

Sensei's Corner

Warrior Perception

A warrior, while engaged in a conversation, perpetually scans the area. The eyes subtly shift, taking notice of the surroundings or the arena. This attribute is hardly noticeable and appears to be a half-hearted disinterested glance here and there. The peripheral vision concept is the Gan precept, and the primary tool of any military, police officer, martial artist or warrior. It is a lifesaving mechanism without which the warrior would be useless to himself and others. It also must be utilized on an almost sub-conscious level, allowing the warrior to key in on hundreds of indicators simultaneously without dwelling on one or two. Then, when something unusual triggers a response the warrior acts immediately with whatever action is needed to do the job. Gan is the most important survival technique for people performing dangerous jobs.

We put aside the etiquette of what is considered proper conduct between people engaged in conversation. Looking into someone's eyes is secondary to seeing everything at once. The true warrior understands when another person does not constantly keep his eyes fixed on his or her eyes during a conversation. This is especially important in a fighting situation. During a battle, you should not keep your eyes fixed on your opponent's eyes. There is too much to see in the eyes: fear, anger, emotion, which are all irrelevant to you at the moment of battle. Your main concern should be to attack the opponent if necessary. Block or shift from his attacks and ultimately win, as quickly as possible, without dwelling on your subject or his emotions. He is, at that moment of battle, an object rather than a human being. You must also put aside your own feelings during the heat of the fight, even a fraction of a second is too much time to waste on emotional thoughts.