

# IT'S THE LITTLE THINGS

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“What you do in the little things, is what you do in life!”. I heard this recently in a book I was listening to.

That statement has immense power when you think about it.

It made me first think about how we behave at martial arts.

Everything! And I mean everything - from the way we step into the dojang (*read dojo or whatever place of training you use*), bowing as we enter the dojang, or when we step on and off the mat, the way we bow (slow and deep, with respect to our art, our master and where we train), the way we treat our belt, ironing our uniform, turning and fixing our uniform when given the opportunity – **every little thing has a big impact. But why?**

I think because what we practice and do in small, every day, mundane things, **creates in us a mindset** of either doing and being our best no matter what or doing things halfheartedly and without care for the outcome.

And developing that mindset (whichever way we go), then overflows and comes to play in the very big things in life.

So if you show the utmost respect for the dojang, the instructors, your uniform, your behaviour, every little thing about coming to training, then that spills over into what you achieve from taking part in martial arts, and to how you show up elsewhere in your life.

I've also read a meme that talked about **how you practice is how you compete**. It's the same thing.

If you do poomsae or sparring practice or other moves at martial arts half-heartedly, you develop this as a mindset and its very hard to then turn on the good stuff when it really matters (like gradings, or worse still real life confrontations).

However, if you do everything to the best of your ability and try your hardest every time, that both **improves the quality of your training** and sets you up to think like that in more difficult situations you might face.



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That first statement about the way we do the little things also got me to thinking about life. How many times do we fail to give a task our best shot, taking the easier route in a homework assignment, or something we do at work?

Every time we make a limited effort in something, **it sets us up mentally to do the same in other areas of life**. The job that we really want, if we didn't show up as doing our best in everything we've been given, then we are unlikely to be the person given the job we want. Achieving what we want through our schooling and study, is unlikely to happen unless we **put in the effort to do our best every time**.

It also applies to how we show up at school or work – looking like we care about what we are doing (easy stuff like shining your shoes counts – I recently bought a pair of boots to wear to work and its amazing how much people noticed I stood up taller and carried myself with pride just from a small change in footwear, but I've also noticed they are losing that new shoe shine so its time I pull out the boot polish and bring back the spark!).

I'm not saying everyone has to look the same or that life comes down to appearances, but making an effort in what you wear or how its clean and pressed can make a huge difference to how you feel and carry yourself, and to how people notice you.

There's a mindset people are happy to create in themselves which is that near enough is good enough. In small things, maybe that feels true, but when things start to really matter, then near enough may be miles off what we want.

So – what do we do? **Focus on the little things**. Take care of your uniform and your equipment (or what belongs to the dojang), demonstrate respect every time in the dojang and towards instructors (and to your parents, friends, family, whoever), try your hardest in everything you do (martial arts practice, school work, your job), take some care and pride in how you come across.

**The more you demonstrate this attitude in the little things, the more the big things will take care of themselves.**

