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The Aikido Center of Los Angeles LLC

忘れられた心を探す合気道 合気道場

The Aiki Dojo

Affiliation: The Aikido World Headquarters, 17-18 Wakamatsu-cho, Shinjuku-ku, Tokyo, Japan
Rev. Kensho Furuya Foundation
Los Angeles Sword & Swordsmanship Society Kenshinkai
Nanka Yamanashi Kenjin Kai Southern California Yamanashi Prefectural Association
Los Angeles Police Department Martial Artist Advisory Panel

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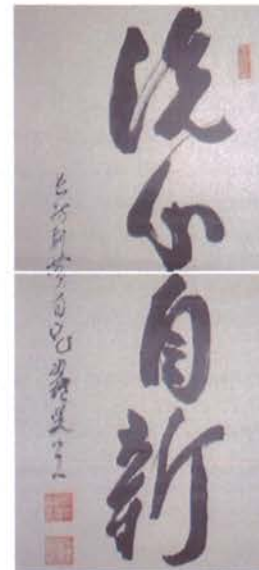
Daily Practice: Ken Watanabe & Mark Ty

"Living In The City" -Special Cable Program Taping. June 18.

On June 18, we taped a special "reality" show program introducing Aikido to several young city youths from around the country who have never been exposed to this type of cultural or ethnic discipline nor to a martial art.

These youths were not told that they would be practicing Aikido but were brought to our Dojo in Little Tokyo after a tour of nearby Chinatown. It was quite a surprise to them when they entered the Dojo and found themselves in a totally different environment of a traditional Japanese dojo and a half dozen black belts seated in a straight line along the mats.

Their first response was to show a great deal of attitude and some were a little hostile and out of control at first, especially when they were given very detailed instructions on how to bow when entering the Dojo and when beginning practice. They did not like having to sit in a straight line with their knees folded under in seiza and the backs very straight. They didn't like the idea of bowing and then listening to all of the instructions. But during the warmup exercises and the eventual class, they began to get more comfortable and started to enjoy the class. They seemed to be very attentive to my short explanation and



洗心自新

Sen Shin Ji Shin
Purify Your Mind &
Renew Yourself
(Each Day).

Brushed by Narita Hozui,
Chief Abbot of Sojiji Temple,
1906-1988.

Just as we clean and take care of our bodies each day, we should also clean or "purify" our minds. Like the nice feeling of putting on a fresh clean shirt in the morning, or changing to a new outlook, we should continually renew ourselves mentally. This is a part of our Aikido practice.



Sensei's private quarters and study, 3rd floor, during photo shoot for upcoming book on architecture in Los Angeles. June 5.

Upcoming Special Events

July 11. Lotus Festival

July 18. Pasadena Buddhist Church Obon

August 7. Annual Nisei Week Festival

From Salamanca Kodokai, Spain



Left to Right: Carlos, Sensei, Santiago & Carlos from the Salamanca Dojo in Spain. Visiting for training and our 30th Anniversary.

In all, my trip to Los Angeles had something new and special. This time was specially important because of two things. One was the 30th Anniversary of Furuya Sensei's Dojo in Little Tokyo and second because it was the first time that I bring two students, Carlos Almaraz and Oscar Castro with me to train under Furuya Sensei.

During the first week, the time goes fast because the preparations the of the 30th Anniversary, the memorial service for O-sensei and Kanai Sensei, and, of course, Aikido practice. And showing different places in Los Angeles to Carlos and Oscar, we have no time to rest. But all was always worthwhile.

Another special remembrance for us was the event at the New Otani Hotel, the dinner and the performances as the traditional Japanese Dance of Madame Fujima Kansuma Sensei, the Taiko drums of the Johnny Mori Sensei, the Blues of Mr. Jake La Botz and of course the presents from Sensei which were given to all his guests. All this made that all of us will have good memories for all my life.

This time to Los Angeles, we have the chance to assist to the seminar of Yonemochi Sensei. This Sensei is a Managing Director Aikikai Foundation and the Director of Aikikai International Department in Tokyo, Japan.

His incredible power and how fast he move every time he do the techniques, even he was close to the 80 years old.

Carlos and Oscar have the great honor to be examined for their Dan Test under Yonemochi Sensei and I think that this will be a very good thing to remember in their Aikido careers.

The following week of this events, we spend time practicing Iaido and Aikido, many thanks to Ken Watanabe and Mark Ty to help me to my develop my Iaido with extra classes but specially to Furuya Sensei that he supervised all these classes, to withdraw from his work and rest to help me. Many thanks Sensei.

I would like to say thank you to all the students of Furuya Sensei who share his Aikido with my students and myself, in all this days.

And thanks to Kenny Furuya and David Ito for his hospitality to let us stay in their homes all of these days,

So one more time I come back to my home with my suit case full of presents and many work techniques and advice that I will work on this year in my Dojo with my students.

I hope that soon we can see you again and practice again in your Dojo and keep this knot of friendship for long time.
My best, Santiago

From The Veracruz Aikikai, Mexico



Veracruz delegation with Tom Williams and the Mrs. At the New Otani Hotel on April 28, 2004.

DEAR AND BELOVED SENSEI: THANK YOU is a very poor WORD to express our feelings and deepest GRATITUDE for the hospitality, teaching, harmony and great time that you made us feel while our stay at your 30 anniversary CELEBRATION of AIKIDO CENTER OF LOS ANGELES ORGANIZATION

The calid demonstration of your STUDENTS while practicing in your BEAUTIFUL AND ANTIQUE DOJO. The colorful of the SAMBASO Dance, THE SOUNDS OF THE Drums and Flute as well as the guitar blues played by your guest and the harmony and friendship showed of the people from SPAIN, PUERTO VALLARTA ETC INVITE US TO RETURN, some time again, but specially your TEACHINGS, WORDS AND ADVISE FROM YOU AND THE HONOR OF BEING WITH YOU AND SENSEI YONEMOCHI

I would hate to miss any names, so please thank them all and once again, DOOMO ARIGATOGOZAIMASU.
DR ROBERTO MAGALLANES M

05-29-04: Dear SENSEI: It has been a month now that we had the opportunity to be with you and your students and guests in your 30 th anniversary celebration, and we remember it with pleasure and excitement since it was a magnific experience We received the magazine where it shows such a wonderful celebration, and will wait for next month issue.

This time as always wishing you well I am writing in order to make and OPEN invitation for any of your STUDENTS that you recommend to COME TO VISIT us in VERACRUZ during this coming holiday season, like TOM AND WIFE did last year .

Veracruz is a nice old city and has beautiful surroundings like XALAPA and COATEPEC town where they cultivate one of the best coffee grounds in the world as well as site seen beauties, like anthropology museum, the city of Papantla and the TAJIN TONACAC culture etc etc

We offer to pay the plane ticket on MEXICANA economy class plus lets say room and board and very tasty MEXICAN SEA FOOD and more like scoop diving, fishing, river kayacking, it will all depend on the Visitor preferences and obviously practicing and learning from him AIKIDO ART in our DOJO

The visit could be planned according to the STUDENT time and necessities he or she could stay with us from one to two weeks any time in JULY OR AUGUST Hoping that one of them would accept the invitation under your recommendation we will be anxiously waiting for and answer. sincerely yours, Dr. Roberto Magallanes.

Sensei's Note: I will discuss with my Instructors and see who is the most appropriate to send to Mexico for instruction. Because I want to make sure that you receive the best instruction, I will think about this seriously. Many thanks for the invitation.

Aikido In Germany

Eckhardt Hemkemeier, Chief Instructor Seishinkan Hamburg, Germany

The Aikido came to Germany in the 50's to 60's by some Judoka, who have been in Japan for Judo or other martial arts. Specially a budoka, Gerd Wischnewski, did very good for Aikido in Germany.

He was in the 60's for some time in O'Sensei's Dojo, special taught by Shimizu Sensei, who was uchi-deshi in that time. The DAB, the German Aikido Federation was established and also Asai Sensei from Tokyo came to stay in Germany and established the Aikikai Germany. Later on, several teachers came to Germany or other European countries, Saito Sensei, Endo Sensei, Kobayashi Sensei, Yamaguchi Sensei, Kanetsuka Sensei and many more.

Shimizu Sensei came first in 1978, asked by some Judoka and Aikidoka, who knew Gerd Wischnewski. Shimizu Sensei became the titled of Chief Instructor for this group of Aikidoka.

Later on this people established the t.a.d., the Tendoryu Aikido federation of Germany in 1993. They have about 2500 members in Germany and many other groups now following, doing the same in Mexico, USA, France, Netherland, Belgium, Danmark, Yugoslavia, Jordania and Russia. I cannot count the members. The Aikikai is still headed by Asai Sensei, who did a lot for the Aikido in Germany too. The Iwama Ryu is also represented by a small group. Yoshinkai, Shin Shin Toitsu Aikido, Daitoryu and more Aikido styles you can find in Germany. Over all I guess that there are about 20 000 Aikidoka in Germany, influenced by many teachers, Japanese or western teachers.

For myself, I'm following the Tendoryu Aikido for 18 years now, leading the Tendoryu federation in Hamburg with 180 Aikidoka. The Tendoryu-Aikidoka are following strictly Shimizu Sensei, who is the founder of Tendoryu. Seminars are held by him twice a year in Germany for several weeks. His Master students are leading many seminars all over Europe, and some off them travelling to the

Tendokan frequently, like I do mostly every year.

The Aikido in Germany might be different from the other countries. That doesn't mean better or worse, it means, that here are existing for more than 100 years many sportclubs, supported by state. They have any kind of sport which exist. They are practicing own halls, schools sporthalls and very rarely in real Dojos.

Private Dojos are rare in Germany, so not as many Aikidoka know how it is in a Japanese style of Dojo, like Furuya Sensei's Dojo in LA. Sometimes the spirit of Aikido is missing here in Germany, it is to often compared with sport, that means technique, ranks, belt examinations and so on. If you have read Sensei's book, Kodo, so you will understand.

But some people here are still working very good for the spirit of Budo-Aikido, and this is very excepted by the public and the Japanese people here in Germany. In my Dojo again Japanese are coming and saying that the Seishinkan is real Dojo with Budo Spirit, and so there are more in Germany.

I hope I could give a little impression about Aikido in Germany, there are many nice Aikidoka from many groups and styles, open to everybody who likes to meet them in Germany. Welcome then, Yours,
Eckhardt Hemkemeier
Hamburg, 26.05.2004
Alsterdorferstr. 5
22299 Hamburg, Germany
ehemkemeier@gmx.net
www.aikido-dojo-seishinkan.de

From the Hacienda La Puente Branch Dojo:

Tom Williams, Chief Instructor

NEW STUDENTS

Sensei, I received an email over the weekend inquiring about taking Aikido at my class in Hacienda Heights. Occasionally, I get these in response to my listing in the AikiWeb dojo search.

This one was rather typical. Interested in Aikido, what is the cost of the lessons, monthly fee or contract? Of course, not interested in what the practice is like, what kind of style or who my teacher is. Nothing of substance about the art or what he might be getting into if he joins, just how much \$\$\$. I welcomed him to come anytime to check us out.

Unfortunately, if it follows the normal course of these things, it's unlikely he'll even follow up with a visit, though classes are free! If money is the most important issue, there's no charge, why not just come and practice? Still, not good enough for most people. Maybe I should charge \$100 per month and see if it changes people's perspective.

I don't really find it discouraging, though. It is just the way it is. People like the idea of Martial Arts, based on their experiences with movies or TV, but to actually commit to the practice, even when no money is involved, is too much to do. I just wonder why they bother writing me.

Hacienda La Puente Aikikai has a good, solid core of committed stu



Tom Williams Continued:

dents. Not a large dojo by any means, but a fine place to study Aikido in the Aikikai style. In the near future, we hope to have more students promoted to shodan. I would like more beginners. But lately that hasn't been our situation. I guess things go in cycles. I remember in the earlier years having 40 brand new students on the mat and only me to help them. What a great problem to have! Now, no new students. But, the group is working hard on basic technique and progressing very well and will be stronger and better able to work with new people when and if they arrive. Sincerely, Tom

Sensei's Commentary: NEW STUDENTS

Please do not get discouraged, nowadays, students look for dojos like shopping in a mall and looking for all of the sales and bargains. And from my own experience, it is always difficult for the instructor, I think, to see students come and go, seemingly never to appreciate all the efforts, care and concern that you may have shown for each of them. When we look at organizations today, they seem so big with hundreds and thousands of students and success today is always measured in numbers and money. In a traditional dojo however, the numbers are always small. In a large organization or a small dojo, if you can raise even one good, competent student in your lifetime, I think you can consider yourself very fortunate. Even in Zen temples, some larger places are called "factories" to produce Zen priests, and others, following older and stricter traditions, raise only a few good priests only once in a while. In whatever, do not lose hope and always be true to yourself, to Aikido and to your students. It is not a matter of how many and how much - you are a teacher, not a clerk in a store.

Living' In The City Cable Program Taping Continued: demonstration of Aikido technique. After class, all were given "zokin" and instructions on how to clean the mats and after clean-up, I gave another short lecture on martial arts, showed them a few Samurai swords, explaining a little about them and then answered a few of their questions.

Although they were quite hostile at first, all seemed to enjoy their first experience with Aikido and had very good things to say in the final individual interviews for the program. What impressed me was how well they did and how well my black belts handled the new recruits. I found it very interesting that their strongest impression was in the "discipline" and "order" of the dojo.

I think in their own "normal" environment and in the situation of living together for several weeks for this program, they has been a lot of

Loft Living Book-Dojo Featured:



With Barbara Thornburn of the Los Angeles Times, and Dominic, the photographer, for an all day photo shoot of the Dojo for her upcoming book, "LA Loft Living", dealing with unique loft spaces in Los Angeles. The Dojo is one of 25 lofts which will be featured .

Living City Continued: bad feelings, misunderstandings, conflicts and hostility towards each other. . . . Each one has their own feelings about the others. And like "real" life, some are friendly towards each other and some are very hard to get along with. . . . I think these youths found the order and etiquette of the Dojo and Aikido very refreshing and immediately saw how such "reigi-saho" can eliminate many problems in real life to avoid or prevent such misunderstandings and conflicts.

I am glad that I myself had this experience to see how Aikido works among such people who really did not want or ask to be in the dojo doing Aikido in the first place! It was extremely interesting to see how the order of the dojo works for these people and how they can apply to their own lives in "real" life. One young guy said, "My father taught me all of these rules which I rejected but now I see that they were not just arbitrary orders but each rule actually had a reason and purpose which I now see and can appreciate as I understand these very similar rules in Aikido."

As an example, when taught how to bow by my assistant, they thought they are merely following some arbitrary rule and rather wanted to reject it. Later, when it was explained that bowing has a particular form, in the sense that the right hand - for drawing the weapon, is always held back last - they began to see that the form of bowing actually has rhyme and reason to it. Once they understand the reason, they appreciated it much more.

Although I didn't quite have the time to explain the reason and purpose of clean-up after practice, I think that several caught on to the meaning on their own. Apparently, I deduced, living together with other strangers, some are not as clean as others or rather, not as neat as others and this has caused some misunderstandings. I think they also appreciate that the clean and orderly atmosphere of the Dojo brings a sense of peace and is quite refreshing.

Within the short time of taping this program, it was difficult to discuss many more topics about Aikido training and what it means. All in all, these young people went away with a good impression of Aikido and I think, within such a short time of one shortened class, it went rather well.

Inquiry From Student, Tokyo

05-14-05: Dear Furuya Sensei, I have read and enjoyed Sensei's words of wisdom at the website and in Kodo. I am currently training at a dojo in Tokyo and recently underwent a grading. Just before the grading, we were told that for 'jiyu waza', the grading was not an 'embu' and we should just be natural. However, being natural may mean repeating certain techniques, especially when uke keeps on rushing at you. Is this all right? May I know what Sensei thinks is the best approach to jiyu waza? Thank you. Best regards, Ken P

Sensei's Reply:

About Jiyu Waza-Aikido Free Style Technique

I am not exactly sure what they meant when they said that "grading was not an enbu. . . ." so I will just explain my understanding of "jiyu waza."

"Jiyu" waza means "free" technique or "free style" technique in which you are using basic technique and henka waza or variations on basic technique in a spontaneous manner and not in any particular order. Usually, when instructors refer to jiyu waza for students, they are trying to see how well you can incorporate your Aikido skills freely and not in any particular order or pattern. As the opponent attacks, it may be necessary to use a technique over and over - but I should like to say that from a martial arts standpoint - it is important to vary the techniques randomly, freely and spontaneously. It is never good policy in moving against an opponent to use the same technique over and over again. Also, in jiyu-waza, the instructor is trying to see how well you can freely use many techniques not one or several.

I should like to add here, that, for me, jiyu-waza is not simply a matter of the number of techniques but I feel that an important aspect of jiyu-waza is to show how well you can connect one technique into another so I would like to also emphasize the flow of energy and the strong connection between each technique.

In addition, jiyu-waza shows how well you can control your opponent over several techniques - once he attacks, the opponent is well under your control as you throw with many varied and connected techniques. It is not the case, in which he attacks, you throw, he attacks, you throw, he attacks, you throw, over and over again.

In other words, once he attacks, in my own jiyu-waza, I may continue to throw him with many techniques without giving him a chance to recover his balance or allowing him to get up so that he can attack again. . . . There is this style of jiyu-waza as well. . . .

In randori, when several students are attacking quickly, it is often necessary to limit yourself to very fast, simple and effective techniques and often the same technique, such as kokyu-nage, is repeated over and over.

For me, jiyu-waza is the opportunity to demonstrate your skill in "ki no nagare" or the strong flow of ki in your techniques.

Inquiry About Teaching Children:

05-06-04: With respect, Sensei - My name is Bobby Fish, and I purchased your book, 'Kodo - Ancient Ways' some time ago. I am humbled and enriched because of this. I wish, first, to offer my gratitude for this work.

Though I am still developing a means by which to study aikido (as I live far from a teacher and have not made enough money to truly commit to a teacher/dojo as I would and should), I am a music artist/teacher. I find your teachings about training and relationships to be very similar to my own experience as a music student and teacher - as well as very helpful for my continuing journey. Thank you again.

I feel a connection with your writings about student-teacher relationships, and I welcome difficult training for my own music study. However, I teach mainly in a high school environment, and I find that younger students are more easily turned off by stern teaching. In an accomplished high school music program, we are trying to keep our standards high while not turning students away; while this would not hurt individual students, the group would suffer the fate of not attempting presentations that could be attempted with more students happily involved.

My first question is this: when you work with children, do you approach them intentionally with any less intensity - do you feel that they are more fragile or vulnerable to stern criticism?

My second question: may I have your permission to photocopy one of your articles from the book to distribute to my students? I think they may find your words enlightening in some way.

Thank you for your consideration, and I humbly offer my appreciation for your work - for your dedication to humanity through your art. Sincerely, Bobby Fish

Sensei's Reply:

In teaching children, I believe, as with adult students, it is important to be very fair and consistent in your teaching. One must apply his best abilities in teaching students as individuals, addressing their individual requirements while, at the same time, teaching them as part of a larger group of students who must all work together in harmony and with the same spirit.

Generally, I teach children, just as I teach adults. If I treat them as adults, they act like adults. . . I find kids more receptive to criticism than adults, in my own Dojo here. Adults usually have too many issues with self-pride or have learned over the years to reject any type of criticism or instruction as being "given orders," etc. and often have to be treated "like kids" or, at least, with "kid gloves." Kids, on the other hand, if they know that you are being fair with them, explaining what the problem is and if they trust you knowing that you are there for their welfare, they listen very intently and seriously. I often find that kids absorb more information and are more attentive than adults so, when teaching children and young people, one must always be at their best and on their toes.

I am not easier on children but the class is varied more to accommodate what they are not receiving in the public school system in regards to stamina, flexibility and coordination training. Also, in class, I like to emphasize mental focus and concentration and learning how to work with others.

If my adult students and black belts would like to test their physical stamina, they are always welcome to attend the Children's Class. I advise my new black belts to learn teaching skills first in the Children's Class where they can develop good communication



skills by learning to relate well with children.

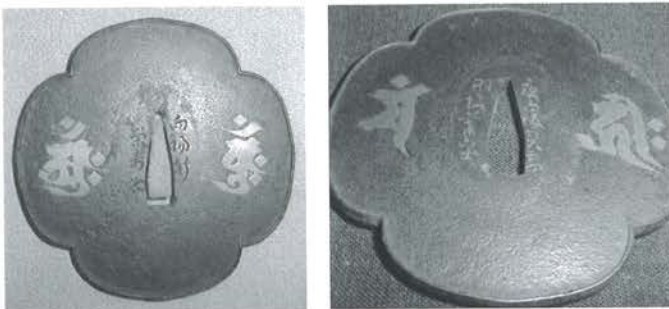
Kids are very observant, quick and sharp. You must always be very fair and keen because if a child suspects that YOU are not paying attention or being a little slow, he will immediately reject you. Also, if a child suspects that you do not know what you are doing, you will be in trouble. In this respect, it is easier to teach adults who will be more forgiving.

In addition, kids get bored more quickly than adults because I believe they can absorb more information than adults whose minds are usually already filled with opinions and ideas. I feel that it is better to give them more than they can handle and challenge their abilities to catch up with the instructor, than to have them bored and feeling that they are not getting enough.

The worse thing you can do, from my own experience, is to treat a child like a child. . . . it is better to treat them like adults and give them the same respect and considerations. Some adults need to be treated like children. . . . in this, teaching can be so mysterious!

From Volcano, Hawaii:

05-25-04: Aloha Kakahiaka e Sensei! (Good Morning!) I have just returned from a wonderfully humbling seminar by Saotome Sensei, hosted by Aikido of Tamalpais in Mill Valley, California -- I am starting to get the feeling that I understand less and less, the longer I train. Plenty to work on . . . and I'm not talking about technique! As for



bonji characters, I asked my friend Miho if she could read them, but according to her, bonji is used only for Sanskrit words, and few Japanese can read these characters. She read the kanji around the tang opening as "Euju", and the place where probably he made the tsuba."

Can you tell us the meaning of the bonji? Also, this particular tsuba is solid, and it appears to be designed for strength. I understand that placing holes in metal does not necessarily weaken it, and the lightness that results can be advantageous -- but is a solid tsuba actually stronger than a symmetric open design? I have never fought with a sword, but from the little bokken work I've done, it seems that tsuba would have had to have been quite strong. Or is a solid tsuba simply easier to make, and thus more "practical?" Thank you,
Heraldo Mon Farrington
Lab Manager, Stanford Research Group @ Magma Lab, Volcano, HI

Sensei's Commentary:

Solid & Openwork Japanese Sword Guards:



Logically, solid tsuba are stronger but generally, Samurai preferred "sukashi" or openwork tsuba. Part of the artisan's craft is to make a tsuba which is light, practical (very strong) and easy to use and, at the same time, beautiful. Many times, the tsuba might convey the sentiments of the artist himself or, many times, the owner of tsuba.

The tsuba in the daily message a few days ago is a large, thick tsuba - designed more for usage than for looks. It is a special custom made tsuba made for a Samurai by another Samurai who also made tsuba. The bonji in silver means Fudo Myoo (Sanskrit: Acala), one of the guardian deities and one form of Dainichi Nyorai, who was very popular among Samurai and is often found engraved on blades and in designs on tsuba and sword fittings.

Aikido In Turkey

05-11-04 Hi Sensei... i am very sorry as I couldn't reply your later early... because I couldn't connect internet... I am so sorry...

In your last e-mail you asked me about Aikido in my country... Aikido was began to be demonstrated by Kenji Kumagai shihan in 1983... and my sensei Mustafa Aygün was one of his first students and also today one of the six 5th dans in Turkey... last year we celebrated the 20th year of Aikido in Turkey with a large seminar organized by unitedaikido organization <http://www.unitedaikido.com> ... and they invited many Hombu shihans to our country and we got the chance to practice with them... in June , Yokota shihan will come to Turkey...

This year Aikido Federation of Turkey changed and we began to see better things in the name of Aikido in our country... this year they organize more seminars than last year.

I hope I could give useful information you need.. thank you very much again for your interest to my question... melih...

Sensei's Reply:

My many best wishes for the good development of Aikido in Turkey. Please write to me anytime when you have more questions about Aikido.

From Brazil: More Children's Class:

03-10-04: Hello Sensei! How are you doing? I hope that everything is well. Remember me ? The person in Brazil who ordered your #9 Aikido video.

I'm writing this email to let you know that the tape arrived yesterday and I already watched. I liked very much. It will be very useful for me and my students as well. I think your students techniques are very good! They showed the techniques with confidence, balance and harmony. I also discovered in your tape some techniques that I'd never practiced before. I intend to order #8 video soon! Probably next month. I enjoyed reading the newsletter you sent me too. Your words are very enlightening.

I don't know if I mentioned before, but I'm affiliated to Aikikai and my Shihan is Ichitami Shikanai Sensei in Brazil and Yasuo Kobayashi Sensei in Japan. I just feel that I should introduce myself better this time. I teach children's classes on my Sensei's Dojo and I love teaching them.

The advice that you gave on this tape and the February newsletter inspired me because sometimes I find myself a little discouraged with teaching and training. In spite that I love what I do, teaching bring us too much responsibility and sometimes I find myself wishing that I should only practice because I don't think that my techniques are good enough. I think that I can "connect" with the children and I feel that they have fun during class, but sometimes seems this is not enough when it's time for the kyu tests. I know that graduation or the next colored belt are not important, but children are always interested on the next one, and I feel bad when someone under my teaching fails on the examination or is not able to show everything that he or she is capable of on the test's day. What I feel is probably very common, but still, sometimes is hard to deal with our thoughts. Writing about it makes me feel a little better.

I practice Seitei Gata Iaido for a year now and I was wondering if there's a tape about Iaido made by you available.

Thank you very much for the tape Sensei. I intend to order your books too, when I can. Gisela Marques.

Sensei's Reply: Teaching children is one of the best forms of practice for developing yourself as a teacher. Please hang in there despite the difficulties, they will all become your fondest memories in the future.

From Israel:

Children's Class in Israel, Aikikan Dojo.

03-31-04: Dear Sensei, I hope you are well. Thank you for the wonderful essay: "Step by step, this is our Dojo". If possible I wish to translate it to Hebrew and to post it at my dojo. I hope it is okay with you. Also, I wish to know who wrote this wonderful brush-work shodo and also the Japanese reading of the words in it. With respect, Ze'ev Erlich



Sensei's Classroom

Studying Tenkan Kokyu-ho:

Tenkan Kokyu Ho is one of the basic techniques of Aikido so I believe that it must not be discounted as a simple exercise but studied very deeply and seriously.

For most of us, it is simply a turning or 'tenkan' exercise. At the beginning, I think it is all students can do to develop a smooth complete turning without losing one's balance or breaking one's flow. Generally, most people have trouble with the feet - usually swinging out the feet in a circular motion, instead of pivoting well and stepping back in a straight line which is a stronger movement of the hips. Swinging the foot in wide arch in order to step back throws off one's balance greatly and causes an unnatural and very slow awkward movement. Movement of the feet should be kept as natural as possible but with greater awareness and a greater sense of balance and stability - than in normal walking.

When tenkan kokyu ho is done with a partner, students, at the beginning, have a tendency to keep the weight on the back foot. Although the other person is grabbing your hand, your center of balance should always be kept slightly to the front or lead foot. In other words, your center of gravity should be 60% to the front foot and 40% to the back foot approximately. Some people prefer to say, "55-45%."

Starting from a static position with the person already grabbing your hand is a good beginning level method to practice this technique. One should develop good movement of the hips while turning in deeply to the opponent's space. At this level, one should be aware not to keep one's hand too flimsy nor too stiff. In other words, one's hand should not collapse against the opponent's grip nor should one be pushing against the opponent's hand as well. This must be studied very well, over and over again.

The 180 degree turn will allow you to be perfectly aligned with your opponent's body and the direction of his energy and attention. Please do not practice making incomplete turns, or turning widely so that you are too far from your opponent body.

I think as one advances in tenkan kokyu-ho, after mastering these various general levels of practice, one must begin to study this movement, not as an exercise, but as a martial arts movement.

I notice with most students, especially after they have been practicing for a while, begin to lose our awareness of this practice and lazily hold out or hand waiting for the partner to grab in order to begin our tenkan movement.

From the standpoint of a martial arts technique, no one will grab your hand if you simply leave out there for someone to grab. We assume too much and take much too much for granted and turn this into a lazy, meaningless exercise.

Do not think of this as an exercise but look at it as a martial arts movement. Even though he is grabbing you over and over again, one must constantly, constantly establish one's ma-ai in relation to our opponent or partner. In repeated attacks, he usually breaks your ma-ai immediately and by the 2nd or 3rd attack, he is already much too close to you and in your space. From the standpoint of martial arts, this is extremely dangerous and not good Aikido practice.



Proper ma-ai is extremely important to master, especially after repeated tenkan when ma-ai is easy to break down and lose your spacing.

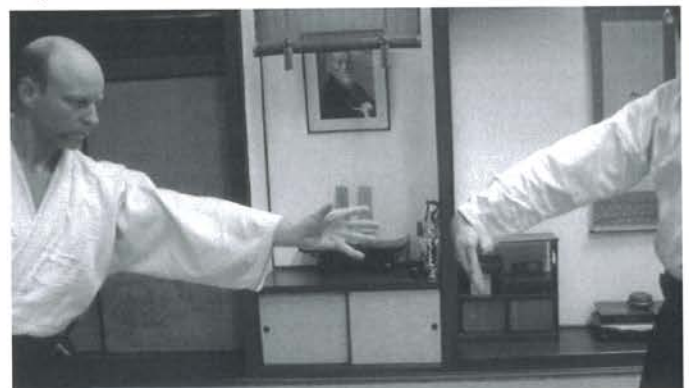
Learn to establish your ma-ai at all times in a single or in repeated attacks . . . This means that you must keep moving and continually be aware of your opponent's movement and where he is and where he is going to be in the next second.

Your hand is "fed" to the opponent just at the moment he is about to move or initiate his attack - NOT after. . . . Learn to catch and destroy or lead your opponent's attention by using your hand to distract his mind. It is offered to him just at the moment he is ABOUT to attack. You must CHANGE his attention by the movement of your hand. You must study this timing very deeply and very seriously.

Once you can catch your opponent's timing with your hand and dissolve his attack - the rest is easy because your opponent is already in your control. Please study this point very, very well.

To review: Simply holding out your hand, waiting for your opponent's attack or grab will never give you the opportunity to advance nor understand the meaning of ma-ai and timing or the purpose of tenkan kokyu ho. I think because of this practice, I now see how this applies to almost all Aikido techniques.

Please practice tenkan kokyu ho as a martial arts technique, not as an exercise. Please watch your spacing, ma-ai, and catch your opponent's timing with the movement of your hand. Do not simply hold your hand out there for him to grab when he likes - this means that you are reacting to his timing and will always be 2nd. Once you can control your opponent's timing and spacing, you can control the technique (attack) - I think this is the beginning fundamentals of all Aikido techniques.



The moment of contact is extremely important - you must establish your own timing by how you offer your hand to the opponent or how and when he is able to make contact. It is not simply to stand there with your hand extended nor is it correct to allow him to grab your hand at his own will.

Don't's:



Do not wait for your opponent to make contact and do not focus on the hand but keep your eyes on your opponent or partner and his body at all times.

Many times, as an exercise, we simply wait for the opponent to grab our hand. Please don't think of this as an exercise but consider it as a real martial arts technique.



Don't allow your partner to move into your own space. You extend your hand towards your opponent at the right moment to control the timing of the movement and to control the ma-ai. Sometimes, we just leave our hand by our side and allow the partner to move into our space and allow him to get too close to us.



Your hand should be relaxed but not limp and collapsing upon contact. Your hand should not be too stiff as well. Do not allow your partner to break your posture or balance when he makes contact. And do not allow him to jam your movement which is also easy if you are too limp or too stiff. Please study this point well.

Please move in deeply. Make your tenkan fast, smooth, strong and well balanced. You can only develop this with hours of training.

Tenkan should not be too stiff or too limp, nor should your movement be awkward or imbalance. Timing and spacing, ma-ai, is of greatest importance.



From San Diego, CA:

Greetings Sensei, You may not remember me but I was a former student of yours so many years ago. I have enjoyed all your writings in your website. It was unfortunate for me to stop practicing Aikido in your Dojo. This was due to family and military life and all the moves everywhere that the military sent me. Though I have tried to practice where I can in other schools, I still could not forget the finer things that your school has taught me. Especially when I practice in other schools and they asked me where I studied Aikido, I was proud to say that I studied under your Dojo. They were impressed about the skills that I knew and how advanced I was in them for the rank that I attained with your school at that time I left, and the technique was more refined and fluid. I didn't think so because I felt that I was still a beginner. I still practice as much as I can with some of my fellow military people that also know Aikido, though we do not rank ourselves, we practice intently and aggressively because of the time allotted for us. This we do to get as much practice time. As I have settled myself now here in San Diego and soon to retire from military life, I will not forget the Dojo in Los Angeles and the humble beginnings I had there. I thank you Sensei for all that you have taught me and all the other people I have practiced with in your Dojo. Hilario (Larry) MoncadoMM1(SW), USN

From Norway:

06-18-04: Hello ! I do practice Aikido in Norway in the capital Oslo, the name of the Dojo is Aikikan Oslo. It's a small but good Dojo. You can have a look at the website <http://www.aikikanoslo.no> I have just done my 4th Kyu grading, but is convinced it's a part of my path. Earlier I've been training Kung Fu and Tai Chi. I'm planning to go to LA for Sweat Lodge Dance Chief Training in February 2005 and wondered how I could combine that with Aikido Training. I will come and train at your Dojo in February Best wishes, Anders Næss

Aikidoka From The Netherlands



Thinking . . .

I think as I reflect that Harmony is everywhere in Nature - indeed the underlying principle and essence of what is Nature. Yet, this Harmony, in the grand scheme of things, is not in a form which humans can easily comprehend. I think O'Sensei could glimpse into this Universal Harmony, but not most of us. Therefore, it is necessary for us to create an "artificial" harmony which is a little easier to grasp. This artificial harmony is the harmony we conceive in our heads and hardly not the ideal as we can see in our own practice and understanding and in the way we live our lives. I think, in our Aikido training, it is necessary to constantly keep testing the harmony we create in our minds with this Universal Harmony of Nature, hoping for that one tiny glimpse which will help us to connect the two.

Sensei's Message:

Practice can create theory but theory can never materialize practice.

Most student understand their Aikido through their own understanding, this is why their ideas are too small and narrow-minded. This type of thinking easily shifts into egoism.

Understand Aikido with the mind of Aikido. Practice Aikido with the spirit of Aikido - this is how one can develop to higher levels of skill. . . .

A Work of Art - Shita-Ji & Shi-Age:

Polishing the Samurai sword is an art. Generally, it takes about 13 years of apprenticeship under a master in order to learn this skill and become a full-fledged polisher of swords.

There are many stones used in this process and mastering this art is very difficult. Much of the value of the sword is based on the beauty which is realized through this polishing process. It is not simply to give the blade an edge but to bring out the beauty of the temper line and forging marks which appear in the surface of the metal.

In the process of polishing, there are two basic steps: the first is called "shita-ji" which literally means "ground work" and is the basic step of grinding away the flaws, correcting the shape of the blade, giving it an edge. Although this is the first step, this step is the most important and takes the most skill. This is where all of the labor and hard work is concentrated.

If the shita-ji work is good, then the "shi-age" or "final polish" or "finishing step" brings out the final beauty of the sword. The final step is much easier.

If the ground work is not done competently, however one uses his skill, the final polish will never come out well.

This is very much the same process with lacquer and metal work as well. In lacquer and metal work, the ground work must be expertly done or the final finish will never come out well and the beauty of the work will never be realized.

This process of shita-ji and shi-age can be easily related to our Aikido practice. If one masters the fundamental techniques of Aikido, it is rather easy to perform advanced or very difficult techniques because everything is based on the ground work of your practice.

Even if you try to do difficult or fancy techniques, if you do not master the basics, these techniques will never be executed expertly. Like polishing a fine sword, or applying lacquer or creating a beautiful patina to metal such as a sword guard, everything is based on the initial ground work (shita-ji).

If you think of yourself as a sword to be polished, focus on the shita-ji, and realize the beautiful finish, shi-age, in the future as a Work of Art of your own Life and Self. Please continue to devote yourself to your practice.

Step By Step, This Is Dojo:

This is a very well known Zen saying and most appropriate to understand the spirit of our training. It says simply, "Step by step, this is our Dojo."

I think these are kind of odd words for most people - we assume a dojo consists of four walls and a roof, mats, etc. . . . I think many people assume a lot about our training and what is a dojo from their own experiences without really finding out what it is really about. A dojo is not like high school or college nor is it like a cooking or sewing class. A dojo may be translated into English as "school" but it is an entirely different kind of school from what we know about and have experienced.

Most students, I think, understand that there are many unusual customs in a Japanese style dojo or when you practice Japanese martial arts - a lot of bowing and paying respects, - it often seems strange and feudalistic, I am sure. We get accustomed to these rituals and customs because we are "learning" a martial art and we assume learning is like learning anything else. I think when you practice Aikido for a while, you will realize that learning Aikido is very different from the type of learning we are accustomed to in our local schools or in a class to do gardening or making ceramic vases.



In Aikido, we don't just learn physical movements and techniques, there is a mental and spiritual aspect to everything we do. . . . There is this idea of "form" and rules of behavior which we are not

accustomed to normally. We are even criticized for our attitude! And finally, everything must be in accordance with this very abstract and difficult idea of harmony and balance. . . . this is all so hard to learn at one time!

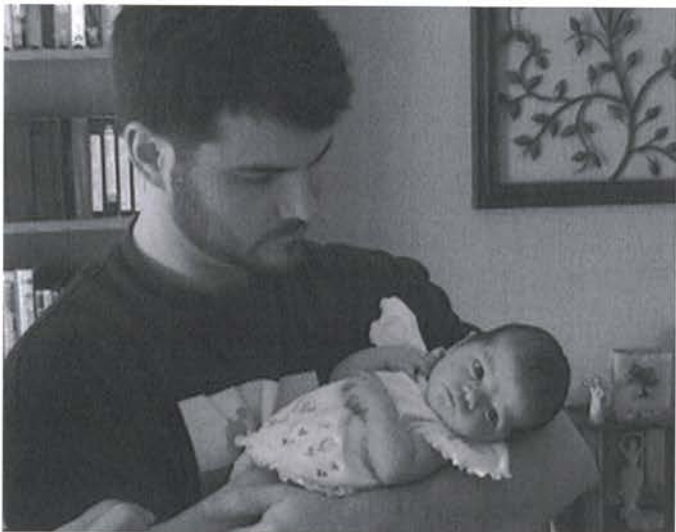
Coming back to this saying, we see the dojo is not simply a building or organization. Dojo is also an idea. . . . it is a way to live. . . . In everything we do, we go step by step - not just in learning Aikido but in life as well.

Too often we rush ourselves because we desire everything right now. Too often, we think we have all the answers because we think only about ourselves. Too often, we think we are better than others. Too often, we are consumed with desire for power and status. . . . This is not the true way to live but it is the way many people like to live. . . . they know no other.

Step by step does not simply mean to go slowly - it means "carefully" or "full of care." This means that we must be "mindful" and full of awareness of all that we do and pursue.

As we take care in what we do, to be "full of care," or "full of caring," each minute of the day, each and every day, wherever we go and wherever we are at, we are always in the Dojo. Indeed, in the truest sense, our whole lives becomes Dojo, where we learn, where we live, where we live to learn and where we learn to live - step by step. . . . Please keep these wonderful words in mind when you practice.

Congratulations! Cyan Luna Shaw



New recent addition to the Steven Shaw family.

Letters:

Many journeys later
I return to find
Your calm cool
Pond
Deeper
Still

Thank you, Sensei
--Dr. Gary S. Goodman

03-06-04: Dear Furuya Sensei, My name is Ed Monaghan. If I could, I would like to ask your advice about some issues occurring in my life.

I've studied martial arts for 30+ years and am an instructor in Jeet Kune Do and several other arts. I am also a Professor at UCLA. During the course of my study I have tried to develop an understanding of the internal aspects of the martial arts but recent events occurring in my life have led me to believe that my understanding is more intellectual than experiential.

I have been diagnosed with a heart problem which has turned my world around. The condition can be life threatening although there are several treatment methodologies to consider. The bottom line, speaking truthfully, is that this condition has made me come to terms with my own death and I am not prepared for it.

If possible I would like to speak with you about this situation. I am getting conflicting

information from Korean and Chinese acupuncturists and I wondered if you might have thoughts on the issue.

I would mostly like to talk to you about Zen philosophy and training. I study and practice Qi-Gong every day but I am having a very difficult time finding balance with the internal and external.

Thank you for your time Sensei. If I could make an appointment to come down and see you it would be greatly appreciated. . . .
E. M.

Practice Hard And Enjoy: 03-12-04: Sensei; "Practice hard and enjoy" I just wanted to thank you for your precious words. When I first read those words from you, I had the feeling that in those 4 words, you told me everything I need to know. Not only to succeed in Iaido, but to succeed in any venture of life.

I was wondering if "practice hard and enjoy" has a history, or maybe the words flew out your fingertips as you read my email. Thank You; Sincerely; Dennis Long

Sensei's Reply: I have heard this in one form of another from many teachers. This is how I have distilled it. . .

03-13-04: I took some time to organize my thoughts. Since I couldn't see you today, I still wanted to share my lesson with my teacher.
Best, Steven.

"Down the Drain" Steven Shaw

This morning was no different than any other early morning. I struggled to break the sheets' claim on my body. I stumbled to the shower as my blood began its more vigorous circulation, and I marveled at my dedication for getting up consistently for the early morning training. Nothing out of the norm swayed me as I dressed in the dark as to not disturb my sleeping wife and unborn child. Yet, as I stood in front of the kitchen sink watching a bug(a bug only because my knowledge of entomology is nothing) along its journey down the sink from the pressure of the water I had turned on from my conscious decision to eliminate the invertebrate I was struck by a wave of thought never before encountered. "What is the bug thinking as it is washed down the dark liquid vortex? Is it struggling for air? What does it think caused the 'flood'?"

I am not a religious person. I don't go to synagogues, temples, churches, shrines, or mosques. I have been to some in my life, but the only habitual place of organized mental and spiritual training for me since age 12 has been the dojo. Religion, spirituality, or whatever the current politically correct term is, has always been a personal journey.

Was this bug thinking about anything? Does it have a consciousness? Was it thinking its new predicament was an act of God? Is this how all beings think about circumstances beyond their control? If I can cause pain and suffering in someone or something, then someone or something must be causing the pain and suffering within my life. What if those who are causing the pain in suffering in my life are so far removed, either by time or distance, from the forces which cause my suffering? Then are they still the source of my pain and suffering? If so, then the responsible party for all pain and suffering is life itself.

Life is something both internal and external. I have life, and life is all around me. So if life is responsible for all the pain and suffering in existence, then the bug, as a part of life, is partly responsible for its own suffering.

With this new understanding and justification of life, I gathered my training gear and walked out of the house to find that someone had parked behind me in the driveway blocking me in and preventing me from going to the dojo. Just like the bug, I too am partly responsible. Fortunately, my lesson has yet to cost me my life so that I may continue to learn.

On Daily Message: 03-16-03: Sensei, I am very sad to see that you have discontinued your daily message. I must admit though, I understand it perfectly well. I'm sure that most of us who have asked you questions in the past or who just simply read your words feel appreciation for what you do. The fact remains, however, that being out there in this format makes it very easy for people to abuse. Frankly, I am surprised you stayed this long!

I respect and admire you as much as anyone who has never met you possibly can. Yet even I am just using you! I use you to fill a void in my training that I fear I will never find the right teacher to fill. I trained for over four years with a teacher who made us sit in seiza and listen to how much he hated the world. When we were alone he shared his bigoted views with me as if we had them in common. WE HAD NOTHING IN COMMON!! I learned a lot of nice techniques but nothing about Aikido. I then left and found the next most reputable teacher I could find. I have spent the last two years in a dojo with nearly no etiquette or sense of respect. The few times I have gone in after class to ask Sensei a

question, I usually find him drinking and getting ready for a night on the town! I just walk away and keep my question inside. I feel the students of both of these dojos begin to reflect the mannerisms of their sensei. And so at my second dojo I learn many nice techniques and very little about Aikido.

I know very well how you feel about receiving information directly from your teacher in the traditional way. You do not know how badly I wish I could find a teacher to devote myself to completely. Please don't misunderstand me, I do not judge either of my teachers. But don't I have the right to deem what I feel is wrong or immoral.

And so, Sensei, I come to you. I go to the dojo and learn a lot of nice techniques and then I go to you to try and learn something about Aikido. I know you don't approve of this method but I am just being honest. You always seem to think that we are using your knowledge to contradict or compete with our own teachers. I am not trying to surpass my teacher. I am just trying to become a good teacher. I know you think because we have never been on the mat together that you are not my teacher. I think you have been a great teacher to me. I was born after O-Sensei had already passed. Does this mean he is not my teacher? I believe he has been my greatest teacher. If you don't think you have been as a teacher to all who read your messages then it is truly best that you have decided to stop writing.

And so as I said, I have been using you. I have used you to fill that void in my daily training. I have used you to help me to make sense of this vast and beautiful art. But mostly I have used you to give me faith that there are teachers out there that one can truly devote themselves to. I am sure I will see you someday to thank you in person.

Domo arigato gozaimashita,
Jason

P.S. This letter is in confidence to you as a thank you. I do not wish to have my teachers belittled on the internet. I hope you will not post this letter. Thank you

Sensei's Reply: Don't worry, I'm back already and they don't read this at all.

03-17-04: Even though I am not an aikidoist your words of wisdom still help in my own martial arts pursuit. Your school sounds like ours...no tough selling...just tough workouts.

My family had the privilege of visiting the Boston Museum of Fine Arts this weekend. They have a magnificent display of antique Samurai swords and battle gear. The beauty and detailed designs of the workmanship was wonderful. Your words about your heritage made me appreciate the exhibit all the more. My 6 year old also enjoyed his first introduction. Joyous spring, Lisa / Massachusetts

A Penny For your Thoughts: 03-17-04: Greetings Rev. Furuya --My name is Scott Newhall. I am a 43-yr. old geography graduate student at CSU Northridge, preparing to graduate this spring. It has been a lifetime goal to study aikido, and I am currently taking a class through CSUN from Sensei Timothy Komori. I have been particularly inspired by George Leonard's experience with aikido in his later years -- have read all his books -- and am currently reading yours (Ancient Ways).

I have invested a great deal of hope in my aikido study. With my life half over, I feel a tremendous impulse to breach the limits of mediocrity that have characterized much of my life. I've come to believe more and more that we are either on the path to enlightenment, or we risk finding ourselves amongst the ranks of the insane. After living "between my ears" for most of my life, I imagine aikido to be a means of "embodying" higher levels of awareness. I am not a particularly good aikido student; all I bring to the dojo is patience, with perhaps a small measure of attention. I want nothing more than to go to my grave with a measure of mindfulness and the power to act purposefully and meaningfully, without fear.

I would be grateful for a few minutes of your time to discuss these issues, and I am prepared to make a modest donation of \$50 in exchange. If you are amenable to this, please let me know of an appropriate date and time. Sincerely, Scott Newhall

Sensei's Reply: Just practice!

Criticism: 03-19-04: Sensei, Thank you for the kind words and also honest criticisms. I know you are right that this is really my problem. I have always been far too idealistic and very conservative when it comes to Aikido. I have painted a picture in my head of the perfect traditional dojo with a wise old sensei to teach me not only about Aikido but life as well. I will try to focus more on letting go of my fantasies and just be where I am. I just hope I can salvage enough of my dream to someday pass on to my own students. Very respectfully, Jason

Sensei's Reply: Sometimes "honesty" hurts more than a sharp knife but heals better than any pills or drug.

Medium? 03-20-04: Dear Rev. Kensho Furuya, I'm writing this letter as I appreciated in the past your insight, wisdom and knowledge in Aikido. I'm very much interested in the way of Aikido as it promotes Harmony on a universal level, perhaps you can help me to understand the correct meaning of the word and the interpretation that the Samurai's knew it to be. The question I have is as follows; How does one find a medium with his fellowman w/o compromising the personal integrity of ones self for the ego adulation of the other party. I have found that my fellowman at times is not willing to find a medium where the ego is not involved, only compromise for the betterment of the moment in regard to themselves and not for me. How does Aikido's principles of harmony come to play, and negates the ego of both parties were both are able to save face in a more dignified manner. Your knowledge and expertise in this matter is greatly appreciated and needed, Sir. Sincerely, Giovanni Falvare. e-mail address for response: iarumas2002@yahoo.com

Sensei's Reply: What is "personal integrity" and what is "sacrifice?"

03-20-04: Hello, I first saw your Dojo on a TV show about the martial arts about a year ago. I really have to say that your Dojo is the most beautiful modern Dojo I have ever seen, the time and effort put into it really shows. Now that side, I would like to know when a good time to come in for an interview and sit in on a class would be. I would like to study both Aikido and Iaido but I don't want to take on too much at once Thank you for your time -Lunchbox

03-23-04: Good morning. I sent you an e-mail a while back about ninjutsu. I have trained in ninjutsu for quite a while now. Although it is very practical and useful, I need something more. My aikido training started a few months ago. The only problem is, I have been unable to find a sensei that teaches aikido beyond just the physical techniques. Do you know of any dojo or sensei in the South Carolina area who lives the path of aikido rather than just practice it? Many thanks for any help you can offer, Furuya Sensei. Sincerely, James Vaughn

KODO Review: 03-23-04: Hello Sensei There is still no sign of KODO on the AikiWeb site. I have emailed Jun, the man who runs the site, to see how what he can do to get it listed. I will continue to pursue it! All the best Ambrose

Sensei's Reply: They won't put it in their website without "Aikido" in the title, they say. Just more politics, that's all. Please don't worry about it anymore.

Do vs Jitsu: 03-23-04: Hello Sensei, I recently heard the description in one of my training classes that "Do" or the way is more artistic whereas "Jitsu" is more combative or practical. As I heard this I became a bit confused as to really what this meant. Does this mean that "Do" has no use in an art but to merely be pretty? I think not. And on the same note, does this mean that "Jitsu" is merely a purely physical form of martial art? I think not as well. But as you can tell from this email I am slightly confused as to the true nature of each. My one instinct is to say that they are both one and the same, and to separate the two would be like separating a limb from the body. Perhaps you can shed some light on this subject for me Sensei. Many thanks for your help :) Take care, Will, NY

Sensei's Reply: Please refer to my Daily Message on our Dojo website.

03-23-04: Dear Sensei: I would like to thank you for writing your book Kodo. I picked it up two days ago and cannot put it down. At times it has made me laugh and at times made me cry. I feel that you truly have captured the feeling of martial arts. I have been a budoka for over sixteen years and have meet very few Sensei. Even though we study different martial arts I feel your are my sensei. I can say it has helped me to view aspect of my training and teachings that were lacking. It is now standard reading for all of my students. Someday I hope to meet you and thank you in person. Please forgive me for taking up too much of your time, but I need to tell you this. Sincerely Shidoshi Bujinkan Budo Taijutsu, Jay Zimmerman

03-24-04: Sensei, Thank you for the time you put into answering my question. I also forgot to check the spelling of Jutsu...though I am more than sure I have seen it spelled jitsu for some bazaar reason (though this is wrong) hehe. Oh well I shall make a note of that. Now take care and be healthy (no more colds :) Will, NY

Doshu's Seminar: 03-26-04: Hi Sensei, Thank you. It will be great to see you as well. I saw David and Mark at the Doshu seminar, and they felt great. David had a really nice irimi nage and Mark's forward break fall was amazing in its grace and absolute silence. I had my little sankyu student try to copy their great ukemi! Many thanks, again. See you next month. Warmest regards, -N

03-26-04: Dear Sensei, Yes, your students are very impressive. They told me about Ken, and I felt sorry he couldn't go. I am looking forward to seeing you next month. Best wishes, -N

Letters continued:

UK Visiting Aikidoka: 03-30-04: Dear Sensei Furuya: I am a practicing Aikidoka, 20 years, from England and I shall be visiting L.A. during May. As I am continually developing my Aikido I would like to visit / train at your dojo during my stay. Would this be possible? I am unsure as to my schedule and how much free time I will have but will find time to visit / train. I look forward to your reply. Always in harmony Phillip Bengé

03-31-04: Dear Sensei Furuya, Thank you so much for your article today! Your words of wisdom expanded my understanding of what a dojo is. Sometimes, even as an intermediate martial arts student, I forget these things. I have printed the article out and will read it again and again as a reminder. Best wishes to you and your dojo on your 30th anniversary! Sincerely, Doreen Cole
(Note: Please see "Step By Step" article.)

03-31-04: Furuya Sensei, I hope this finds you well! Today's message really hit home for me. I am about to graduate from college this May and as a student staff worker, our little department has undergone some real changes. My supervisor actually occupies my old position and he behaves more like a police officer rather than a student leader. You mentioned about how not to live with the consumption of power. Those words made me think of him. As always, I am grateful for your daily messages. Do take care and have a good weekend! Michael C

04-02-04: Aloha e Sensei! Thank you again, for your time in preparing your Daily Messages. Whether you focus on an aspect of budo, share a personal anecdote, or pass on news of births and deaths, you always seem to touch your readers in a deep and meaningful way. I know that this is not always pleasant or easy. Thank you.

I read last Monday's Message regarding Kanai Sensei's passing with disbelief . . . I had just returned from my first-ever trip to Boston, during which I had trained daily with New England Aikikai, and I was in the process of finding out from his students about Sensei's 'sweet tooth' since I wished to send him a small gift from Hawaii after my last class in Boston, these same students had encouraged me to knock on Sensei's door to say good-bye, and I can clearly remember his warm, open smile as he shook my hand (what a remarkable grip!) urging me to "Please come back soon!" I also remember the surprising amount of metal-working tools he had along one wall of his room, and the fact that he was examining a tsuba when I interrupted him . . . I can only imagine how shocked and saddened the dojo must be.

At the same time, I know that they have been training daily ("all classes as scheduled"), except of course today -- the day of his memorial service. I am sure that Kanai Sensei is very much with them, on the mat and off. He has been with me, here in Hawaii, all week, and I barely knew him! And I know that the entire aikido community has been similarly affected . . . Such a painful lesson in non-attachment, and a sharp reminder of our own mortality. Thank you again, Sensei, for your time, and your forum. Respectfully, Heraldo 'Mon' Farrington

Too Old? 04-04-04: I watched with great interest and attention a television show in which you described the discipline, patience and becoming humble as one learns Aikido. There are other spiritual traits that one learns as one learns this martial arts. I love the concept that one flows with the force of an intruder thus defeating his effort to harm the possible victim.

I am 65 years old and have desires to learn such traits. I hope I am not too old but I do want to train my mind and body as I learn this wonderful art. What tapes should I start with ?

I have searched for a place here in Naples, Florida to learn, but have found none. I cannot relocate to Los Angeles as I would like to learn from you - if it was possible. I must say that I am in excellent health- physically and spiritually- being a former long distance runner (15 marathons) and member of the Army's first Special Forces group deployed to Vietnam- Laos in 1958. wishing you the best. Pepe Quintero

Sensei's Reply: It is possible to be too young in many things but not to be too old - except for riding wild horses or racing in sports cars which you don't want to do anyways!

Grounded: 04-08-04: I am interested in learning a martial art, primarily for self defense. I never want to have trouble, always want to avoid it. I'd like to learn how to deflect a potential situation in the fastest way possible. Have looked into Jiu Jitsu, but it seems that every Dojo I talk with, tells me most of their work is on the ground. I'd like to diffuse a situation before it ever gets to the ground. Is Aikido what I am looking for? Sincerely, Louis

Sensei's Reply: Yes, definitely - Aikido is the one. Martial arts, like many things, are subject to fads and popular trends which come and go. We like fads but it is always better to stick with the tried and true.

04-08-04: Dear Sensei, I have read your book, "Kodo" and have found it to be very enlightening. I wish to seek your guidance on a matter in regards to a TaiChi class I have attended for the past 10 years. I have been asked on many occasions why I have taken up the art and on those occasions my answer were in my view simple and the same. "I just love to do it". However, it has been increasingly apparent to me that "love" is starting to wane a little day by day. I have felt that the once peaceful studying environment that I have experienced has been replaced by frequent competitions, demonstrations, in-house politics. I have on numerous occasions tried to resign myself from the class (as I am an instructor) but have been turned down by my Master of whom I have grown to respect and love over the years. Please advise as I am in a dilemma. Thank you. Alfred oszelee@hotmail.com

Sensei's Reply: Boredom comes from within, not from outside - seek your answer from inside yourself.

Suganuma Sensei In Israel: 04-09-04: I hope this finds you well. Yesterday and today I participated in Suganuma Sensei's seminar here in Israel. Tomorrow is the third and last day. A great seminar. Today at last I found a good chance to talk to him in Japanese. I mentioned you and I explained that you teach me so much. Suganuma sensei's face became shining and happy and he said that he likes you a lot. He used the word SUKI !!! How nice !. He also most seriously said that I have to tell you that he is truly hoping that next time he comes to Israel (April or May 2005) you should come here too... This is what he asked me to tell you. I hope the video clip went through well. It is a bit big. I am sending some photos too. Yours, Ze'ev.



A Wasp? 04-10-04: Sensei, Suganuma sensei's seminar is over. He will come again next year like every year. This is the third of his seminars that I am attending. In many ways he is an unusual sensei. But when I think about it I realize that he should be the usual sensei and all the others are unusual. He is so good and modest. So open and kind. His classes are special. He always in the middle of class sits with us and he lets us ask him questions. So we end up spending about one hour training and about 30 minutes listening to many wise explanations and stories. Here is a very nice story he told us. He said it is a true story.

A shacho (company president) was in trouble. The economy went down and with it his company went bankrupt. He went to the temple to seek for advice. The head of the Zen temple accepted him and invited him to talk.

As they were sitting and as the shacho was telling his sad story, the old Zen priest was gazing at the window. Over there there was a wasp trying again and again to fly through the window. The wasp wanted to fly into the temple but again and again it banged into the window until it collapsed.

The shacho was hurt. The priest was not paying any attention at all to him.

Angrily he left the temple and went home.

On his way he thought to himself: That rude old priest... Maybe he really got too old to pay attention to me (boketa kana...)..

Then he began to realize that the priest was actually not that stupid. He started to think about the wasp. Then he understood what the priest was trying to show him. The world is so wide and full of opportunities but the wasp chose an impossible mission to waist its time on. Same as himself. He thought that his company is his life itself but life is so huge.

His life had changed from that moment...

This was Suganuma sensei's example on the importance of tenkan in Aikido and in real life. How wise. Yours, Ze'ev.

04-11-04: Dear Sensei, Thank you for posting the story about the wasp and thank you for the response. Suganuma sensei's student (Eli) told me yesterday that later on sensei said to him that the story is actually about an abu (gadfly) and not a wasp... I wonder what big difference does it make... Well perhaps wasps are a bit more clever than gadflies. Anyway, I wish you a most pleasant weekend and a nice new week. Yours, Ze'ev.

04-13-04: Dear Sensei, Yours message from April 13th and all your comments and teaching regarding the story about the merchant and the priest went right into my heart and to my log. I will write it in Hebrew and let the Hebrew readers and to my students learn from it too. Thank you very much, Yours, Ze'ev.

Suganuma Sensei's Israel Seminar - To Bee Or Not To Bee! (Daily Message of April 12, 2004) Sensei's Reply:

You are welcome. This is why I mentioned yesterday that these stories all have "many levels" and you need to remember and study them over the years as you train. Yes, the original story mentions gadfly, not wasp, and I wondered why he changed the insect - maybe he saw a wasp while visiting you and remembered this story, maybe he thought that you did not know what a gadfly is, please ask him next year when he visits you again - he will be so happy that you remembered his story!

The gadfly is important to the story - a gadfly is like a horsefly and in Japan - they are only around dirty or lowly places like a horse stable and such.

The "shacho" in this story was actually a very wealthy merchant - they did not have "corporate presidents" in those older days. Please imagine the wealthy merchant talking to this priest - we see by the gadfly that it must be in the very hot summer and probably the temple is very poor and unkept because such flies are about. This particular priest must be very poor and destitute heading such a poor temple. . . . and listening to this important visitor he should be all excited at the prospect of receiving a nice donation of money but instead - he is only interested in the fly trying to escape. . . We know he is a great priest because wealth, power and money do not really concern him at all and he is not so influenced by them or impressed by his illustrious guest!

Actually, the merchant does not go home in the original story but confronts the priest during the interview saying, "Is this poor gadfly which captures your attention so completely as important as me? I am powerful, famous and wealthy - why don't you cater to me? You should be paying attention to all my problems - they are more important than a fly - I have so much trouble with all the money I have!"

The priest shows that a mere, tiny gadfly is equally important as a wealthy merchant with money - both have the same problems to escape their own bondage towards freedom, banging against an impossible obstacle. . . . yet there are so many ways to be on one's way to freedom so easily. . . .

Because the priest is not attached nor influenced by your wealth and money, he is free to do as he pleases and prefers to watch the interesting antics of the fly.

The merchant does not learn so much from the fly as he does from the priest himself who really did not say anything at all, yet answered his question so well just by being himself, free and unattached.

When the merchant realized that he is same, no better, than a fly and his problems are no more important than the same fly trying to escape through the shoji panel of this poor temple, he realized how un-important and trivial his own problems are - compared to this poor priest who can be so free and easy with himself.

Suddenly the merchant realized that all his problems were only a product of his own imagination bred by his own misguided beliefs in his own self-importance and his attachment to money.

Whenever I think about this story, I am also reminded of the famous painting by Miyamoto Musashi of Hotei, the god of good-fortune, observing the cock fight. . . . The two cocks are in a battle of life and death - not for any other reason than they like to fight - how easy it is to stop fighting or walk away and enjoy a better life! No - it is necessary to fight and die, these poor cocks believe, and Hotei is so amused that even chickens can be so silly as people! Hahah!

Of course, we are all unique individuals and important in every respect as the center of each of our own lives. Yet, at the same time, we must continually keep in mind that we are the same as others, no difference at all. Everyday, we encounter those who want to be the center of attention or impress upon others with their power, wealth and fame - they are offended if you don't give them such "respect" and "attention" or if you do not kowtow to them, just like this wealthy merchant who thought he could intimidate this poor priest. .

He was offended that he didn't get the "proper" attention and that a mere gadfly could possibly be more important than himself. . . . His own notions of his self-importance overshadowed all else in his world. . . . this is the power of self-destructiveness

In Zen and in our Aikido practice, we must fight against such self-destructive notions which are stuck in our heads. . . . instead of confronting and fighting with others, feeling unjustly treated or being filled with resentment and rage - it is better to "tenkan" and let it pass.

There is the famous episode when Musashi was in Nara. Looking for the Hozo-In Temple to test his strength against the Hozo-In spear, he asked his way but was led to the back entrance of the temple where another smaller temple was situated through which he could gain entrance to Hozo In. As he passed through the smaller temple, he saw an old priest hoeing the vegetable garden. As he passed by the old priest, Musashi suddenly got the impression that the old priest might strike his feet with the hoe and leaped six feet into the air and over the priest. When he turned to look, the priest had not move at all but continued peacefully with his garden tasks.

Later, he met the old priest again who invited him for an interview. "Why did you leap so high over me?" inquired the priest, "I was only working in my garden. "

"I felt that you were going to attack me," replied Musashi.

"How can that be? I am just an old man farming whereas you are a young, strong warrior, why should I fight you?"

Musashi argued, "No, I distinctly sensed your attack."

The priest explained, "You are TOO strong. No one was attacking you. Your suspicious fighting mind saw the hoe and your suspicions which are entirely your own, bounced back at you and you became frightened by them!"

It is a mistaken notion that we need to continually compete with others in strength or by other means. No one is really competing with us at all. We do not need to show that we are better or more powerful than others -

Many times - tenkan is not simply turning the body, but it is turning one's mind as well - this is the message I got from Suganuma Sensei all the way from Israel!

Best wishes, and many thanks!

PS: My warm regards to Suganuma Sensei!

04-14-04: Hello Sir, I am reading your book "KODO" at the moment and really am enjoying it. I was wondering if you could recommend how to find a good dojo to practice at? I am and always have been very interested in the philosophy and ancient ways of martial arts. I started practicing tai chi chuan but cannot find any good places to learn from. I have always wanted to go to the East and learn from a real master. I'm in college now so that wouldn't work until I graduate. For now though I want to find a reputable master that will give me lessons and wisdom. I don't just want to take an "Americanized" class for exercise. I want to learn discipline and philosophy and martial arts all in one. If you could find the time out of what I'm sure is a busy schedule to let me know where I could find something like this, I would really appreciate it. Thank you. By the way I'm going to school in Iowa City, IA and live in Chicago IL. Tony Dusek, CSS Consultant, University of Iowa, College of Engineering 1253 SC 5-5055

On Zen: 04-15-04: Dear Sensei, Hello Sir and Happy Spring! I apologize for my email address change, the former email (michael sama@hotmail.com) has begun to feel insulting. I know nothing of the sama or san in the Japanese language, I adopted that email many years ago. I just purchased a book titled Selling Water by the River, A Manual of Zen Training by Jiyu Kennet. Is this something you have heard of or read? Do you recommend it? I just finished the preface and introduction. Your Daily Messages have inspired me to read, read and do more reading! I have many questions on many topics for you, but out of respect for your time and busy schedule will limit those questions as an effort to ask you about elements that require your experience and knowledge. I offer my sincerity to you regarding my questions as I value your input greatly. However, I am beginning to understand what you mean by heart to heart communication. Thanks so much for your time Sensei! Please take good care and have a wonderful spring season! Regards, Michael C.

04-15-04: Dear Sensei, Thank you so much for your continued swift, thoughtful and educational replies to my questions. I would like to offer my apology for asking if you recommend a book or not. I do see how such a question could put you in a circumstance of unpleasantness when dealing with readers on a global scale. Please forgive my thoughtless question. As always I hope you are well and thanks so very much for your continued patience with me!
Regards, Michael C.

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04-16-04: Good morning sir. I am eager to learn from you. But one thing has been bothering me. Would aikido prepare me enough if I'm taken to the ground by an attacker (say a grappler or a wrestler)? Your insight would be greatly appreciated.

Sensei's Reply: Hello! Be honest - you are not eager to learn from me - you practice martial arts and want an easy answer for yourself and your friends. Come back to me in twenty years when you grow up!

From Copenhagen: 04-18-04: Hello from Copenhagen, Denmark. My name is Albert Campos, originally from Los Angeles but now living in Denmark. I just saw a TV show and was very impressed with Aikido and of course Rev. Kensho Furuya.

I have always liked martial arts but have not taken any classes since I was a young boy in L.A. Can Rev. Kensho Furuya recommend any Aikido instructors or Dojo's here in Copenhagen? I'm a 43 year old male that have been Blessed musically, but I feel that my ability to focus and overall laziness must be addressed and improved for better quality of life. I'm hoping that Aikido might be something that will help me physically, mentally and spiritually. I can assure you that the next time I come home to L.A. to visit my family, I'll be taking a class there, if I'm allowed. Thank you and I look forward to your recommendations, Albert Campos, <http://www.alcampos.com>

04-21-04: Sensei, I have been studying and practicing martial arts for several years now, and have been very interested in the principles of Aikido. I have found an incredible overlap with those of Nichiren Daishonin's Buddhism. I now chant Nam-Myoho-Renge-Kyo and am a member of Soka Gakkai International (www.sgi-usa.org). Was wondering if you had considered this overlap? And also if you have any thoughts about Nichiren's Buddhism? Thank you for very much for your time and patience. Kindest regards, Alok K. Gupta

Sensei's Reply: Not really.

04-26-04: Dear Sensei, Shit, my body hurts from training this weekend, I wondered if the pain resulting from the effort I make at 59 is any more debilitating than that the workouts at 50. I continue to improve overall despite the decrease of muscular strength. Both kumite and kata continue to improve.

04-26-04: Sensei, The email I sent you this morning was sent in error. I read your page from time to time and often write something in response, some times not even dealing with the current material on your site. On occasion I write something I feel might be of interest to you and I send it intentionally, otherwise it stay in my draft file. My last email was intended to remain a draft, please excuse my rudeness, I was mumbling to myself and did not mean to mail it to you. Sincerely, Wesley

Congratulations On Baby #3! 04-28-04: Dear Sensei Congratulations on reaching such a remarkable and inspiring milestone of 45 years of practicing Aikido! I wish that I could be there to share in the celebration in person but please be assured that my thoughts and best wishes are with you.

I sincerely hope that I am able to celebrate 45 years of Aikido practice when I am 75 - alas that I came to Aikido so late. But better late than never.

Perhaps I will be able to join you in celebrating your 50 years of Aikido practice in 2009.

My wife and I are also over the moon at the birth of our 3rd child, Gabrielle Sophie Merrell, on the 15th April. She is beautiful and healthy. All the very best Ambrose Merrell

04-28-04: Dear Sensei Congratulations and I hope that the 30th Anniversary celebrations are a wonderful day and that you have a chance to meet and spend time with all the guests that have been able to join the dojo in the celebration.

30 years of dedicating yourself to the dojo and the teaching of others is an incredible achievement and one that I, and I am sure many others, find very humbling. Best wishes on this special day. Ambrose Merrell

04-28-04: Hi, Sensei. Just a quick note to let you know that, as your celebratory banquet is going on right now, I'm thinking of you and sending good wishes on this happy occasion. The very best wishes to you. Sincerely, Marie

04-28-04: Sensei Furuya, It was a wonderful celebration; I felt much honor to have been there. Thank you very much for taking the time to plan such an event, no easy task I know. Have a great night, and I'll see you during practice. Toma Lam

04-29-04: Sensei, Congratulations!! My very best wishes on both your birthday and the anniversary of the dojo! You are such an invaluable resource and a true treasure to the Aikido community. May you continue to find joy in your life and practice, and may your students someday come to understand that joy. Best regards, Jason

04-29-04: Sensei; Thank you for a wonderful celebration last nite. Again, congratulations on 30 years. Hopefully this is more than a selfish wish, but may you have 30 more, each, better than the last. Thank you; Dennis Long

04-29-04: Dear Sensei, Congratulations and many thanks for the wonderful celebration. I really had a great time seeing so many happy people. I felt the energy of the Dojo in the banquet room last night... Respectfully, Jim

05-02-04: Hi, my name is Anthony Taylor. I live in Jackson, Ms. I love martial arts every since I was four years old. I've always wanted to learn Aikido. But in mississippi they don't teach Aikido for some reason. I'm 20 years old and in college working on a degree in computer networking technology. I have 2.5 years before I graduate. The school I go to the older and bigger guys beat me up and slap me around. My parents are tired of it and so am I. I guess what I'm trying to say is, I need you to teach me Aikido. It's what i've always wanted to learn and it's the only thing that i've wanted to learn and I want to learn from the best. Please help me!

From Turkey: 05-06-04: hi .. sensei... i am a 1. kyu aikido student in turkey... and i always try to develop myself both physically and mentally in this martial art... i swim regularly and make meditation as much as possible... but i see myself not so powerful... what should i do?... should i make body building or any other thing... what kind of training method should i follow...?? thanks. . .

Go Gokyo! 05-07-04: Sensei, I was reading one of your responses to a question, and you were telling the person to practice Ikkyo, Nikkyo, Sankyo, and Yonkyo. I often see the response to various questions, and wanted to ask you why Gokkyu, the fifth teaching, is rarely included with the other four? Is it in another category, or is there a reason why it is kept separate? Thank you very much for your insight. PS - How was your visit to Oakland at the Doshu Seminar? C. Salazar

Sensei's Reply: If you practice Gokyo with Ikkyo, Nikyo, Sankyo and Yonkyo, the answer will be immediately apparent.

05-13-04: Greetings, Reverend Furuya ~~~ I was wondering if your sword society holds regular (or irregular, for that matter) meetings, workshops, classes, or the like in sword care. If so, are they open to the public, or just to society members? If the latter, what are the eligibility requirements to join the society?

I recently acquired my first katana (which I hope to be authentic...), and regardless of its monetary value, it is of great sentimental import to me, and I would like to learn how to maintain it. I've read articles and things of that sort on how to apply the choji oil, etc., but I would feel more comfortable actually seeing it done in real life...any resources/observational opportunities you could suggest or provide would be greatly appreciated!

Thank you for your time, and I hope I can stop by the dojo sometime! After 26 years of romping through J-Town, I can't believe I haven't seen it yet! Take care, Darin Furukawa

05-14-04: Dearest Sensei, Thank you for allowing my daughters to observe class last night. They were so excited and beaming about being able to watch class. They picked up on some many details of what took place last night. They had so many questions. They were especially taken with the beautiful garden - they said, "It feels like you're going into another world! Dad, we need to have garden just like that when we get our new house, that way we can escape to a beautiful and peaceful place!" Thank you Sensei. Best regards, Ray Emnace

05-20-04: Dear Furuya Sensei, Last Monday evening I was talking with a friend of mine, Fr. Maurice Harrigan, a Catholic priest, about you and the dojo - the training, the wonderful traditions you uphold and the beauty of our dojo. I also mentioned that you had a portrait of Mother Teresa in the dojo, he got up from his desk and brought me a book on Mother Teresa and asked if I thought that you would accept this book from him as a gift - Fr. Harrigan said, "Tell him this is a gift to him, if he would accept it - from one priest to another priest. It was a gift to me and I wish for him to have it." Best regards, Ray Emnace

Sensei Reply: Many, many thanks!

05-25-04: Aloha, I just wanted to know if you will still have the Japanese sword classes in the fall (september). I'm from Hawaii and am currently studying in southern california and won't be able to take your class until then, but I really really would like to become involved. Thanks, Kanoe

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30th Anniversary Programs & DVD's

We do have a few 30th Anniversary Programs left on sale for \$20.00 each. (Cost of printing was \$17.00.) We also have DVD's of the event. \$25.00 each.

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July 10-11th. Lotus Festival. In Echo Park.

July 18th. Pasadena Buddhist Church. 5:00-6:00pm.
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People can be very motivated if there is something to gain. This is true of all physical training and effort. To be motivated and dedicated to something in which there is no merit or benefit at all, is the essence of all spiritual training.

If you compare yourself to others, you will lose sight of the Way. If you compare everything to the Way, you will find yourself all alone. . . . Enlightenment is the true battle of "the self making the self into the self."

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For Sensei's Daily Message

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You are very welcome to visit our beautiful, hand-crafted, traditional Japanese Dojo during posted training hours. All practicing Aikidoists are welcome to train with us or observe our training. Interested students and visiting Aikidoists are always welcome to join our practice. Directly affiliated with Aikikai Hombu, Tokyo.

Please Visit Our Website:

Joining The Dojo:

Becoming a member of the Dojo is very easy. Please come to observe any of our Open Beginning Classes. You do not need to call to make an appointment, just check our Training Schedule and Calendar of Events for the current times. After class, you may speak with one of the black belts or assistant instructors. To sign up, one needs to fill out the application form and pay the initial fees. Please note that there are no refunds, no exchanges or make-up classes. Discounted Family rates are available. Welcome for the Dojo!



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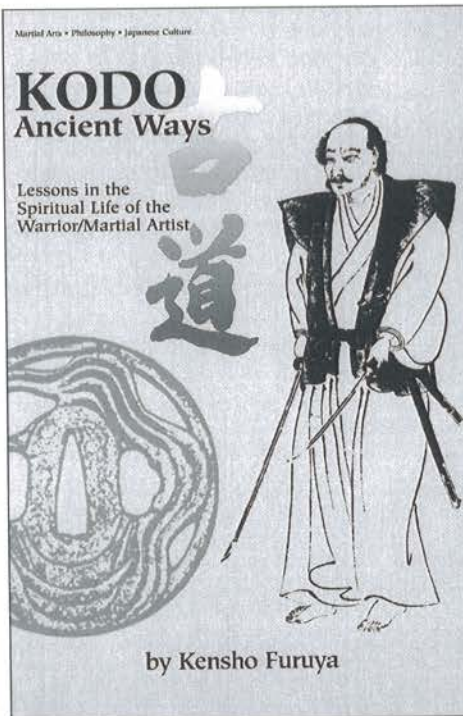


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Our Dojo's Mission:

We are not-for-profit, traditional Aikido dojo struggling to preserve the honored, old values and traditions of the art. We are always dedicated to maintaining the highest standards of the art in a Dojo which, itself is considered a work of art. With your continued understanding and support, we hope that you will dedicate yourself to your training and do your best to support the work of the Dojo. This is greatly, very greatly appreciated, Always, Aikido Center of Los Angeles, Rev. Kensho Furuya

Our International Aikido Kodo-Kai.

We do accept all Branch Dojo affiliations with any dojo who practices and follows the Aiki Kai Hombu Dojo training, rules and standards. This also includes commitment to 3rd Doshu and the Ueshiba Family as the founding family and originator of our art. You are welcome to make inquiries by email or letter. Our purpose in this is to help and aid others in the correct practice of Hombu Aikido and to spread the correct interpretation of O'Sensei's teachings to the best of our abilities.

Requirements for Affiliation:

1. To practice correct Hombu Aikido with good spirit and energy.
2. To follow O'Sensei's and his Successors' Aikido with honesty and commitment.
3. Not to dabble in harmful or hurtful politics or intrigues.
4. To get along with each other in the dojo and with other dojos in a friendly way.
5. To pursue your training with an honest and open Beginner's Mind.
6. Not to engage in competition or participate in activities harmful to one's self or others.
7. Not to engage in unsuitable, blatant commercialism or use Aikido for personal profit.
8. Not to engage in illegal drugs or harmful abuse, or inappropriate behavior in the dojo.
9. To promulgate and develop Hombu Aikido in your community in a positive way.

All Black Belt Candidates & Senior Students Recommendations:

1. Please attend all intermediate & advanced classes. Maintain regular, consistent training schedule. Attendance is most important.
2. Please attend monthly early Morning Intensive. 6:30-8:00am. Early morning training is to honor O'Sensei's Memory and is required for all Black Belts..
3. Please attend and assist Sunday morning Children's Class. This is the best training to become a good Aikido instructor.
4. Please help with the opening and closing chores and keeping the dojo immaculately clean, neat and in good order.
5. Please be a good role model for junior students. Be helpful and friendly but modest and humble. Demonstrate by your actions, not words and idle chit-chat. Be a good example both on and off the mat.
6. You must develop good, strong, correct technique. Concentrate and master the fundamentals inside and out.
7. Please always keep in mind that Aikido is not competition in any form, in strength, rank, power, prestige, position, or social status. Practice correctness over strength.
8. Beyond physical technique, Aikido means goodness. Good technique does not come without good character. Practice benevolence in all aspects of training.

Life Learning:

Just because someone is very talented, young and strong, does not necessarily mean that they will be skillful in Aikido. Just because a person is slow with no athletic ability at all, does not necessarily mean that they will not do well in the art. Often, an average teacher can produce a very good student. Many times, a very good teacher cannot any good students at all. Teaching and learning do not go by any logical system nor can outcomes be predicted by a formula or reasoning. The human factor is always a major element in Aikido. More than going by material odds and ratios, we must emphasize these human qualities in practice. To be respectful, humble, hard working, loyal, compassionate, dedicated, helpful and all such qualities as these will determine the outcome of a student's training. Even a very strong, young student of exceptional skill will not do well or be respected if he does not have the qualities of respect, discipline, compassion and dedication. I think this is important to understand in all aspects of daily life.

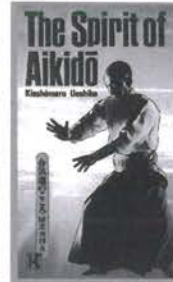
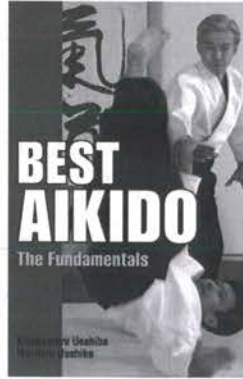
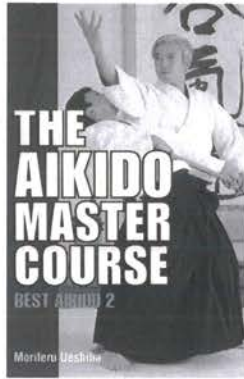
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Sensei's
Recommended
Readings
On Aikido:

Please use these books and references as a valuable, useful supplement to your Aikido training in our Dojo.



In Japanese

規範 合気道 基本編



aikido
by Kisshomaru Ueshiba

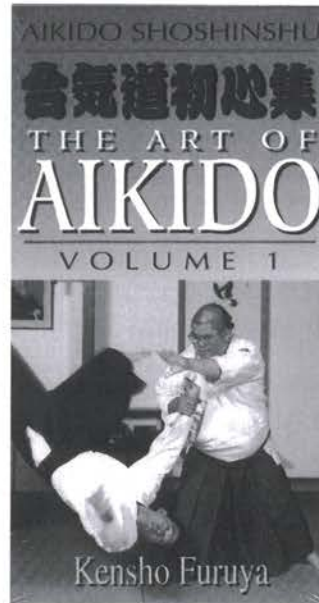
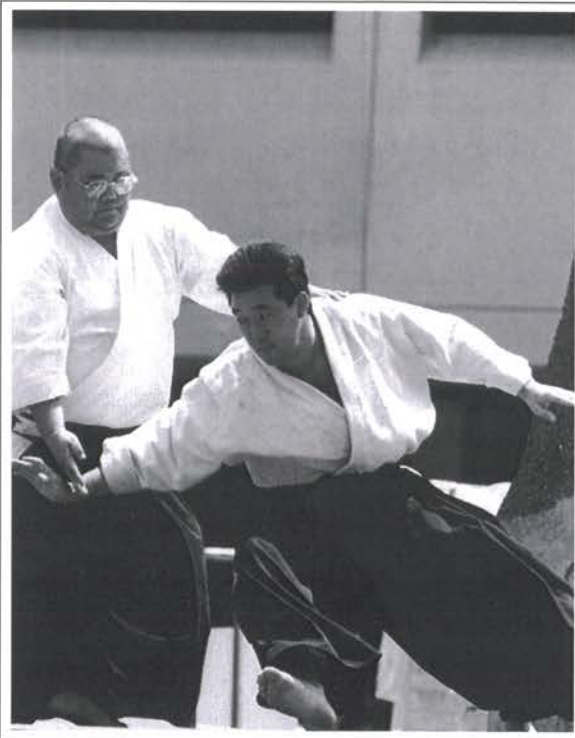


Highly Recommended:

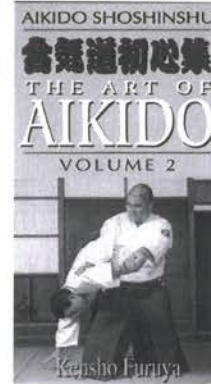
The Art of AIKIDO

Aikido Instructional Video Series in Nine Volumes

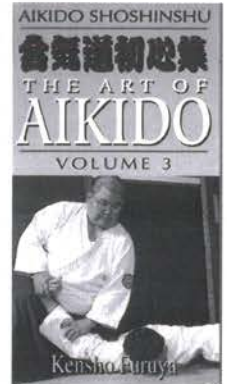
"Top Rated" Karate Illustrated "Impressive Scope" Aikido Today, "Exhaustive" Aikido Journal"



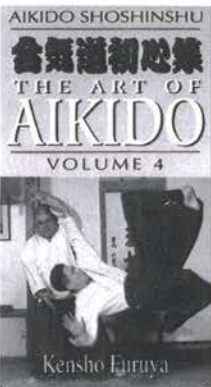
This video series is considered to be the most comprehensive and detailed instructional video on Aikido available today. Clear depiction of each technique and very detailed explanation of all of the fine points. Recommended for students, often used as an instructor's reference by many dojos.



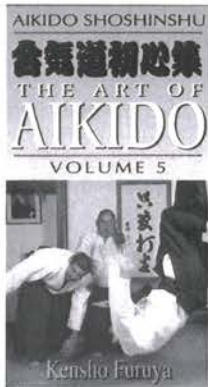
Basic Techniques
Throwing & Joint
Techniques, Ikkyo, Nikyo,
Sankyo, Yonkyo & Gokyo



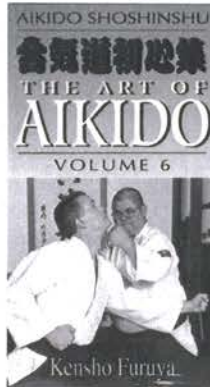
Ukemi-Breakfalling
Basics Continued
Free Style Techniques
Tenshin. Ki. Breathing.



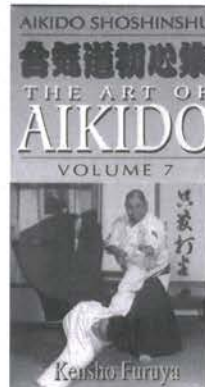
Katatetori Ryotemochi:
Ryotetori: 2-hand.
Reigi-saho: Etiquette.
Koshinage-Hip throws.



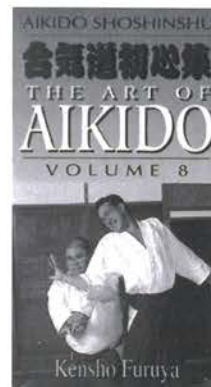
Suwari-waza. Gokyo.
Hanmi-handachi. Kokyu-
dosa. Katatori: Shoulder.
Multiple attackers.
Five-man Freestyle.



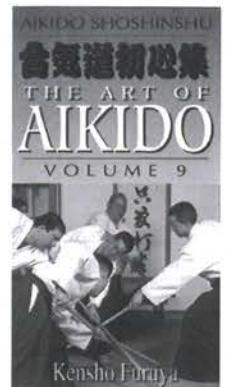
Tsuki: Strikes & Punches
Yokomenuchi: Strikes to
the side of the head &
neck.



Shomenuchi, Ushiro
Katatetori Kubishime:
Chokes from behind.
Ushiro Ryotetori,
Ryohijitori, Ryokatatori.



Atemi-waza: Striking
Defense against kicks.
Tanto-tori: Knife defense.
Aiki-ken: Sword Training
Fundamentals.



Jo: Basic long staff
Fundamentals.
Complete 1st Degree
Black Belt Examination

Aikido TRAINING SCHEDULE

AIKIDO for ADULTS

Sundays: Children's Class: 9:00-10:00am
Open Beginning: 10:15-11:15am

Mondays: Open Beginning: 5:15-6:15pm &
6:30-7:30pm.

Tuesdays: Open Beginning: 5:15-6:15pm
Intermediate 4th & Up: 6:30-7:30pm.

Wednesdays: Open Beginning: 5:15 6:15pm
& 6:30-7:30pm.

Thursdays: Open Beginning: 6:30-7:30pm
Beginning Weapons, Bring Bokken & Jo:
7:45-8:45pm, 4th Kyu & up.

Fridays: Open Beginning: 6:30-7:30pm.

Saturdays: Open Beginning: 9:30-10:30am.
Open Beginning: 10:30-11:30pm.
Every 4th Saturday: Intensive Aikido:
6:30-8:00am. 3rd Kyu & up only.

CHILDREN'S CLASSES

7- 16 yrs old

Sunday Mornings 9:00 -10:00am

Affiliation

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 Moriteru Ueshiba Doshu.

Aikido Center of Los Angeles

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Los Angeles, CA 90012

Tel: (213) 687-3673

Email: aclafuruya@earthlink.net

www.aikidocenterla.com

Iaido TRAINING SCHEDULE

TRADITIONAL JAPANESE IAIDO SWORDSMANSHIP

Sunday Mornings: 7:45am-8:45am

Thursdays: 7:45-8:45pm (Weapons)

Saturday Mornings: 8:00am-9:00am

No Classes on the last weekend of the month.

Intensive Iaido Seminar

Every 2nd Saturday of the month.
6:30am-8:00am

Private Classes Available.

Finding Our Dojo:

We are endeavoring to maintain the highest standards of training while preserving the True Spirit of Aikido. We hope you will appreciate our efforts and undertake your training with devoted and committed energy. Your efforts, we believe, will be greatly rewarded. We welcome you to an ancient and profound art. We welcome you to our Dojo. Everyone, beginners and active Aikido students alike, are cordially welcome to join our training. Thank you.



We are convenient to most major freeways. Enter private lane at Vignes and 2nd Streets. We are one block west of Santa Fe Ave. and several blocks east of Alameda in Little Tokyo. The **Easiest Way:** From Alameda go east on 1st St and make right turn at Vignes. Do not turn on 2nd St. but go straight into the private lane. Look for the garden.