

Monday, August 6, 2007

Don't force it; listen to your teammates.

Â Â Practicing life andÂ law as a harmonious whole. Â This past weekend, I walked with my sixteen-month-old son through the park, which included soccer practices in progress. He loves watchingÂ live soccer and football, so I pay attention along with him. Â To a group of junior high school-age players, the coach said, "Don't force it. Listen to your teammates, instead of keeping your head down." I remarked to my son that no team athletic coach had ever given me such beneficial advice.Â I have mixed feelings about conventional team sports. On the one hand, conventional team sportsÂ focus too much on competition between sides,Â rather than on cooperation among all to achieve a solution and harmony. Always there is a winner and loser, which is a rather extreme result; then, again, that is what trials are about in many ways.Â Conventional team sportsÂ often involve male-only teams. They often invade players' privacy through drug testing. On the other hand, conventional team sports teach players teamwork, patience, and discipline, and help keep people physically and mentally fit. Â My t'ai chi teacher Len Kennedy teaches "No hurry, no worry." He also asks how we handle change. Do we resist it? Do we deny it? Or, do we do what we are supposed to do, which is to accept the change and work with it? He teaches about practicing the t'ai chi form in unison, as doing otherwise will not get us to tao when practicing in a group, he says. He teaches about using soft energy to push one hundred pounds. This is similar to, and goes beyond, the soccer coach's recent lesson of "Don't force it. Listen to your teammates."Â Applied to the trial lawyer arena, all this shows the power of practicing t'ai chi in litigation battle. At our best, we do not get all angry, fuming and resistant when a judge throws us an onerous curve ball. Instead, we accept the change, and try to turn it to our best advantage. Jon Katz.

Posted by Jon Katz in Persuasion at 00:06