



A WORD OF CONGRATULATIONS TO ACLA MEMBERS

Summer at the Aikido Center is always both very slow and very busy. It is slow because many students take vacations and the classes usually become smaller. At the same time, it becomes very busy because we have so many visitors from other dojos who are travelling and happen to come into Los Angeles. This year we have entertained fellow Aikidists from New England, Seattle, Florida, New York and Japan. I find this quite amazing for a small dojo like ours, but, what makes me very, very happy to hear is that everyone finds our dojo very friendly and very hospitable. In addition, everyone says that they get a good workout. This is an indication to me that everyone is cultivating the proper attitude in their training and this deserves my heartiest congratulations. I think I would be horrified to hear from some stranger that they found our dojo too snooty or to cliquish. As odd as it may seem, this happens often in many dojos. Sometimes, people feel embarrassed or do not train sincerely and are fearful of meeting strangers who may humiliate them. Sometimes, people are over-confident in their training and want to show off their strength or feel superior to their guests and become very exclusive. Both attitudes are inappropriate and one must be very careful that it doesn't creep into one's practice.

Everyone should be anxious to practice with our guests because it is a good way of meeting other Aikidists and seeing how they train and how they view Aikido. This can only enhance one's own practice. If you approach our guests with a friendly, open attitude, they can only reply with a friendly, open attitude. This is how friends are made. In addition, if you put yourself in their shoes, you will understand how difficult it is to be in another city for the first time and how wonderful it is to make new friends instantly. I have not travelled much across the US but when I do go it has always been for Aikido. And, wherever I have gone, I have always met many friends. One time, some friends took me to Las Vegas, and although Las Vegas surely does not lack for entertainment and things to do, I was rather bored and lonely because there was no Aikido dojo there.

RULES TO LIVE BY OVER 1300 YEARS AGO

The following rules were presented to his students by

Zangetsu, a Zen master who lived around 600 AD. Although these precepts are over 1300 years old, I think they are still appropriate today and very apt for Aikido students.

Living in the world yet not forming attachments to the dust of the world is the way of a true Zen student.

When witnessing the good action of another encourage yourself to follow his example. Hearing of the mistaken action of another, advise yourself not to emulate it.

Even though alone in a dark room, be as if you were facing a noble guest. Express your feelings, but become no more expressive than your true nature.

Poverty is your treasure. Never exchange it for an easy life.

A person may appear a fool and yet not be one. He may only be guarding his wisdom carefully.

Virtues are the fruit of self-discipline and do not drop from heaven of themselves as does the rain or snow.

Modesty is the foundation of all virtues. Let your neighbors discover you before you make yourself known to them.

A noble heart never forces itself forward. Its words are as rare gems, seldom displayed and of great value.

To a sincere student, every day is a fortunate day. Time passes but he never lags behind. Neither glory nor shame can move him.

Censure yourself, never another. Do not discuss right and wrong.

Some things, though right, were considered wrong for generations. Since the value of righteousness may be recognized after centuries, there is no need to crave an immediate appreciation.

Live with cause and leave results to the great laws of the universe. Pass each day in peaceful contemplation.

From *Zen Flesh, Zen Bones*, Paul Reps, A Doubleday Anchor Book, 1961.

A FEW WORDS FROM SENSEI: ON LEARNING AND COMMUNICATION

As students gain skill and experience in Aikido, they find that they must sometimes help the newer students get through the techniques during practice. These students as well as my assistants begin to appreciate how really difficult it is to communicate a thought or experience or information. Teaching is not easy and I think teaching itself deserves considerable study.

Generally, the most important aspect in learning Aikido is to maintain a regular training schedule and the opportunity to practice the techniques over and over and over again. Within this context, it is important for the student to pick up as much information or hints or clues to the technique as possible from the teacher. Often, the teacher does not give this out so freely. In traditional martial arts, there is a saying that the student must steal the techniques from the teacher. But, I don't think the teacher is worried too much about having his techniques stolen. At the same time, I don't think many good teachers should be considered "stingy" with their teaching. By not speaking too much, by not instructing too much, by not giving too much in the way of teaching is, indeed, a very important form of teaching in martial arts and Aikido. It is a matter of communication.

In this society today, we often speak of communication or the lack of communication. This is very common in therapy and group therapy. But I often think that we are not suffering from a lack of communication; instead, I think we are suffering from too much communication. And, with this overabundance of communication, we have become confused. We have become so bombarded with information that most information never registers. It is interesting to note that this problem existed 400 year ago as well as today, in the age of communication.

In Aikido, I think it is very important to develop a special kind of hearing and a special kind of seeing. Although we are perfectly normal humans beings, aren't we guilty of oftentimes spending our days in a kind of trance, really not aware of anything going on around us. (However, we would be greatly offended if someone were to call us "zombies".) When I speak of a special kind of hearing or seeing, I am not referring to some special or supernatural powers but

to "everyday" seeing and hearing. "Everyday" seeing and hearing means how God originally meant us to see and hear. This means that we should perceive everything, both in our daily lives and when we are on the mats, clearly and with great sensitivity. It means that we see things without our prejudices and value judgements.

Many years ago, I was instructing my student and corrected him many, many times on a particular technique. Later, he took an examination and made exactly the same mistake over and over and failed. He couldn't understand why he failed and when I pointed out his error, he replied, "Why didn't you ever tell me?" In Japanese martial arts, when one masters his art, it is called *kaigan*. Although this means that one has achieved mastery, it literally means one's eyes have been opened. "Everyday" hearing and seeing means to hear and see what we are actually hearing and seeing and not what we "think" we hear and see. This is very important to understand. What we hear and see is reality and this goes for the other senses as well. What we "think" we hear and see is an illusion created by thought (discrimination, love, hate, like, dislike, etc.).

Kaigan is not an accumulation of much practice or the achievement of mastery. In every moment of our practice, we must be in a state of "eyes opened." Tenno was a Zen priest who had achieved his status as a teacher and went to visit the Zen priest, Nan-In. (We spoke of Nan-In in the last issue regarding "A Cup of Tea.") Generally, priests spend ten years under a master before they go out on their own. Tenno had graduated and wished to express his Zen before Nan-In. It was a rainy day, and Tenno had left his clogs and umbrella by the gate before entering Nan-In's quarters. Before he could make his greetings, Nan-In spoke, "I assume you have left your clogs and umbrella by the gate. Did you place your umbrella on the left or right side of your clogs?" Tenno couldn't answer and realized that he did not carry his training through in every minute of the day. Tenno spent six more years under Nan-In.

Here is another Zen story which illustrates how easily we can fool ourselves in our own practice. We must indeed, always keep our eyes and ears opened in our training.

Four students of Zen took an important vow not to speak and to enter meditation for seven days. On the first day, everything started off well enough but as it

grew dark, the first priest yelled, "Fix those lamps!" The second priest said, "Hey, we are not supposed to speak!" The third priest said, "Both of you are stupid because you have both broken your vows!" And the fourth priest said, "It looks like I am the only one who has not spoken!"

Although we can consider ourselves intelligent people we can so easily fool ourselves at the same time. This is why training never ends and why we must pursue it to the very day we die.

In returning to the subject of communication, I would like to share the words of Jiddu Krishnamurti, a well known Indian philosopher who passed away several years ago. He was groomed as a world savior and teacher as a youth but dissolved his association and has taught all over the world travelling by himself. At the beginning of almost every talk, he speaks of communication. This selection is from the introduction of *The First and Last Freedom* (Harper & Row).

"To communicate with one another, even if we know each other very well, is extremely difficult. I may use words that may have to you a significance different from mine. Understanding comes when we, you and I, meet on the same level at the same time. That happens only when there is real affection between people, between husband and wife, between intimate friends. That is real communion. Instantaneous understanding comes when we meet on the same level at the same time.

It is very difficult to commune with one another easily, effectively and with definitive action. . . . I would like to convey, by the very simple words which we use in our daily life, a deeper significance; but that is very difficult if you do not know how to listen.

There is an art of listening. To be able really to listen, one should abandon or put aside all prejudices, pre-formulations and daily activities. When you are in a receptive state of mind, things can be easily understood; you are listening when your real attention is given to something. But unfortunately most of us listen through a screen of resistance. We are screened with prejudices, whether religious or spiritual, psychological or scientific; or with our daily worries, desires and fears. And with these for a screen, we listen. Therefore, we listen really to our own noise, to our own sound, not to what is being said. It is extremely difficult to put aside our training, our prejudices, our inclinations, our resistance, and, reaching beyond the verbal expression, to listen so that we un-

derstand instantaneously. That is going to be one of our difficulties."

MONDO: QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

In the last issue, there was a selection from the writings of Wang Yang Ming, a Chinese philosopher of the 15th century and founder of the Hsin Hsueh or Mind School of Neo-Confucianism. These writings are included in the newsletter to stimulate thought and questions by the students. I thought I could continue a discussion of Wang Yang Ming's thought in this issue by the many questions that should have been brought forth. Unfortunately, none came. This is either a sign of great genius or great laziness. Time is very valuable and it is difficult to hold discussions at the sacrifice of practice. Before, I used to discuss many subjects with my students over coffee or dinner outside of the regular training schedule but it is difficult now because everyone is so busy. Perhaps, the newsletter itself can become a vehicle for discussion of many interesting subjects one can relate to his training. I have researched these articles hoping they will provide valuable food for thought. Please think and please ask questions.

I am including another selection; this time from Zen. It is part of a rare manuscript discovered in the Tun Huang caves and there is nothing else written about it anywhere. The original study itself is extremely rare.

A DIALOGUE ON THE CONTEMPLATION-EXTINGUISHED. Translated from the Chueh-Kuan Lun by Gishin Tokiwa. Published by the Institute for Zen Studies, 1973.

1. The Great Way is deep and void, sublime and still, beyond comprehension, beyond verbal expression. Here are provisionally set up two persons who both talk the true reality: a master named Attainment and a disciple called Gateway. Now Master Attainment is calm without words. Gateway, abruptly standing on his feet, asks Master Attainment, saying,

"What is it that is called, 'Mind'? How do we put the mind at ease?"

Master says in answer,

"You need not suppose a mind, nor need you particularly endeavor to put one at ease. That can be spoken of as putting the mind at ease."

2. Asked, "If there is no mind, how do we learn the Way?"

Answered, "The Way is not anything the mind thinks of. How does it concern the mind."

3. Asked, "If it is not anything the mind thinks of, how can we ever think of it?"

Answered, "To have thought is to have mind. To have mind contradicts the Way. To have No-thought is to have No-mind. No-mind is the true Way."

4. Asked, "Do all living beings really have the mind or not?"

Answered, "If living beings have any mind, that will be a perversion. Only because a mind is set up in the midst of No-mind do there take place delusive thoughts."

5. Asked, "What kind of thing does the no-mind have?"

Answered, "No-mind is at once No-thing. No-thing is nature itself. Nature itself is the Great Way."

6. Asked, "How can the delusive thoughts of living beings be destroyed?"

Answered, "In so far as one sees delusive thoughts and their destruction, one will never leave the delusive thoughts."

7. Asked, "Without their destruction or elimination, will it be possible to accord with the Way?"

Answered, "So long as one speaks of 'to accord' or 'not to accord' one will not be free from the delusive thoughts, either."

8. Asked, "What shall I do?"

Answered, "Nothing done. That's it."

NEWS ITEMS

THANK YOU FOR YOUR DONATIONS

Several students have made donations to help out the dojo. These are greatly, very greatly appreciated. Thank you very much.

NISEI WEEK DEMONSTRATION ON AUGUST 16, 1987

On August 16, 1987, we will be demonstrating Aikido and Iaido for the Nisei Week Festival on the second floor of the Little Tokyo Plaza (Yaohan Mall), located on 3rd and Alameda Sts. The demonstrations will be at 1:00pm and 3:00pm. Please be sure to encourage your friends to come and watch. Everyone should try to participate; we also need people to help pass out the flyers and answer questions about the dojo.

We are sponsored by the Little Tokyo Plaza and Seki Jewelry Co. on First and San Pedro Sts. Mr. Pat Seki, the owner, is a member of the Zenshuji Temple and a strong supporter of our dojo.

KATHY AND MITSUKO WILL BE ATTENDING THE NEW ENGLAND SUMMER CAMP

In August, Ms. Kathy Heinemann and Ms. Mitsuko Yoshimoto will both be attending the East Coast Summer Camp hosted by the New England Aikikai. This year the camp will be attended by Doshu's grandson, Ueshiba Moriteru, Yamada Sensei, Kanai Sensei and Sugano Sensei, who has recently moved to New York from Belgium. Members should wish them good luck and a pleasant journey.

NO SECOND CHILDREN'S CLASS

We have not had any response about a second children's class during the week so this idea will be put on hold.

CPR CLASS TO BE OFFERED IN THE DOJO FOR STUDENTS

We can sponsor a CPR class here in the dojo and we need input from the students. The minimum requirement is at least 10 students with a maximum of 15. The price is \$10.00 person. The course lasts for about three hours and a certificate of completion is presented at the end of the course. This course may also include a basic lesson in first aid (fee is slightly higher and the course longer). If you are interested in learning CPR, please see Sensei. The instructor is recommended by the American Heart Association. We should plan to have the course sometime towards the end of the month on a Sunday or Saturday morning.

ORDERING NEW DOJO PATCHES

We will be ordering more dojo patches soon because we are almost out of them. The patches are a \$5.00 donation each and we will require pre-orders before we can place our order. Please order now. The new patches will be corrected to "Aikido Center of Los Angeles" instead of "Aikido Institute of Los Angeles."

VCR CAMERA NEEDED

The dojo is looking for someone with a VCR camera to record our Nisei Week Demonstration and other events. Any volunteer with a camera please step forward. Thank you.

OFFICIAL DOJO PENS

We still have many dojo pens for sale at \$4.00 each. Although not many people are breaking down the doors to buy them, they are still quite nice and also refillable. Please buy your pens now. They make nice presents.

MAGAZINES FOR SENIOR CITIZENS

The dojo subscribes to many magazines which the students are welcome to borrow. However, the dojo will be donating these magazines to the local senior citizens home, so please return them in good condition and in a timely manner. Thank you.

APOLOGIES

The Newsletter apologizes for not including the Technical Corner in this issue. This will be resumed next month (September issue) with Yonkyo techniques.

FRIENDS OF THE AIKIDO CENTER OF LA

Students and friends of the dojo who may wish to make a contribution to the dojo of any amount, at any time and for any occasion, may fill out this form and send it in. All of the contributions will go towards continuing our newsletter and covering our yellow pages ad which is a very big but necessary expense for the dojo. Those who wish to become "Friends of the ACLA" may also check the appropriate category.

AIKIDO CENTER OF LOS ANGELES
940 EAST SECOND STREET #7
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90012
(213) 687-3673

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

___ Contribution \$ _____

___ Per month pledge \$ _____

"Friends of the ACLA" membership categories.

___ \$15.00/month - California resident.

___ \$10.00/month - Out-of-town friend.

___ Please send reminder card each month.

___ Please send newsletter and seminar information.

___ I am unable to make a contribution, but please send me my newsletter.