

Psychological aspects of “Tsuki and Mizu No Kokoro”

All competitive or combative sports, games and matches, involve interaction between two or more people. There are mental, physical and possibly verbal factors, which are psychological factors, which may affect the outcome of a contest. Generally, the psychologically stronger, even though they may be the physically weaker, will prevail.

Mizu No Kokoro: (a mind like water) this principle is rooted in the teaching of the old karate masters. It refers to the need to make the mind calm, like the surface of undisturbed water. Smooth water reflects accurately the image of all objects within its reflection. If one's mind is kept at this state, apprehension of the opponent's movements, both physical and psychological, will be immediate and accurate, and one's response, both defensive and offensive, will be appropriate and adequate. If the surface of the water is disturbed, the image it reflects will be distorted. If the mind is preoccupied with other thoughts, you will not be aware of the opponents intentions, whether defensive or offensive, creating an opportunity for the opponent to attack you.

Calm water is like a mirror and gives a picture of all that is around. Conversely troubled waters only reflect the turmoil within. When a person approaches a problem with calm and composure then like the reflection on calm water he sees everything. So also when a problem causes turmoil then like the troubled water on confusion is seen. Imagine an intellect as calm, a will as relentless and indomitable and a personality as adaptable as water and you will have envisioned a “**Mind Like Water**”.

— Sensei Takayuki Mikami

"This term was emphasized in the teachings of the ancient karate masters. It refers to the mental attitude required while facing an actual opponent. Mizu no kokoro (Mind like water) refers to the need to make the mind calm, like the surface of undisturbed water. To carry the symbolism further, smooth water reflects accurately image of all objects within its range, and if the mind is kept in this state, apprehension of the opponent's movements, both psychological and physical, will be both immediate and accurate, and one's responses, both defensive and offensive, will be appropriate and adequate. On the other hand, if the surface of the water is disturbed, the images it reflects will be distorted, or by analogy, if the mind is preoccupied with thoughts of attack or defense, it will not apprehend the opponent's intentions, creating an opportunity for the opponent to attack."

— Sensei H. Nishiyama

Tsuki No Kokoro: (a mind like the moon) just as moonlight shines equally on everything within its range, you need to be constantly aware of the totality of the opponent and his movement. Developing this awareness will aid you to be consistently aware of any opening in your opponent's defenses. Similarly, clouds blocking the light of the moon are similar to nervousness or distractions which "cloud" the opponent's movements and physical intentions, making it difficult to apply the appropriate technique and leave you vulnerable to attack.

Tsuki No Kokoro: (mind like the moon) this concept refers to the need to be constantly aware of the totality of your opponent and his movements, just as moonlight shines equally on everything within its range. With the thorough development of this attitude, the consciousness will be immediately aware of any opening in the opponent's defenses. Clouds blocking the light of the moon are likened to nervousness and distractions which interfere with correct apprehension of the opponent's movements and make it impossible to find an opening and to apply the proper technique.

— Sensei H. Nishiyama