

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

道の為、世の為、人の為 合気道

The Aiki Dojo

Direct Affiliation: The Aikido World Headquarters, 17-18 Wakamatsu-cho, Shinjuku-ku, Tokyo, Japan
International Aikido Kodokai, 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

\$5.25
Donation

December 1, 2005

Volume XXIV. Number 12.

Seasons Greetings & Merry X mas

Peace on Earth

Hideo Yonemochi Shihan Travels Sweden & Cambodia:



In recent months, Yonemochi Sensei, 8th Dan, has been busy travelling to various countries, to Sweden and to Cambodia on teaching missions. Sensei is one of the most senior members of Aikikai and the Managing Executive Direc-

tor of the Aikikai Foundation. He will be visiting us in February, 2006, for a special seminar.

A Very Merry Christmas! Dojo & Tradition Illuminates New Life & A New Age:

Rev. Kensho Furuya

With the new lease signed, I feel like we have been granted a "second" new Life of the Dojo. This is a good time for me to think seriously about the future of our Dojo and all of my students. Many students are doing excellently and new students coming in everyday all show excellent potential to be very good Aikidoists. In the dojo, we must always think of what we can "give," not take in this world. Of course, it is natural to think about, "I want this and I want that," but this is the cause of all fighting and suffering. What can we give back to Aikido, how do we show our gratitude of O'Sensei's teachings? What can we give back to the community? How can my students continue to grow and develop and naturally come into their own? This are questions which I think about everyday.



Good Aikido always brings good results. Good acts and good thoughts always bring happiness for all. We must always hold true to this Path. As long as we are caring and generous, someone, something from above will always look after us and protect us. Of course, I cannot explain this by facts and reason, it is all a matter of faith. In the painfully horrible days of waiting for our lease to be settled, I almost thought that I was abandoned and thought perhaps this might possibly be the "end of my season," as they say. We have been granted a New Life and a New Age and we must treasure this moment and take to heart that we hold true of our Aikido.

Recently, many new dojos have joined our little family. Of course, they come to us for our help and friendship, I believe that it is not about money and how much profits. It is not about what we can grab for ourselves. It is not about exploitation. It is about sharing the gift of Aikido and making good friends and creating a better world through Aikido.

Of course, many will criticize me as unrealistic and of course, we are not rich with a great deal of finances. Yet, rich or poor, humble or great, far or close, we should share what we have with others freely. I think this is what O'Sensei and Doshu would have wanted us to do with his Aikido.

I would like to offer my warmest greetings to Doshu for long life, health and happiness and all my friends at Hombu Dojo. Many Holiday Greetings to all my students and friends and all of our branch dojos all around the world. Many Seasons Greetings & My Warmest Wishes!

Rev. Kensho Furuya, Chief Instructor.

Congratulations! Itoh Yasumasa Sensei & The Grand Opening of Tekko Juku Dojo



Many congratulations and best wishes to Itoh Yasumasa Sensei and members of his dojo on their Grand Opening of their new space on October 15, at Boston University.



The Grand Opening practice was greatly supported and a big success.

Fate & Friends

Kei Izawa Sensei, Tanshin Juku Dojo, Boulder, Colorado

Strange happenings take place in life. Soon after Kanai Sensei of Boston passed away last year, I received a note from Furuya Sensei and Yonemochi Sensei from Hombu introducing me to Steven Shaw. Steve had moved back to Colorado for a job. His very polite manners impressed me very much and while he lives quite far from our dojo location north of Denver, he has made many efforts to come and practice with us. Steve's nice personality is a great addition to our dojo and when he comes he becomes a dedicated student, eager to learn and help me in many ways.

The letter from Furuya Sensei was a nice

touch since I had met with him back in late 70s with Kanai Sensei when we went to a seminar in Pasadena. Furuya Sensei had forgotten about me

but perhaps it was because Kanai Sensei was the key person then. I just accompanied Kanai Sensei and almost did not open my mouth since the discussion was mostly about swords. It was a dialogue of two experts on a subject that I was not very familiar, even to this day.

I have known Yonemochi Sensei since I am a council member of Aikikai in

Japan since the mid 90s and Yonemochi Sensei holds a very important position there. Furuya Sensei had forgotten about me but when Steven Shaw was about to move to Colorado, Furuya Sensei got in touch with Yonemochi Sensei to check who would be an acceptable person in Colorado to go to and practice. Fortunately and great honor for me was that it appears that Yonemochi Sensei told Furuya Sensei about my dojo.

Furuya Sensei, as it turns out, was my sempai studying under Kanai Sensei in the late 60s and early 70s. His experience of practicing under Kanai Sensei still is with him. Getting to know him well this time has proven to be a great value for me, and hope for him as well. Both of us are very strong believers of supporting Aikikai as an organization and naturally the Ueshiba family.

It is great the Steven moved to Colorado but



Yasumasa Itoh Sensei with Kei Izawa Sensei of the Tanshinjuku, Colorado, at the opening of the New Dojo. October 15.

New Tekko Juku Dojo Yasumasa Itoh Sensei, 6th Dan Tekko Juku Dojo, New England

The name of our new dojo is Tekko Juku. On September 9th, we installed 50 mats in a room we use at Boston University. Although it is a university facility, most of the students were people from the community from the beginning. After two months have now passed, we are getting more students from Boston University and other neighboring universities. This is temporary, as soon as we have a good location, we will establish a more formal dojo.

On October 15, we had our Grand Opening Seminar. Many senior students and Izawa Sensei from Colorado were invited, as well as students from other states and Canada all participated. Despite a huge storm and heavy rains, over 60 students participated in a three hour seminar. practicing hard with a much sweat. It was a big success.

Now I would like to introduce the name of the dojo and introduce a little about myself. "Tekko" is a term very much loved by the late Kanai Sensei. My name is Yasumasa Itoh, Kanai Sensei's most senior instructor. From March, 1978 to March of 2004, when Kanai Sensei passed away, I have steadily practiced Aikido. In 1999, with Kanai Sensei's recommendation, I received 6th Dan from Doshu. Continued:

it is also great that he made it possible that Furuya Sensei and I get to re-acquaint ourselves and have many exchanges. Health, finance and time permitting, we would like to travel to other places together. I very much appreciate the invitation to the seminar next April in his dojo and look forward to meeting all those fine Aikidokas at that time or sooner. Kei Izawa



Yonemochi Sensei in Sweden. 08-20-05.

New Friends From Turkey: Muhlis Partal, Zen Felsefi Savas Sanatlari Dojo, Toplulugu, Turkey



On October 28, we were visited by Mr. Muhlis Partal and one of his students from Turkey. He has been touring the US for one month and attended Kato Sensei's seminar in San Jose before arriving in Los Angeles to meet with Sensei at the request of his students. Sensei's dvd's seem to be very popular and well utilized in Turkey. Mr. Partal immediately applied for affiliation after meeting Sensei and seeing our practice.

Holiday Greetings! It Is Wonderful To Be Here! Gary Myers, Iaido 5th Dan



Happy holidays to Sensei, Ken, Mark, and the Kenshinkai and Aikido sections of ACLA. Thank-giving and the holiday season is upon us, as we come to the end of another year.

This year has been particularly difficult one for Sensei and the dojo. It has been a stressful one for Sensei and those involved trying



Crane and poem drawn by Oishi Kuranosuke Daiyu, leader of the 47 Samurai, who carried out his vendetta against his lord's enemy, Kira Kosuke, in December in the Genroku Period.

to keep the dojo intact in its current location. It would be hard for me, and I suppose everyone, to picture the dojo in a different environment. But for a good portion of this year that was the situation that faced us. There was a very real possibility that we would lose our lease and have to move. Thank goodness negotiations concluded with us signing a new lease, although at a much higher rent than before. My main reason for bringing this up is to: first, be thankful that we still have our beautiful dojo to practice in; and second, to thank everyone who helped make it happen. I think most people don't realize how truly fragile our lives and situations are. There are any number of outside forces that can turn our worlds upside down, just ask any of the victims of hurricanes Katrina, and Rita. Each of us should appreciate and be thankful for what we have because it could so easily go away.

The other day I was reflecting on how our perceptions change as we grow "older & wiser" particularly as it relates to the holiday season. With everyone's busy schedules the holidays seem to be just another thing to schedule around. Buying presents, wrapping presents, social responsibilities all these seem to intrude on everyone's already busy schedules. It's no wonder that many people feel the holidays are the most stressful time of year. I was comparing those feelings with those of my childhood, when the holidays were anticipated with a sense of wonder and joy. Of course when you're a child there aren't the burdens and responsibilities that we face in adulthood. If I had one wish for everyone this holiday season it would be that everyone try to experience that sense of wonder we had as kids, even if it is only for a little while.

With Much Gratitude To Our New Dojo Lease Donors:

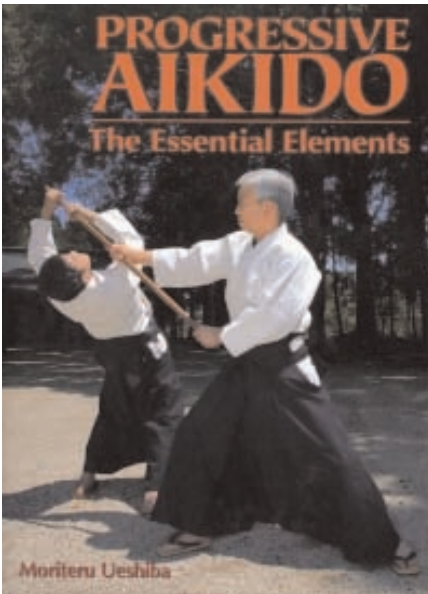
The following students have generously donated to the Dojo to help with the final settlement of our new lease. Many, many thanks and our deepest gratitude. All donations are still gratefully accepted. Please present directly to Sensei. Many thanks.

*Bill Allen
Jacob Sisk
Arthur Dowling
James Doi
Dennis Long
Anonymous
Kay Sera
David Ito
Jacob Sisk (2x)*

Tekko Juku continued:

I started Aikido in 1973 at a university in Tokyo under the instruction of the late Norihiko Ichihashi Shihan, 8th Dan.

In addition of me at our new Tekko Juku, there are 7 instructors, all students of Kanai Sensei. There are two 5th Dans with 30 years experience, one 4th Dan with 24 years experience, two 3rd Dans with more than 20 years experience, and two 2nd Dans with more than 15 years experience. At the moment, we are not affiliated with any organization so everyone is welcome to practice with us.



Progressive Aikido: Doshu Moriteru Ueshiba Sensei's New Book To be Out 2006.

The Movement of the Circle & The Spirit of Harmony:

Masatake Fujita Shihan, 8th Dan Aikikai Hombu Dojo



The aim and purpose of Aikido is the harmony between one's mind and body, the harmony between one's self and one's partner, and the harmony of the

operation of the Universe, or Nature.

One's physical being should be healthy, one's mind at peace, without fighting with others, neither harming or opposing Nature, not confronting (others) with force, and harmonizing when opposed. The Budo which treasures the Harmony of the Universe, - this is Aikido.

The collision of power against power - this is what we call "fighting," or "conflict." Aikido is not collision of power against power. It is a joining of power with power, to come to a resolution of conflict. This transformation of power allows for Aikido techniques to be born.

Aikido always hold this ideal, no matter

what situation arises. In reality, all martial arts have this same ideal.

Aikido is composed of circular movement. The movement is the way of non-conflict. Aikido takes a strong force and make it circular. In order to eliminate the necessity to injure or kill the other person, this circular movement is necessary.

Aikido is not just a simple martial art, it is a unique Way, a representation of Japanese culture and tradition. It serves as an introduction of Japanese spirit throughout the world. The main principles of the Japanese spirit, of the true Japanese heart, is Harmony.

The way of the Japanese spirit is not competition. The country of Japan is also known as "Yamato," or as the characters can be read, "great harmony." This is the heart of Japan. No matter what country or period in time, one must follow this way. Let us as those who possess the Spirit of Japan, work towards achieving correct training in Aikido.

Sincere Appreciation & Happy Holidays 2006:

His Honor, The Consulate General of Japan, Los Angeles, California

Hideo Yonemochi Shihan, Executive Managing Director Aikikai Foundation, Aikikai Hombu Dojo

Offices of the Mayor of Los Angeles

The Honorable Mrs. Jan Perry, LA City Councilwoman

Aikikai International Department

Masatake Fujita Shihan, Aikikai Hombu Dojo, Tokyo, Japan

Teru Ikeda Sensei, Hombu Int'l Dept. Tokyo, Japan

Los Angeles Kenjinkai Kyogikai Japanese Prefectural Association

Los Angeles Police Department

Japanese American National Museum Mrs. Irene Hirano

*Season's Greetings
& Best Wishes
To Doshu and all our
friends at Aikikai
Hombu Dojo
& All Around
The World*

Aikido Center of Los Angeles

Upcoming Important Dates:

January, 2006. 2nd Doshu Kisshomaru Ueshiba Sensei's Memorial Service.

February, 2006. Yonemochi Shihan Seminar and Welcome Reception.

April, 2006. Annual Memorial Seminar for O'Sensei & Kanai Sensei. With Special Guest Instructors, Itoh Yasumasa Sensei & Kei Izawa Sensei

*Traditional Kung Fu Association
Master Adam Hsu, Taipei, Taiwan*

Japanese American Cultural & Community Center

*Little Tokyo Services Center
Mr. Bill Watanabe
Ms. Nancy Kikuchi*

*Madame Kansuma Sensei
Kansuma Kai Nihon Buyo*

Zenshuji Soto Mission

*Mutual Trading Company
Pres. & Mrs. Noritoshi Kanai*

*Fumio Demura Shihan
Karate Shito Ryu*

*Kiyoshi Yamazaki Shihan
Ryobukai Karate*

Rafu Bussan, Little Tokyo

Mikawaya, Little Tokyo

Fugetsu Do, Little Tokyo

Bloom's General Store, Arts District

**Annual Dojo
Christmas Party**
December 1st, Thursday
From 6:30-9:30pm
Everyone is invited!

**Season's Greetings:
The Moment Of Truth**
James Doi, Aikido 5th Dan



A long time ago I worked at a large corporation that had employee clubs, including an Aikido Club. One day I was eating lunch in the cafeteria and a coworker sat down.

He had apparently went to an introduction meeting of the company Aikido Club and wanted to tell me all about it. For about 15 minutes he when on and on about "using your opponents power against him", "ki flow", "circular motion" and all the other cocktail party talk things that one tells people about Aikido.

Great Halloween Party
October 30



On October 30, we had another great Halloween Party during our Children's Class, organized once again by Ken Watanabe. This year, we had a ninja, Dorothy from the Wizard of Oz, kitty-cat, Zorro, a 30's flapper, and a scary guy (Nicholas). Everyone broke the Darth Vader pinata and took home a lot of trick-or-treats and goodies. Many thanks to the parents who brought so much good food for everyone. Many thanks to Ken Watanabe.

October Issue Correction:

In the November 2005 Issue, the footnote for the calligraphy should read, Shoshin Wasuru Bekarazu, not, Shoshin Wasure Bakarazu. Many thanks to Ikeda Teru Sensei, Tokyo, Japan.

When I was able to get a word in, I let him know that I had been practicing Aikido for some time and that I thought that it was great that he was interested in Aikido. Suddenly his attitude changed from enthusiastic to indifferent and he quickly excused himself for an appointment or something.

Among the technical staff, this fellow gained a reputation as a "glory hog", presenting group work as his own to management and taking a lot of undeserved credit for many projects. He made a point of organizing office luncheons, holiday and birthday parties for the bosses (but not for coworkers). Management loved him, he was an archetypal brown nosing "fast tracker" and he was quite successful in the company. I don't believe he continued with Aikido or any other martial art.

I once saw an article in which it was estimated that as high as 40% of museum holdings are fakes. In my present job, I perform chemical and materials analysis in industrial failure analysis. If the case involves litigation, then this work would be called forensic analysis. This type of analysis can and is used to determine the authenticity of art objects.

After seeing TV documentaries on scientific analysis of ancient artifacts and works of art, I thought that there would be quite a market for scientific analysis of art objects. However, after exploring and thinking about the possible market, a theme emerged. Scientific analysis can only "prove" that an object is a fake, but can not "prove" it is genuine. Analysis can only say that the material processing of an object are "consistent" with its supposed provenance, only that an object is "very likely" genuine.

This means that if you have an object that you have some doubts about, you will have to pay to determine that it is possibly worthless (or at least worth a lot less than you paid for it). Do you really want to know if your valuable art holdings are actually worthless, or would you rather believe them to be valuable? The truth of the matter is that people do not want to risk finding out that their objects are fakes. The market for scientific analysis of art objects is not very good.

Everyone can recognize the shallow posturing and self serving rationalizations of "normal" life.

In bullfighting, there is a point in the fight called the "moment of truth" where the

matador kills the bull. In order to do this, the matador must be standing directly in front of the bull. The bull has to be standing Continued.

**Holiday Greetings:
The Order Of Aikido**

James MacDonald, Aikido 3rd Dan



This may sound strange but one of the most profound things I've learned from Aikido is not to worry. Our lives seem to be so full of worries these days. Bills, appointments,

children, jobs or lack there of, it's amazing anyone even makes it to the Dojo. But somehow we all do, and I am always thankful to look across the mat and see the familiar faces of people I have trained with for years and the new people I'm just getting to know. Here we all are again with one thing in mind. To train. To continue our studies in the endless pursuit of Aikido. So how has Aikido stopped me from worrying? It's been a gradual process, but over the years my resistance to what I thought I should be doing has been wearing down. When I first started training all I did was worry. Am I doing this right? Do I come often enough? Can my body take this? And those were just the worries about Aikido. What about the rest of my life? Maybe I should take a painting class, teach my son how to surf? And the list goes on. But as the ritual of driving to the Dojo, training, and then driving home kept taking place month after month, year after year, a strange thing started to happen. I noticed I wasn't paying as much attention to those thoughts. Sure, they would arise and many of them still do, but I don't seem to attach to them as much anymore. And when I'm not attaching, I'm not worrying, and that's a much sweeter place to be. That was a big lesson for me. I started to notice that as I got ready to go to the Dojo that my mind became more aware. Aware in the sense that I was able to look at my state of mind. Whatever that state was, it didn't matter, but I was aware of it. Which makes a big difference. Because in being aware of it, I'm able to open up and see that it's really just a thought and nothing more. A teacher once said "It's only when you attach to a thought that you suffer." I usually turn off the radio, take a few deep breaths and enjoy the ride down to the dojo. As a performer I have certain rituals I do to prepare myself for a show. And now I see it's the same way in aikido.

Don't you just feel 'off' when you jump into training having missed the warm up? I know I do. But as I said, the ritual for me starts when I get in the car. I park, take off my wedding band, pocket my wrist watch and walk down the ally. Then it's up the wooden steps, through the garden and into the changing room. Training has begun and I find myself being very careful. Where can I fold my pants? Will my bag bury somebody else's? Don't be in a rush, dress carefully so as not to bump anybody or knock something down. I tie my Hakama, carefully slip past the other people waiting on the stairs, bow to O' Sensei and start to stretch. It's funny, but a lot of times while we're doing the group warm-up I will catch O'Sensei's picture out of the corner of my eye and I'll think, "Did I really show gratitude to O'Sensei when I bowed to him?" And many times I'll realize that I didn't, that my bow was just mechanical, an empty gesture. If I can't be present with O'Sensei for one moment I shouldn't even be on the mat. Then I train and I realize I'm not thinking of anything else. I'm totally present, aware, and ready for the next attack. Where did I go for that hour? Then we scrub down the mats. Maybe I'll have a few words with Sensei and its back through the garden and out into the world. As I walk down the alley I put my watch back on, slug some water and notice how warm and loose my body feels. On many nights the sun has just gone down leaving a charcoal blue sky touched lightly by the city lights. I get in the car and put my wedding band back on. What seemed so important two hours ago now feels like a distant dream. What was I worried about? Of course it's all going to be okay. It always is, isn't it?

Starting My Path In Aikido

By Paul Majors, 2nd Kyu



A year and some-odd months ago I felt I was finally ready to train in Aikido, having some exposure to it many years ago, and set out to find the right dojo and teacher. I audited a few different dojos

all over LA and eventually came to the alleyway in Little Tokyo we're all so familiar with.

At the risk of sounding too romantic, I remember being quite clear in my thought

that this dojo was something different and special. There was a level of meticulous care and detail even in the entryway; and once I entered the interior I found the dojo breathtaking. The instruction, that class taught by Mark Ty if I recall correctly, was everything I had worked up in my mind that I wanted to find. Clear, fundamental building-block ideas and movements. Traditional. Practical. Imbued with respect.

Feeling as cautious as I did about 'making the right choice' however, I knew from past experience that it would be very important to take my time and really try to make a good decision rather than waffling from dojo to dojo, I continued on with auditing other schools in town.

Then, through a stroke of serendipity, I met ACLA student Kevin Hoffer at an audition (I'm an actor too, though it's not my day job yet!). After a brief discussion and observation that he was sincere when he spoke as highly as he did of the training, I almost immediately joined the dojo.

The first two months were probably the most painful, as I tried to learn ukemi properly and unlearn habits I had picked up eight years prior at another dojo I had very briefly attended. My backward rolls in particular seemed like a cube clunking from one side to another rather than the smooth spherical motion the more advanced students achieved. I also experienced what I imagine is a pretty typical initial period of hyper-dejection within myself. "Why can't I just do what I'm shown? Why am I so bad? I'll never get better! This stuff is uncomfortable and hurts sometimes, why do I keep coming back?"

But I did keep coming back, and I would say a couple more months into my training I began to loosen up a little. I noticed that my ukemi, while a far cry from the yudansha, wasn't hurting me, making me dizzy, or exhausting me like before. My initial awkwardness and nervousness toward etiquette and the techniques themselves also smoothed out more tolerably. I attribute this less to me, I am not a 'natural', but to my instructors. They have always been so willing to help me out. Especially in situations before and after class having an instructor or fellow student throw me around is I think of great benefit.

Two months into my training I began writing in a journal specifically for Aikido after

every class. I would list the techniques I had worked on in each class, or described them if I didn't know the name, and would put down whatever I could remember the instructor said. That continued without fail for the full year, and now I still keep my journal but record in it in a digest form every week or every other week. I notice this helps me in particular because it helps reinforce corrections I receive in class by writing them down and periodically reviewing the journal. Also unhelpful questions in my mind like, "When will I achieve [insert rank]?" get replaced by "I need to get further behind uke in shomenuchi iriminage", and I attribute this to the humbling clarity the training journal provides. Even moreso it also helps to see that Sensei and the yudansha are themselves such humble students and excellent examples of where I want to be.

People have asked me several times since I joined Aikido, "What is Aikido?". Well, I don't know how to describe it after a year of practice and I don't know if I'll be able to articulate the words that encapsulate Aikido even after twenty years of practice. I could tell people, "It's a martial art created by O'Sensei, Morihei Ueshiba, that emphasizes harmonizing with an opponents attack" or something like that (that I wouldn't really understand even as the words came out). I don't know what it is, really. I have ideas, but these are ephemeral and shift as I continue my training.

I know that Aikido is a martial art in the most literal sense: it is both martial and an art. Maybe most importantly I simply know that I love it, that I enjoy the act of practicing Aikido loyally in this dojo and in the company of these students and my Sensei. I look forward to my continued training and say to any new students: Hang in there, it just gets better and harder!

Make Your Worst Skills Into Your Very Best

By Dennis Long, Iaido 1st Dan.



"Weakest Technique" The feeling of a need of discipline, and a long-term attraction to swords, and seeing Sensei on "Life and Times" drew me to the ACLA website. I arranged via email

with Sensei to come view an Iaido class

early on a Saturday morning... I was blown away... Here, an ancient art was being taught in an ancient manner, by a Buddhist priest, in a Dojo more beautiful than one would dare to imagine. After class, one of the instructors came over to talk to me, he asked if I was interested, if I wanted to participate, I was shocked that I might have the opportunity. I figured that there must be fewer than a dozen places like this on the whole planet, and if I was being given the opportunity to participate, I had to say yes! 20 months later Iaido is an essential part of my life. My natural skills do not help my Iaido, I'm a big-picture person not details oriented, more broad strokes than precision, give me a step by step map to your home and I will create a new path. But as Sensei has said hundreds of times "work on your weakest technique till it is your strongest ..." Iaido is working on my life.

Thank You Sensei. Thank You spirit of the Dojo. Thank You to all of the students and instructors for all of your hard work on yourselves (and on me), and for your support of Sensei and the Dojo. Dennis Long

Beginning The Path of Aikido

By Todd Hardwood, New Student



Hello Sensei, I just joined the dojo this August and I just wanted to thank you for the opportunity to practice the art of Aikido in your dojo. I am 35 years old right now and at at

times I regret waiting so long to begin learning Aikido. When I was 18 I became aware of O-Sensei and it led me to read a few books about Aikido. I was instantly drawn to it. For one reason or another at this time in my life I was unable to commit myself to finding a dojo and learning the art. Now I have committed myself to it and even though I have only just begun I feel it is exactly what I have been looking for for many years. It is tough on the body but I enjoy the physicality of it and more importantly I enjoy the mental and spiritual aspects of it as well and the goal of taking them all as separates and making them one. I know I have many years of hard work and I look forward to it with excitement each day. Thank you again... Thank you, Todd Hardwood

Happy Holidays! Aikido Is Always A Work In Progress

Santiago G. Almaraz, Aikido 3rd Dan, Aikikai, Salamanca Kodokai Dojo, Salamanca, Spain



Like every year, I have to begin to say, "thank you" to Sensei Furuya because Sensei delivers enormous efforts to all those who are related to his Dojo. We are all students, friends,

branch dojos, etc.. Let us write words that of a way or another reflect our feelings, experiences or simply thoughts of the happenings this year that is quickly coming to an end. In my case, not always able to express myself as it would please me by language, it is that the power to transmit all of these emotions is a little more difficult and sometimes frustrating.

It is a topic but my every year happens more quickly, every month, every week and day seem shorter and what is worse I believe that this feeling accentuates with age. Before, in the classes of the Dojo it seemed to me that they lasted longer and I could make more techniques or that I could teach a little more. Now whenever I watch the clock, I am surprised that I am arriving at the end of the class. I suppose that the value of our time is different, I believe that every day worries me not to be able to teach enough to my students, practice enough, to correct the insufficient things... Perhaps one begins little by little to understand the important thing that it is the time and its value of using it like taking advantage of the classes and the explanations best, so that that moment will not return, and perhaps is reason why as much importance the attendance to continued in class since it is fundamental for the development of this Art.

When I began in Aikido, perhaps I begin with much illusion so that you have many objectives ahead, many objectives you want to wear the hakama, be a senior student, you want to have a black belt 1, 2 Dan.... but at the same time, you are progressing, you are discovering and needing another class objective that fills you more inside. You do try to find the targets out in material things, you try to find your targets in yourself, because you don't have to demonstrate nothing to no one, just yourself. You begin to be more objective with yourself. Most of the time,

the fault of the things does not come out, neither of the Sensei, nor of the Uke, nor of your head... just from yourself.

This is because is very important for me, the day to day, knowledge that is left things to do, always the work is incomplete, always a detail of a movement is there to polish and to refine and this really is what we must look for in our lives, to polish, to clean, to renew every day until we approach that which is within Aikido we call the "Do," remembering that this feeling of dissatisfaction is what motivates us to be able to continue walking forward.

Seki-nin: "Responsibility"

Ze'ev Erlich Sensei, 4th Dan, Aikikan, Rehovot, Israel



Our first steps in the dojo... The shoshinsha (beginner) is very concentrated in his own learning and practice. Then, later, we begin to practice Aikido while considering our partner's

ability. We try to be aware of his ability and level. The circle grows. At first the circle was just around you. Now it surrounds you and your partner. Later-on as you advance, you feel more and more a part of your dojo. A part of a unique community. Here the circle becomes even bigger. You gradually start to care about the whole dojo - the group, its activities, the training hall and its maintenance... I think that developing the sense of caring must eventually grow to a level that covers even a larger circle than you dojo. I believe that as caring people we should also care for our beautiful blue planet. Earth. As Aikidoka we should not be selfish. When we rush to turn off the light in the other room we should not think selfish thoughts about our wasted money, but have an awareness to the waste of energy and to the pollution produced while manufacturing it. There are so many things we can do to help protect our beloved earth. Let's take responsibility just like the responsibility we take as budoka.

Happy New Year to you. Happy 2006.
I wish to thank your dojo and your wonderful Sensei - Rev. Kensho Furuya Sensei for all your teaching and support.
Yours, Ze'ev Erlich, Aikikan Dojo
The Israeli Aikido Association (Aikikai)

Note: Many thanks for all of your support

Home Sweet Home!

Jim Basset, Aikido 1st kyu



On a recent trip back to Los Angeles, having been out of town for about 2 months, it struck me how much the experience of coming back into the dojo felt coming back home.

Since then, again out of town for months to come, I have thought a lot about that experience. I have thought about what 'home' means, precisely. There are some of the obvious things, shelter, protection from the elements, a protected place. But these don't seem to quite get at the exact feeling of the experience.

In 1995 I moved to a Lakota reservation for about 4 years to build a new school and campus complex for a Native American university, Sinte Gleska University. In our very earliest meetings with tribal members, elders in the community were asked, 'what is the Lakota version of the classroom?' Resoundingly the answer was 'the home'.

The home was seen as the primary place of learning. In essence, the home creates the conditions for learning. In this way, the dojo is much like the home. In addition to being a place of return and ongoing practice, the dojo creates the conditions for learning, Sensei creates the conditions for learning. Things are in their place, my mind is not distracted by visual noise. There is a sense of order. For all of the detail, there is coherence, all parts working together.

In the center of the dojo, the tokonoma becomes a reference point. Like the photographs of our ancestors, the changing landscape of the tokonoma becomes a reminder of who we are and what we are trying to achieve. Reflected in this landscape are our choices, our inevitable and actual relations to the past and the responsibilities embedded in those ideals giving us pause, considering our actions.

When I was growing up, I passed in the hallway a photograph of my grandmother each day. Some days she looked at me from behind the glass sternly, as if I was misbehaving. Other days I saw in her eyes pure compassion. I have since taken it as more accurately a reflection of myself with her as a point of reference, teaching me quietly.

At home, the dinner table was the site of reckoning, a place where one was held accountable for actions in the world. Similarly, when one enters the dojo, there is that sense of accountability, can the outside world be left at the door? With this question comes the awareness of that which has been left at the door. This thought of the dojo as 'home' has deepened my appreciation for all of those who endeavour to teach and maintain that environment, creating the conditions for learning. Thank you to you all.

Happy Holidays and Season's Greetings to Sensei, to everyone at the dojo, and to all readers of the newsletter! Respectfully,
Jim Bassett

Holiday Greetings From Littleton, Colorado

Steven Shaw, 2nd Dan, Aikikai



Greetings, salutations, and Happy Holidays to all. It's hard to believe it's been over a year since I was training regularly at the Aikido Center of Los Angeles with Sensei.

Another holiday season is upon me, and as I reflect upon the past year, I am filled with gratitude. I am so very thankful. Though I am many miles away, I still feel incredibly connected with the Aikido community and specifically ACLA. Thank you, Sensei, for keeping me connected.

I read last month about Hacienda La Puente Aikikai celebrating its 10th Anniversary under the direction of Tom Williams. Congratulations, Tom, it is well deserved. Some of my most intense training has come when partnered with Tom. He has been an integral part of my Aikido development and is a gentle giant. May Hacienda La Puente Aikikai continue to grow and flourish under Tom's direction.

I would also like to congratulate an Aikidoist on the other side of the globe. I have had the fortunate opportunity to train with Santiago Almaraz. His dojo, Aikido Kodokai, has recently celebrated its 7th anniversary, and I know that his strong Aikido will continue to grow and flourish for years to come. I always enjoy training with Santiago.

It's amazing how O'Sensei has been able to connect so many people through Aikido. I am not a jet-setting, world traveler. I am a simple man, who enjoys an upslope breeze as I traverse the Flatirons in Boulder, CO. I enjoy the infinite complexity of shohhato, and find piece in watching a duck's webbed feet pushing through crystal clear water. Through Aikido, I've trained with some of the most amazing people I've ever met. Maria Murakawa's morote-kokyu-nage is like the opening of a flower in spring, a force of nature. Mark Ty's Iaido is precise and unreplicable. David Ito's technique is exacting in its fluidity and efficiency. Indeed I am fortunate to have met these good people through Aikido.

By some luck, I have been blessed with training at the Aikido Center of Los Angeles under Sensei Furuya. Through little markers along my path, I came to Sensei by following my heart. Then by another karmic miracle, Yonemochi Sensei has connected me with Izawa Sensei in Lafayette, CO. I have again been blessed with being led to another amazing teacher.

Thank you, to all my partners with whom I have trained. Thank you, to all my teachers, and great thanks to O'Sensei for creating the opportunity for so many to come together in harmony. Such a simple concept can be elusive in the world in which I live. This holiday season, I wish for all beings of this sphere on which we live called Earth to practice Aikido in every aspect of our lives. Thank you for training with me.

Isogashii: Busy, Busy!

Last night we continued what we have been practicing for the last two weeks, emphasizing Irimi Kokyu-ho and Shomenuchi Ikkyo Irimi and moving into Yokomenuchi Ikkyo Irimi taken from Irimi. Essentially we are refining our Irimi fundamentals.

Cutting the arm down in Yokomenuchi as we enter is a basic movement for Irimi. However, making the switch to take Ikkyo is troublesome for many people. Instead of sweeping the hand towards the head to take Ikkyo from this position, everyone tries to grab the attacking hand - a very weak movement and very time consuming. At that point, you do not have much time, because you are vulnerable to the opponent or partner's free hand. There is no time at this point to pause or fumble with the opponent's hand. In addition, when students Continued:

Question: Zanshin & Suki Ga Nai (No Openings)

10-01-05: Dear Furuya Sensei, How are you?

If you have time could you possibly please help me with the word "Zanshin" which seems to be interpreted too lightly and too freely by too many...

The way I understand it and I may be wrong, the state of Zanshin is a state in which one has to obtain after applying a technique. As the words Zan (Nokoru / nokosu) means to remain, I understand it as something which comes after applying the Waza and not before - unless you apply one technique after another or when you have several opponents.

A long time ago when we talked, I asked you about this subject and you taught me that before applying a technique we have to be in a state of "Suki Ga Nai" or "Suki No Nai" which means "no opening" - a perfect Kamae of body and mind. You also mentioned then a very beautiful poem about wind that blows through cracks is an old hut.

To be clear: is my opinion correct? before we begin we are in a state of "Suki No Nai" and then after we apply the waza we must be in both Suki No Nai and Zanshin?

I think it might sound incorrect to say that one has to be in a state of Zanshin even before he is attacked at all, as the word "Zan" means "to remain" - to remain after something happens...

Sorry it is getting long, do you have any idea about the history of the term "Zanshin"? where and when did it appear first?

This subject interests me greatly and has been a subject of my training for a very long time and still is.

Thank you for your time. I am sorry if this question was answered before and I missed it... Yours, Ze'ev Erlich

Note:

Ze'ev Erlich is the Chief Instructor of the Aikikan, in Rehovot, Israel, and has been corresponding with Sensei for several years now. Wishing all of our our friends at Aikikan all of the best of the Holiday Season and many best wishes for the New Year!

The Meaning of Zanshin

Many thanks for your question. I think it indicates how devoted you are to your training and trying to develop sound knowledge in your practice. This is a very difficult question to answer and even in many well-known, source materials in Japanese, it not very clearly explained. I have been dealing with this subject for many years but I still do not know if I can present a reply which will be clear to you, the ideas of "suki ga nai" and "zanshin" are still a matter of continued study for me.

As we discussed several years ago, "suki ga nai" literally means "no opening" and refers to a state of invincibility, both mental and physical, in which one leaves no opening for attack or retaliation in one's kamae or posture or behavior.

It is not simply a matter to be stronger or better than the other person, but has something to do with impeccability or "perfection" in one's art. There is a well known story about Sasaki Kojiro, the rival of Miyamoto Musashi, who was watching a dance performance of Izumo no Okuni, a famous and popular dancer of the time. Originally a temple dancer who performed during religious ceremonies, she left the temple to develop a popular style of dance which later became known as the Kabuki theater. Sasaki became infatuated with Okuni because in her dance, as viewed by Sasaki, there was no opening in her movement to attack her. . . . In other words, her movement and mental state was totally focused and there was not a moment where she was unattentive, or lapsed in her concentration, or where she lost her mental focus. In Japanese, this condition, as Sasaki declared, is called *suki ga nai*, or "there was no opening to attack her," during her dance performance.

Miyamoto Musashi also describes a similar experience. While in Kyoto, after defeating Yoshioka Seijuro and Denshichiro, the two master-brothers of the famed Yoshioka Kempo School of swordsmanship, he came under the protection of Honami Koetsu, the famous patron of the arts and sword polisher to Hideyoshi. Koetsu's calligraphy, tea bowls, and lacquerwork are designated as National Treasures in Japan today, his family still continues to appraise and polish swords. His descendant, a famous polisher, Honami Nisshu, passed away about ten years ago. . . . Koetsu sheltered Musashi at a famous tea house in Kyoto under the care

of Yoshino Dayu, the most famous courtesan of the time. As Musashi returned from a duel, an attendant was shocked at the sight of blood on Musashi's sleeve. Immediately, Yoshino broke in laughter and said, "Silly girl, that is not blood, it is only the red petal of the peony flower which has caught on his sleeve!" At the moment, Musashi was so impressed with Yoshino Dayu and asked, "What is the secret to your perfect composure in such a sudden moment when even I didn't know what to do or say?" For Yoshino Dayu to respond so naturally and spontaneously to conceal the blood on Musashi's sleeve is another example of *suki ga nai*.

In the same light, there is another well known story about the same time, which is often used to explain this state of *suki ga nai*. Sen no Rikyu was very close to Hideyoshi, the leading warlord or Kampaku during the late 1500's in the Period of Civil Wars (Sengoku Jidai) in feudal Japan. Many thought that the tea master was too close to Hideyoshi and interfered too much in his politics and was a bad influence on him. Several retainers decided to assassinate Sen no Rikyu. On the pretext of learning tea, one skilled warrior visited Sen no Rikyu with the intention to kill him. Sen no Rikyu invited him into his home and began to prepare a cup of tea for him. Although the warrior was waiting for a opportunity to draw his sword and kill Rikyu, during the entire tea ceremony, Rikyu was so focused and relaxed in every movement and so peaceful and at home in his attitude, the warrior could not even draw his sword and failed to kill him. Actually, the warrior was so impressed with Rikyu's perfect composure and focus, he confessed his intention to Rikyu and became his tea disciple. After seeing Rikyu's skill in the tea ceremony, he had changed his attitude and believed that Rikyu would be a asset to his leader, Hideyoshi's campaign.

In the same light, in more recent history, I personally had two interesting experiences during the 35th anniversary of my tea teacher's school about 10 years ago. It was a big event held at the Sheraton Hotel and several hundred guests and tea teachers and students were in attendance. During one ceremony, at the last moment when the hot water is poured into the the tea cup, the person making the tea realized that she forgot to put hot water in the kettle and became shocked and bewildered at what to do. There was a commotion and someone had to quickly bring some hot water and after everything settled down in a few minutes,

she continued but everyone was upset and, of course, all of us were reprimanded for forgetting the hot water by our teacher. . . . We were all ashamed because such a thing never happened before. Much later, in the celebration, the O-Iemoto or Grandmaster of tea from Japan prepared a cup of tea. As he sat down to begin the preparation, he stood up, turned around and walked off the stage and came back again and sat down again and begin the preparation. His movement was so natural and calm and we only wondered what had happened until we realized that he had forgotten his fukusa - a small silk cloth used to "purify" all of the utensils before the tea is prepared. This was a big mistake, but because he never lost his composure and there was no break in the ceremony and his movement and composure was very calm and normal despite the error, we all understood this to be, "no opening" or "no break" in his mental state - this is another example of *suki ga nai* and he was, on the other hand, praised for his high level of attainment as a master should be. . . .

The two older stories are often cited as an explanation of *suki ga nai*. Of course, as I mentioned before, *suki* or "opening" is described as the light of the moon which shines through in the tiniest openings of the old, thatched hut. . . . I mention all of these stories to you do that you will have a good background and "flavor" of what *suki ga nai* is described.

In martial arts, where earliest times, *suki ga nai* was the goal or sign of the highest level of skill.

In many ways, *Zanshin* is related to this. . . . In Aikido practice, there is a slight pause at the end of the technique where we are focused in a strong posture and we call this *Zanshin*. This is as opposed to someone who throws and rather just walks away without a strong posture. We see this in sword work, where there is a slight pause at the end of the cut and we say that this is the focus of concentration. Some people often call this a part of "*kiiai*." The late Mitsunari Kanai Sensei of Aikido explained to me that if one expresses perfect power and focus in the Aikido throw, the body will naturally stop like this as an expression of this power. It is not a contrived or mechanical "stop" or intentional "pause" at the finish of the technique, it is a natural result of power of the throw.

As you say, "*zan*" means "to remain" or "to

be left over." In all of the many books I have read, I have to say that the more I studied this subject, the more confused I became. I think that many people really do not understand this concept well or have really thought it out. This is a subject for continued study, thought and further research. . . .

This kind of "pause" at the end of the technique which is called *Zanshin* is very much like the "*mie*" in Kabuki where at a particular significant and important dramatic moment, the actor builds up all of his energy from within to strike a dramatic "pose" - it is not simply the physical position of the arms and legs but the ability to focus all of his power and strength to create this one "dramatic" moment.

However, we if explain *Zanshin* as a "pause" at the end of the technique or a particular "posture" or "pose" we strike at the end of the technique, we still do not understand that *Zanshin* is. . . .

I think that you have good insight to see that *suki ga nai* and *Zanshin* are well connected. One might even go so far as to say that they are "closely" connected and perhaps "the same thing."

At this point, please do not get confused and I must be careful to try to be as clear as I can here. I rather prefer to explain such terms in the traditional way so that you can get the "correct" and "proper" hints and signs for your own practice and study, not from my mouth, but from the mouths and ideas of many great masters of the past. . . . Many of the stories so far are almost always cited when trying to explain this subject.

There are three inclusive terms to understand in first studying *Zanshin* and they are all included within the meaning of *Zanshin*. They are "*mu-shin*" - or "no-mindedness," and "*yu-shin*" - or "to have mindfulness" and "*zanshin*" - or "left-over (remaining) mind."

We have discussed "*mu-shin*" previously. *Mu-shin* or "no-mind" is the popular term in Zen of the ideal state in which we are not filled or overly preoccupied with our own ideas.

Yu-shin ("to have" mind) comes from Japanese poetry in which words and ideas must be filled with "mind" in the sense of "emotion" or "heart" or "attention" or "focus." In other words, not "empty" words,

but words filled with mind and heart.

Although semantically, *mu-shin* and *yu-shin* literally have opposite meanings, in Japanese, very oddly and very confusingly, they mean the same thing. Just as we can say that *mu-shin* or "empty or no mind" can mean "infinite" or "all-emcompassing" mind, it has the same meaning as "*yu-shin*" or actually "filled with mind." I hope this is clear. There is an odd Japanese custom to explain ideas in the negative. "No" can mean "nothing" and, at the same time, in Japanese, also mean, "everything!"

In other words, this Zen state of "no-mindedness" or *mu-shin*, can also be thought of as "everything" must be filled with "mindfulness." I hope this is clear to everyone.

In our movement, there are always breaks in continuity as we change the direction of the movement of our arms or legs or body. My arm is moving to the left and there is a slight break as it shifts direction to move to the right or in a circle, etc. . . . In our Aikido techniques, we often have breaks in the movement as the movement changes direction, or as we shift our body weight, or change the action or speed or timing. More often than not, many breaks in our movement involve breaks in our concentration - we forget the movement, we get confused with the movement, we don't know what to do next, we lose our concentration, we are upset and thinking of something else, lose our concentration, for all of these things we put breaks in our movement and concentration. These breaks are known as "*kyo*" or "empty" moments in our movements and concentration and these "empty" spaces are "*suki*" or openings where, in martial arts and Aikido, we have left our ourselves open to attack or vulnerable because of our lapse in the movement or mental focus. Is this clear? As in Aikido, if we stop or pause in the middle of the technique, we easily lose our timing and momentum of the movement, I even like to say, "torque" built up in the technique to issue the power in the final moment of the throw. . . . We prevent such breaks by creating a "flow" of energy and power in our techniques. I think this is one of O'Sensei's wonderful and profound insights into Aikido. . . .

In martial arts, we know the mind moves faster and more quickly than our bodies. We often think of the mind moves before the body. This is called "*i*" in Japanese or "will" or "intention." In martial arts we try to sense

the opponent's "will" or "intention" - his mind which leads or is followed by his body movement (ie: attack).

As you well know, it is easy for our minds to leap from one place to the next very easily. Scientist say that the mind can have thousands of impressions and thoughts in just one small second. . . .

Sometimes, the mind moves too quickly for the body. . . . In our training, we try to get the body and mind to blend perfectly to move together in harmony. More often than not, we already jump to the next idea before our body react. Often, when I am teaching, students like to try to jump ahead of what we are doing or before they complete the movement, they are already jumping to the next movement. . . I think you understand what I am talking about. . . .

Zanshin - allowing our minds to remain or be "left-over" is to focus our minds strongly into the movement - in whatever we are doing at any time and moment - in what we are doing - not allowing our minds to jump ahead of ourselves. This is especially important and obvious at the end of the Aikido technique - or sword cut - or dance move - or tea preparation - whatever - we allow our minds to "remain" (in the moment) and not jump ahead or leap to another topic of focus.

Just as we strive for mushin or the ideal state of no-mindedness which in effect is to be "filled with mindfulness" or totally mindful (yu-shin), this also involves full of mind in every moment without gaps and empty spaces in between - to fill these inevitable empty spaces and lapses with mindfulness is Zanshin. "Leaving" or "allowing your mind to remain" to fill the gaps where your mind will normally jump to another place. . . . to be focused and totally in the moment. . . . this is how I think "What is Zanshin." I hope you can understand.

Zanshin is most obvious at the end of the technique or moment but actually, we should be in a state of constant of Zanshin and this is where is can see how the three concepts of "mushin" and "yushin" and "zanshin" are all the same in meaning and practice. However, in order to understand Zanshin, we need to see it from these three "separate" perspectives to catch this idea. This is where many people become confused about mushin and zanshin and all of this, of course, is, in itself the state of "suki ga nai" where not even a

tiny ray of the moonlight can slip through into the old thatched hut. . . .

You wrote to me worried that you letter was too long. I received your letter in last evening here in Los Angeles and I decided not to write immediately but wait until this morning when I am full of energy and look what happened - such a long and tedious reply! My apologies and many best wishes! - and many thanks again!

James Doi: The Moment Of Truth Continued:

with its front legs parallel such that its shoulder blades are lined up so that there is a gap between them where heart can be reached by stabbing in a downward direction. This is an extremely dangerous position for the matador to be in.

The phase has been defined as "A critical or decisive time on which much depends; a crucial moment". It also carries other meanings; it is the moment of judgement, where the skill, hard training and courage of the matador are mercilessly tested.

Martial arts training is not everyday life. Furuya Sensei teaches Aikido and Iaido as true martial arts, that is, they are taught as preparation for the martial, life and death "moment of truth". Most people, of course, will never be in a life and death combat situation, but the "moment of truth" is the reference point that gives the martial arts training meaning. Contrast the "moment of truth" with the endless BS that we encounter each day, and then one clearly sees the beauty of martial arts training.

In an everyday world of "spin", posturing and compromise, there is a purity and clarity of "the moment of truth" in martial arts that few other things in life provide.

Isogashii Continued:

try to hurry, they often miss the hand altogether and this causes more problems.

It is not to "hurry," only to be "quick." This is actually a quote from many years back by the former, famed UCLA basketball coach, John Wooden, if you can remember that far back. "Don't hurry, be quick," also applies to Aikido. However, most people confuse "hurry," and "quick." Hurry means "rushed," which means, "out of control," and this is the root cause of many mistakes and disasters. I do not know about basketball, but in Aikido,

Greetings From Poland

10-24-05: Sorry, so sorry! My heart deases no happy me!! My English language is very wrong. I'm was a heart by-pass & stent on my heart. No problem:) Martial arts is very biggest in my soul and my heart. Me and my brother Piter your fun in Poland. Your teacher is very inexplicable for me and my brother. Your Ki is so great, your circle is a infernal. Minimal step, maximum effect .Is inextinguishable! Me & my brother very



inflames for your school. We practice martial arts at home and garden 25 years .My last mail is more than a year. Your school fascinating for my brother & me. Jacek & Piotr Kaczmarek, Bydgoszcz, Poland

when we say, "quick," we mean, "no collision," "no strain" and "no blockage." "Quick" means to eliminate all wasted motion and effort. It means to move clearly and with strong direction. Aikido also means, of course, good (and proper) timing.

If one were to describe modern life today, I think the first choice would be to say, "busy." That just about describes everyone I know, including myself! We are all so busy, in making time for everything we want to do, we have no time for nothing! In Japanese, for "busy," we say, "isogashii." This word is written with an interesting Kanji or Chinese character - for the word, "busy," we write the character for "heart" or "mind" and the then the character for "dead" or "dying." It is the character we use for a dead person. In other words, to be "isogashii" or "busy," means we have a "dying" or "dead" heart. For Aikido, it means that we have no time to put our "ki" energy into what we are doing.

In Irimi, we must train to understand the strong forward movement towards our opponent's center which does not collide with him in any way. In order to comprehend this, we also need to understand the strong, forward projection of our ki. Please continued to train devotedly.

My Trip To France:

By Bill Allen



Last year, at the beginning of September, Machiko and I went on a short get-away tour to London and Paris for one week. I had never been to France before that

time, and was really impressed by Paris. Up until that time, I had known almost nothing of French history and culture, but three days in Paris piqued my interest. As soon as we got back home to Los Angeles, we started making plans for a much longer vacation in France, and I decided to try and learn how to speak French. Between work, home, and Aikido, I couldn't fit in time for a class, so I did what I could with self-teaching courses available in bookstores and on the Internet. Almost to my amazement, these self-study courses actually work! Now, I am still a long, long way from being fluent in French, but I was able to carry on simple conversations with people, find places, give and get directions, order in restaurants, and read newspapers, menus, and subway directions with relative ease.



Renting a Provencal Farmhouse in France

We arrived in Paris on September 7, about 11:00 a.m., and took the train from Charles de Gaul airport to our hotel, the Relais Christine, in the 6th Arrondissement on the Left Bank of the Seine. We were roughly a block south of the Ile de la Cite, and surrounded by very stylish cafés, bookshops, galleries, and restaurants. Across the street from our hotel was a small art cinema that seemed to show only old American movies.

My mother and aunt also came to France, at our invitation, and we met them later in the day at their hotel in the Marais. We spent a



couple of days in Paris, going to the Orsay, the Eiffel Tower, walking along the Rue de Rivoli, and such stuff. My mother is a confectioner, and thus we spent a lot of time in chocolate and confectionery shops (there are many of these in Paris), looking at the creations on display. I have watched my mother make candy and work chocolate since before I was a teen-ager, and I could almost see her mind absorbing the ideas of the Parisian confectioners. One thing that always amazes me is that she can get a very good idea of how a candy was made if she can taste it. Of course, most people can get a good idea of the ingredients of a candy by tasting it, but they have no idea how to tell how much of something to put it, when to put it in, how long to cook or temper it, and how it was cooled. All of these phases are critical, and my mother somehow discerns most of these aspects by looking and tasting. So, of course, we had to buy and sample candies several times a day.

On September 10, Machi and I made our way down to the Cote d'Azur, the French Riviera, where we had rented a house for a couple of weeks. My mother and aunt stayed in Paris for a few more days, and joined us later down south. I rented a car in Nice, and we drove to the house, which is just outside a small village called Peymeinade. Peymeinade is close to the town of Grasse, which, in turn, is about 10 kilometers north of Cannes, where the film festival is held each year.

Our landlady was a very nice woman named Madame Laville. She spoke no English, and her French was fast, but very easy to understand, so communication was not a problem. She had very kindly stocked the refrigerator and cupboards with food, including local wines, meats, and several cheeses. Her house was a remodelled Provencal farmhouse (un mas, in Provencal French), constructed of river stones. There were three bedrooms, two baths, a full kitchen, a living

room, and several dining areas inside and outside. There was also a swimming pool, with a barbecue and stove under the same roof as a poolside picnic table. The property, like most of the properties in the area, was surrounded by very tall hedges, through which the only opening was the driveway gate. The gate itself was more than two meters high, so the property was very private.

A few days after Machi and I arrived at the house, my mother and aunt came down from Paris, and two days after that, two friends from Thousand Oaks also joined us. Even with six people, the house felt spacious and relaxed. I was glad to have some company aside from the three women, too.

Peymeinade is a normal small town, with schools, a post office, and several local businesses. It was very easy to relax there, especially after having been in Paris, Nice, and



Grasse. On the other hand, if you have a car, it is very easy to get to a lot of places in the Cote d'Azur, the Var, and in Haut Provence. Each day we would plan an excursion, load everyone into the cars, and head out for the day. Each evening we would return to the house, and then either prepare a dinner, or go out to eat. We visited a number of places. Grasse is famous for perfumes, and there are several perfumeries that create scents for companies like Chanel, Hermes, and so on. We were close to Grasse, so we visited the Fragonard perfumery there. Fragonard is the oldest perfumery in Grasse, and is open to the public. They give tours of the factory free of charge. The tours are very interesting, and cover the history of perfume making, and give an overview of the processes involved in making perfume and eau de toilette. Fragonard also employs a person known as un "nez" (a "nose"), whose job is to create blends of essential scents that become perfumes. A nose is specially trained from a young age, and can discriminate over 1000 scents. In the world, there are no more than 150

Aikido Center of Los Angeles

www.aikidocenterla.com

"noses", and Fragonard employs one. The Fragonard nose only works a few hours each day, because the sense of smell tires quickly. His lifestyle is extremely restricted, and he may not smoke or drink strong beverages, or eat aromatic foods. For the average Provençal, such restrictions probably seem equivalent to a prison sentence.

Some of the other large towns that we visited were Monaco Ville, Nice, and Cannes. The climate in these towns is very similar to the climate in Southern California along the coast. When you drive along the seaside, many of these cities resemble larger versions of coastal towns like Santa Monica, Manhattan Beach, and Malibu. For my mother and my aunt, who live in Pittsburgh, this was very exotic. However, given the traffic, the tourism, and the sun, I often felt as if I had not left home. In fact, there were almost as many British tourists in Cannes as there are in Santa Monica. However, in Monaco and Cannes, I did note that there are some extremely large private yachts. In fact, some were so large, I thought at first that they were cruise ships. It never occurred to me that an individual could actually own a 300 foot boat, and hire an entire crew, just for his own pleasure. As one person at the harbor told me, "Oh yeah. If you sail into Cannes on anything less than a 200 footer, you're just one of the small fry." We got into our 15 foot BMW and headed back to the land of micro fry.

A very interesting place that we went to see was the Basilica Ste-Marie-Madeleine in the town St-Maximin-La Ste-Baume. The basilica was built on the site of the tombs of Saint Mary Magdalene and of Saint Maximin. Mary Magdalene was a disciple of Jesus, and accompanied him and his apostles into Jerusalem at the time of his death and subsequent resurrection. Maximin was the martyred first bishop of Aix, the former capital of Provence. According to legend, the Saints' remains were hidden from the

Saracens in the 8th century CE, and rediscovered in 1279. Construction of the basilica began in 1295-1296. It is a great example of Gothic architecture, and houses an organ with some 3000 pipes, and, most importantly, the relics of St. Mary Magdalene. There is a bronze gilt reliquary that holds the skull of St. Mary Magdalene. The skull is all that remains. Over the centuries, pilgrim popes and princes took away other parts of her body to keep as sacred relics. I found this

custom very interesting. If you visit cathedrals in France, and, I assume, throughout Europe, some will store, perhaps, a piece of a bone of a Saint to whom the cathedral may have been dedicated, or who was a favorite Saint of a patron of the cathedral. These old bones may be stored on velvet in gold and silver jewel encrusted display boxes. Since Mary Magdalene had direct contact with Jesus - indeed, she is sometimes called "the apostle of apostles" - her remains undoubtedly possess a great deal of spiritual power.



We visited several cathedrals in France and Monaco, and, though none rivalled the heavy Gothic character of the Basilica Ste-Marie-Madeleine, each was unique. The smallest cathedral we saw was in the town of Vence. The Cathedral of Vence exhibited a mosaic of "Moses in the Bullrushes", designed by Marc Chagall. The Neo-Romanesque Cathédrale de Monaco sits above the Mediterranean on a rocky spur, fronted by a well-tended garden park, and exhibits a number of treasures, and is the resting place of Prince Ranier and Princess Grace. The 12th-century Ancienne Cathédrale Notre-Dame-du-Puy in the old town of Grasse houses three works by Rubens. The chapels and cathedrals of Europe house great works of art, and the range of work spans all styles and genres of European art up to the present time.

Along the Cote d'Azur, there are many places that house and display the works of famous artists of the 19th and 20th century. Many of the impressionists either stayed in the south of France, or decided to reside there permanently, and it is not unusual to find works of artists like Chagall, Matisse, Miro, Picasso, Renoir, Braque and others adorning the walls and rooms of hotels and restaurants, where the work was accepted in lieu of payment. The Foundation Maeght in St-Paul-de-Vence was a great place to visit. It is, perhaps, the best collection of modern art I have ever seen.



Our friends from Thousand Oaks didn't want to overstay their welcome, and, after a week, hit the road to explore Gallo-Roman Provence on their own. A few days later, my mother and aunt flew back to Pittsburgh from Nice, leaving Machi and me by ourselves for a couple of days. As much as I enjoy our friends and family, it was great to finally have some time by ourselves.

We left the car at the Nice Gare (train station), and took the TGV (Train à Grand Vitesse, or high-speed train) to Avignon. Avignon is in the heart of Provence, in the Vaucluse, and is famous for, among other things, the Palais des Papes (Palace of the Popes), and the Pont St. Bénézet. In the 14th century, Italy was torn by war, and the Papacy temporarily abandoned Rome to make Avignon the center of the Catholic world. From 1309 until 1377, there were seven French popes who ruled. The French cardinals rebelled when a new Italian pope, Urban VI, was elected, and in 1378 they chose a rival pope, Clement VII. This caused a major schism that lasted 25 years. For nearly a century, though, Avignon became a center for learning and the arts.

We stayed in a very nice place called the Hotel de Europe. It has beautiful rooms, is decorated with works of art that span the years from the 18th century, and has an absolutely top-notch staff. I was amazed at the concierge, who was able to carry on four conversations with the guests. He was so good at handling the guests, that no one showed any signs of feeling slighted or of being temporarily passed over. What really impressed me was that each guest spoke a different language. There was an American couple, a Spanish family, an Italian man, and a French family. He seemed very comfortable speaking all of these languages. When the crowd cleared away, I approached him
Continued In January Issue:

Why Do We Fight Each Other?

Continued From November Issue

From Sensei: Thank you, it is a thoughtful reply. I don't know if there is a real answer or answer that fits into our categories of reason and words.

Yes, I think it has something to do with anger but it has something to do with thinking from the standpoint of others and not exclusively from our own point of view.

Justice is involved too. Everyday, I drive on the road, I always manage to see people driving so recklessly and foolishly, taking other people's lives at risk as well as their own. My sense of justice is aroused.

I think there are many types of anger and we cannot lump them into one category, Anger from moral injustice as you mentioned, there is anger which arises from our own neurotic trauma, and there is anger which comes from greed and self delusion. . . . I think there are many types.

In Zen, there is nothing wrong with becoming angry - it is accepted as a human emotion but first we only think: "is it right to be angry now? Ok - I'm angry!"

I think anger may be one contributing factor towards fighting - but fighting can come from a sense of competition, self-preservation, domination, lust for power, and other sources outside of anger.

Today, this morning, when I saw a driver cut across several lanes very dangerously on the freeway, I was not angry, but I was morally outraged that the driver is only thinking of himself for some momentary kicks and not thinking of the safety of others. . . . I was also sad that someday, with a repetition of such unsafe behavior, this foolish person will eventually end as "road kill."

Today, fighting has also become a sport for high stakes (money) and prestige or fame. We fight for the excitement and notoriety it brings. As this element comes into our martial arts, our martial arts will change into a kind of game or sport simply for the excitement and fun of it all. . . .

From Kelly Allen: "I am sorry this is a poorly constructed reply. All I really need to say is that I think we fight because we are selfish and unaware! Is it not that simple?"

Poorly constructed! Absolutely not! Your analogy could not have put your idea across any better, at least to us drivers. That misunderstanding of point of view of the so called aggressor, in your analogy simply a poor driver, triggering anger because one takes the poor drivers antics personally, can and is mirrored in a vast number of situations. Many things aside from driving can and is misinterpreted every day. The anger that incites the conflict is produced when the misunderstanding is taken personally. That "taking it personally" is the selfish act that all must strive to change. Great comment! Thoroughly enjoyed it! Kelly Allen

From Mert Uslu, Turkey: I liked about fight and driving. That's a problem in here. Somewhere I heard traffic is a good pointer of a community. We have a metaphor. You walk along the way of life and sometimes you face a closed door in front of you. There is either breaking the door or opening it and passing through. Breaking it can make you angry and lower your energy. Opening it needs a very little force and no anger at all. (That's Aikido by the way) The mastery is not a straight line going upwards. It has downs and ups and steady moments. The trick is not giving up and using the inner energy as economic as you can. Like a mountain you are climbing. Don't break the doors, just open them and sometimes sit to regain energy and watch the wheel and be proud how high you climbed. You deserve it. Then start climb up being careful and trying hard. Trust yourself. Stop acting as if the other person is unique and you are commonplace. That is idol worship which produces pain. Act as if you are unique, not from human vanity, but because it is so. You are unique. Every one of us is. :) God Bless, Mert Uslu

From Sensei: Yes, you are exactly right. Sometimes, I think we are too busy closing doors to challenge ourselves to open new ones.

It is a fact of modern life, that wherever you go in the world, you have traffic jams. Although only 65% of the people in the world have electricity, everyone seems to have cars!

Many, many years ago, when my grandpa bought a new car, a Chevy Nova 1957, demanded that the cigarette lighter, the heater, and even the carpets on the floor be removed - he said that a car is for transportation, not luxury! Regrettably, my father

laughed when it actually cost my grandpa more money to make take his car down to the bare bones. Nowadays, it is quite different, a car is not just a means of transportation, it is a status symbol, a means to "instant" power, a luxury - second only to our homes. . . . for some, it is even a fashion statement. . . . No wonder, we have become such bad drivers! We have to continually make the cars safe enough to protect ourselves from ourselves.

For many, joining Aikido practice is a new door to be opened. For some, it means great excitement and joy, and for some, it is rather frightening and perhaps a bit of a culture shock. Actually, there are three general types of dojo or three doors to choose from.

If a dojo is like a business, you, as the "customer," not a student, will always be right. The teacher will always compliment you and pat on you on the back. It can really be a joy and pleasure for many, it is just a matter of paying your money like any business.

Some dojos are for leisure, play and socialability. Like a playground for children, as long as you don't hurt yourself or throw sand in the eyes of your playmates, no one really cares what you do. It is all fun and games.

A good dojo, I believe, is like a family. And like a family, your teacher, like your parents, will scold you for this and that and everything you do, it seems! You will get scolded if you don't eat your carrots or behave yourself at the dinner table. You get scolded if you don't study hard. You get scolded if your room is a mess, you get scolded if you don't behave yourself in front of company, or sit correctly in a chair or say bad things and on and on. . . . Such a dojo is like being at home under the watchful, critical eye of your mother and father.

Although being in a dojo which treats you like family is probably the hardest kind of dojo of all. However, like a family, it creates the deepest strongest bonds, has the greatest impact on your life in the best way, and is always those who you can rely on through thick and thin, all your life, in the best way.

When O'Sensei said that "mankind is like one Family," it is the most profound teaching of all which we must experience daily in the Dojo in our practice.

From Ambrose: Hello Sensei I find it interesting that you say that "In Zen, there is

is nothing wrong with becoming angry". I thought that in Zen emotions were not seen as 'real' or something that we needed to respond to?

Anger may be present in us but like all emotions it will pass just as euphoria will pass and depression and so on. We do not deny them but we do not cling to them or allow them to dictate our natural response.

However, my studies in Zen are very very limited so no doubt I have misunderstood.

Perhaps it is more a case of 'right anger' - which is what I think you were alluding to. Where is this anger coming from? Is it anger because someone has hurt my ego? Or is it egoless anger, anger from the true self? Ah I am waaayyyy out of my depth here! Best wishes, Ambrose

From Ambrose: Thank you Kelly - I am glad that you found my attempts at an answer interesting!

Misunderstanding, not knowing, being unaware - I think it is the source of so many of our problems today.

I seem to recall being told, or having read somewhere, that one of the aspects of tai no henko is that it reminds us to see what our uke is seeing, to see the world from their point of view. When we do that how different the world can look. Best wishes, Ambrose

From Ambrose: Hello Mert: That was a very nice metaphor. Just turn the handle - it's simple! But we don't learn - we don't follow the simple life, walk the simple Way, enjoy the simple beauty of the world that surrounds us.

Instead we are blind, caught in the chaos, never a moment to stop and think as we are swept along with everyone in a vicious stampede - to what?

I have a clear image in my mind. I am one of those people running in a rushing, panicking, frightened, massive crowd. People are falling over but we keep running, hearing their cries but not heading them, not helping them. I just think, "I must keep running, I must keep running". All my friends are running, my family too but I don't see them too often - I have no time.

I am running in a big circle, we all are, and

I keep stumbling over the same hurdles. The light is poor, it is hard to see, the colours are dull and the noise is deafening. People keep crashing into me and trying to knock me over, trying to get ahead of me. I have to fight them, I have to hurt them, I have to keep ahead. I can't think clearly, I can't catch my breath and I can never ever stop. If I stop I will die.

But sometimes, as I glance to my right, I catch a glimpse of peaceful people, gentle people, people with time, people who don't rush. They are outside the stampede and they smile at me, a friendly but sad smile. They almost seem of another world, a world with vivid colours, of depth and beauty. It begins to make sense and I begin to turn towards them. But then I am shoved in the back and hustled by the crowd. I stumble and I lose sight of them and the fear takes over once more and again I start running.

"I must keep running, I must keep running."

It is strange really. Just turn the handle - I know it and yet I still crash against the doors and try to break them down. Best wishes, Ambrose

From Sensei: Nice point to make and you conveniently answered your own question! Anger is considered in Zen to be "unsubstantial" like all emotions which come and go in the mind. Of course, it does not agree with anger which is harmful to one's self or others. It also does not recommend that kind of anger which is held inside one's self and allowed to grow and fester. At the same time, we shouldn't label or attach such importance to anger as we do. More than becoming attached to anger which is one of the natural emotions of any individual, we should let it come and go naturally as it should. . . .

Like a bucket of water, if we disturb the water and then press our hands against the surface of the water trying to quiet it down, our efforts to settle the water only disturbs it further. If we leave the bucket and the water alone for a while, the water, like anger, will calm itself down by itself naturally.

Once an old business man came to Ryokan, the Zen priest, and asked, "I am getting old and sick and I am going to die, I don't know what to do!"

Ryokan replied, "When you are old, it is ok to be old, when you are sick, it is ok to be

sick. When it is time to die, it is ok to die."

When we are happy, it is ok to be happy and we should enjoy it for the moment. However, happiness does not last forever and our mood changes. When we are angry, it is ok to be angry and if we do not aggravate it or give it too much importance or attach ourselves to it, it will soon pass too.

When a driver on the streets does something bad, it is easy to become disturbed and angry. It is a natural emotion and response to such things. However, if we blow it all out of proportion and try to act dangerously against the person on our anger, we can get into trouble. If we do nothing and hang on the this anger, we can ruin our whole day, perhaps days, months and years - this is unnatural and not healthy for ourselves at all.

When the driver does something bad, it is "ok" to be angry for that moment, but without attaching ourselves to it, we can see that it will pass and soon you will have forgotten all about it. We do not need to let such a small thing destroy or infect our lives.

. . .

In this sense, we can say, "anger is ok." Do you see my point?

In our Aikido practice, or in the daily activity of our lives, we should practice to maintain the "normal" state of our minds as our minds constantly swing back and forth and every which way. . . .

There is no end to anger and we will be angry again many, many, many times before we die - in our practice, we should try to understand the true nature of anger. It is a part of ourselves, so it is ok. . . .

From Sensei: After I posted my last entry about anger - I thought to myself, "Now i will get into trouble! Everyone will extend my statements about anger to serial killers, madmen, cannibals, psychopaths from Hannibal Lector to Jeffrey Dahmer!"

Of course, I always talking within the context of the dojo and our fairly normal daily Life. I know that martial artists are always worried about who is stronger and who will attack who and what is more effective and who beats who. With almost 50 years of experience, it has only happened on several occasions - so in my opinion, it is hardly worth it, I am sorry to say. It is better to focus on the higher things in Life and not

who you can beat or throw.

When my grandfather was very young, he went to a kendo master to learn swordsmanship. This is at a time before modern kendo was formalized into a sport as it is today. He was refused. He went several times to ask for permission to study but each time he was refused and told that studying martial arts would do no good at all. . . . Eventually he came to study under him. His teacher told him, "the sword has only saved my life twice in my life and once it was to save my wife. . . . studying your whole life is hardly worth the effort!" My grandfather told me this as a kid but not to discourage me from training but to encourage me!

Of course, I must say that it is better not to get mad or lose your temper. But if I say this, all my students will laugh because I am famous for my short temper when I am teaching. Of course, I don't get mad because I am crazy or like getting mad - I wish I didn't have to get mad at all! When students are sleeping or being lazy, or not paying attention, or being ornery or obstinate - I am always frustrated that they cannot focus on the practice. There is so much to teach, so much to learn. . . .

Confucius compared students to horses. He said one horse, you have to whip several times before it starts to go. The second horse is a little smarter - if you show him the whip, he will go on his own. The third horse is the best - he knows the heart of his owner and will go by understanding the owner's will.

I remember many years ago I was very much impressed with one teacher - no matter what, he never got mad or upset at whatever the students did, he always seemed very happy-go-lucky. One day, I asked him, "What is your secret to never getting mad?"

He replied to me immediately, "Oh, that is easy, I just don't give a damn!" On that day, I vowed that I would never be a teacher like him, and always, always care for my students. . . . Because of this, I can never cure my anger!

From Mert: Hello Ambrose I have tried many times and it works. Your energy stays with you letting you do more and also better things. Don't forget ...There's always a door and Everyone has 24 hrs :)))) Best Wishes, Mert

From Sensei: Many thanks to everyone!

Adjusting For Errors:

By Rev. Kensho Furuya



Yagyū Tsuba. "Oar In the The Waves" design, one of the secret oral teachings of the Shinkage Ryu of swordsmanship. Late Edo.

When a sailor sails across the sea, he uses a rudder which he must constantly adjust one way and then the other to keep the boat afloat and in the right direction. He may shift a little to the right, but in a split second, he is already adjusting it to the left. Sometimes a small adjustment and at times a large push in the opposite direction. In this constant adjustment back and forth, left and right, the boat stays on its true course, steady and strong.

Of course, we all know that we cannot make mistakes in Life because it will cause loss or waste, and some mistakes are dangerous and may even mean the loss of life. Yet we all know that we are human and will always be making mistakes, no matter how careful we are, even if we do nothing at all. Of course, we try to not make a mistake but in the next second, we are already making a mistake. Then, feeling bad, we correct our mistakes and move on. . . . Like the rudder of a boat, in Life, we must constantly adjust ourselves back and forth, left and right, up and down - making mistakes, correcting mistakes, learning from our mistakes, sometimes starting over, sometimes causing loss and suffering, adjusting, correcting, moving on and making another mistake again. . . . Like adjusting the rudder of a boat, we must constantly adjust ourselves in Life to keep our balance and a steady course. This is only the natural way of Life.

Of course, you will feel bad when erring - but if you stay on this singular course, your Life (boat) will crash - in a second, you are already adjusting yourself in the opposite

direction. . . . Can you understand this process? This is how we learn and this is how we train in the Dojo - each day, every second. . . left and right, back and forth, right and wrong.

Like fine silk, the fabric of life is composed of strands crossing in different directions - some strands represent right and some represent wrong, but it is their interweaving and intersecting at so many points that creates the material which is beautiful and strong at the same time.

Today, I was reminiscing about my life and mentioned some names - of course, my life is full of good things and not so good. . . . My student felt bad for bringing up an unpleasant subject and we had a little talk about this. . . . Sometimes, I think I am too strict on my students because I say this and that, or don't do this or that. . . . I know you, like everyone, want to be free and have the freedom to do whatever you like. . . . I know my students feel the same way as everyone, I feel this way too.

A teacher is like a compass - a compass only shows you one way - north - is this not right? However, because you can know this one direction for sure without fail - you can easily determine true east, west and south as well - from learning one direction, all other directions are understood at once. A teacher may appear to only show you "One Way" and tell you that you must understand only this one way. Like a compass, although you are only shown one way, indeed, at the same time, you are shown all other ways - it is only for you to understand "north" ("one way") first of all. . . . You may want the freedom to guess and determine for yourself which is north and south, east and west. But the wise one only masters north - and understands all other directions and directions in between at once. Can you understand this - this is the process of training?

As a matter of fact, in old Japan, we used to call our teachers, "shinan," - which exactly means, "compass." Sometimes, a teacher may appear very restricting - but please do not judge him until you have truly understood his teaching. . . . maybe he is just a simple compass only pointing north for you.

To my students: Don't worry so much about making a mistake, only worry about missing chance to learn something new to develop yourself in your Aikido practice - and in Life. Thank you!

Welcoming Our New Affiliate Dojos:

Littleton Aikikai
Littleton, Colorado
Steven Shaw

Brugos Kodokai
Brugos, Spain
Under Santiago Almaraz

Four Seasons Dojo
Granbury, Texas
Michael Schmidt

Zen Felsefi Savas Sanatlari
Topluilugu, Turkey
Dojo #1 - Ankara, Turkey
Dojo #2 - Istanbul, Turkey
Muhlis Partal

Season's Greetings To Our Very Good Friends In Aiki Spirit:

Tanshinjuku
Boulder, Colorado
Kei Izawa Sensei, 5th Dan

Chushinkan Dojo
Buena Park, CA.
James Nakayama Sensei, 6th Dan

Aikido Ai
Whittier, CA.
Frank McGouirk Sensei, 6th Dan

Tekko Juku
New England
Yasumasa Itoh Sensei, 6th Dan

My Christmas Wish:

We must all continue to get along with each other in the spirit of Aikido and with a caring heart. It is easy to make a friend, it is difficult to keep and nurture a friendship over many years. In our practice, just as we make a tremendous effort to understand Aikido, we must also understand how to control personal ambitions and political desires which may hurt others. It is always "give and take" however, this is not a typical two-way street in which we can calculate equal portions of coming and going. As in the profound teachings of Aikido, we focus on projecting our Energy outwards, and naturally, it is replaced. In our relationship with others, we focus on giving, and very subtly we are receiving in some mysterious way. To allow such incredible operations of Energy to take place in our lives is the great Joy of Aikido. Have a very Merry Christmas and many Season's Greetings. Sensei

Affiliated Branch Dojos

Aikido Kodokai
Salamanca, Spain
Santiago Garcia Almaraz

Hacienda La Puente Aikikai
La Puente, California
Tom Williams

Wyoming Aikikai
Sheridan, Wyoming
Tom McIntrye

Bahamas Aikikai
Grand Freeport, Bahamas
Seymour Clay

Jalisco Aikikai
Jalisco, Mexico
Eric Jaracho

Aikido of Guadalajara
Guadalajara, Mexico
Raul Blackaller

Aikido of Puerto Vallarta
Puerto Vallarta, Mexico
Eric Jaracho, Raffi Badalian

Association D'Aikido Pour Demain
Paris, France
Cyril Danan

Aikikan
Rehovot, Israel
Ze'ev Erlich

Valladolid Aikido Dojo
Valladolid, Spain
Felix Ares

Veracruz Aikido Dojo
Vera Cruz, Mexico
Dr. Roberto Magallanes
Dr. Alvaro R. Hernández Meza

Marco Giuseppe Marangoni
Monza, Italy

Welcome To The Aikido Center of Los Angeles



Aikido Center of Los Angeles

Visiting Our Dojo:

Our dojo is dedicated to the practice of traditional Aikido as taught by the Founder of Aikido, Morihei Ueshiba and his legitimate successors, the late 2nd Doshu Kisshomaru Ueshiba and the present 3rd Doshu Moriteru Ueshiba.

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
Aikido-laido-KODO@yahoo



Rev. Kensho Furuya, 6th Dan

The Kensho Furuya Foundation:

Mr. Ken Watanabe - President
Mr. Gary Myers - Secretary
Mr. Mark Ty - Treasurer
Mr. Jonathan Altman - Legal
Mr. William D'Angelo - Legal

The Furuya Foundation is dedicated to preserving the Dojo and its continued operation maintaining the highest standards of practice and the work of Furuya Sensei in research and education in Aikido, the traditional Japanese sword & related arts and their history, culture and traditions. Your donations & contributions are welcome.

Japanese Swords: Appraisal & Restoration

Expert appraisal on Japanese swords. Complete services for restoration of Japanese art swords and custom-ordered Iaito training sword. Services include polish, handle wrapping, scabbard lacquer work, special orders. By appointment only.



Japanese Swordsmanship:

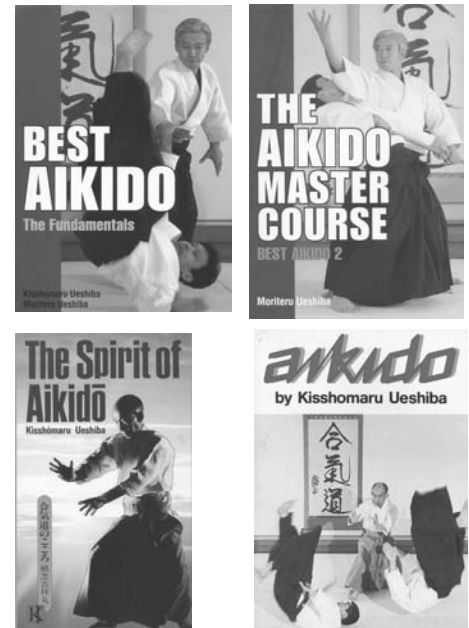
Traditional Muso Shinden Ryu Iaido

We offer instruction in the traditional art of Iaido, the art of the Sword. Serious students are always welcome. Iaido demands a strong commitment of time, honor, perseverance and integrity. It is a spiritual art with a history and tradition of over fine hundred years. It is an art which is rapidly disappearing in our modern world today. We welcome all interested students to join our training. You will learn the proper etiquette and handling of the Samurai sword and its usage as a real weapon. This is not sword play, movie stunt action or performance-competition. This is a real, traditional martial art discipline.

Mission of the Aikido Center of Los Angeles:

We are not-for-profit, traditional Aikido dojo dedicated to preserve the honored values and traditions of the art. We are continually focused on 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, enjoying all the benefits Aikido can offer.

Recommended Readings:



International Aikido Kodo-Kai.

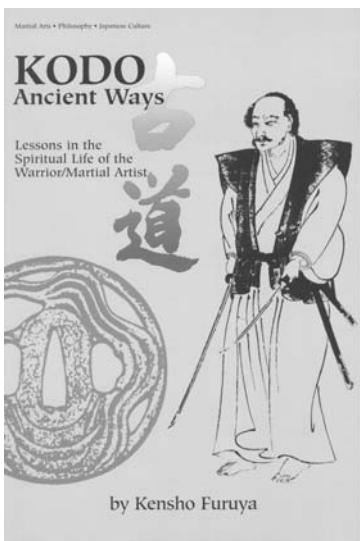
We do accept all Branch Dojo affiliations with any dojo who practices and wishes to follow the Aiki Kai Hombu Dojo training, rules and standards. This also includes commitment to 3rd Doshu and the Ueshiba Family as the Founding Family and Originator of our art. You are welcome to make inquires by email or letter. Our purpose is to help others in the correct practice of Aikido and to spread the correct transmission and understanding of O'Sensei's teachings.

**Visit our official website daily at www.aikidocenterla.com
Become a member of [Aikido-laido-KODO@yahoo.group](mailto:aiclafuruya@yahoo.group)
For Sensei's Daily Message and current news & postings.**

Copyrighted © & All Rights Reserved.

Published by Rev. Kensho Furuya, The Aikido Center of Los Angeles, 940 E. 2nd Street #7, Los Angeles, CA 90012
Tel: (213) 687-3673. Email: aiclafuruya@earthlink.net
No portion of this publication may be copied or reproduced without written permission from the Publisher.

Publications By Furuya Sensei:



Kodo: Ancient Ways: Lessons In The Spiritual Life Of the Warrior

By Kensho Furuya

\$16.95 plus tax.

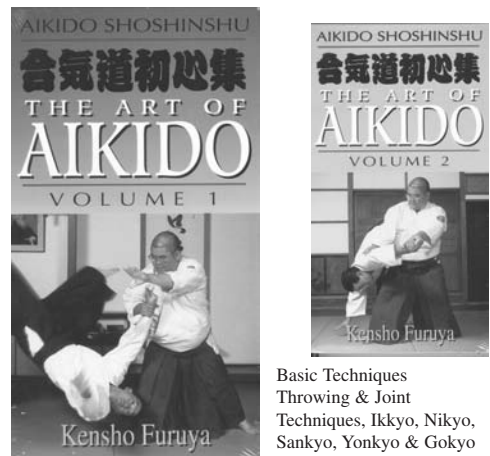
Highly recommended for all students of the Dojo. Please request for your autographed copy by Sensei.

The Art of AIKIDO

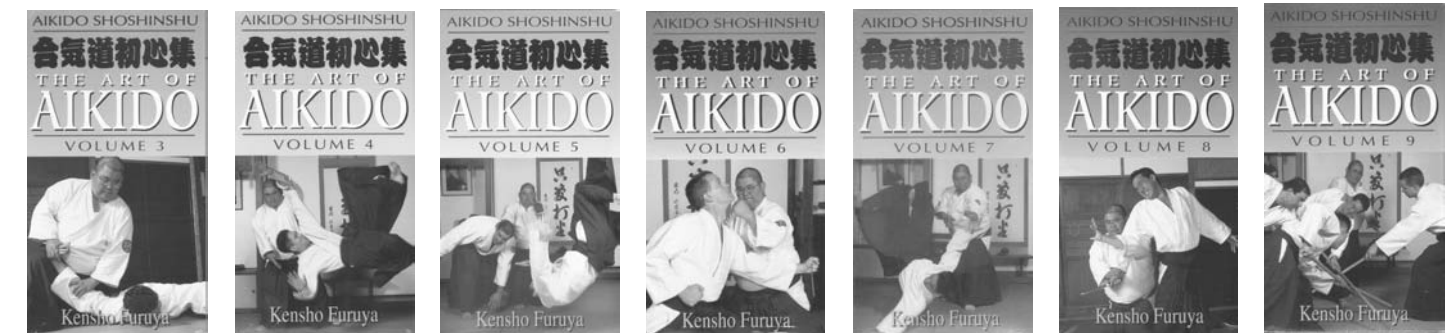
Instructional Video Series s Now Available in a new DVD format.

"Top Rated" Karate Illustrated
"Impressive Scope" Aikido Today,
"Exhaustive" Aikido Journal" "Best in the English language on the market today," Budovideos.com.

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.



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. Kokyudosa.
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

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

Aikido TRAINING SCHEDULE

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

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

Tuesdays: Beginning Basics: 5:15-6:15pm.
Advanced Intensive 3rd & Up: 6:30-7:30pm.

Wednesdays: Beginners': 5:15- 6:15pm.
Open Beginning 6:30-7:30pm.
Aikiken & Weapons: 7:45-8:45pm.

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

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

Saturdays: Open Intermediate: 9:30-
10:30am. Open Beginning: 10:30-11:30pm.

Every 4th Saturday: Advanced Intensive
Aikido: 6:30-8:00am. 2nd Kyu & up.

CHILDREN'S CLASSES

7- 16 yrs old

Sunday Mornings 9:00 -10:00am

Sign-up anytime for on-going classes.

We are directly affiliated with:

AIKIDO WORLD HEADQUARTERS

Aikido So-Hombu Dojo - Aikikai

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

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

Aikido Center of Los Angeles

940 E. 2nd St. #7, Little Tokyo,
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

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

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

No Classes on the last weekend of the month.

Private Classes Available.

No Appointment Necessary To Join:

You are welcome to visit us anytime during our adult Open Beginning Classes. Signing up for classes is very easy and only takes a few minutes. We accept personal checks, MO and cash. Please bring valid ID such as your driver's license and the name of your insurance company. Many thanks and Welcome to the Dojo!

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.