

“Discipline”

Word defined as:

1. Training expected to produce a specific character or pattern of behavior. 2. Controlled behavior resulting from such training. 3. A state of order based on submission to rules and authority. 4. Punishment intended to correct or train. 5. A set of rules or methods. 6. A branch of knowledge or teaching. – v. –plined, –plin•ing. 1. To train by instruction and practice. 2. To punish [*Lat. disciplina, discipulus, Disciple.*] *The American Heritage dictionary 3rd edition.*

One cannot disagree with the above definition of “discipline”. When we all look back on how we were trained, we can all see how discipline played one of the biggest roles in producing order and character among us. When we are loose, we know we all must pull ourselves back tight. Discipline also involves listening to instructions and honoring direct orders given regardless of the nature or wisdom behind such order. Adolf Hitler once said on March 30, 1941, at the Hague conference, “I do not expect my generals to understand me, but I shall expect them to obey my orders”.

When discipline comes into play, we are able to listen and do. Disobedience clearly displays no discipline at all. When we are disobedient to orders given, we are then punished which is intended to correct disobedient behaviors, ultimately meant to restore discipline.

This punishment is not intended to harm, belittle or disrespect the soldier but to make him understand that disobedience will not be accepted. Without discipline, we have no order. Once we are without order, then comes chaos. When chaos emerges then follows self-destruction.

Military methods of discipline trains the soldier to fulfill any orders given. In combat being capable of following orders keeps the soldier alive when facing a life and death situation. A set of instructions are given before sent on a mission regarding what’s to be expected, who they are dealing with and what methods of action they should take if something goes wrong. The outcome of their mission depends solely on how well a soldier follows instructions. The proper following of instructions also protects the other soldiers who are a part of your team. Who will come back alive and who will come back dead once the mission is complete depends on discipline.

Discipline is more than just submission to the rules and set of instructions. It also involves knowing your position and when to follow rules and instructions without being told. Once you know your position you know how to occupy that duty.

If a set of instructions are provided, one should know what the instructions were 30 minutes later. If we don’t, then a question arises, “Were we really listening or not?”

Discipline is not an ability we develop in a day’s time. Over the course of constant training, discipline will be developed. Discipline will be engrained. We will know what instructions to follow at any given moment.

The development of discipline is frustrating because the vast amount of training involved opens us to the many aspects about us that we have to fix. The many weaknesses that we possess will make their way to the surface for not only ourselves to see but others who are around us will be able to see these weaknesses clearly as well. Turning weakness into strength formulates discipline.

– Christopher Balmer