

Aikido Center of Los Angeles, LLC, 1211 N. Main Street, Los Angeles, CA 90012, Tel: (323) 225-1424 www.aikidocenterla.com



# The Aikido Center of Los Angeles

## 道の為、世の為、人の為 合気道

# The Aiki Dojo

Direct Affiliation: Aikido World Headquarters, 17-18 Wakamatsu-cho, Shinjuku-ku, Tokyo, Japan  
Los Angeles Sword & Swordsmanship Society Kenshinkai  
Furuya Foundation

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O'Sensei Memorial Service

### **Reflections From the Seminar** by David Ito Aikido Chief Instructor

Our annual O'Sensei Memorial Seminar was a huge success and I am proud of everyone's hard work and dedication. I wish to thank Itoh Sensei, Izawa Sensei, Alamarz Sensei, Blevins Sensei, and all of our guests from around the US and the world for supporting us. I am very proud of all of our students and instructors, and our guests were equally impressed with everyone. The comments from our guests included things like, "exceptional," "wonderful," and "great teamwork." Everybody trained very hard, but what I am happiest about is that the dojo members showed that they have become a community.

The hallmark of a truly great martial arts school is not in how strong they are physically, but the discipline the students display and how they treat each other and our

guests. Anyone can throw someone down hard and without care while trying to look good. True Aikidoists have self discipline; they care and think of others before themselves. To me the indicators that the dojo had become a community were when I saw students coming early or staying late to help clean or bring food to the people who stayed over at lunchtime to watch the dojo, when students washed our guests' uniforms, and the other little things that might have gone unnoticed. The dojo has become a community of people who care about each others' welfare, which Sensei always envisioned in a dojo; our achieving this pleases me most.

We take the measure of a community by observing the how often its members sacrifice for each other. There is no tangible reward in doing for others so this sacrifice becomes the pinnacle of a spiritual practice.

*Continued on page 4...*



## Moriyama Sensei Visit

May 27-31, 2009

Please see schedule on page 4

**Everyone is invited!**



**What is Form?**

by Reverend Kensho Furuya

I think the concept of form as it is understood in martial arts is actually more complex than what most people think. I think there needs to be a little bit of explanation here.

Most of us think of prescribed movements or a set sequence of techniques such as a kata. Generally,

“form”, to us, has a negative nuance of hard, inflexible, old, stale, or the opposite of freedom and fluidity. Within the dojo, there is a prescribed method of training and many detailed rules. The purpose of this type of form is to create a context within which we refine and discipline ourselves. The concept of the individual refinement and attainment of enlightenment or self-understanding is a unique characteristic of almost all Eastern disciplines.

There is a form in the techniques as well but this is where people make the most mistakes, especially in Aikido. Most students idealize “free” form, or something which can spring from themselves freely and “creatively.” Oftentimes, it is regrettably movement which is undisciplined, lacking in foundation and skill, and self-willed, meaning that it is not based on purity of thought and action refined through mastery, but hit-and-miss guessing. “I’ll try this and see if it works.” or “This feels good, this must be right!” or “Look at me, I discovered something new!” is how many people practice. Generally, this type of focus doesn’t get anyone anywhere and eventually leads to disappointment, misunderstanding, and inevitable failure.

Have you ever studied very, very carefully and very sensitively, your own movement in a very simple action such as picking up a glass of water or cup of tea? You want the glass and see it on the table and your hand reaches out to take hold of it and bring it to your mouth so you can take a drink. It is actually quite a numerous and complex series of actions, yet you do it freely and naturally and think nothing of it. Your hand doesn’t over- or under-reach the object. It automatically weighs the glass so that you apply enough strength to raise it, and you balance it very carefully so that you do not spill it all over yourself and it finds your mouth and your lips open and all your muscles go gulp, gulp and your tummy and throat are happy and satisfied.

This happens in a split second, almost without a thought and you think nothing of it. Of course, as a baby, you probably split it many times on yourself and your mommy and as a very elderly person you might begin to spill it again, if your hand becomes too weak or unsteady. It comes through practice over the years you are growing up and the tens of thousands of times you took a drink of water. As a matter of fact, your senses automatically and easily sense and differentiate between the hot cup of tea and

cool glass of water and the way you pick it up changes accordingly. This, in martial arts, is real technique or form. There is no wasted motion or energy to pick up the glass of water to take a drink. Within the usual method you use to pick up the glass, there is continuous and constant calculation and adjustment of distance and weight, all done freely and almost without thought.

The thought or idea of having a glass of water and drinking the water is in perfect harmony. This is real martial arts technique. And this is what we call “form.” And like learning to drink water from your days as a little baby, it takes many years of practice. “Form” is thought and action in perfect harmony. Please do not make a mistake. The “form” of training and education which is a “prescribed, literate form” of discipline which we determine on a conscious level leads to the development of the “form” of technique and which takes many years to polish and perfect. In regards to “form,” an ancient master said this, “When carving the handle of an axe, the model is not far away.” Which, of course, is the shape of your hand. Please train to understand the “form” of technique more clearly in your practice.

*Editor’s note:* This was a posting from December 11, 2000 on the Aikido Center of Los Angeles’ daily message.

**Branch Dojos**

**Hacienda La Puente Aikikai**

Hacienda Heights, California  
Chief Instructor: Tom Williams

**Aikido Kodokai**

Salamanca, Spain  
Chief Instructor: Santiago Garcia Almaraz  
www.kodokai.com

**Veracruz Aikikai**

Veracruz, Mexico  
Chief Instructors:  
Dr. Jose Roberto Magallanes Molina  
Dr. Alvaro Rodolfo Hernandez Meza  
www.veracruz-aikikai.com

**Aikido Renbukai of Arizona**

Surprise, Arizona  
Chief Instructor: Michael Van Ruth  
www.aikidorenbukai.com



Special thanks to Eric Russell and Clif Bar for providing Clif Bars, Power Shot Bloks and Clif bar Electrolyte Drink Mix.



**Our Neighbors, Our Food**

by Maria Murakawa, Aikido 2nd Dan

Apart from Aikido being one of my greatest hobbies, food is what gives me the energy to practice, and has become one of my passions as well. So I would like to indulge myself and write about a wonderful Thai eatery discovered by Michelle Cabrera, which she later took me to experience.

I am actually talking about a Thai market, a place we have started calling "Thai Costco." The actual name is LAX-C Supermarket. It lies on the outskirts of Chinatown, none other than across the street from our very own dojo, on Main Street. The good stuff happens when you enter the parking lot: you face two squat food stands, one of which serves fresh *som tam* (green papaya salad) prepared right before your eyes with a mortar and pestle by a sweet Thai lady. You would think you were in Thailand as she pounds all the ingredients together, and when you take that first bite, the flavors taste so authentic you can almost believe you were on a beach in Phuket. She also adjusts the sauces to your taste. This same stall also serves *kanom krok* (coconut cake), which they make in pans much like what is used for Japanese *takoyaki*, or Danish pancakes called *aebleskivers*. The spherical balls practically burst in your mouth with coconut-custard goodness. The neighboring stall serves chicken, beef,



and pork satay, or barbecued meats on a stick (\$1.50 each). Be sure to ask for the peanut sauce.

Once you've torn yourself away from these stalls and their delicacies, you'll move on into the massive warehouse-like space where you will be greeted with everything from bulk groceries, fresh produce, restaurant supplies to furniture -- hence our affectionate nickname of "Thai Costco." But the real find is the prepared foods counter you will see when you enter the market, near the checkout lanes all the way to the left-hand side. You can select from an array of spicy curries and stews, as well as roast duck which comes with its own rich and savory gravy, and that famous Southeast Asian dish, Hainan chicken and rice. There are also wonderful fried foods such as deep fried taro root which comes with a sweet and sour sauce, and flaky curry mini pies, which believe me, become very addicting. Don't forget to save room for dessert: you can choose from crunchy fried banana (3 pieces for \$1), mango with sticky rice, and *kabocha* (Japanese pumpkin) filled with coconut custard, among others. Just point and choose; the staff are very nice and friendly. They have very reasonable prices, from \$5-\$8 per dish or combo, and generous portions. The counter stops serving food at 5:00 PM so it's a great place to go after practice on the weekends, and it's also a great way to get know our neighbors!

**Ebb and Flow**

by Mark Ehrlich, Aikido 2nd Kyu

We've made it through another seminar, and by all accounts it seems we enjoyed a great success. I know that our visitors shared many kind observations with Ito Sensei about how well our students knew their Aikido basics, and how the knowledge of those basics allowed them to negotiate the sometimes treacherous territory of not only learning advanced techniques which may feel strange, but also learning them within the context of a crowded and busy tatami. Congratulations to everyone for sharing your energy, your etiquette, and your enthusiasm with our guests.

After such an extended time of keeping busy, it seems natural for many people to take a break from practice, nurse their bruised bodies, and settle back into an easy pace of training. I certainly would urge everyone to strike a balance in their lives; neither Aikido nor anything else, I hope, throws us askew unless we make certain choices. Having said that, however, I urge everyone to keep up the good work -- not



out of aspirations to impress or intimidate others, but to reap the benefit that comes from doing something you like a little bit each day. If we all start developing this habit now, we should have no trouble hosting our guests from Pearl City Aikido in Hawaii, who will come visit and train with us during the last week of May. Based on past experience I know we all will show them a joyful, vibrant practice as well as the hospitality that has begun to earn us a high reputation.

For my part, I've begun to experiment with ignoring as much as possible the events on the dojo calendar in the sense of working on the mat towards some goal. I'd like to train every day, or almost every day, because I like training at least some of the time. That way, I need not worry about what someone thinks of my technique or how many people I want to attend class -- I just arrive and go about the business of practice. I hope that this behavior gradually replaces my often anxious ambitious mind so that, day in and day out, I simply train, floating peacefully, as it were, like the rumor of a cloud over the innocent ears of the trees.



Reflections From the Seminar continued from page 1...

This self-sacrifice embodies the concept of ichi-go ichi-e or "one time, one meeting." This moment shall never occur again and we are defined by what we do in that moment. It would have been very normal for people not to want to help out and stay within their comfort zone and only do things that felt good, but people came early, slept a little less, stayed a little later to ensure the success of the seminar, and make certain that others were taken care of and this was very much ichi-go ichi-e. This occasion will never occur again and it is easy to be selfish and let it pass by with the "I will do it later" or "Somebody else will do it" attitude. If you only came for yourself, you missed the whole point of the seminar. The seminar was not to develop your technique or show off as much as it was to build our community and practice your etiquette and self discipline. I was impressed with how many people came to practice the last day our guests from Spain were in town. I know many were already tired from the seminar and week-long training, but many people showed up and trained hard. This farewell, I am sure, meant a lot to Almaraz Sensei and his students.

At the O'Sensei memorial service, Reverend Kojima spoke about the character of do in Aikido. He explained that the do represented the path of how we live our lives and that in our lives we should be present in each moment. It is in living each moment that we embody the concept of ichi-go ichi-e where there is no chance to make it up later. Training hard, caring for others' safety, cleaning the dojo, and washing uniforms all embody our training and represent the do or path that we choose daily. I feel blessed to have a dojo with so many great students and I feel honored to be part of this community.



# Moriyama Sensei Visit

## May 27-31, 2009

### May 27 Wednesday

5:15-6:15 PM Larry Armstrong  
6:30-7:30 PM David Ito

### May 28 Thursday

6:00-7:00 PM David Ito  
7:15-8:15 PM Moriyama Sensei

### May 29 Friday

6:00-7:00 PM David Ito  
7:15-8:15 PM Moriyama Sensei

### May 30 Saturday

9:30-10:30 AM David Ito  
10:45 AM-12:45 PM Moriyama Sensei  
~No Aikido Instructors Intensive~

### May 31 Sunday

10:15 AM-12:15 PM Moriyama Sensei

*Schedule is subject to change without notice.*

*This schedule replaces ACLA's typical class schedule for the above dates.*

Moriyama Sensei, 7th Dan is the Chief Instructor of Pearl City Aikido Dojo located on the island of Oahu. He has been studying Aikido since the early 1950s.

***Everyone is invited!***



O'Sensei Memorial Seminar  
April 24-26, 2009



**Dojo Diagnosis: The head Injury**

by Shaun Menashe, Aikido 3rd Kyu

We all enjoy a joyful and vigorous practice on the mat. Aikido's many throws send us flying through the air and teach us the importance of good, and more importantly, safe ukemi. However, despite our best efforts, accidents happen and we may find ourselves a little too intimately involved with the tatami. When we are not able to prevent such injuries from occurring, being prepared can make all the difference.

Of all the injuries martial arts has to offer, the head injury may be one of the most common and potentially devastating and it is important that we understand the appropriate response in the case of such an emergency. Head injury is a general term used to describe any trauma to the head, or more specifically, the brain itself. This can range from open head injuries, where breaking the surface of the skull results in serious fractures to the bones and other structures of the head, to closed type injuries, where trauma is contained within the skull. Closed head injuries are serious and may go unnoticed because the evidence of injury is not as obvious. The absence of blood or break sadly does not equate to the absence of trauma.

The most likely head injury that we may encounter during our practice is the concussion, or the proverbial knock-out. Concussions are most often caused by a sudden direct blow to the head. After the brain is jolted, it can ricochet into the sides skull, often causing bruising injuries to nerves and damage to the surrounding blood vessels. This can result in impaired vision, loss of balance, or even loss of consciousness. Concussions are difficult to diagnose because they can not be seen. Although you may have a visible cut, bruise, or feel the typical cartoon bump, the real damage lies in the interior.

Some of the signs of a concussion are:

- Confusion or feeling dazed
- Clumsiness
- Slurred speech
- Nausea or vomiting
- Headache
- Balance problems or dizziness
- Blurred vision
- Sensitivity to light and/or noise
- Sluggishness
- Ringing in the ears
- Behavior or personality changes
- Concentration difficulties
- Memory loss

Concussions vary in severity and can range from symptoms lasting as little as 15 seconds to 15 minutes. It is the severity of the concussion that dictates the type of treatment necessary.

As long as the height of the fall does not exceed your own and there is no loss of consciousness or presence of the symptoms described above, minor first aid or sitting out the rest of practice is recommended. In these instances a doctor's visit is not usually necessary and injuries may be treated at home or at the dojo if equipped to do so. These victims should be encouraged to stay off the road and regain their bearings before leaving the dojo to prevent further injuries. If that same fall resulted one or more of the symptoms listed above, a trip to the local emergency room is strongly recommended.

Some of the throws we negotiate in Aikido generate a great deal of force and this can significantly multiply the dangers associated with injury. In the event of a severe head injury immediately call 911 and follow first aid guidelines until help arrives. The person should be encouraged to lie still and avoid movement of the head and neck. If the victim needs to vomit, carefully roll them onto their side without turning the head. Since brain injuries are serious, safeguarding yourself is crucial and it is important to seek the appropriate medical attention.

It is important to remember that, as martial artists, it may be difficult to walk away from our practice and take a break to evaluate our injuries. While some aches and pains are a part of the practice experience, others are vital to

our well-being and must be addressed accordingly. In my own personal experience, it can be difficult to determine when an injury warrants sitting on the side lines. Not too long ago I was in the dojo during a serious injury. It was very hard to watch someone in pain on the mat. That, coupled with the most intense lecture I had ever heard Sensei deliver, left me reeling from the experience and everyone involved felt very badly about the mishap. Of course, mistakes happen and that student is happily back to practice and stronger, and more involved in the dojo than ever. As the bond of the dojo community grows stronger I find myself exercising more compassion in my practice. As Sensei remarked, the uke loans you his body for the benefit of your practice, to help us become stronger and better martial artists. Remember, safety first!



Kei Izawa Sensei throwing Michael Van Ruth

**Aikido Center of Los Angeles:**

*We are a not-for-profit, traditional Aikido Dojo dedicated to preserving the honored values and traditions of the arts of Aikido and Iaido. With your continued understanding and support, we hope that you also will dedicate yourself to your training and to enjoying all the benefits that Aikido and Iaido can offer.*

**The Aiki Dojo Newsletter**

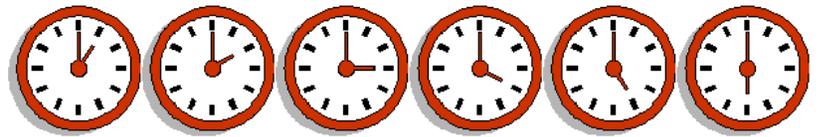
Publisher: David Ito

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Photographer: Larry Armstrong



JAPANESE LESSON



日本語

Ima nanji desu ka?: What time is it?

Pronounced: Ee-mah nah-nn-gee-dez kah?

いまなんじですか?

Ji means o'clock or hour and fun (or pun), depending on the word it's attached to, refers to minutes. To create the time, combine the ji with the fun (or pun) and add desu. Desu means it is.

For example:

1:00 is ichiji desu

1:30 is ichiji han desu or ichiji sanjuppun desu

Yoji nifun desu is 4:02

Sanji sanjuugofun desu is 3:35

Example dialogue:

John: Sumimasen, Ima nanji desuka?

Mary: Rokuji gojuuippun desu.

John: Arigatoo Gozaimasu.

To distinguish between morning and afternoon use the terms gozen and gogo. Gogo means morning or AM and gozen means afternoon or PM. Note that gozen and gogo should appear before the time and not after.

gogo sanji desu is 3:00 PM

gozen niji juuippun desu is 2:11 AM

The Japanese are devoted to the concept of time. All social interactions are governed by punctuality in order to preserve group harmony. Tardiness is seen as rude and impolite and most Japanese usually arrive 30 minutes early for appointments. Many of you probably remember the scene from the movie Lost in Translation in which the Japanese hosts were always waiting for Bill Murray in the lobby. This typical Japanese behavior which is influenced by the host and guest mentality. They come early and wait to demonstrate to the guest that everything is taken care of and they should not worry about things. Punctuality is the first predictor in a relationship in which you are trying to build trust. It shows that you care about the relationship. It is one thing to waste your time, but to waste other people's time is unacceptable.

I recently read in a Japanese newspaper that a recent Tokyo survey concluded that in Japan only five percent of women and four percent of men admitted to having wristwatches that are set inaccurately. Late trains and subways are newsworthy items in Japan, which would never even make it on the TV in the United States. Sensei was a stickler for class starting and ending on time.

Hours

Minutes

1 o'clock	ichiji	:01	ippun	:16	juuroppun	:31	sanjuuippun	:46	yonjuuroppun
2 o'clock	niji	:02	nifun	:17	juunanafun	:32	sanjuunifun	:47	yonjuunanafun
3 o'clock	sanji	:03	sanpun	:18	juuhappun	:33	sanjuusanpun	:48	yonjuuhappun
4 o'clock	yoji	:04	yonpun	:19	juukyufun	:34	sanjuuyonpun	:49	yonjuukyufun
5 o'clock	goji	:05	gofun	:20	nijuppun	:35	sanjuugofun	:50	gojuppun
6 o'clock	rokuji	:06	roppun	:21	nijuuippun	:36	sanjuuroppun	:51	gojuuippun
7 o'clock	shichiji	:07	nanafun	:22	nijuunifun	:37	sanjuunanafun	:52	gojuunifun
8 o'clock	hachiji	:08	happun	:23	nijuusanpun	:38	sanjuuhappun	:53	gojuusanpun
9 o'clock	kuji	:09	kyufun	:24	nijuuyonpun	:39	sanjuukyufun	:54	gojuuyonpun
10 o'clock	juuji	:10	juppun	:25	nijuugofun	:40	yonjuppun	:55	gojuugofun
11 o'clock	juuichiji	:11	juuippun	:26	nijuuroppun	:41	yonjuuippun	:56	gojuuroppun
12 o'clock	juuniji	:12	juunifun	:27	nijuunanafun	:42	yonjuunifun	:57	gojuunanafun
		:13	juusanpun	:28	nijuuhappun	:43	yonjuusanpun	:58	gojuuhappun
		:14	juuyonpun	:29	nijuukyufun	:44	yonjuuyonpun	:59	gojuukyufun
		:15	juugofun	:30	sanjuppun or han	:45	yonjuugofun		



"It is said that 1 million dollars cannot buy back one minute of your life. Use your time wisely and carefully."

~Anonymous



# Aikido TRAINING SCHEDULE

## Sundays

9:00-10:00 AM Children's Class  
10:15-11:15 AM Open

## Mondays

5:15-6:15 PM Fundamentals  
6:30-7:30 PM Open

## Tuesdays

6:30-7:30 PM Open

## Wednesdays

5:15-6:15 PM Fundamentals  
6:30-7:30 PM Open  
7:45-8:45 PM Weapons

## Thursdays

6:30-7:30 PM Bokken

## Fridays

5:15-6:15 PM Fundamentals  
6:30-7:30 PM Open

## Saturdays

9:30-10:30 AM Open  
10:40-11:40 AM Open

6:30 AM Instructor's Intensive: last Saturday of the month.\*

\* This class is not open for visitors to watch.

# Iaido TRAINING SCHEDULE

## TRADITIONAL JAPANESE IAIDO SWORDSMANSHIP

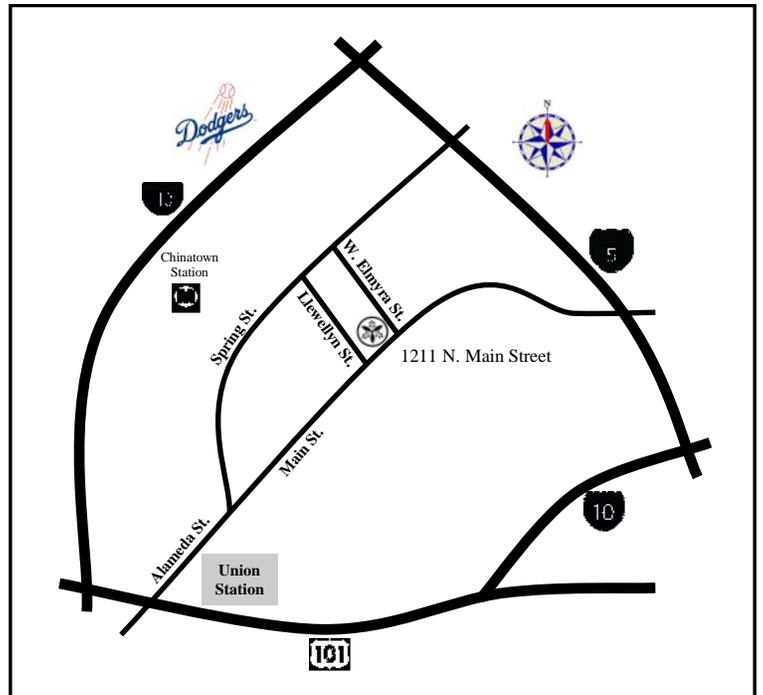
## Saturdays:

7:15-8:15 AM Beginning  
8:15-9:15 AM Intermediate-Advanced

Sundays: 7:45-8:45 AM

Thursdays: 6:30-7:30 PM (Bokken Practice)  
7:30-8:30 PM

No classes on the last weekend of the month.



## Meditation Class

Saturdays: 12:00-1:30 PM

(This class is open to the public and is free of charge.)

*We are directly affiliated with:*  
**AIKIDO WORLD HEADQUARTERS**

Aikido So-Hombu Dojo - Aikikai

17-18 Wakamatsu-cho, Shinjuku-ku, Tokyo, JAPAN

*We are committed to the study and practice of the teachings of the Founder of Aikido, Morihei Ueshiba and his legitimate successors, Kisshomaru Ueshiba and the present Doshu Moriteru Ueshiba.*

The Furuya Foundation and the Aikido Center of Los Angeles admit students of any race, color, and national or ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. The Furuya Foundation and ACLA do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, and national or ethnic origin in administration of their educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship and loan programs, and athletic and other school-administered programs.



## Finding Our Dojo



We are located at  
1211 N. Main Street  
Los Angeles, CA 90012  
Tel: (323) 225-1424

E-mail: [info@aikidocenterla.com](mailto:info@aikidocenterla.com)

We are across the street and one block northwest from the Chinatown Metro Station.

**The entrance is on Elmyra Street.**

**No appointment necessary to watch classes or join:**

You are welcome to visit us anytime during any of our Open or Fundamental classes. Please come early.