

## Always A Student

By Sensei Paul Jewell

Since the first day my training began in the Martial Arts, I have always considered myself as a developing student. As you progress through the kyu grades more and more responsibility is passed on to you. Many think that once you achieve Shodan, the role as a student stops and the role as an instructor begins. In some ways this is true. Certainly kyu ranks will look at you as an instructor or mentor to gain knowledge.

However if we think at Shodan, the emphasis on continuing our personal growth and development stops we will quickly find this is far from the truth. Much will be gained and experienced as we continue to learn and refine our technique, mental attitude and focus.

As I have now attained the rank of Yondan through the instruction and guidance of my instructors, I realize even more than ever that there is still much to be learned. I, as we all should, eagerly await the next lesson my instructors will share with me. It is then up to me, what I do with it. I prefer to take my new knowledge and continue to practice and gain an understanding of what it is I am doing, until I am ready for further "fine points." If we do not take the opportunity to enhance our understanding of what it is we are doing our technique will only modestly improve. If however we "search out" extra lessons, mat time or an improved understanding of what we already know, we will find our personal growth and development will be greatly enhanced.

Never forget there is always a lesson to be learned if you are willing to open your mind to being a student.