



Variations on a Dream – *or* – To Repeat the Same Actions that Failed Before is Not the Definition of Insanity.

Have you ever repeated the same actions when something isn't working, or so it seemed, and for some unknown reason, it worked? Think of pull-start lawn mowers and snow blowers, and for some reason that last desperation pull... Or a zillion computer scenarios that are fixed because of repeated endeavors that seem exactly the same. In judo contest, one more try at that technique... ***Ippon!***

We know from experience that to repeat the same action can sometimes lead to success. The insanity comes, really, when we can't figure out why. But who cares, *why*? It worked!

Judo shows us a good reason to care. Something was a little different, and to know what that difference was will lead to being able to apply it in the future. Also true, failure analyzed can often bring the same awareness.

At a recent shiai, one of our competitors was repeatedly attempting an ippon seoinage to ko-uchi attack, one she dearly loves and is often successful. It just wasn't working. The unseen problem was a mixture of timing and the angle of attack. The opponent wasn't 100-percent responsible for the throw not working, but her resistance, combined with our woman's minor lack of re-adjustment, resulted in no throw ever happening. She discovered that training to accomplish the move from a variety of adjustments, rather than being stuck in a rut, a rut unfortunately based on previous successes, is the key to success. Without the challenge, she would not have realized this, and on-going success might have hindered rather than helped in the development of the overall judoka.

Perhaps the maximum efficiency slogan here might best be, "If at first you don't succeed, figure out the minor adjustments that do." Sometimes, there is no whole-new-way. Sometimes, try, try again will bring rewards; but those rewards are especially valuable if we recognize how they were accomplished. Then, we might hear the echo of "Eureka!", and that is more valuable than a gold medal.

Of course, our gal could have opted to use a different attack, a very wise approach. The seoinage / ko-uchi failure could still have been studied. However, if the success of a different approach lessened the need to study the one that failed, we have another perplexing situation. I leave you to it. Variations on a dream.

