

The Aikido Center of Los Angeles, 940 2nd St. #7, Los Angeles, CA 90012. Tel: (213) 687-3673. Website: www.aikidocenterla.com.



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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October 1, 2004

Volume XXIII. Number 10.

All Japan High School Enbu Taikai Tokyo, Japan. August 3.

08-28-04: . . I went to the All Japan High School Aikido Enbukai on August 3rd. (Zenkoku Koutou Gakkou Aikido Enbutaikai) The Doshu also attended and performed an amazing demonstration. It's always a treat to see the Doshu's waza. His movements are so smooth and seem so effortless. At the end of his demonstration five yudansha charged him at once, only to be thrown, two or three at a time, in various directions.

There were a number of extremely talented high school students as well. It makes me wish there had been an Aikido dojo near me when I was in high school. One thing that seemed interesting to me though, was that a number of the different high school groups used a ki-ai, which I haven't seen anyone do in Aikido before. I asked one of my senpai who had gone with me about it and he sort of frowned and said he didn't think it was very good. I am interested to hear what you think about this. Do many Aikikai groups use ki-ai when they are doing waza? I'd love to hear your thoughts on this. Quinlan Faris, Tokyo, Japan

See Letters.



Maria Murakawa, 1st Dan, demonstrating at Nisei Week on August 3.

Doshu Conducts Seminar in Madrid, Spain. October 2-3

Doshu will tour Spain from the end of September through the beginning of October, conducting a seminar for over 1,000 students in Madrid. Santiago attends with 15 of his students, representing the Salamanca Aikikai.

October Special Events:

This is a busy month for us with our belated Dan Promotion Celebration at Palermo's on October 10th. We will also present our first concert, featuring Jake LaBotz blues singer and student, for the Los Angeles Downtown Community on October 16. Everyone is invited.

General Meeting & Budo Study Combined On Wednesdays:

We have changed our General Meetings to the first Wednesday of each month from this month on. We will also combine this with our Budo Study Class. On the first Wednesday of each month, this month will be October 6th. Please mark your calendars. All students are encouraged to attend and be an involved voice in the Dojo.



Doshu Moriteru Ueshiba Sensei demonstrating Aikido in excellent form at the All Japan High School Demonstration.

**All Japan High School Enbu Taikai
Tokyo, Japan. August 8.**



Doshu Moriteru Ueshiba Sensei's demonstration.



**Congratulations & Best Wishes:
Carlos & Marga Almaraz Wedding**



Carlos Almaraz and his new bride, Marga, married in August of this year. They honeymooned in Puerto Vallarta, Mexico. Best Wishes & Many Sincere Congratulations always!

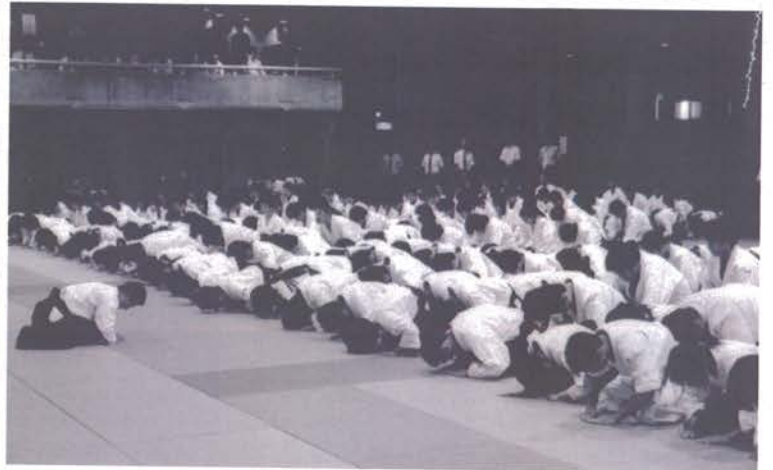
Carlos attended our 30th Anniversary in April of this year, his first time out of his own country, visiting Los Angeles.

**Congratulations:
San Leandro's 20th Anniversary**

Best Wishes to Aikido of San Leandro and Pat Hendricks Sensei on the celebration of their dojo's 20th Anniversary.



Doshu and Yonemochi Sensei at All Japan High School Demo.



Above: Opening Ceremony. L:left: High school students' demonstration.

More Nisei Week Demonstration:



Special Events Calendar

October 6. Monthly General Meeting. 6:30-7:15pm.
Budo Study Class. 7:15-8:30pm. (New Schedule Change)

October 10. Dan Promotions Celebration Party. Pizza Party at Palermo's in Hollywood.

October 16. Jake LaBotz Concert. 7:30-9:30pm. In the Dojo.

October 31. Dojo Halloween Party. 10:00-11:30am.

November 3. Monthly General Meeting & Budo Study Class.

November 25. Thanksgiving Holiday. Dojo Closed.

December 1. Monthly General Meeting & Budo Study Class. 7:00pm.

December 5. Annual Dojo Christmas Party. Everyone in invited, join the fun!

December 18. Dojo Year End Garden Cleaning and Fence Painting.

December 25-26. Christmas Holiday. Dojo Closed.

December 28. Dojo Year End Clean Up.

December 31. Special Year End Practice. 6:30-7:30pm.

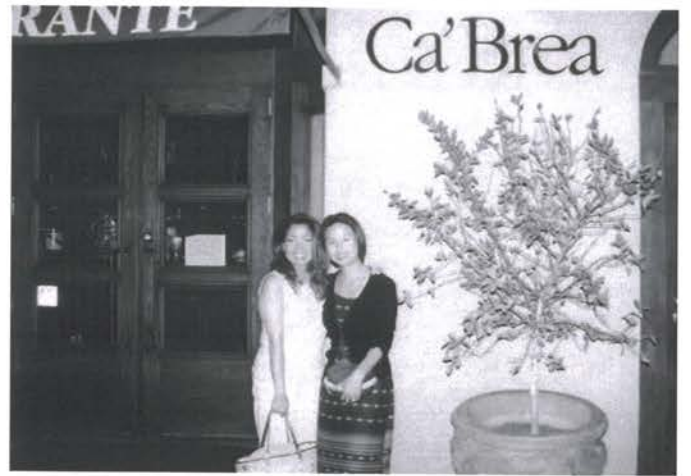
January 1. Happy New Year's Holiday. Dojo Closed.

January 2. Hatsu Keiko: First Practice of the New Year.

January 5. General Meeting & Budo Study Class. Study Topic: The Significance of the New Year and Kagami Biraki in Aikido and Tradition Martial Arts.



Nisei Week Children's Class:



An old friend and daughter of Master Adam Hsu of Taipei, Dr. Helen Hsu from Oakland visited Sensei last month. Dinner at Ca Brea with Helen, Carol Tanita, Ken Watanabe and Sensei.



Steven Shaw has relocated to Colorado for his new job and has bought a new home for his family. We wish him the best of luck and hope he will visit us in LA very often.



Report From Salamanca, Spain:

08-17-04: Sensei, How is everything? Hope well Sensei.

Here I'm again try to finish my Special Aiki news(August and September) number. This month I was very busy with the renovation of some part of the Dojo (a new mat and new decoration) I have not much time to do Aiki News in August, so I will do a special number in September.

Today I have I little interview about Iaido (maybe many people saw the Kill Bill Vol.2 Movie) so the ask me about what is Iaido and why we practice this art in this time, because nobody carry a Sword by the street (you know stupid question like that!) They try to understand a real martial arts as iaido and ask a couple of questions. And I think what it's worst they think that I can explaine it in a couple of answers, but I try do my best and explain with not many concepts about what is this art and which school we practice here, They take some pictures and they will publish this in a local magazine, I'm afraid that many strange people come to try Iaido...

The Dojo's work is hard and I hope this year our Aikido and Iaido will grow a little bit. And I hope next year some of your students come or I will go to visit you with my family in Los Angeles.

I have no any news about Doshu's Seminar in Spain. I think that he still will do this seminar but I did not hear anything in a couple of months.

One thing more my brother Carlos get married this weekend with Marga, and they will go to PUERTO VALLARTA to honeymoon, he asked if Raffi Badalian still have the school, because they like to visit him, but I don't know. Do you know anything about Raffi. Always, Santiago, Salamanca Aikikai, Salamanca, Spain

From Puerta Vallarta:

08-24-04: Dear Sensei, I hope all is well with you. I apologize for not getting back to you earlier. My computer was not working. I am in Los Angeles for consultations and treatments for my lower back. I will be here another 3 to 4 weeks depending on the improvement. Is Carlos going to go to Mexico for his honeymoon too? I send you my best wishes for health and happiness. With gratitude always,
Raffi Badalian

From Sweden: Right Thinking:

08-28-04: Hi Sensei Furuya My name is Peter Nyberg. I'm just wondering if you can help me with this?

You sometimes say put "technique (correctness) over strength. Spirit over technique. Mindfulness over spirit.", and "Compassion over mindfulness." In my point of view, this is great, my way to interpret. the meaning in this, are as follow:

1. (Love) and compassion are the head and rules over mindfulness.
2. Mindfulness is the guide over your spirit.
3. And budospirit are a guidenes and stand a bit above technique.
4. Correctly performed technique stand above strength, (of course if you train your muscels and body it also good but don't overdo it.)

Just wonder if I'm on the right track here? Best regards Peter Nyberg
Sweden 1:st Dan Aikikai, 2004, and have been training since 1991.

Sifu Brown & Students From Detroit:



Sensei explaining about Aikido, the Dojo and the Japanese tea ceremony to our guests from Detroit.

Sensei's Reply:

Yes. You are exactly correct in your understanding. It is easy to train your muscles and develop your stamina. One can start running, lift weights, go to the gym, do exercises at home, work in the yard - it is really not a problem to develop your muscles as you say. You can do this on your own.

Learning the Aikido techniques is another matter, you need a competent teacher to instruct you. You cannot really learn this by yourself.

However, by learning the techniques, it is really not correct Aikido to simply go through the empty motions or, on the other hand, compete in strength and power with others.

So above technique - is "correctness" of technique.

However, learning the correct moves is not enough in Aikido, there is also learning the correct mental posture, attitude, and feeling of good spirit for yourself, for what you give to your partner and your teacher and in the whole atmosphere of the dojo and your practice.

Continued:

Sweden continued: Included in this, is what you say, "budo-spirit" - not to harm or overcome others.

How you develop proper attitude and inner mental strength is mindfulness - or being aware and in the moment in everything you do.

This kind of awareness of your self and the world around you, will soon develop into compassion and love - the ultimate goal of Aikido and the essence of true martial arts.

I want to thank you for your email because several people wrote to me immediately after I posted it and said that they don't understand at all what I wrote. I don't think they thought about it very much at all. You are writing to me several days later so I think you must of thought about it a little. My intention was to encourage everyone to think about this . . . I believe it is very important to understand these words in our Aikido practice.

Finally, I notice at the end of your letter that you add your name, rank, and where you are from and how long you have practiced. This is very correct and proper etiquette in martial arts and I commend you on your training. I also think that you must train under a very excellent and thoughtful teacher - otherwise you never write an email like this. . . . Nowadays, I never see such "correctness" and proper attitude in martial arts - you have really made my day a great day today - your letter makes me feel so good! Usually, when people write to me, they are kind of rude or even though the letter is polite, I notice that they do not follow the etiquette in martial arts. But you do so very well in your email to me. Thank you! And my thanks and best wishes to your teacher - he is very great. Although I have never met him or even know who he is, I can tell from the letter you wrote to me.

From Tokyo: Ki-ai-Yes Or No:

08-28-04: All Japan High School Aikido Demonstration: Sensei, . (From First Page). . . On a different subject, I went to the All Japan High School Aikido Enbukai on August 3rd. (Zen koku koutou gakkou Aikido Enbutaikai) The Doshu also attended and performed an amazing demonstration. It's always a treat to see the Doshu's waza. His movements are so smooth and seem so effortless. At the end of his demonstration five yudansha charged him at once, only to be thrown, two or three at a time, in various directions.

There were a number of extremely talented high school students as well. It makes me wish there had been an Aikido dojo near me when I was in high school. One thing that seemed interesting to me though, was that a number of the different high school groups used a ki-ai, which I haven't seen anyone do in Aikido before. I asked one of my senpai who had gone with me about it and he sort of frowned and said he didn't think it was very good. I am interested to hear what you think about this. Do many Aikikai groups use ki-ai when they are doing waza? I'd love to hear your thoughts on this. Best regards,
Quinlan

Question on Ki-Ai & Aikido:

I am glad that you were able to see Doshu's wonderful Aikido. One of the photos you took is of Yonemochi Hideo Sensei who attended our 30th Anniversary in April of this year. He was the head coordinator of the event you saw.

In regards to Kiai, this is a very difficult question to answer and I

Annual Dojo Christmas Party

December 5, Sunday, 6:30pm

Sambi Restaurant, Downey

think it is up to the individual teacher whether they use Kiai or not in Aikido practice. In this country too, some Aikido teachers advocate Kiai and some do not.

I am sure that Doshu was not using Kiai, nor did 2nd Doshu, Kisshomaru Ueshiba when he was alive and teaching. I myself would agree with your sempai, we do not generally use Kiai in practice.

I think many people use it in imitation of O'Sensei who seemed to use Kiai. However, in O'Sensei's case, he explained that the sounds he makes is different from the typical Kiai used in martial arts. O'Sensei's sound is from Kokyu or breath power and also comes from Kotodama or "word spirit." Although I think it may appear the same, O'Sensei is a different sound, not Kiai. Sometimes, this is explained as "silent Kiai." Most of the high ranking instructors, who studied directly under O'Sensei for many years, that I have trained with in the past, all did not or do not use Kiai. Although sometimes, there is a sound, this is from Kokyu or "inner breath" or "breath power." In Aikido, we make a difference, although this is not very clear to many.

I think that every Aikido instructor you ask this question to, will come up with a different answer or opinion for you. My recommendation to you, is to follow Doshu's Aikido exactly as you see it and as he teaches you.

Sidenote on Kiai:

Kiai is an old term in Japanese martial arts. In most definitions, we talk about concentrating the power in the tanden and expressing this power in an explosive voice we call Kiai. There are too explanations from olden times. The first is that Kiai is also, "Toki" or war cry as a shout on the battlefield. The second definition is more esoteric and explains about concentrating energy in the belly or into the strike or cut with the sword.

In Aikido, we use a kind of sound in Funakogi Undo (Rowing Exercise) and in suburi or bokken training. In Aikido, many instructors make a distinction between "shouting" as a form of Kiai or a strong force of breath which we call Kokyu.

I think as an Aikidoist, in my own opinion, it is better to understand this voice as Kokyu. In the other disciplines of Kendo and Karate and often in Judo, we talk about Kiai. . . .

Kiai is a compound of two words: Ki (energy) and ai (to blend). Exactly in kanji characters, Kiai is the reverse of the word, Aiki. In colloquial Japanese, there is the phrase, "kiai wo ireru," or "add kiai to your effort." This does not necessarily mean to add a shout or voice to your work, but means to "concentrate" or "focus your energies" more into what you are doing. I am not making any conclusions here, but explaining Kiai as a teach my own students in my own Dojo, as I was taught.

Letters:

08-08-04: Dear Sensei, I learn much by reading your daily messages. Thank you very much for caring enough to take such trouble.

There is so much I wish to discuss with you, but I'll limit it to one thought. But first, here's a bit of background on me:

I practiced judo from about age six to about fifteen, then for a few months a few years ago when I was in my late 30s. I didn't stick with it that time mostly because I didn't find what I was looking for. Then a few months after I quit, I saw you on the Discovery Channel documentary on martial arts. Since then, I've studied many books in Aikido (including Kodo) and it illuminated many things about judo that my judo senseis never talked about. Since judo and Aikido share some common heritage, much of the lessons in the Aikido books quickly made sense to me.

Despite the value I've gained from studying Aikido (at least intellectually), I haven't joined an Aikido dojo because I know I cannot devote the time and mental energy required. I have a very demanding job at Microsoft. In fact, another reason I quit judo that last time is because my Microsoft job taxes my mind so much that by the time I arrived at class in the evening, I was so mentally drained that I'd make many mistakes tied to my inability to concentrate, resulting in injuries to myself and others.

Anyway, my thought relates to a workshop on a very complex, new topic that I delivered to a very high quality audience. By high-quality, I mean these are among the best computer programmers in the world. I developed the concept for the workshop and the material. This was the first time I developed a course on a topic I barely mastered myself and delivered myself. It really made me understand the need for senior students to participate in teaching. It seemed that my final exam was to teach the subject. The act of preparing the material that must be correct and delivering the material really cemented my grasp of it. In the future, when I'm a sempai again, I'll never again think the sensei may be taking advantage of me as free labor.

Lastly, I'm curious about something you mention in Kodo. You mention an item that is not on the menu of a Japanese restaurant you frequent. You say that there is an unseen ingredient that makes it so special. I'm betting you're talking about butterfish (black cod) misoyaki.

Thank you for taking the time to read my email. I certainly would love to visit your dojo when I'm in Los Angeles. Sincerely, Eugene Asahara

08-08-04: Hello Sensei, Thank you for the response to my email this morning (via your Web site). Actually, I'm fortunate enough to live very near Frank Doran's dojo, Aikido West. I will take advantage of that while I'm here! I believe I have worked myself into a position where I can make the time for Aikido and in fact the payoffs from randori will be great in the normal course of my day :) Also, thank you for the interesting information on ume. Sincerely, Eugene Asahara

08-08-04: Musashi: Dear Rev. Furuya Sensei, You wrote in your daily message today about Musashi. Do you have any thoughts about why this great swordsman, great teacher of kenjutsu, serious artist, and inspiring lifelong student, would retire to a cave as a hermit at the young age of 58 and write a book every beginner thinks they understand?

Sensei's Reply: Miyamoto Musashi's Life: In Musashi's time, we estimate the average life span for a male in times of war to be around 35-45 years, perhaps 50. Musashi lived to a very ripe old age considering his occupation as swordsman.

After the age of thirty, we know he became a "friend of the mountains and streams," meaning that he spent most of his time travelling and most likely perfecting his art in the mountains. In his later years, he became a guest of the powerful Hosokawa Daimyo in the south of Japan and pursued his painting and various arts. In his final years, he retired to the Reigendo cave where, it is said that he wrote the Gorin no Sho. We believe that most of his important works of art were produced in his later life. Several of his students opened schools in the years after his passing so we assume that he was teaching as well.

If you read the Gorin no Sho, there is a sense that he felt that he did not achieve all of his dreams and that this record was to be a testament to his skill and knowledge of the arts. In addition, in the several days before his passing, his students had several portraits of him painted to preserve his memory.

We don't know a great deal of Musashi's life and there is not very much which can be verified or taken as historical fact. Much of what we know is from his own words and the rest is conjecture. Much of what we assume to be his life is from the great novel, Miyamoto Musashi, by Yoshikawa Eiji. This novel, originally published as a newspaper serial, along with "shingoku" a new style of theatrical plays, and the movies have made Musashi a legend and much of this legend is taken as fact, even today.

Yoshikawa did not base his novel on the Gorin No Sho but on a short novel written several years after his passing called the Nitenki. Much of the facts in this record are fictitious and this have been an attempt by his students or some admirers to boast Musashi's reputation.

Despite, the scarcity of verifiable information, we do know that he was very competent in swordsmanship and a great artist and thinker. The novel came at a time, when Japan was extremely interested in the West and their future in the international scene. Musashi instantly become a popular icon of the people embracing the so-called Western spirit of "individuality" and "independence" with a "rebellion" against the establishment and older set ways. Every movie company in Japan made their own version of the Musashi legend and lead stars all coveted the role of Musashi. This not only indicates the popularity of Musashi's image but further cemented fact with legend - with legend winning out.

Although his most noted duel was with Sasaki Kojiro, there are no historical records at all which verify his existence - not in his birthplace, not with the Chujo Tomita School of swordsmanship where he is said to have been given his degree of mastery nor with the Hosokawa Daimyo who is said to have hired him for a while as their fencing instructor. In the last case, there would definitely be records of his employment, stipend or salary, residence, etc. . . .

If you go to Kokura in the south, you will see a monument to the place where this famous duel was fought. Indeed, it is most likely a monument to great writing ability and imagination of Yoshikawa Eiji, than to historical fact.

In Kyoto, the famous duel between the Yoshioka brothers is also most

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likely fiction. There was a fencing school with the name of Yoshioka in Kyoto during the Ashikaga reign, but they were experts in the jutte, a short baton, and not swordsmanship. In Musashi's time, they had long ago dropped their occupation as a martial arts school and were engaged full-time in indigo dying. In addition, within the Yoshioka family, there are no records of the existence of Yoshioka Seijuro, Denshichiro, or Genzaemon, the young heir. None of these people exist but are from the head of Yoshikawa.

In Iga, as well, there is not existence of Shishido Baiken as a great kusari-gama, sickle and chain, expert. Most likely, he did not meet any Hozoin priest in Nara. There is not record of any encounter with Takuan, the Zen priest, nor with Yagyū Tajima no Kami or Yagyū Jubei.

In the novel, when Musashi is said to have been shut up in a castle by Takuan. Otsu, his love interest, is said to have waited for him working for several years in a tea shop.

This tea shop is modeled after a famous tea shop in Kyoto known as Tsu-en. Using the real tea shop as a model, he wrote about this other fictional tea shop where the faithful Otsu waited for Musashi.

It was in this way, using real models for his fictionalized account, his writing are given a great deal of reality and credibility. There is no record of Otsu, she is only a character of the novel.

As Musashi pursues the "do" or "path" to the perfection of his art, he in turn is pursued by Otsu. Otsu or "tsu" is another version of the character for "do" or way. Musashi never realizes in the novel that the path he pursues is quite possibly in the love of Otsu (path) from whom he constantly runs away.

Before responding to your question here, for the first time, I went to Google to see what information is available on Musashi. I am sad to say the much as a continual rehashing of the same old material and legends over and over, with slight changes and variations here and there. . . .

The sword which is often referred to is definitely not a Musashi sword nor resembles the type of sword he designed.

Although it is stated that he use a "Kaneshige" or "Kinju" - this Kinju is one of the well known ten students of Masamune and a valuable treasure. Historical fact does verify that he used a "Kaneshige" or Kazusa no suke Kaneshige who was active in swordmaking around the time of Musashi. This Kaneshige uses different characters and is a different person of a different time. Kaneshige blades are known for their cutting ability and a good choice for Musashi. Musashi introduced Kaneshige to the Todo Daimyo where he was hired as their official swordsmith. Later, Kaneshige taught Nagasone Kotetsu who became of the greatest sword makers of the age.

In the novel, Sasaki Kojiro is said to have used a Bizen Nagamitsu known as the "Mono-hoshi" or "(clothes) drying pole" because of its length. Nagamitsu is another early smith of the later Kamakura period and hardly the type of sword a person would carry around or use because of its age and value. Many Nagamitsu are registered as National Treasures today. Among Nagamitsu blades, there is no blade of this length as described in the novel nor is there a Nagamitsu known as "Mono-hoshi." Ok, this is enough for today.

08-09-04: Enjoyed Nisei Week Demonstration: Furuya Sensei; Thank you so much for having me today at your demonstration. I enjoyed it tremendously, although I am sorry that I missed the IAIDO portion of the program, due to the fact that several of us were waiting outside because your event was such a great success.... !

It was an honor and a privilege meeting you. I have wanted to meet you for quite some time. Your dojo epitomizes what a DOJO (place of THE WAY) should be, and you and your students truly embody BUDO. You truly exemplify BUDO what I am striving to teach my students.... that is, KEN ZEN ICHI (by the way, Nakayama Sensei's favorite KOTOWAZA that he wrote to me, together with his handwritten MUSHIN, hence the name of my dojo) O-Sensei would be very proud. AIKIDO and ZEN (especially SHIKANTAZA) is THE WAY.

Let's meet for tea or lunch this week if you have time (maybe Wednesday late am?). I am sorry for this long message, but you have inspired me deeply. Michael Berger, 5th Dan, Shotokan Karate.

08-09-04: Dojo Hardships: Dear Furuya Sensei, My teacher who is also my partner has been studying Shotokan Karate for almost 30 years. He started training in 1975 and in 1986 went to Japan to study and train at several universities and the J.K.A. Among the universities were Takudai, Keio dai, Taisho dai and Kokushikan. I myself began training 15 years ago.

The reason I am writing to you, is to thank you for letting me know I am not going insane. Most of what you write about in your book Kodo has happened to me and my teacher. He has practiced day after day never stopping. Even through 10 close bereavements and other extreme hardships. But the main thing that is hardest to understand is the terrible jealousy we have towards us. Please believe me, I thought I was going insane with the continual back stabbing and people trying to stop him teaching on a professional basis. Even to the point of students being envious of his ability, though still obviously wanting his instruction.

Our situation reminded me of F.B.I. movies where you don't know who to trust. The one real lesson this has taught me is that the word Sensei means far more than I ever imagined and true Sensei are rare. I am a lucky student to have a teacher who is sincere honest & dedicated to the art of Karate and the Way. I will continue reading your book as this has given me strength and inspiration to continue on a journey that is so wonderful and fulfilling in every aspect of my life, I thank you once again for your efforts in explaining these confusing phenomena. Yours faithfully, Linda Barnes.

Sensei's Reply: Thank you for your kind words and I am happy to hear how Kodo has helped you stay on the Path.

Art of Aikido Now In DVD Format:

Our video series in nine volumes, The Art of Aikido, is now in DVD format with very convenient subheadings for each technique. This makes it very easy to go to any specific technique very quickly. We hope all students will take advantage of this great teaching tool and reference to your training in the Dojo. You can order through our website or see one of Sensei's assistants to purchase or get more information. HIGHLY Recommended!

Continued: Yes, we think that everyone is studying the same thing with the same heart but still there can be horrible jealousies, back stabbing and political assassinations. . . . it can even happen within the sacred grounds of a temple and monastery as well and no less a dojo.

We must keep in mind that the sacred space of the Dojo is quite different from the world outside. It is important to apply the ideals and principles of what we understand through our training and apply it to the world around us. However, many people, not appreciating this, take their own violent, petty world and bring it into the dojo and into practice.

This happens all of the time and there is no way to avoid it. I see this continually even today and know it can become very discouraging and stressful. Now, after many years, I still suffer from many wounds and scars from so many such battles and still new battles go on today. As you get older, you can only rely on your most trusted students for support and strength, so I do believe it is important to continue to teach your students correctly and sincerely as possible.

"Envious students" is also a subject I have rarely heard brought up but it is an important issue because it happens all of the time. Most of my inquiries come from students so it is not often I get to hear the struggles of other teachers. There are many students who are "envious" of the teacher's status or "authority" but somehow still want to learn from them. Some students, despite their desire to learn, feel threatened by their teachers or are uncomfortable with the "higher" ranking of the teacher. Several students over the years have said, "I have a problem with authority." Again, I often see the "students vs teachers" syndrome. There is also a jealousy of another's accomplishment. All of this does not belong in the dojo or on the practice mat. I think the hardest task of all is to get the student to focus on his training and leave all of the baggage of their personal and private lives outside. Much of this, all comes from a lack of respect for learning and the learning process. Of course, there are some who take pleasure in seeing another put down or in trouble. And of course, there are some who take it as a "win" to see another put into a position of misfortune or suffering. In some cases, students project their own suffering to others in a distorted, "If I am suffering, everyone else should suffer too!" mode of thinking. And then again, if some feel persecuted because they in turn persecute others like the "thief who looks at everyone else as a thief."

In martial arts, we say that training is like "polishing a mirror of the self" so that we can see our ourselves for who we are as a part of our enlightenment. For many, I see, we don't want to see who we really are - we only want to see who we want to be or at least deny that dream for others.

Martial arts practice takes tremendous courage and energy - to see one's self, to practice such high ideals and principles with our sweat and blood - is definitely not easy and only for the chosen few who are willing to make such sacrifices in their lives and who have a brave aspiration towards self-enlightenment

More often than, people come into martial arts as an easy way to confirm their own beliefs or receive some kind of "approval" or "confirmation." For many, it has nothing to do with learning and training. . . . at all.

Again, I must keep saying that the ideals and principles and sense of

order we learn on the mat should be applied to the world outside, not the reverse of bringing all of the chaos, personal anguish, and battles of the outside world into the dojo.

As much as I hate to say it, Aikidoists are generally the most hypocritical to talk about peace and harmony all of the time, yet be so politically ambitious, competitive, and petty in dealing with each other and among various dojos and organizations.

Again, please believe me when I say I know very well what you can go through but still we must keep going on. Who promised that the Path is easy and smooth? From the very beginning, we already know how hard it must be, we are just not used to the pain and the hurt. When I get discouraged, I think about my past teachers and what they went through and I know that it is ten times more terrible than what I can possibly experience in my own life. . . .

In the past, great masters like Miyamoto Musashi did not have many students and live a quiet life but still his name lives on today very vividly.

We try to make huge organizations and dominate others with our political power and influence and use money to buy people's hearts. For me, it is often resembles various countries of the world building their armies and preparing to fight each other in another world war. This is not the Path of Peace and this is not the way of martial arts, it can only lead to more suffering and destruction.

Yet, even in our own hearts, how much fighting do we do? How much jealousy do we harbor, how much hate, envy and meanness do we cultivate each day within ourselves?

Don't worry about the actions of others, however powerful or frightening they may seem, just continue to practice and try to be faithful to your self and to your art. You cannot control the hearts of others - this is only an illusion of the ego, you can only polish your own heart each day so there is no way to judge other people. Only expect more and more hardships, I am sorry to say.

Someone once told me, "God gives the hardest tests to those with the greatest aspirations. . . ." Don't let the petty actions and small minds of others deter you ,but just keep trying.

As for myself, I am weak and old. Without the support of a few good students, I could never make it. Even to develop one or two good students in your life is an accomplishment, I don't think big, and I don't think powerful, even though the hole I dig each day is very small and insignificant compared to others, at least each day, I try to go deeper and deeper and deeper. . . .

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Continued: Please keep a brave heart and continue your practice despite all obstacles - there will always be people out to get you for whatever reason.

I remember I knew a teacher who was always so carefree when it came to dealing with his students, problems and the problems of the dojo. I could never understand how he could achieve such "serenity." Finally, during a conversation, I brought this subject up and he calmly said, "Oh, well I just don't give a damn about them."

When you "give a damn" about something, you will suffer and suffer. When you don't give a damn, you may achieve some kind of serenity and freedom - but at the cost of your own humanity???????

08-09-04: From Budovideos.com: Dear Sensei, Your DVDs are doing very well and the interview was very well received. I look forward to your future products too! Best regards, Jake McKee

08-11-04: Dear Furuya Sensei, Many thanks for taking the time to give me such a poignant and speedy reply. Your kind remarks, advice and concern have given me the fortitude to review my problems from a renewed perspective. Arigato Gozaimasu, Linda Barnes.

08-12-04: Hello Sensei ; I hope this finds you well, and in case you did not receive my last email, I wish to reiterate my great gratitude for you for your time and generosity on Wednesday. By the way , I did give your regards to Kubota Sensei , and he made some very kind remarks about you....

I was just reading about some of the items that we discussed , and was surprised to again find a reference to Bodhidharma and his development of or modification of Dr.Hua Tuo's Five Animal dance (wu xing xi) to create the first Shaolin style, (wu xing quan) Five Animal Boxing Style.... I dont believe it to be true , as you have confirmed, but the interesting thing is that this article has a bibliography that references a book supposedly from China, "True records of Shaolin's internal and external martial arts" from Beijing Press and the Beijing University Physical Education Education..... I was wondering if these facts have been presented in such a way, as you suggested, just to promote the Shaolin Temple to tourists or ??? Anyway, it was interesting. Let me know what you think....

There is a painting of O-Sensei on the cover and some interesting articles, but I am not sure how accurate they all are....

I would love to read some of the books that you suggested, like "Refining the Self" ... would you be so kind as to send me some suggestions ?

08-12-04: Dear Sensei: I have been reading your Daily messages with a great deal of interest and am able to draw many parallels and empathies with your experiences. Of particular interest is the attitude of todays students compared to those of 25 to 30 years ago. Today it would appear that when a student joins a dojo, they do so with pre-conceived ideas about how the training should be presented to them, and also how much effort they are prepared to give.

Another notable difference lies in the spirit within a dojo these days. When I was a student we were expected to create spirit in the dojo, thereby allowing Sensei to impart the lesson without having first to get the students in a spirited frame of mind. Today as a teacher I am

expected to create the spirit for the students, otherwise training would take place in an uncomfortable atmosphere. People do not seem to be able leave their daily problems at the dojo door and insist on bringing their baggage in with them. I know from experience in Japan that the sempai lean very heavily on anyone who does not display the correct frame of mind and spirit.

Today it is almost a constant battle to make people aware of which approach is right, the students or the teachers. Sometimes I wonder why some students bother to train in the first place as it seems they are determined to resist being taught and are hell bent on trying to dilute the arts as a system. This takes a huge amount of resolve and resiliency from us as teachers as the future of these systems lies firmly in our hands. Try explaining that to a spotty geek who wants to fly or run around the walls. Fudoshin, I think!!!

Many things seem to isolate true martial arts teachers today, be it from the attitude of the general public or from sources that are closer to us. I cite this as an example for what its worth.

Some 23 years ago a young woman applied to join my dojo. Having passed the initial interview she started training the following week. She already held a 3rd kyu and from watching her opening Kihon it was obvious her standard was awful. Not wanting to discourage her I worked on her shortcomings, supported her spirit and eventually she began to improve. Four years later she successfully took and passed shodan.

Obviously both she and I was pleased with the result and she continued to train albeit at a less intense level. When she started to slacken with her efforts her standard started to slip and when I mentioned this her excuses came thick and fast. Work, relationship, family, the list was endless. Time passed and nidan began to be mentioned and again I was expected to make more effort with her training which I duly did. Again, another successful result. After her pass I felt it would be encouraging for other new female members if she would help with beginner classes. I was flatly refused and she stopped training altogether for over a year. During this time I had heard on the grapevine that she was going around telling anyone that would listen that she was a personal student of an international teacher who took an annual summer course of one weeks duration.

Naturally I was bewildered by these remarks and when she returned to the dojo and it was mentioned she denied all knowledge though I knew the source to be true. She once again resumed training though sporadically with gaps of many months between training. Sandan was being mentioned but by this time I was wary of her motives. To placate me she decided to take private lessons and in doing so made huge improvements in technique. Sandan was duly taken and passed and the usual slackening off and missed training sessions set in. After an absence of two years she finally turned up to train. By now I was in no mood to accept lame excuses and felt I would have to confront her motives for training. I endured a spectacular range of histrionics and finally she admitted the training was too hard and that she was off to find " A Recreational Karate Club."

Foolishly, the fact that I practice as a Shugyo and she passed her grades with relative ease, she turned her back on the one thing that had given her success. I'm only annoyed it took 20 years to find out. Beware the wolf in sheeps clothing!!! Yours faithfully,
John Barnes.

08-16-04: Dear Furuya Sensei, Now I feel even more of a lucky student. I have been reading your past daily messages and the similarities I find are amazing. Its just like listening to my teacher. If only the student realized the work of a true teacher. The teacher has done all the work & research on the subject and searched for the best teachers to learn from. Its a continuous work load & ongoing study. As my teacher is my partner I also know the huge amount of energy it takes. Your students are extremely lucky to have you, as all they have to do is turn up & be open to the learning you are trying to impart. All the answers they look for are in their daily training. If they only knew that all a good sensei wants is to make them the best person they can possibly be. Yours faithfully, Linda Barnes.

08-15-04: Father Pinto's Visit to the Dojo: Dear Sensei, Fr. Pinto was very excited to have met you and to have seen a beautiful dojo. Fr. Pinto had numerous comments. Once we were in the car he said, "Your sensei is a very good man, there is a lot of peace in his heart! I enjoyed talking to him so much. But you know, he's also a very scary man! You know why? Because he is so humble - that man has tremendous humility - men like that - you can't imagine the strength they possess. He is man with such strength because of his humility." At the 2-day conference in Oxnard, Fr. Pinto mentioned each day - telling the conference attendees of the opportunity he had to have met such an incredible martial artist - he mentioned to them that it was not just your ability that made you so strong, but your humbleness and the peace in your heart.

Fr. Pinto also mentioned the next time he comes he'd like to meet with you. I mentioned to him about your fondness for Mother Teresa - Father, during his novitiate to become a priest, worked with Mother Teresa. Best regards, Ray Emnace

08-16-04: Don't Understand: Dear Sensei, In closing your page, you said to put "technique (correctness) over strength. Spirit over technique. Mindfulness over spirit.", and "Compassion over mindfulness." I am failure with the meaning of compassion and spirit but am not sure what is meant by compassion over mindfulness over spirit? Thanks, Wesley

08-17-04: I came across this wonderful piece of balanced writing on a strength and conditioning Web site. Some one asked for a Martial Art to be recommended: "Aikido should be avoided if you are looking for self defense, it looks good in movies and on the mats, but it's poor against real street attack. Aikido is a bastardization of Daito-Ryu Aiki Jujutsu, which I study, which is way more combative and deadly than Aikido (barring those rare Aikido guys who have a grasp on reality) as Aikido was created by a man on a spiritual journey. He made it more open and gentle (not the good kind), and he had this BS dont hurt your attacker approach. Daito ryu is about hurting, maiming and killing an attacker. BJJ, IMEO is way better for the street than Aikido. Krav Maga is a good solid defensive system, with alot of strikes and low line kicks, basic grappling and joint locking/destructions and good anti-weapon defenses. Shugyo! Dylan"

I particularly liked the line "he had this BS dont hurt your attacker approach." Another wonderful example of how the Internet is a double edged sword - access to a mountain of information most of which is rubbish! Thank goodness for your oasis of truth! Best, Ambrose

Sensei's Reply: Stay away from ignorance. Leave it alone!

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Marco Giuseppe Marangoni
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Typical silliness by uninformed and ignorant people who plague the internet

08-17-04: Sensei, I was at the NY Aikikai 40th Anniversary seminar, and I must say that it was a great experience. I was hoping to see you there, but since I know you are on the West Coast, I thought perhaps you might not make it. I learned a great deal at that seminar, especially from Doshu. However, several aspects of my training prior to the seminar, help me to understand what Doshu was trying to teach everyone. It was as if a light finally went off in my head after 9 years of training. One thing that was on my mind, were several points that you made in a recent article I read on Budovideos.com. I won't reprint them here, but I just wanted to thank you for all of your teachings and wisdom. It really is a pleasure to be able to learn and benefit from an Instructor of your status, even though we have never met. I have also watched several of your videos and payed close attention to the things that you said. I have tried to apply those things to my daily training, and I believe that it is finally starting to pay off. I feel as though I have reached a new plateau in my training, even though I consider myself to still be a novice. I hope that one day I will be able to come to LA and meet and train with you (with your permission). I just wanted to share these thoughts with you and thank you for sharing your wisdom and experience of Aikido with all of us. Thank You Sensei! Nafis Zahir.

08-18-04: On the Budovideos Interview: Sensei, The whole interview was enlightening, but at the time I read it, I was preparing for my Ni Dan test at the NY Aikikai 40th Anniversary Seminar, and I was struggle through a transition in my training. This transition was magnified by the fact, that at the same time I was preparing for my test, my Sensei was also trying to break me out of some old habits I had. I would spend hours thinking about it, and when I read these two things in your interview, a light went off.

1) "It is important for the movement to flow and create a strong connection with the opponent's movement."

2) "Many times we are not stuck or stopped by his strength, we are stuck on the "idea" of this strength or we are intimidated by his attack." Nafis Zahir.

08-18-04: Wants Link: Furuya, Sensei osu! I am writing to you this sunny afternoon to ask for a favour of sorts. I own and operate a dojo in Dawson Creek, BC Canada. I have a web-site for the students and have recently added a page called (kangaeru - ponder)! I read your "words from Sensei" daily and would like to post the occasionally quote from your page on our kangaeru page?! Would this be acceptable to you? I would of course reflect and give credit to you and add a link to your "words from Sensei" page whenever I quoted you. Please consider this request and perhaps take a look at my site to give you a feel of who we are and what we are about, osu! Namaste... Yours in Budo, Bill Dufour, "Tanshin Dojo"

08-21-04: Likes Training: Hello Sensei, I just wanted to let you know that I am very excited about training in your dojo. I have been to four classes so far, and I am thoroughly impressed with the individual attention and excellent teaching that has been given by yourself and your students. I haven't been to class in a couple of days, and I will likely not be returning until Tuesday or Wednesday, however, because it seems that I have hurt my shoulder a bit. Also, my body is just becoming accustomed to these new moves, and I need more rest

because it seems that I have hurt my shoulder a bit. Also, my body is just becoming accustomed to these new moves, and I need more rest now than I will as I become more comfortable with everything. I just wanted to assure you that I am very serious, dedicated and excited about the training and I will return as soon as my shoulder heals a bit more. In the meantime, I have picked up your book "Kodo, Ancient Ways," and am enjoying absorbing your unique views. So, hopefully I will be back to class in a couple of days. Thanks again, and I hope all is well. Warm Regards, Bill DuBay

08-25-04: Visitors Form Detroit: Dear Sensei, What an honor and joy it was to visit you and your dojo, August 7th. I am one of Sifu Brown's students. We appreciated your hospitality and dojo very much.

The tea ceremony is very special to me, so I was so grateful that you shared how it affects the practice. As you spoke, I wanted to get your photo, seated next to my teacher, as you explained the ceremony. But, I felt that it would be rude to take a picture that required a flash, when you were speaking. Your student took a photo, without the flash. He said that it was your camera. May I get a copy of that photo? Of course I would pay a fee for it, and pay for it to be sent. I hope that this is not a breach of etiquette, as I know that I represent my teacher. I know that your picture - with Sifu - holding the hishaku - would mean so much to Sifu Brown, and to all of the students who had the privilege to visit you. Please let me know if this is acceptable and appropriate. Sincerely, Deborah B. Daiek

08-30-04: Sensei, I hope everything is well and I hope this forum is a successful one. I am just responding to your request for an introduction. Of course I have been writing to you for a couple of years now, but as you have recently pointed out in your daily message, I have had bad manners in not updating you with my information for so long. Respectfully, Jason P., Ikkyu, Akido of Center City, Chief instructor, Donovan Waite Sensei

08-30-04: Fake Swords & Bad Mogito: Hi my name is Eduardo Acosta and I am seeking some advice. I recently purchased a katana that the seller claimed is from the Meiji Period. I have my suspicions about the blade, but I can't be sure since my knowledge of swords is very limited. I would appreciate it very much if you could tell me what your opinion is on this sword. I will understand if you don't have the time to look at it, but I'd appreciate any information you would be willing to disclose. Thank you very much. Sincerely, Eduardo Acosta. (Please refer to reply in Daily Message)



Welcome To The Aikido Center of Los Angeles



Aikido Center of Los Angeles

Please Note Our New Iaido Schedule:

Saturdays:

7:15am-8:15am Beginner's Class.

8:15am-9:15am. Intermediate & Advanced.

Sundays:

7:45am-8:45am Open Class

Thursdays:

7:45pm-6:45pm. Weapons & Kumitachi Class.



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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. We are directly affiliated with Aikikai Hombu, Tokyo, Japan. Please make inquiries by email: aclafuruya@earthlink.net.

Please Visit Our Website:
www.aikidocenterla.com

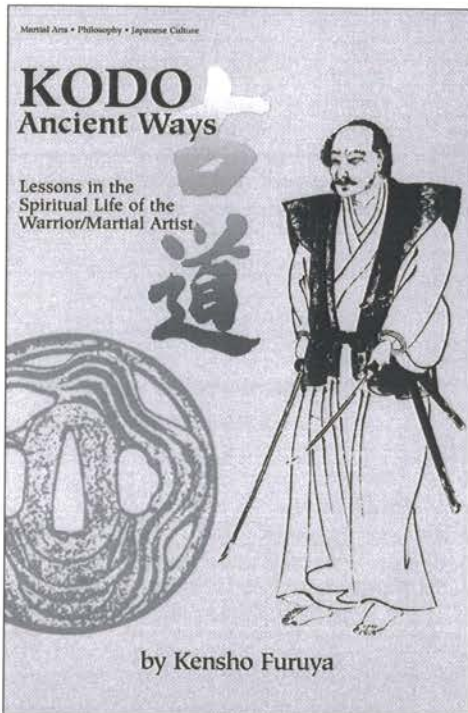


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Our Dojo's Mission:

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. Aikido Center of Los Angeles, Rev. Kensho Furuya

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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Aikido Center of Los Angeles

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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 inquires by email or letter. Our purpose is to help others in the correct practice of Aikido and to spread the correct interpretation of O'Sensei's teachings.

Requirements for Affiliation:

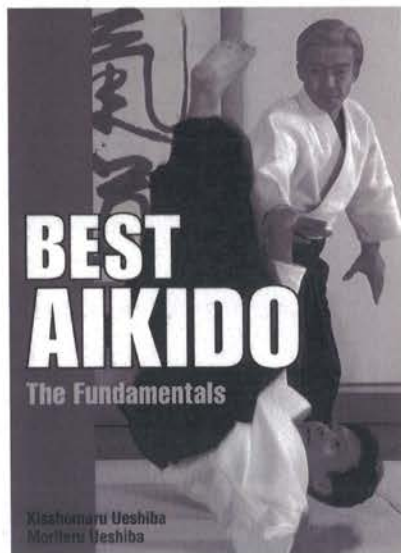
1. To practice correct Hombu Aikido with good spirit and energy.
2. To follow O'Sensei's and his Successors' Aikido with honesty and commitment
3. Not to dabble in harmful or hurtful politics or intrigues.
4. To get along with each other in the dojo and with other dojos in a friendly way.
5. To pursue 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.

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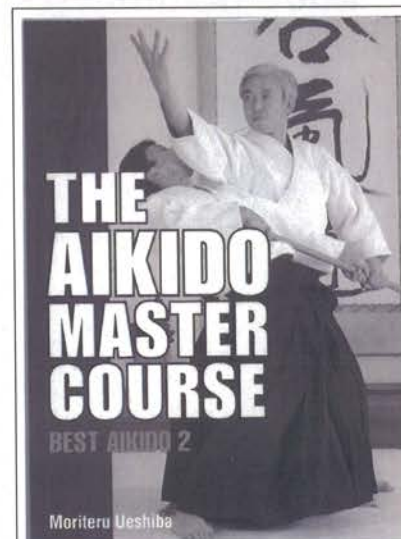
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3rd Doshu's Books



Kisshomaru Ueshiba
Moriteru Ueshiba

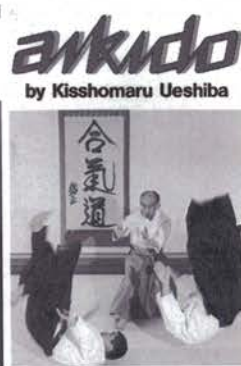
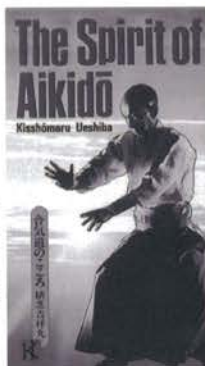


Moriteru Ueshiba

3rd Doshu's latest books are highly recommended

Sensei's
Five Star
Readings
On
Aikido:

Please use these books and references as a invaluable supplement to your Aikido training.

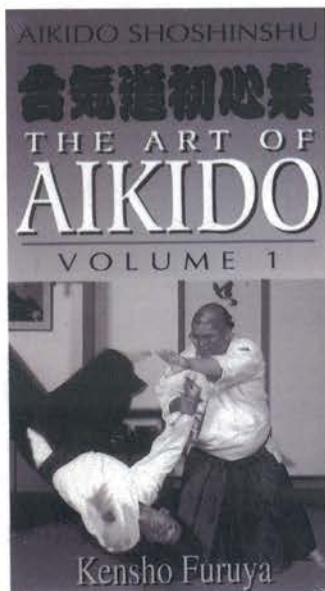


The Art of AIKIDO

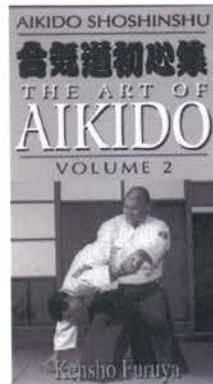
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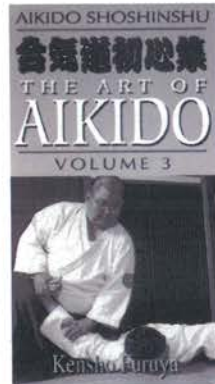
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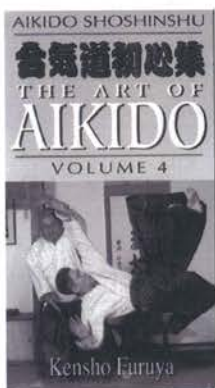
Kensho Furuya



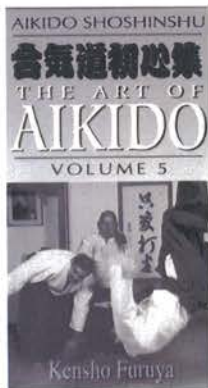
Basic Techniques
Throwing & Joint
Techniques, Ikkyo, Nikyo,
Sankyo, Yonkyo & Gokyo



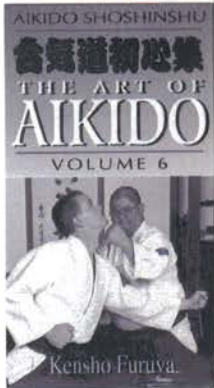
Ukemi-Breakfalling
Basics Continued
Free Style Techniques
Tenshin. Ki. Breathing.



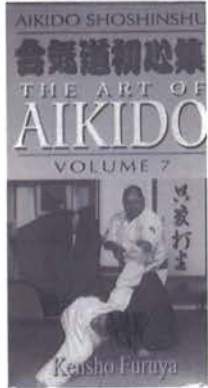
Katatetori Ryotemochi;
Ryotetori: 2-hand.
Reigi-saho: Etiquette.
Koshinage-Hip throws.



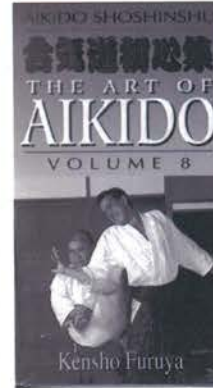
Suwari-waza. Gokyo.
Hanmi-handachi. Kokyu-
dosa. Katatori: Shoulder.
Multiple attackers.
Five-man Freestyle.



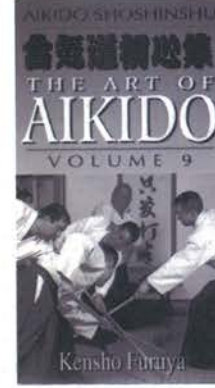
Tsuki: Strikes & Punches
Yokomenuchi: Strikes to
the side of the head &
neck.



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

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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

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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.