not to "reject", transforming our anxieties and fears into calm and trust in ourselves and in others.

Everything else will happen naturally.