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Reflections on Chushin

No good time is without difficulty

By Francis Ferris
2002 Convention Director

Since my Kiai Echo editorship ended in 1996, you could say I was getting soft. I maintained the status quo of all righteous jujutsuka – going to classes, conventions, bouncing around the country as the *wandering uke*, and even opening another thriving American Judo & Jujitsu Federation dojo with my partners, Cyndi Ferris and Gary Smith. But was this enough? I needed a mission, and for my sins you gave me one: *Chushin*

It all started when Ed Shatzen, chair of the AJJF Operations Committee, asked me if I would put on a convention. Of course, he knew the answer before he asked the question. My eyes widened and I envisioned an incredible adventure. And it was.

When Kiai Echo Editor Dan Browning suggested that I write an article about the experience, I thought, no sweat. After all, there was so much to say. But now I don't know what great

insight to pass on in a few lines. Words fall short.

There is no how-to manual for AJJF conventions. There are procedures, of course, and there were many helpful friends at my home and many eager hands helping out. But there was nothing anyone could tell me that I didn't learn from the trenches. We did not win all of our battles, and we even lost some big ones. But today my team is stronger for the tribulations. We demonstrated *chusin*, True Heart, with a goal of producing the best convention we could. And we did.

The formula for convention success is simple and may work for most everything in life.

Surround yourself with good people and make them leaders. Delegate, believe and let go. Strive for quality in all things, from location, to instruction, to food, and to the many extras that make conventions pleasant and memorable. These extras are important; the more the better. Pay attention to detail because

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