

No One Wants To Be Ordinary

How many people come home from work and sit in front of the tube? They are not looking forward to another sitcom, but nothing else is on. Then, after a while, they do look forward to another sitcom and nothing else goes on in their lives.

Then there is the more outgoing group. They spend their evenings with the guys or at bars accomplishing little, but it's better than TV and it alleviates boredom.

Or how about the salaried worker who feels that she is not going to keep her job if she doesn't leave work at 7:00 or 8:00 PM. Then it's home to dinner and bed.

The TV-person can't see any way not to be ordinary. The pub-person wants not to be ordinary, but takes the socially acceptable way out (and ends up being like everyone else.) The work-person is motivated to be more than ordinary, but the method to achieve that goal is work and work alone.

You can't be extraordinary if you do what everyone else does. How many Tube-sters, think of getting some other sensory input during the week? How many Bar-sters have the reserve to say, "No thank, guys, it's my training night"? How many hard working Professionals realize how little work they get done when they do not vary their routine and take care of themselves first?

Nobody *wants* to be ordinary, but unfortunately, few make the choices that allow them to rise above the ordinary. Joining a martial arts school will not guarantee that you will become an extraordinary martial artist, but your mere dedication to martial arts training two or three times a week will guarantee that you will rise above the masses.

In the BUSHIDO-KAI geographical area there are more than ten martial arts schools. Let's assume that their enrollment (being overly generous) is 200 people each. That's 20,000 students of the martial arts. But Framingham, the center of the area, has a population of over 100,000! There are very conservatively 200,000 people in the area served by those ten schools. So, at most, about one in ten people are martial artists. Being in the top 10% is not bad. I'll bet you would have loved being in the 90th percentile in school! Since the average school does not hold 200 students and the population of the area is greater than 200,000, it is obvious that martial artists are an elite minority. They are certainly not ordinary!

If the hidden motivation for studying almost anything is to rise above the ordinary, I would suggest that martial artists—whose study can bring them self-defense, physical exercise, challenging goals, cultural broadening, self-discipline, self-control and many other sorts of self-development—rise above the ordinary. Not only are they relatively few in number, but they also bring their other interests and skills to the martial arts, allowing the martial arts to influence those other activities. The result is at first a gradual growth, then arithmetical, then exponential. The more students are dedicated, the more challenges they face. The more challenges they face, the more skill they develop. The more skill develops, the greater their success. The greater

their success, the more they are boosted up in both overt and covert ways. Very few seasoned martial artists are ordinary. Oh, they work and vacation, earn and spend like anyone else, but how they feel about themselves and how others feel about them changes over the years.

They watch TV but are not the Tube-sters. They go out with the guys to bars, but are not the Bar-sters. They work hard and even stay late to get the job done, but make room in their lives for bettering themselves. Martial artists are beyond the ordinary; some become extraordinary.

Next time, we'll talk about Aspirations for both student and school.