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The Aikido Center of Los Angeles LLC
忘れられた心を探す合気道 合気道場
The Aiki Dojo

Affiliation: The Aikido World Headquarters, 17-18 Wakamatsu-cho, Shinjuku-ku, Tokyo, Japan
Rev. Kensho Furuya Foundation
Los Angeles Sword & Swordsmanship Society Kenshinkai
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Merry Christmas - Peace On Earth



Welcome! Hiroshi Isoyama Shihan Visits Our Dojo. October 28.

During a seminar in Santa Clarita for his students, Hiroshi Isoyama Shihan from Aikikai Hombu Dojo came to visit our Dojo. Isoyama Sensei came with two of his students from Santa Clarita, one student accompanying him from Saitama Prefecture and another student visiting from Brazil. He was introduced to the Dojo by Hideo Yonemochi Sensei at Aikikai Hombu.

Isoyama Sensei talked with Sensei at length and enjoyed the Dojo and hopes to visit us again on his next trip to California. Many thanks to the members of the Isoyama Aikido Academy in Santa Clarita. We welcome Isoyama Sensei and his students.

Above: J. L. Paulson Sensei, Isoyama Hiroshi Sensei & Sensei

Congratulations & Best Wishes!

100th Anniversary of the Higashi Hongwanji Buddhist Temple, Little Tokyo.

6th Anniversary of the Salamanca Kodokai, Spain
See article in this Issue.

10th Anniversary Hacienda La Puente Aikikai. 2005



Wishing the Best of the Holiday Season To All

Members of the Aikido Center of Los Angeles
Rev. Kensho Furuya, Chief Instructor
ACLA Yudansha Kai
International & Domestic Affiliate Dojos

Seasons Greetings

My personal greetings to all my students and friends and to the many friends and supporters of the Dojo - a very Merry Christmas and all of the Best of this Holiday Season. Peace on earth.

Rev. Kensho Furuya



Greetings of the Holiday Season & Merry Christmas

First of all, I would like to offer my warmest greetings for the Holiday Season and the very best Merry Christmas.

This last year, looking around Little Tokyo, we can see so many changes. Look at all of the new construction taking place and see all of the new buildings which now conceal the once open view of the Los Angeles Downtown skyline and mountains to the north. Of late, it has been so rapid that it has caught many of us downtown residents and the city in general quite by surprise. In another few years, downtown will be quite a different place than what we enjoy now. Progress always means change and change always means that some will fall by the wayside in their season and the new will take it's place until the next generation of change.

It is easy to say that the new is new and the old is old but in actuality, the new is born out of the old. A peach may grow in it's season, but if we check its dna or inner "essence" we see that it contains something of the original peach perhaps millions and millions of years ago. What protects its form so that it can continue to come back every season without fail? Perhaps, peaches are different from its ancestors, but its essence is the same, only its outer form has changed a little. The ancients discovered dna as "kami" perhaps. . . .

Aikido is growing and changing so rapidly these days, but it is only going with the current trend and pace of this modern age. Its outer form may change, but its essence, the original teachings of O'Sensei and his successors will not change so much. Aikido, I believe, must always be O'Sensei's Aikido. In the early days of my training, we thought of Aikido and O'Sensei as if they are the same word. Today, it is sad to me that I rarely hear of O'Sensei's name. I think we must keep his name and memory deep in our hearts as the essence - the dna, as one might say - of Aikido.

As I get older, only my limitations, mistakes and failings become more clear to me. As much as I think that I could be more clever with this or handle that in a smarter way, I see that all my life has been a struggle and I have tried to do my best to my ability. This is all we can expect, perhaps, despite our shortcomings, we should never suffer a shortcoming of our faith and commitment to Aikido - a small price really - to repay the great benefits we receive from Aikido.

Loyalty and commitment are matters of the spirit and has nothing to do with profit or loss, advantage or disadvantage. Such words are never used today, because we are in a profit-oriented society. In the days of the samurai, this was called, "akinai konjo" or the "businessman's spirit." - who took pride in their motto, "korondemo son ha senu yu," or "even if I stumble down, I will find a way to make a dime in standing up!"

Just put your minds to your practice and only think of how you can do your best each day in your Life. This is all that is necessary to fulfill your life. Once you put a price on your life, you already hold yourself too cheaply. Aikido allows us to see this greater spirit of Nature. Have a Merry Christmas and enjoy the Holiday Spirit.

Memorial Service For 2nd Doshu On January 5, 2005, 7:00pm.

Please attend the Annual Memorial Service for the Late 2nd Doshu Kisshomaru Ueshiba Sensei in the Dojo on Wednesday, January 5, 2005. Incense Offering. Please mark your calendars and please attend. Thank you.

Last General Meeting Of The Year. December 1.

Please attend our last General Meeting of the Year to discuss our agenda and programs for the New Year. From 6:30pm Budo Study Class follows.

Our Annual Christmas Party. December 5.

Please join us at our Annual Christmas Party. This will be at Sambi's Japanese Restaurant and a great buffet is lined up for everyone. Gift exchange as well as many other surprises! Everyone is welcome! For gift exchange info, please see Carol Tanita or Ken.

Brandeis University Women's Group Visits Dojo On Downtown Art Tour. December 13.

Forty ladies, members of a support group for the famed university in Boston, will visit the Dojo for a short lecture on Japanese culture and a demonstration of Aikido and Iaido on Monday from 10:00am. The Dojo is participating in this Art Tour to support their fund raiser to buy books and necessary publications for their alma mater library.

Early Morning Instructor's Class. December 18.

Because of the Holiday schedule, we will have our last Instructor's Class of the year at 6:30am, one week early. All black belts and senior students are encouraged to attend this practice.

Christmas Holiday. December 25-26.

The Dojo will be closed in observance of the Christmas Holiday for two days. Best Wishes and Happy Holidays!

Special Year End Practice. December 31.

Our special Year End Practice will be held on the last day of 2004. From 6:30-7:30pm only. Everyone is welcome to join us.

Congratulations! Hacienda La Puente Aikikai's 10th Anniversary In 2005.

Next year in September, we will be celebrating the 10th Anniversary of Tom Williams' Dojo, one of our affiliate branch dojos. Good Luck and Best Wishes always.

New Monthly Dues Schedule:

To accommodate our landlord, we need to receive everyone's monthly dues BEFORE the first of the month. We appreciate everyone's cooperation and understanding in this. Many thanks!

Aikido-laido-KODO@yahoo.group:

Everyone is welcome to join Sensei at his yahoo group for conversation, surveys and Q&A on Aikido, practice and various subjects of interest. Please become a member now.



Ken Watanabe
Aikikai 5th Dan
Iaido 5th Dan

Our Sunday Morning Children's Class Merry Christmas!

As the year comes to an end and a new one begins, I would like to write a little bit about the children's class here at the Dojo.

If you didn't know, we have a children's class which meets for practice every Sunday at 9:00am. The age range for the children's class is about six to seventeen years of age and I, along with several other black belts, teach this class.

Under the guidance of Furuya Sensei and with the help of the other assistant instructors, the children's class has been doing very well. The classes are very well attended and all the students practice very hard and catch on very well. Ultimately, the most satisfying aspect to teaching the children's class for me is the progress of the students and that they enjoy their practice. I believe that it's the consistent training method here at the Dojo, which helps them progress in their training very well and so quickly. We do not teach the children any form of competition or competitiveness as in popular sports like baseball or basketball. As you know, in Aikido, there is no competition. For children, we emphasize personal development while learning how to work in harmony with the other children. In addition to Aikido techniques, we also emphasize flexibility, agility, stamina, and strength training. In addition, these exercise are designed to develop their hand-eye coordination, eye-feet coordination and getting their bodies to work together effectively and with a greater sense of self-confidence, self-esteem and grace.

Also, the etiquette of the Dojo and in Aikido teaches the children about proper manners and proper behavior and how this helps them to develop confidence in themselves and good mental concentration. This is something which I think will be very valuable to them throughout their whole lives.

In the past, Aikido was closed to the public, accessible only to those who came with the highest recommendations and were already experts in martial arts. Today, even the students of the children's class can benefit from Aikido training. In addition to the new friends they make in the dojo, it's very nice to see the students' progress in their training.

Next year, I hope to see more new faces in the children's class, and that the children continue to progress in their training & practice hard.



Mark Ty
Aikikai 3rd Dan
Iaido 4th Dan

Writing an article for the newsletter is always difficult. It's always hard to tell what to write about. My general observation of practice is that everyone is doing well so far. Everyone is catching on to the techniques fairly well and seems to be progressing very Con't.



Gary Myers
Iaido 5th Dan

Rain & My Christmas Wish List

At the onset of writing this article, Los Angeles experienced its second big rain storm of the season. This usually signals that the winter is coming and, in turn, so are the holidays. Being originally from back East, I still find it amusing that rain, in Los Angeles area, is a media and

newsworthy event, requiring a TV field reporter to stand out side without an umbrella, to tell us he's getting wet. Also astounding are the number of people who forget how to drive in the rain. Some people seem to forget, in the course of nine months, (since the last time it rained), that oil has been absorbed into the pavement. The first rain-storm of the season brings that oil to the surface, (because oil is lighter than water), making the roads very slippery and hazardous. Additionally, the concept of hydroplaning seems to be lost on some people as they speed along at 80 mph. It appears that they follow the "leave later and go faster" philosophy, that way they won't be out in the rain as long to get to their destinations. I passed three accidents on my way to the dojo one rainy Sunday, several weeks ago, such a waste of property, the possibly of injury or loss of life, and they didn't even get to their destinations.

Back East, I dreaded rainy days because they were all too frequent. Now I look forward to them because they are few and far between. It's that way with a lot of things. When we receive too much of anything we take it for granted or we become weary of it; we long for the uncommon or the different to break up the same routine. I think sometimes people approach practice in this way. They come to the dojo, get dressed, stretch out and begin their practice. But, I get the feeling sometimes that some are on autopilot going through the motions but not really thinking and concentrating on their movements.

But this is supposed to be a Christmas greeting. It's the gift giving season again, when we sit down and try to figure out what to get our friends and relatives. When I was a child I would send my letter to Santa at the North Pole. Hey Santa, I never did get that pony! We still make gift lists, but now it is to remember who we are giving what to. But I thought if I was sending a letter to Santa now; what would I wish for the members of Kenshinkai? Rather than give individual gifts to the Kenshinkai I thought it would be nice to have a grab bag that each member could chose the gift that they needed the most. Here's my Kenshinkai Gift Wish List:

The Right Attitude: Here is a gift where one size fits all. Our mental approach is very important in the learning process. If the mind is not open to learning, no learning will occur. They say you can't teach someone who doesn't want to learn. Typically, in sports, one practices to obtain a goal, the practice is considered a means to an end, to win the big game, or the gold medal event, or the championship trophy. Practice, in western cultures is rarely considered the end in and of itself, so, often practice is considered a necessary drudgery. It becomes a repetitive requirement for some rather than viewed as a unique and individual opportunity for improvement. In Iaido we practice and if we improve we have an opportunity to be tested for a dan promotion. We don't participate in competitive events that we have to practice for. So the right attitude about practice is very important in Iaido. So my first Wish List item is for everyone to come to Iaido practice with an eager and willing attitude given Continued:

Gary Continued: this unique opportunity to improve ourselves.

Perfect Suburi: Wouldn't it be great if everyone did suburi perfectly every time? Of course, we know that it may be improbable but it is certainly something to strive for; a perfect straight cut following the same path each time with energy directed to the tip of the sword. Suburi reveals a lot of information about our current mental and physical condition. If we are not feeling well, if we are tired physically, if we are not in the moment, all of these things come out in our suburi. Chances are that things are going well if our suburi is good.

The Best Saya-biki and Noto: To all you left brainers I wish you the gift of active, coordinated left hands. It's interesting to realize the genius of the earlier founders of Iai. In Japan, everyone was made to be righthanded, yet Iai made the left hand as important as the right. It must have been quite a revelation to Hayashizaki Jinsuke Shigenobu that the left hand created this new form. While it would be nice to wake up and find that you are now magically ambidextrous, the truth of the matter is that you have to work hard and make a concerted effort to make both hands move together. It has been scientifically proven that the use of both hands helps develop more connections between the right and left hemispheres of the brain. We can't wish ourselves to be ambidextrous but we can begin to use the left hand more in daily activities. For example if your right handed brush your teeth with your left hand. Begin doing things with the left hand that you generally do with the right. Soon it will feel quite natural to use both hands.

I don't want to get to greedy so this concludes my Wish List. Imagine how quickly we would get through our exercises and onto our real practice if these were realized. There is no harm in wishing and sometimes that wishing transforms into willing something to happen, but it can't substitute for hard work and diligent practice. Wishing everyone at ACLA and the branch dojos a Happy Holiday Season.



Jim MacDonald Aikikai 3rd Dan

"What Is Aikido?"

The most commonly asked question that comes up after someone hears that you train in Aikido is "Oh yeah, what is that again?"

Sure, I know the pat answers...that Aikido is blending with an attackers energy. . . that it involves joint locks, throws and over two thousand techniques and counting...that it's the most difficult to learn and the most effective of all the martial arts. I guess I'm a bit biased. But what really is Aikido? I'm tempted most the time to say, "You know, I'm still not really sure," or "You really have to train in it for a couple of years to get a glimpse of this elusive art." And boy, is it elusive. Just when I think I've finally got my irimi nage down, it's lost, gone--one of the most fundamental techniques in Aikido has become a train wreck, me being the train suddenly colliding, veering off the tracks and wondering where it all went wrong. I think most people have had training days like that--out of the blue, problems with a favorite technique. Many of these problems can come about because of a deepening knowledge of the technique itself. A simple adjustment or correction from Sensei and your gi is soaking and you're hoping your body will take over and make everything right again. Just relax, all will be fine,

is the mantra. Thinking and Aikido don't seem to mix well. It's like learning to play an instrument, it has to be second nature. I think that's why Aikido can be so frustrating in the beginning. All you're doing is thinking, trying to remember where your feet go, what hand to grab, when to bow, how to bow, was that four times or just three, is it my turn already? Did they order me the ultra-bright, fits too big, geeky new-guy gi on purpose? God, what did I get myself into?! But, of course, then we all have that magic time, if we work hard and stick with it, when it all comes together and we're rolling, throwing, moving like we never dreamed possible and the thought enters our heads, 'Hey I'm getting pretty good at this. Wow, when did this happen?' And it's usually around this time that Sensei yells across the mats at you, "What are you doing? Make a strong attack. Try to strike him, it's important to learn to get out of the way. And watch your spacing! Pay attention please."

So the person is still staring at me. They repeat the question "What is Aikido?" Oh, right. I try to gather my thoughts. Should I tell them about O'Sensei? That would take too long. How about that I don't think there's any other sport or training regime that is a better overall body conditioner, or how I breath differently now. No, that's not really what they want to know. They want a sound bite. Something they can file away for reference. Most people don't really want to know about Aikido. Not the Aikido I know. Not the Aikido my teacher has passed down to me. "To know" that Aikido is to know true spirit, budo and, ultimately, the way. It's a lifetime quest, and as I get older, the more I find there is to learn.

The person is still staring at me and I've forgotten he asked me a question. He speaks. "Aikido, that's where you guys roll around and stuff right?" I smile "Yeah, that's it, it's that thing where we roll around and stuff." He seems satisfied and I walk away wondering if I'll ever have a real answer.



Tom Williams, Aikikai 4th Dan Hacienda La Puente Aikikai

Seasons Greetings to Sensei Furuya, the students at Aikido Center of LA, all of the teachers and students in the branch dojos and friends around the world. We at Hacienda La

Puente Aikikai, wish you all a very Happy and Prosperous New Year!

Another year has flown by. We are now approaching our 10th year anniversary as a dojo. It is pretty amazing to think of it. So many students have come and gone over the years, a lot of falls on the mats. I guess it's true: Time really does fly when you're having fun.

We look forward to another year with anticipation of growth and progress. A number of students, hopefully, will have been promoted to shodan. So, we will be a bit stronger as a group. We anticipate new students will continue to flow into the group as well.

As for me, more practice, more teaching, more work, more fun. There will probably be more gray hairs as the sands of time pass through the hourglass. I would like to extend a personal invitation to you all to visit us anytime. We are always open to guests. I hope that Con't.

our friends from other countries can make it to train with us sometime. Please think about joining us for our celebration in September of '05. It would be very special to see you. Again, I wish you all the best and look forward to training with you in the coming year.

Tom Williams,
Aikido Center of Los Angeles,
Hacienda La Puente Aikikai



William Allen Aikikai 1st Dan

Best wishes to everyone at the Aikido Center of Los Angeles for a very good Christmas Season and a Happy New Year. I hope that everyone will continue to train hard in the coming year, and that we will help each other to remain fit and uninjured by training mindfully every day.

I have been a student at the ACLA for a little over three years, and usually think of myself as one of the "new" students. When we practice something like the tenkan exercise or shomenuchi ikkyo, techniques that we do all of the time, it is obvious that I am doing the technique "better" than I did it last year, and last year was better than the previous year. On the other hand, all of these techniques are just as far away from perfect as they have always been. There are an infinite number of errors in timing and spacing, and infinitely many misunderstandings about the relationship of the opponents. Trying to correct everything is impossible, there are too many points to remember, and any attempt to make progress is futile. I watch the instructors and listen to every word, but most of the details evaporate when we stand up to practice. It's hopeless.

And yet, the technique is better this year than it was last year. Once in a while, Sensei even says, "yes, that's right." One can only see the changes over time. Common sense tells me that if I continue to practice diligently and pay attention, then improvement will come. It is really only my selfish mind - the one that wants to be better than others - that doubts this. I think this is the same mind that gets into problems with forcing techniques to work, and which jams and frustrates my training partners - in the interest of "helping them learn", of course. I think this mind is a shortcut to a broken heart, but there doesn't seem to be any way to shut it off, or to make it go away. It's another hopeless task. The best you can do is practice diligently and pay attention.

Practice and practice and practice. Be careful, pay attention, and stay fit so you don't have to miss practice. Life is fleeting, but the path goes on and on, so practice practice practice. And next year, hopefully, you'll be better than you are this year. Maybe it will take two years, or three or four. Who knows? What does it really matter? As long as you love Aikido, or Iaido, or whatever it is that you practice, isn't it a marvelous thing that it will always be a challenge? That you will never be as good as you want to be? That there is no end to that path?

*Merry Christmas & Happy Holidays
To all our friends across the sea and around the world.
Our prayers for peace and happiness.
Members of the Aikido Center of Los Angeles & Sensei*



Dr. Roberto Magallanes Aikikai 1st Dan Vera Cruz, Mexico

With all my respect to you and wishing you the best. Now that this year is about to end and Christmas Season is near by, feelings of Joy, Peace, Happiness but especially gratitude come to me since this has been a good year.

family grew with Amiras arrival and Claudia and Le returned with her PhD to the university in Puebla (three hours away from home) from Australia (half a world away from home) and Ceci got the Job at the State Rehab Center and my wife retired at last.

On the Aikido study, in April we had the honor of being with you your guests and students during your 30th anniversary celebration, I have watched the tapes several times with my students and it was quite an experience and feel the harmonious, respectful, humble hospitality that you made us feel mentioning of course the magnificent practice guided under master as Yonemochi Sensei is in your beautiful Japanese dojo.

This experience made me look into my Aikido all around and restart it from the beginning with a beginners mind from Reigi Saho to each technique and develop a better spirit in teaching and practicing. Our dojo grew in members, we have a twice weekly 18 kids class (with 3 to 4 instructors) from 6 to 12 years old and the youngsters and adults class has grown as well. We try to make emphasis on the basics since it is what makes a building strong.

I wish and hope this coming year will take us back to you and your dojo and a close relation will continue. I thank you for your daily teachings, patience and support to us and our dojo, and wish you and your students a Healthy, Happy, Holy, and Peaceful Christmas.



Steven Shaw II Aikikai 2nd Dan Iaido 3rd Dan

How Did I Get Here?

For those of you who don't know me, I studied under Sensei Furuya for four years, and then moved with my family to Colorado in August. From the benevolence in his character,

Sensei, through Yonemochi Sensei, found a very good teacher for me in Colorado. I have only been training with Izawa Sensei since October, and I am very thankful for being connected with him and his organization.

The other day, after class, a new student asked Izawa Sensei why there were so many interpretations of Aikido technique. The new student had been watching videos of Aikido by various teachers. Izawa Sensei's reply was that after O'Sensei's passing, his ukes were left to interpret their memories of being thrown by O'Sensei. Izawa Sensei related how the uke would be grabbing or attacking O'Sensei and then, somehow, they would find themselves on the ground. They didn't know how they got there, just that they were there. Over the years, O'Sensei's ukes were left contemplating what they had felt from their experiences. Those memories, and their interpretations of those feel-

Steven continued: -ings are the reasons for variations within Aikido technique, as each had different perceptions of their experiences.

Immediately, I recalled a time at the Aikido Center of Los Angeles when I had taken ukemi for Sensei. I remembered grabbing his wrists, and the next thing I knew, I was in the air. I remembered thinking, "What am I doing here?" Fortunately, Sensei wanted to show the technique again, and again after grabbing his wrists, I was in the air. "How did I get here?" popped into my mind as I traveled to the mat. I have no memory of the time between grabbing Sensei's wrists, and being in the air. "How did he do that? How is that possible?" Baffled, I bowed and practiced. I had seen Sensei throw Ken Watanabe and Mark Ty using the same technique many times. I'd practiced it many times, but never did I think it would, or could, feel that way. How can I replicate that for my uke?

Now, I recall many times when Ken had displayed a look of bewilderment after being thrown by Sensei. I remember thinking, "How is Ken confused? He is so good. What is Sensei doing that has him internalizing so much?" All those memories of confusion and Ken's interpretation of them with Sensei's guidance have made Ken so good, that and his dedication to training.

If you ever find yourself wondering how you got somewhere, or what just happened, then we're probably on the same path. I hope it's the right one.



Dr. James Doi
Aikikai 5th Dan
Iaido 4th Dan

Man On The Moon

When I was a young man, a very long time ago, there was a cliché that went "If we can put a man on the moon, why can't we end poverty (or end war, or cure cancer, etc.?)"

One does not hear the phrase anymore because in the late 1970's, the last Saturn IV rocket, the type used for moon launches, was cut up and was placed on display in the Kennedy Space Center Museum "Rocket Garden". The massive Vehicle Assembly Building (VAB) which was built for moon launches is now used to prepare Space Shuttles for launch. Shuttles are only about a third the size of Saturn/Apollo spacecraft. It is like a 747 jet hanger being used to park school buses. The sad truth is that "we" (or anyone else) can no longer put a man on the moon.

All the technology, manufacturing infrastructure, engineering expertise, personnel and components that made lunar landings possible are gone. If it were decided to land humans on the moon right now, it would take another decade to rebuild the system that was lost thirty years ago. In the case of lunar travel, the expense was too much and the political motivation disappeared (the US had "won" the "space race") hence, the "art" of interplanetary space travel was lost. It is very easy to lose knowledge and it is very, very difficult to recover it once it is gone.

We tend to think of history as being a series of events leading to some



sort of happy ending. History is thought of as an evolution of events leading to the present. The idea of evolutionary change implies positive progress. However, evolution merely means change congruent to contemporary conditions, it does not mean "progress" or "decline" (that evaluation is how people in the present interpret past events). The vast majority of changes ("mutations" in biological evolution) are mistakes and failures; only a very small number of variations or changes are of any value. For the last couple of centuries, the success of technological progress gives the illusion that "things are getting better." Technology is improving; industrial technologies have made enormous advances in a very short historical time period but not all things have improved.

Aikido was created by O Sensei at a particular time in Japanese and world history. Aikido, like all human great achievements is subject to social, historical and economic forces that try to change it. There are many contemporary Aikido dojos that teach Aikido techniques that are quite different from Hombu Aikido. Learning Aikido is very difficult and requires a great deal of work. Under the pretext of some sort of "development" or "evolution" of Aikido, techniques can be made to appear to work if attacks are weak or mistimed. Once this approach to making Aikido "work" appears in practice, the art is being lost, perhaps never to be regained. On the other extreme, but equally as bad, are techniques with "muscle" or "cheap shot" tricks, which appear to be "effective". Many "secret" martial arts techniques are merely tricks based on surprise. They are "secret" because once one observes them; they are easily neutralized one-shot tricks. In these cases, there is a very real danger of losing "real" Aikido.

Another sign of decline is when history is distorted to reflect the changes in these "modern" schools. Once the authority of O Sensei is challenged or if the history of Aikido is altered or distorted, then that school is suspect. There are many people who call themselves Aikidoka who do not recognize O Sensei's photo. We are extremely fortunate as Furuya Sensei's students to be taught Aikido in his "traditional" manner. "Conservative" is perhaps a better term, in the sense to "conserve" or "preserve" true O Sensei Aikido.

Great achievements, such as Aikido are subject to historical change and evolve in time, however if these changes are for the worse, they are very hard to recover from. The original phrase, slightly reworded, answers itself. "If we can't maintain the knowledge of putting a man on the moon, why can't we end poverty (or end war, or cure cancer, etc.?)"



David Ito Aikikai 4th Dan

Students vs "Clients"

I also have been an assistant instructor for ten years and have worked as a personal trainer for seven years. Teaching Aikido and instructing exercise has given me some interesting outlooks about teaching students versus training my clients.

In the Dojo, people enter into training as students, but in the gym they are your "clients." Both are eager to learn and develop themselves. However, students and customers generally have different ways in which they view learning that often times dictates how they think they should be treated not to mention that they possess completely different goals. In my experience when people view themselves as a client or customer they tend to expect a trade off relationship. I give you something and I want this in return. We sometimes call this the western or modern point of view. The customer has expectations of how they want to be treated, how they should be taught and what results should be produced. If they do not get what they want, they will "take their business elsewhere." It is the quintessential "customer is always right" relationship. In the client-trainer relationship, I find that my clients respond the best when I maintain their egos by constantly giving them positive reinforcement regardless if they are doing the exercise right or wrong. Difficult exercises, correcting them and reality checks are bad for their egos and in the end bad for business. The burden of success in the client's eye is on the trainer and what type of workout the trainer can give them regardless of their own self-discipline. Ultimately, the goal of the fitness client or customer is not to develop themselves as a person, but to develop themselves into a better-looking person. Never mind the fact that exercising itself is essential for good health.

By contrast, in the Dojo you are viewed as a student who is coming to learn with the aspirations to develop yourself into a better Aikidoist and eventually a better human being. You come to learn and surrender your ego to the art. To enter the Dojo and begin Aikido training, you are, in a sense, asking the teacher to teach you the best way he or she knows how. This is based on the teaching method perfected many years ago in Japan and which is still being used today. In the Dojo there is a lot of protocol and order. This discipline and structure is necessary to create the learning environment. By creating a learning environment you are compelled to give up your delusions about learning and simply learn.

Furuya Sensei used to tell us to, "leave our heads outside." The student is corrected when in the wrong and challenged daily to improve. Your conduct and behavior are essential to learning, which are governed by your ego. This is why it is necessary to create such rigorous discipline and to correct you when you make a mistake. It is not personal and is usually for your benefit that it is done. Moreover, there is no perfection in Aikido training and the only goal is the process of daily training. You train day in and day out not to defeat other people, but to defeat yourself.

Merry Christmas and Best Wishes for the Holiday Season and have a very Happy New Year!

Join : Aikido-laido-KODO@yahoo.group



Ze'ev Eerlich Aikikai 4th Dan Israel Aikikan Dojo

Aikido Center of Los Angeles, we wish you a very Happy Christmas and a Happy New Year. This is not easy time here in Israel, the birth place of Christ. So maybe a silly joke will cheer us up:

Mom, can I have a dog for Christmas? [No, you can have turkey like everyone else.] Merry Christmas & Best Wishes for the New Year!!

Mark Ty continued:

quickly. It feels like it took me a lot longer to make the same progress. One thing that I have noticed though is that a lot of people appear to be hesitant in their practice. To me, it looks like people are afraid of executing the techniques incorrectly and wait for the black belts to explain the technique to them in detail. I think this is the wrong way to go about practice.

After 11 years, I still can't say that I can execute any particular technique 100% correctly. Of course we should strive to make things perfect, but in practice, it doesn't have to be (at least not right away). Especially at the beginning, you don't need a complete dissertation on how the technique works. In fact, without actually practicing the technique yourself, this information is entirely useless. The only bit of instruction you need during each class is what the instructor gives when he demonstrates the techniques. If you can catch just those points, you'll soon find that you will be able to execute the techniques fairly well.

Therefore, the one suggestion I would make to improve everyone's practice is to just get into practicing the technique right away. Don't be afraid to make mistakes. There's a difference between making a mistake because you weren't paying attention and making a mistake simply because you didn't know. As long as it's the latter, that's completely natural. We all came here to learn Aikido and/or Iaido; no one expects us to already know how to do it. The techniques don't have to be executed perfectly right off the bat. The most important thing is to jump into the practice immediately and get the general point of the technique being taught or instruction being given. This will give you a starting point for studying the technique.

Once you establish this foundation, you can start building more easily from there. But if you try to analyze everything all at once, it will become much too confusing and frustrating. It's far better to learn each point one at a time. Of course, the catch is that you have to retain this information the next time you practice the same technique. You don't need to handicap yourself by relying on help from the black belts as a crutch. When you just start trying to do the technique, you'll often be surprised to find that it's actually very natural and that you can figure it out for yourself.

One last reason for throwing yourself into practice: everyone has a busy schedule, and we all can't come to practice as often as we'd like. So there's no sense wasting time talking during class time. As long as we're in the dojo, we might as well make the most of our time there. Merry Christmas & Season's Greetings to all!

Congratulations! Sixth Anniversary Of The Salamanca Kodokai Dojo, Spain

Santiago Garcia Almaraz, Chief Instructor
This Saturday 23 of October, 2004, our Dojo Kodokai celebrated it's Sixth Anniversary. We conducted a Demonstration-Seminar of Aikido and many friends, students and families came to enjoy the celebration with us.

The seminar starts at 11:30am and close to 50 people practiced Aikido for one and half hours.

Most of them did not know any thing about Aikido so, in this seminar we tried to introduce about the Aikido philosophy, basics and principles of this martial art.

We start with the classic warm-up of Aikido, very different from others martial arts, and basic movement as Irimi, Tenkan, Tai Sabaki and basic falls, front and back roll. After this we showed different Aikido techniques. we began with static attack as in Katate Dori – Gyaku Kata Dori and Ushiro Ryote Dori, and we did, Kokyu-nage Ikkyo and Shihonage and KoteGaeshi, and after this, we did the same with dynamic attack as Shomen uchi or Yokomen uchi.

As many people were complete unknown about Aikido we are not interesting in that they did the techniques perfect, (in one and half hour is impossible) but we try that they know the different possibilities of Aikido and they can know a little bit more about this art. Before finished, we did some suwari waza, and we show some techniques with weapons, Tanto, Jo and Bokken. At 13:00 we have short time to do a Iaido Demo that many people enjoyed very much. We just did as a usual Iaido Class, we did some Suburi, Noto, stepping back noto, and some forms of Muso Shinden Ryu and Toyama Ryu.



Six Years, My Very Best Wishes!

Greetings From Rev. Kensho Furuya

For many, many years, I did not accept any branch dojo affiliations, because I did not want to evolve into any type of "organization." In all my years, I still did not understand how to create an organization without the typical pitfalls and foibles to which organizations succumb and I was very much afraid that I would become a typical example focused only on political power and money.

When Santiago came to me for instruction and I heard about his situation and after seeing his character and how he trained, I decided to break my long standing rule and take a big chance accepting him as my first affiliation. I am glad that I was not wrong in my evaluation and, indeed, so happy to see how well he is doing. Our relationship is not by rules and regulations, nor by authority or politics but simply the relationship between teacher and student, as I think it should be. I hope now that this can continue as an example of an organization based purely on the principles of Aikido, and not business or politics. I know this is an ideal and impractical at best. But with students such as Santiago and his dojo, I am quite confident that it is very possible. Many congratulations to the Salamanca Kodokai.



Eckhardt Hemkemeier Aikido 5th Dan Hamburg, Germany

Dear Sensei & Aikidoka All Over
The World:

Here in Northern Germany, Hamburg, the weather becomes cold and wet. More and more the people want to do the "indoor-sport", which means the "indoor-sport". Many new people are coming in our Dojo for practicing. But after a while they find out that Aikido is no sport, of course it is good for the body, they find out that the AiKi means coming together, be one in a moment. that can help also for the daily life and they are happy. The Christmas time is coming close, and the message is the same, come together, might be for a short moment, but it means "I'm thinking of you, I'm taking care of you", like in Aikido. My students and me are wishing you many of those moments, Happy Christmas and lucky New Year. Very best regards, Eckhardt



Santiago G. Almaraz Aikikai 3rd Dan Iaido 2nd Dan Salamanca, Spain

Merry Christmas and Best Wishes for the New Year! This year has been so eventful with a new child, the wedding of my brother Carlos. and the 6th Anniversary of my dojo,

Many thanks for all of your support and friendship. Merry X'Mas!

Aikido In Latvia, Eastern Europe

Question On High Ukemi

10-16-04: Your advices are so good that maybe you can help me also with this one. I am quite worried about high-falls. I can do them fairly normally when we specially train them, I also can make a high fall instead of a roll (in some kokyu-nage, udekime-nage and so on). But never instead ushiro-yoko-ukemi, like in kote-gaeshi or shiho-nage, for example. If Tori makes the technique very slowly to let me get ready and turn in a right way - then I can try. But then there is usually no sense to fall high. But if he just makes the technique leaving me to fall as I prefer - I always fall low even if it would be better and safer for the wrist to fall high. I am just afraid. I don't really feel the moment so I don't even want to try. If I do something wrong I can do something bad to my back or shoulders. I am afraid. It seems hopeless. Thank you in advance, Sensei! Olga

Sensei's Reply: This kind of training of training all depends on your teacher and how he thinks. I am only giving you my own ideas from my experience and how I teach in my dojo. Of course, it may be different from your own teacher and dojo so you have to understand this. This is just the way I have come to learn it and teach it. I hope you understand that I am not saying "right or wrong" in either way.

When I was training in my early days and at Hombu Dojo, we didn't particularly train for "high ukemi." Many times, when the teacher threw us, it just happened that way because it was the natural way take ukemi. I trained in Iwama, just after O'Sensei had passed away so there was no one in the dojo at that time. The late Saito Sensei gave me private lessons while I was there and every time he threw me in his dynamic way, it was just natural to take "high" ukemi. But we never trained particularly to take high ukemi at that time, either at Hombu or in Iwama or anywhere.

Nowadays, I see we have to train in a particular way and many times we both, the uke and tori, "set-up" or "agree" in practice that we are going to do "high ukemi." Many times, I see that it is not natural. In my own dojo, if my uke takes high ukemi, it comes from the natural way he is thrown, if he doesn't, he doesn't

Sometimes, we do this kind of ukemi in class, only for my students to develop a wide range of skills, but I don't particularly encourage or advocate it.

I prefer low, natural ukemi and strongly emphasizing that it be light, quick with a fast recovery to a standing position in Kamae (in proper ma-ai - out of range of the tori's continued technique), ready to attack again at any time. This is my ideal of ukemi which I try to teach my students.

Maybe this seems odd to you, but I don't encourage slapping the mats either or making a sound.

My feeling is that if you are against a real attacker - most probably he is not trained like an Aikidoist to take ukemi, or particularly high ukemi. We must be accustomed to the opponent taking natural ukemi or simply falling.

Secondly, in a real situation, you will not be falling on a mat or soft surface as in the dojo but on hard ground like concrete or dirt, etc. and hitting the ground hard will cause injury. From this point of view, slapping the mat hard when you fall is also not practical.

On a hard surface, I prefer that my students fall lightly and quickly for recovery and be in a ready position in kamae - ready for anything, rather than making a big noise with his hand. This is how I teach in my dojo. However, naturally, through this training, my students can take high ukemi naturally as they develop skill when it is necessary and natural in the throw.

Of course, if you want to develop your "high" ukemi skills, here are two methods of training which may help you.

Both you and your partner are in a standing position in aihanmi. Grab your partner's hand just as if you are shaking hands in greetings. Have him lower your hand towards the ground and you take your ukemi, over his hand, as he is holding your hand. You can slap the mat if you like in this case. Gradually, he can hold your hand higher and higher and even support your hand by holding it up so you can take higher and higher ukemi as if you are being thrown.

In the second method, have your partner go on his hands and knees on the mat. Place your elbow flat on his back - as if you are placing your hands on the ground getting ready to take ukemi. Then push yourself over his body to take ukemi. This is very similar to the type of ukemi you will take from shiho-nage or irimi-nage.

The first method is good to master to take ukemi from kote-gaeshi.

The only other way to master this is to have someone throw you over and over again. In all cases, ukemi, I believe, should be natural and easy - not contrived, nor should the techniques be altered or distorted simply to accommodate a high ukemi. This is the way I personally teach my students.

10-18-04: Receives KODO: Dear Sensei, Many many special thanks for your book!!! I have received the parcel yesterday evening - never thought our postmen work on Sundays. :) So the Sunday evening was great for me. First I read the news-paper that was such an unusual thing - and so interesting. That is really good. My sensei said me once that if I like to make photos and like to write than I can make Dojo's news-paper. I laughed - I never knew there actually are the Dojo newspapers. Now I start to think more serious about this. Why not try? I liked your news-letter very much.

And then I took the book. Oh yes, I like it. Just as I like your articles in Internet. It covers so many areas of the training and Martial Arts that it is hard to get it at once. A very good book - it can be easily and usefully reread many many times, in any situation and from any place! I didn't even want to read it all at once - so I have read only one third of the book. I am very grateful to you, Sensei, for this wonderful gift. I loved both the practical advices on the trainings and those fancy Zen stories, and the most fascinating stuff for the first reading were the little thoughts on the borders of the page. I hope it all will be a great help and support for me in the future. Thank you very much! When I read it I offer my fellow Aikidoka to read it too. I hope other will enjoy it as much as I do. Thank you very much again! Gratefully yours, Olga

Art of Aikido Now In DVD Format:

Our video series in nine volumes, The Art of Aikido, is now in DVD format with very convenient subheadings for each technique. This makes it very easy to go to any specific technique very quickly. Available in the Dojo, see Sensei.

10-18-04: Small Enlightenments: Would you like to hear the story of my strange week-end that made me both laugh and cry? Such an unexpected experience it was. Since my sensei has to go to Tallinn there was no one to have a training at Saturday. There four of them at Saturday - bokken, jo, children class and children bokken class. Usually when he is away one of the senior students takes the weapons training. Since there are only three senior group's students who train with weapons the choice is not large. Usually this is Linda since she is really good in weapons and Aikido, she has 4th kyu, she is actually the best student and she replaces our sensei in the kids classes very often. She wants to be a sensei too. But Linda was ill. The second chance is Normund but he has gone to Tallinn as well. So that was me left. That was said to me on Thursday. Sensei looked at me very carefully, hesitated for a while and finally asked whether I can have the trainings on Saturday. I fell silent and white. He laughed, made me sit down and started to explain what shall we do on Saturday. It sounded like "Then you make Jusan-Kata in pairs. You know it, don't you?" I nod and understand better than ever how bad my Jusan-Kata is. "Let the kids make katate-dori ai-hanmi and katate-dori shiho-nage. Ura." I nod again remembering at once every single problem I ever had with shiho-nage. My little personal problems seem to grow bigger and bigger while he is talking. All the little nuances of the techniques that I didn't understand start to seem so important. I remembered at once the trainings when I didn't pay much attention to what he shows or what I do myself. That was strange. I always know that I could be a better student. But it seems that somehow I have never realized it. When the instructions were over I said, very unconfident, that I take these trainings, all right, but I hope Linda will get well. So do I, he answered.

Linda got well till Saturday. That was good both for me and the students. We have had good and interesting trainings. Yet Linda was not really delighted - she doesn't like to train the grown-ups, she doesn't feel confident. Sometimes it is the fault of the grown-ups - there are so many guys who just can't bear the explanations from the 20 years old girl however right she is. So before the training when everyone was already on tatami warming up or walking here and there Linda asked me in a very unsure way "Shall we sit?", meaning whether we shall have a ritual. I knew she would prefer a free training, she doesn't want to act as a sensei. I had another opinion and then I promised the sensei that there will be a normal training. So I said "Cause we shall!!!", gave her an encouraging smile and clapped inviting everyone to sit down in seiza. "I'll play a sempai" I explained. Linda laughed. Me too. Such a wonderful kindergarten game it was. I thought that it is a unique chance in fact that we can play this sort of games now, when we are so little Aikidoka yet. And since we were serious about it all, tried our best so I think there was nothing wrong with the training. In fact people said it was very good.

I have had another interesting experience at my job. I had to act as an oral translator or so I was said. But that turned to be not the translation. We came to the company that ordered the translation and they explained the situation. That was a building company specializing in heating systems. One of the most important equipment for them are the boiler units. They prefer the units made by one Swedish company but the Latvian distributor of the Swedes is working very bad and is always late. So they want to purchase the units directly from Sweden. They need it quickly and cheap. That was what I had to explain to that Swedish company's manager. I had to pursue him to sell these units though he was not very eager and was sending us to the Latvian distributor. I didn't have to translate but to talk. After twenty minutes of talking I made him to promise to sell the units, he explained what

models they have on stock and how quickly the delivery may come. He asked to send the e-mail and if everything is all right they sell the units. The deal was half-made. All this action surprised me so much. I had come to make a translation but in fact I had to make a deal or to make deal possible at least. I tried my best. But I wasn't interested in a result at all. I was paid just for coming and talking. It was not my job to pursue that manager. I just tried to do this because I thought it must be done well. Why not do well if I have to do it. It wasn't going about the payment, recognition, deal or gratitude. I didn't even like the topic of conversation - the boiler units, ha! No reason. The doing without motivation. Such a surprise for me. Such a casual strange experience.

There was another strange experience later that day. I have a very good friend, the best friend in fact. He is a person I understand really well because we are so similar. The good qualities of our characters are more different but the bad ones are just the one. At least when he is doing bad, when he is acting in an unpleasant way, when he brings the disappointments to his friends - I always see myself in his actions. I act the same so often. I know how he feels even when no one else understands it. I can justify him always - I know how it is when you act exactly THIS stupid or selfish, what unconfidence, laziness, fears lead you. That day I was told about something he did (in fact, something he didn't - when he had to do so much in that situation). It made me angry. He's got enough problems, enough troubles - he just must not make his life more difficult now. Every new problem and every lost chance is a sure step towards precipice. But he only looks in the sky thinking that even if he falls his spirit will rise there undamaged. Doesn't he understand this, I thought in anger and fear. Why does he ruin his life, I wondered. And then suddenly I realized that I still know what he feels and what he understands and what he thinks about the whole thing. I have been in the same situation for years and have just got out from it. I realized how MY troubles and my actions looked in the eyes of my parents and friends. The double vision was shocking. And HOW could I turn to be on the side of the enemies? I saw the situation from both inside and outside. Both sides were right. The outer side screamed about the help and support and advice. The inner side coldly explained there is nothing I can do or say. Something that made me to get through was inside me, not brought by someone. I got through when I realized that there is nothing that can help me, no one who can help me. When I understood that I have the only life and the only chance to live it - everything changed. But there is no chance to share my understanding with my friend. He has to find his own. I always felt his troubles as my own and it didn't look so bad. I never thought they look so awful from the outside.

The Sunday night I thought about it for a long time. I even laughed about myself and my satori week-end. I also thought how can use all these little understandings in the further life, in my studies and in my

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Aikido practice. Not that I found some good decision. Yet, no doubt, the week-end was very interesting. :)

Thank you for listening, Sensei. It goes so good to write to you about different stuff. I hope you don't mind. Please forgive me if I don't ask many questions or advices. I am not very fond of asking if I am not sure whether this is really what I want to know. And I praise your opinion and knowledge and experience much enough not to try to speculate with it. Have a very good day!!! Olga

10-18-04: Clapping: It is a topic many times discussed in Internet but with only few success. I talk about clapping in the beginning and end of the practice, HAKU SHU it might be called, if I don't mistake. Sensei, you told much about it in Aikiweb one time, but that discussion was unfortunately interrupted. I hope maybe you can answer my questions here. There are only two.

What do the three and four times clapping mean? I have read about two times clap in Mitsugi Saotome book, in Aikiweb you also gave a bit different interpretation, but I have never read about more times than two.

Shall everyone clap if Sensei does so? I like it sometimes, but sometimes I don't feel okay for it. Maybe I have read too much. It is a form of Misogi, if so - then you must have an appropriate attitude at that moment. Sometimes I just feel I am too distracted at that moment. I only wonder whether my realizing of distraction doesn't mean that I have to use the chance to get through it. I don't know. I simply don't want to be like so many who always clap and repeat all the movements of sensei's hands, the single trembling of his fingers, without even general knowing of what this ritual truly is. Remembering all the Internet discussions I hope you don't mind this question. Thank you in advance for your help! Best wishes, Olga

Sensei's Reply: I thought I wrote a very nice and thorough explanation of the custom of clapping in Aikido and Japanese custom in another website. But this, for some reason, caused such an angry response from so many people who resorted to name-calling and insults I was really surprised, shocked and disappointed at such a response. I was only helping answer a person's inquiry who had posted a question similar to your but it had remained unanswered for several days. My intention was to help answer this persons' question and for no other reason. I don't know why some people became so vindictive and acted so horribly. Anyways, if you would like this explanation on this custom, you can refer back to my entry on Aikiweb, if it is still there. It is still a very accurate description of this custom despite whatever people want to say.

It is for this reason that I do not go to this website, nor do I answer questions on politics although I do not touch on politics from the very first time I began going onto the internet. All of my readers know this.

Anyways, I am still rather disappointed with these people on the internet in general who seem to know nothing of even a modicum of courtesy. Even the moderator, in this case, went so far as to say that etiquette, reigi-saho, is a useless "decoration" and has no place outside of the mat. This would mean that the etiquette we learn in Aikido is meaningless - I can't imagine such a statement can be made in Aikido. It is a very unfortunate situation which has never been resolved but this is what happens on the internet when people get together and start to gossip and chit-chat too much.

This ancient idea of clapping is a very old and common custom in Japanese culture and perhaps very unique and strange to our Western tastes and ideas. This is a very interesting study which I have gone into over many years. Regrettably, I found that many people seem to make up whatever they want to say on the internet and, especially in Aikido, are very sadly misinformed or very capriciously make-up whatever answer that appeals to them at the moment or fulfills some personal, political agenda. No wonder there is so much misinformation, distortion and misunderstanding in Aikido. Because of this, I lost a great deal of respect for much of the discussions and politics which continually go on in these forums in the name of Aikido.

Dear Olga, I recommend that you go back to read my original reply for your information. Maybe someday, we can discuss it again. Anyways, it is time to simple move on. I will probably vent on this a few more time until I let off all my steam. lol! I tried to very polite at the time and held in all my shock and disappointment - but this is no good either - so it is nice to let off the steam once in a while. Holding it all in only give me acid stomach. So please understand and have some patience for me, many thanks!

10-20-04: Dear Sensei, Hello! How are you? I hope you are fine because your posts I read today seem to be a bit frustrated. Whatever happens, you know, there is a very hot fire burning in your heart and it won't die out. :) That must get better.

I am very sorry that you got so sad about my question on clapping. Indeed I didn't mean anything bad like those guys on Aikiweb forums that time. I really enjoy all the customs that are used in the practice and I quite appreciate the difference between our culture and Japanese culture. And I am really glad that through my practice I can make it a little bit familiar to myself and to acquire knowledge and habits I wouldn't get otherwise. This time I just wanted to know more about a tradition/practice that I have to use so often. Our sensei doesn't tell the meaning of it at all, so most students don't really know what they do and why. If it is okay for them then let it be. But I was very glad to read about it in your Aikiweb posts for you told much more that I found in Aikido related books. And I was sorry that the discussion was interrupted though I think you were right quitting it. I asked my sensei about it and he told me a bit, but he didn't really want to tell much. And we didn't have much time as well as far as I remember. So I decided that it is probably not a time for it yet if I can't get more information. I thought maybe I can know it now. That was my only purpose when asking. I didn't expect it was such a painful point for you. I am really sorry. Maybe it is still not a time. Have a very nice day! Best regards, Olga

Sensei's Reply: Please do not worry. I am "venting" A nice word I just learned from you. My main reason for continually bringing it up and showing my displeasure is to point out that such thing should not happen here in the internet or anywhere if we are all trying to learn and understand Aikido. More than learning and practice, some people allow their personal agendas, jealousy and envy and political interests to take precedence over all else. This not only hurts their own practice but causes a great deal of confusion and mistrust among beginning students about how to practice correctly. This is a big disservice to Aikido.

Please keep up your inquiry and questions and I will do my best to answer them for you. Do not worry if I show emotion, I am very passionate about what I teach and committed to teaching correctly.

Letters & Correspondence:

10-16-04: Hello Sensei I am sure you are familiar with Pareto's Law, often called the 80/20 principle.

This states that in every endeavor, in every area of life, there are a few things that have a massive impact, vastly disproportionately greater than the many many other things that contribute to the endeavor.

I strongly believe that this is true and so I try to look for those key factors in everything I do, 'the 20' as I refer to it.

Through my practice and my study I begin to feel that the '20' for life and for Aikido (is their really a separation?) is 'awareness' and 'persistence'.

These two qualities seem to me to form the foundation of everything. The messages you write, the questions you are asked, the relationship I have with my family, the way that I practice with my training partner, how I learn (or do not learn) from my teacher, driving my car well, the appreciation I have of the world around me and on and on. Awareness, and the constant, unceasing cultivation and refinement of it, seems to me to be key.

Unceasing cultivation - persistence. Awareness does not arise out of nowhere. Or perhaps it does but it is at the mercy of clamor, disturbance, imbalance, complexity and disappears under the weight of baggage that we acquire - literally and metaphorically.

So it requires persistence to uncover our original awareness, quiet the clamor, still the disturbance, find the balance, simplify and lose the baggage. It takes persistence to get onto the mat every night, persistence to practice the technique night after night.

And it takes awareness to truly see the technique as your teacher shows it, not as your intellect colours it. It takes awareness to listen to your father, mother, son, wife, husband, your children, your friends, your teacher and to really hear what they are saying to you. Because if you are truly aware, truly listen you will hear everything you need to, you will hear their love, their vulnerabilities, their strength, their confusion, their needs.

I could go on and on but I will spare you all! There is a question for Sensei buried in this rambling message. Am I being too simplistic? Am I missing something equally or more important? What about love? Well I see love as being originally there but lost, only to be rediscovered through awareness.

So Aikido is love. It is love because it is about awareness. Awareness of your attackers goodness, beauty, confusion and pain. Awareness of their intention to do you harm but also of the causes of this intention. Awareness of the nature of their attack and awareness of yourself, your centre, your power and your ability to harmonize with them, and redirect their attack without harm to them or to you. Awareness to feel their ki and your ki, to control their ki and to redirect their ki.

And to cultivate this awareness takes persistence. persistence that O'Sensei and Sensei Furuya, amongst others, embody. I would very much welcome your thoughts Sensei - and those of any others that have had the patience to read this far! Thank you! Ambrose

10-17-04: Aloha e Sensei and Ambrose-san! Thank you for your 'rambling' message and reply! Awareness is indeed the key to our existence as human beings -- our capacity for awareness is what separates us from other sentient beings . . . although it is helpful to remember that we co-exist on the same continuum, and that we humans do not always develop this capacity at all. In fact, many of us seem eager to deny this capacity and strive to depend instead on the deeply-rooted instinctual responses which we still possess, but which need not necessarily define us!

The story of the artist in Sensei's reply helps to illustrate the qualitative difference between a passive type of awareness of the all-too-obvious present and the more developed (and uniquely human?) active type of awareness which sees all -- the sun and the rain, both arising from the same sky . . . the self and the non-self, reflections of the same being-ness. Time for me to shut up (I'm not even a priest!), mon.

10-17-04: Receives KODO: Sensei I can't find words enough to thank for sending me a copy of your book. It arrived on the solar eclipse, which is very auspicious and I just didn't know how to thank you. I still don't, but something must be said! It means a lot to me to have it signed by you and I feel honored to receive it. The writings so clearly come from your heart and are a gift of yourself. I am delighted by all the photos of yourself and your masters, and by the many illustrations. I have been dipping into it and sometimes using it as bed-time reading. Bless you for your generosity of spirit, your courage and humility and intelligence and humour and all these inspiring qualities. It is beautiful and was a delightful surprise on that particular day, as I had forgotten your wish and intention to send me a gift. I can't begin to do it justice, but be assured that it is an inspiration for my life and practice. I am moved and touched by the serendipity of our meeting on the internet, and it has truly opened my mind to another great authentic tradition, of both Aikido and Zen. I am sending you a picture that reminds me of you. If it is inappropriate, please forgive me. It is from a site* that has mainly Tibetan thangkas for sale, but also a few Japanese ones, which are mainly described as "unknown", though if anyone would know, I think you might. I visited a Chinese Mahayana Buddhist temple yesterday, as I like very much to make connections with practitioners using different forms of dharma. It pleases me very much that someone steeped in the traditions of Japan so deeply honors, as you do, a Tibetan lama. This is unique and special.

As for whether this is private or public, I leave that up to your wisdom and relinquish control! I simply want to thank you and acknowledge your brave open spirit and generosity. You are doing something really good in the world. Believe it! Perhaps you might consider that we are not all as fearless as you (yet!) and that the internet is not yet your dojo?! But I can see you are working on it!;) (this is a wink). If I tease you gently, as if I were your friend (as I would wish to be) I trust I cause you no offense, fearless one. I may be completely out of order, but what to do?! Affectionately and with great respect Jennie

10-18-04: Directing Ki: Hello Everyone I am not sure I have given this enquiry a good title. But let me explain my difficulty.

In katate dori kokyu ho, after I enter in similar to tai no henko, I am standing close to uke facing in the same direction. At this point my Sensei came over and said that he could see my energy was now flowing in the opposite direction to the direction I should be taking the

technique. So as I turned I should continue the feeling of moving in the direction I entered so as I put my elbow under ukes chin and take their balance I am able to throw them.

Instead my energy, my feeling was flowing in the opposite direction - back the way I had just entered from. No good.

Hhhmmmm - I hope I explained that clearly enough?

Another example of the same problem which I am very aware of but find hard to correct is in kumi tachi. As I step back and parry my partners cut my energy, my feeling, my power should be flowing forward through my bokken. But it doesn't. I feel like I am on my back foot, retreating, collapsing under my partner's power. My energy is heading backwards and my grounding is poor.

I am not clear how to correct this feeling. How do I ensure I parry as I step back but project my energy forward? I am going backwards so my energy goes backwards as well! One issue I think that doesn't help is when my partner moves too quickly. I am just a beginner and if it all happens too quickly I get flustered perhaps. Maybe slower more steady training?

The kokyu ho issue is slightly more perplexing as I had no idea I was making this mistake and I am not as aware of the direction my energy is flowing as I am in kumi tachi. Perhaps this is the benefit of weapons training? It highlights issues like this and grounding?

Anyway any suggestions anyone has of how best to address this problem would be greatly appreciated. All the best Ambrose

Sensei's Reply: Redirecting Ki And Center of Gravity: To Ambrose: Thank you, now I understand much better. In this kind of tenkan kokyu-ho, there is a strong emphasis on turning your head into the direction you will be facing. In tenkan, you are facing one way, as you move into tenkan, you will be facing 180 degrees in the opposite direction, your head must turn too. Sometimes, we have to correct the student because he keeps facing the partner or opponent too long, turning the body but not the head.

Many years ago, one teacher used to teach this by telling us to focus in the distance to the far wall we are facing and when we turn, to immediately focus on the opposite wall.

If you are not turning your face or head too late, the other common problem is when you turn, you shift your weight to the back foot or to the rear. This is not good. In your kamae position, your weight should be about 10% to the front or lead foot. When you do tenkan, you must shift your weight, or rather maintain your weight, forward keeping it on the lead foot. Many times, when a student does tenkan, he shifts his weight to the back foot - this is also an indication that your ki has fallen back or has not been clearly redirected forward as your body turns in tenkan.

In bokken training, it is the same principle. Although you must shift right and left foot back and forth in some exercises, it is always important to keep your body weight and center of gravity slightly forward or, in other words, keep your ki forward. Many times, as in tenkan, in the process of changing feet, we inadvertently shift our weight to the back foot, to maintain our weight in the rear end. The center of gravity is always slightly forward to the front in the tanden

or lower abdomen. One problem in bokken, is that some students put too much strength in their shoulders or make them too tight or move their shoulders too much (raising them too high) when they raise the bokken above their heads. Although you raise the bokken over your head, your shoulders must remain down and in their natural position.

One other problem in sword is that many follow the Aikido feet position with the back foot turned at a 45 degree angle and the lead foot pointing straight forward. What happens with many students, is that this causes one to naturally put their weight to the back foot or into the back of their hips. The angled back foot causes this. In traditional sword, both feet are actually kept parallel so the back foot is pointing straight forward and the heel is slightly off the ground - this naturally causes you to keep your weight to the lead foot - and maintain the forward projection of your ki.

You can try for yourself. Turn your back foot at the normal 45 degree angle you normally use in kamae and you will feel your weight shift to the rear. Then turn your back foot so it is point forward like your lead foot and raise the heel slightly off the ground - of course, your weight and center of gravity will shift forward to your tanden. In sword, we say, "there should be enough room between the back heel and floor to slide a piece of paper under.

Although you raise the bokken upwards, or step back in a movement, your center of balance, body weight and eye focus (mental focus) should always be forward.

In Aikido, some teachers emphasize a strong right and left sided kamae so oftentime the kamae is exaggerated right side and left side. In sword, this is more subtle, - in other words, the hips are set that it is difficult to tell whether the right or left foot is forward.

In all Aikido technique, it is important for that slightly forward center of balance - keep your posture erect and the weight to the balls of your feet and you will feel the weight slightly forward. Keeping the weight on the balls of your feet is another way of saying keeping your heel slightly off the ground. This is also known as lai-goshi - or "sword hip." Also, do not put strength in your shoulders but they should be in their natural position. Please let me know if this is clear or if you have other problems with redirecting your ki.

10-18-04: Aggressive & Gentle In Aikido: Sensei Furuya, I am from the Midwest and have been a past reader of your daily comments. I am a former Aikido student who helped build a dojo from the ground up when my own sensei (4th Dan) moved to the area. Ultimately I left the dojo about 2 years ago. I find myself being drawn back to continue my training but I am at an impasse. One of the reasons I have left the dojo was the time requirements I believed I needed to start my own business. The business I am involved in is a high tech business, it is a new technology and it is extremely risky. It also requires a tremendous amount of my time but this doesn't concern me as my time and priorities can be managed. What does concern me is the aggressive nature I feel I must perform at within my business and whether this nature that I depend on is ultimately compatible with Aikido. I guess I feel that through Aikido training that I may be "gentling" myself in a way and this calming effect may interfere with the kind of sharpness through responsible aggression I am accustomed to that has been primarily responsible for my success so far. I have responsibilities to my workers, my family, and my own ambitious goals I have set out for myself. Ultimately it is very dif

difficult to articulate what I am trying to say and I may be completely misinterpreting Aikido altogether. Still however I simultaneously feel a "deep unexplainable need" to begin training again, especially those days that have been extremely hard on me, but also worry that parts of my nature I currently depend on for success are not the Aikido philosophy or way. Can I be a serious student of Aikido and be a strong aggressive leader in a highly competitive and sometimes vicious business market? I believe I could write pages to articulate what I am trying to say. Hopefully this is a good place to start. I don't know if you answer personal inquiries from strangers. If you do I would greatly look forward to hearing your thoughts on this. With Respect, Alex Warner

Sensei's Reply: If you go back to Aikido, you will be perfectly fine. I don't think that you should see Aikido as "passive" and your work as "aggressive" but I think that you should be Aikido as a way to bring all your focus and energy into anything and everything you do. This awareness and focus of energy is what Aikido training is all about. In addition, I hope Aikido will teach you to do your best in any endeavor you undertake.

To NOT use your fullest potential or exceed your own potentials and expectations in your work and family life would be, I think, not understanding Aikido.

Several years ago, there was a Prime Minister named Obuchi. There was a great deal of problems and scandals in the government and the whole country was doing very badly and everyone was blaming the government. Originally, as a kind of scapegoat and target for all of this, they put in a gentle, mild-mannered person, this person named Obuchi. Quite to everyone's surprised, with such hard work, he turned the entire government around. At the same time, he was dealing with a major earthquake in one part of Japan and an erupting volcano in another part of Japan - two disaster areas at the same time. In his short lived career, he was considered a great hero - he was a 4th Dan active Aikidoist at Hombu Dojo.

I should also tell you the bad part - he worked so hard that no one has ever seen anyone work as hard as him - his career was cut short because he dies from overwork - they said that we worked one week at a time without sleep. . . .

Aikido will give you the energy to work hard - harder than anyone else - BUT please, don't work too hard like Obuchi. Best of luck and many best wishes - you will be fine and very successful in everything you do, I know. Always, Sensei

10-19-04: Understands Problem: Aha! Yes the weight shift to the rear is definitely the cause of the problem with my bokken practice. I can feel the weight transfer even as I recall my practice.

Excellent! Thank you Sensei. I now have a concrete modification to my practice to work on. I will remember the piece of paper that must slip under my back foot. At the moment I don't think you could hammer a nail between my back heel and the ground.

Strength in my shoulders is another problem I am trying to address.

I remember reading somewhere on the Internet (so it is probably a mis-quote!) that apparently Tohei Sensei said that the only thing of value O'Sensei taught him was how to relax. I am not sure about this

alleged quote - it reminds me of the quotes you hear about atemi being 20%, or 60% or 90% of Aikido! But I am sure that learning to relax into the technique is very important. In this area I have a lot of room for improvement! I am not sure about my problems with kokyu ho. I will have to explore this more and perhaps speak in more depth Sensei after class. Thank you Best wishes, Ambrose

Sensei's Reply: Misquotes: To Ambrose: Unfortunately, there are many misquotes and inaccuracies on the internet, books and everywhere. It is a shame that people will speak of their teachers in such a way especially when they owe them so much. That is all he learned from O'Sensei? How can such a person say such a thing?

Much of the this particular teachers quotes come from his desire to push himself upwards by putting other people down - such a common way to gain fame and popularity so typical today. I knew this teacher personally very well in the 60's until he split away from Hombu Dojo. I stayed with Hombu Dojo, of course. Much of my dis-illusionment came from the way to belittled others so freely and he was so aggressive to promote himself.

When I spoke with 2nd Doshu regarding this, he said, "Aikido people do not speak ill of others." Doshu himself always followed his own teaching, and I have always had the greatest and deepest respect for him for this. Although a simple instruction, I have always been challenged to live up to this and each time appreciate Doshu as a humble but great teacher.

10-20-04: Politeness: Sensei, A few weeks back I was in Paris for the first time. Someone told me that the French are often considered to be rude, but, in actuality, are really very polite, and that visitors to France often don't take the time to learn the forms of politeness. When I asked what the forms are, he gave me just a few - very simple - guidelines:

1) When you enter any establishment, think of it as someone's house. Say "Bonjour" (Hello, Good Morning) in a clear voice to the people who are there.

2) When you leave, say "Merci au revoir" (Thank you, good-bye).

3) When you ask for something, say "s'il vous plait" (please). When someone gives you what you ask for, say "Merci" (Thank you).

I was rather surprised, because these are just the ordinary rules of daily exchange that everyone is supposed to understand. Personally, we found the French people to be very nice, polite, and helpful.

On the other hand, we met an American woman who wasn't too happy being in Paris. She claimed the French were not polite to her. I thought that was odd, and told her that had not been our experience at all. We went to a cafe together, and (after saying "bonjour" to the owner) we sat down at a table. The first thing this woman said was, "How about a little water here?". I wanted to move to another table. --Best Regards, --Bill

10-20-04: Kokyu Dosa & Constant Practice: To Ambrose: Although some teachings can be understood intellectually in a second, it is quite different to realize them in one's body and in reality. It is easy to understand how a rocket can get to the moon in one's

head, but to build a space rocket for one's self, can be impossible to do.

Kokyu Dosa like many Aikido techniques which can be understood in one's head and by another's words or guidance easily, but understanding it for one's self, takes a great deal of time, patience, and devoted training. Many years, in fact!

Once you understand the correct principle of Kokyu Dosa, just keep to this principle and devout yourself to your practice, whether it works or not. If you keep trying to understand the principle in your practice, the technique will eventually come to you after a time. This is the value of the teacher to guide you in this way.

Most people, if they can't do it in three minutes, try something else, and something else and something else. It hurts their ego that they can't "understand" something immediately because they think it reflects upon their own intellect or smarts. This is the wrong way to train. Do not look for quick and cheap solutions or easy answers. Do not distort the teachings for your own convenience and personal schedule. (A hard rule to follow.)

Even if it takes ten or twenty years to understand - the virtue is in the correct practice, not in the doing "any way you pleas." or the "immediate kill."

Eventually, it will come, understanding the teachings is more important than to understand immediate success.

I think this is very hard for many students to understand or appreciate but I say this to you anyways. Many people think that the easy, fastest way is best - this is not always so in such a practice as Aikido.

When I first became a priest, I decided to go back to the very basic teaching of the Buddha and start from there to become a good priest. The first basic teaching is "have right thoughts, do right action." How hard this is! I keep trying and giving up, forgetting it and coming back to it. Maybe I can never understand this or do this in my lifetime, but it doesn't mean to discard this teachings. . . . perhaps, it is the struggle to understand this is the practice itself - regardless of whether I can achieve it or not. Can you understand?

How many years did it take me to understand correct Kokyu Dosa. After a little understanding came to me, I thought, "How come I couldn't do it before?" Best of luck in your practice.

10-20-04: Politeness Works: Talking about manners, politeness and social customs got me thinking today. Like Bill, I had the opportunity to visit France. I'm sure all of us Americans have heard the jokes based on stereotypes of French people. I won't repeat any here. I, too, found the French to be quite hospitable and friendly. It was a pleasant experience as a tourist. I find that in general people share many of the same characteristics around the world, regardless of our individual cultural differences. If you treat people kindly and with respect, it tends to be reflected back. Tom Williams, La Puente.

10-22-04: More Suburi: Hello Sensei I have been practicing my suburi with the focus on making sure that my shoulders are relaxed, the grip is correct and a feeling that a piece of paper could be slipped under the heel of the rear foot. I am sure that the answer is yes to my next question but I thought I had better ask to be absolutely certain.

we learn) my weight shift from my front foot that I raise slightly and draw back slightly towards me. Therefore my weight is shifting onto my back foot but I make sure that I keep the weight on the ball of my back foot - not letting the heel bear the weight? This is how I have been practicing. Please let me know if I am practicing correctly, at least in this regard. I am not sure what you would make of my overall form if you saw me. Best wishes, Ambrose.

10-23-04: Respect: I don't think I understand what you mean about bartering, trading, selling and buying our respect. The time, attention, and work of another can be bought, but it's not clear that this is the same thing as buying their respect, or selling ours. We may be willing to pay more for the time and work, and fruits thereof, of a person whose work or integrity we respect, so it may appear that our respect has been stamped with a commercial value, but has that person actually sold us the respect we feel? Perhaps I am making the question too complicated. I need to think about it more deeply --Bill.

10-24-04: Respect: That was an interesting question. I came to think that our conception of respect has sort of a double meaning. The one is that conditional respect you told about. That is something that comes from the outside and mostly is expressed on the outside. Since it is not a matter of the inner understanding, it may be changed very quickly in any way you want. The conditions change - the attitude changes. But the second meaning of the respect comes from the inside, from one's heart and mind. That is something deeper, connected with the inner understanding of the life, death, self. I don't think any of the sorts of respect is good or bad. These two go together just like all inner and outer expressions of our life go together. If the conditional respect is the only one you know - then you get an empty form instead of the real attitude. If you are an extremely spiritual person with a highly developed consciousness but indifferent attitude to all the achievements and other conditions that concern other persons - then you have the spirit of respect only, no one will even notice it. If they go together, the form and the spirit, then it is a true respect, that comes from the innermost depths of your soul and is brought to the other people in the best form you can make.

That is a tricky question, Sensei. It is not easy to get some clever thought on it, since this concept of respect is so well buried under the habits and events of the everyday life.

10-25-04: Respect: Sensei, I agree whole-heartedly. One of the wonderful things about budo and the martial arts is the way that it can elevate ones character as well as physical skill. In looking for a martial arts school recently, I saw a lot of what you mentioned, teachers with a lot of skill but no soul of a true martial artist. The main reason I chose the ACLA is because I could immediately tell that it was different in that respect--a place that seemed to really honor the development of the whole person, not just a place commercializing the art and turning it into a sport. This was more of a feeling I had when I visited the school, and I have learned to trust in my initial feelings.

I was recently watching the Ultimate Fighting Championship, and I was appalled that one of the fighters, a so-called master in his art, actually stepped on his downed opponent neck after he was already proclaimed the victor of the match. It is very clear in things like these how much some practice their art as a sport, something to feed the ego, rather than a way to refine the higher qualities of human beings. I am glad to have discovered Aikido. It is something very worthwhile and exactly what I need as a growing human being.

10-26-04: Settling Our Lives: Hello Sensei Last night my brother, Richard, and I were talking about our lives and how unfulfilling so much of what we have done (and continue to do) has been.

I spoke to him about the book 'From the Zen Kitchen to Enlightenment' and did my best to explain the key points of the text. Living in the moment, having direction not goals, not chasing 'happiness' but pouring your life energy into whatever you are doing, not living a life playing with toys etc. To "settle naturally into our lives" as Sawaki Roshi said. All of these made sense and he could relate to them, as indeed I can. He then asked what I thought to be an interesting and challenging question, for me at least. He asked what the alternative was then? What exactly would he do? Should he become a Zen monk? Should he train in the martial arts and set up a dojo?! He wanted to have some concrete examples of what people had done who had settled naturally into their lives. He accepted that everyone was different but he just couldn't see in real terms what he would be doing in this new life particularly when a wife and 3 children have to be considered.

I didn't really know what to say. My suggestion was that as he settled into his life the way forward would become clear naturally. That his starting point, our starting point indeed, would be to stop playing with toys. We are both car enthusiasts, always after the perfect car that is an endless and ultimately pointless pursuit. So my suggestion was to take the time that we waste on this and other similar pursuits and rather use that time to practice zazen. Hopefully through this initial step our life would become clearer, we would begin to become aware of our true selves and so our true path would begin to reveal itself. But I don't know if any of this is correct. I am stumbling along the path – or more accurately zig-zagging across it. So I would value your thoughts, and anyone else who would like to contribute. Is the answer to my brother's question simply to integrate the practice of zazen and the other aspects of a settled life and through this a settled life will begin to emerge? And does anyone have any examples of people who have done this so I could provide some concrete examples to my brother of how people have transformed their lives in this way? I look forward to hearing people's views. Always, Ambrose Merrell, Great Shelford Cambridge, United Kingdom

10-26-04: Kodo: Furuya Sensei It has been a while since I last wrote to you but I have been reading your daily message every day for the past year or so. So inspired I have been with your writings that I purchased your book "Kodo Ancient Ways". I have just finished it and have enjoyed it thoroughly. I know from reading your daily message that you are always curious when people tell you that they were inspired by your book what specifically it was that inspired them. I can tell you that it was many things in almost every one of your articles that had some meaning to me. Too much to cover in one e-mail. but I will single out one item that at this moment I can relate to the most.

It was from the article "Realize Your Greater Self". You told of a student that went from going to his smaller self to his greater self so much so that his ego went from negative (believing he wasn't good at anything) to positive (finding out that with practice and patience he could do well at anything he tried) back to negative again (when all he did after was for recognition and praise) rather than training for himself.

You see I was once that student in a sense. I was the youngest son of a large family that had a pecking order amongst my siblings that constantly put me in my place, so to speak. So I was somewhat bullied not just by my siblings but their friends too. It doesn't do much for ones self esteem being in that situation. Any way as I grew up and moved out of that situation I realized that the problem with me and my life wasn't the people who put me down, it was me not ignoring them and moving past their criticism and negativity. So I went back to school (drop out) and finished high school and went on to take vocational and college courses till I found something that would make me employable. After taking so many courses I realized that I not only could do or learn just about any thing I set my mind to, I also got praise and recognition from people that were close to me.

Soon I was doing things like fixing others mechanical, electrical, and carpentry problems, not so much for the sake of helping the person who needed it, but more to show the people who said in the past that I was useless and couldn't do anything that they were wrong. I was so proud of my accomplishments that when I had done anything that the average person couldn't I had to let people (read everyone) know what it was that I did. I think that this in itself had pushed some of the pe-

ople that were close to me farther away as I think I began to come across as a braggart and a show off.

This has been somewhat of a recent discovery and I have been changing my "TRAINING" to kick my ego down to a size when everyone can handle it. I still do a lot of things for others but I don't make a big deal out of it anymore. In fact if I can get away with out any recognition for the deed at all I would be much pleased. By striving to make this one change it has made my life much simpler some how. I'm not doing things for others to gain something. I'm doing things for others because I enjoy it and learn from it. It is interesting to note that it is not an easy thing to stop looking for recognition and praise after years of habitually and subconsciously looking for it. I intend to reread your book many times and if you would like I can tell you of the other articles I related to. In the mean time I will still read your daily message looking for the inspirations that I often get from them.

I have 2 1/2 years training in an unaffiliated Aikido Dojo I was told I trained to a 3rd Kyu level before I had to give up Aikido due to the shift I currently work. I only give you this information as I remember reading in a previous Daily Message about how including your current rank and the number of years of one's training is part of letter etiquette, especially when writing for the very first time. I hope it didn't seem pretentious. Sincerely, Kelly Allen, Winnipeg Manitoba, Canada.

KODO

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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.

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.

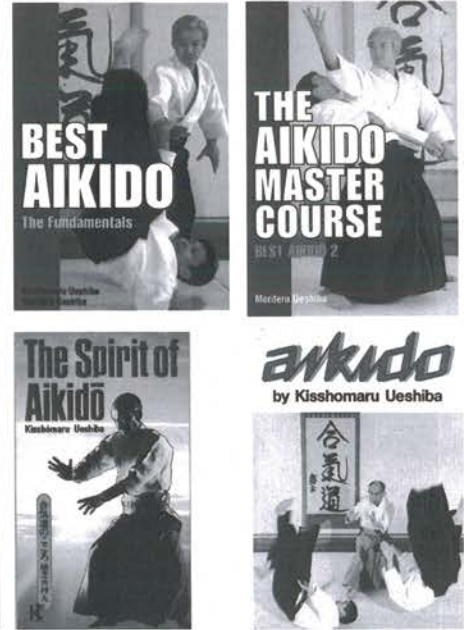
Visit our official website daily at www.aikidocenterla.com
Become a member of [Aikido-laido-KODO@yahoo.group](mailto:aiclafuruya@yahoo.group)
For Sensei's Daily Message and current news & postings.

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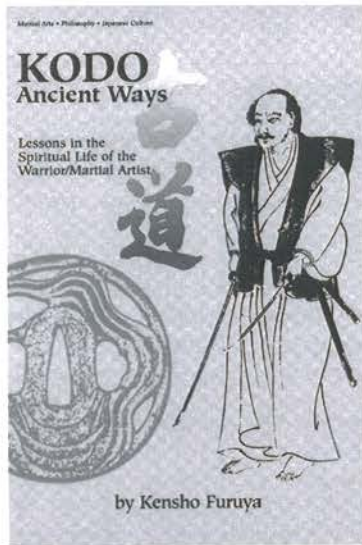
Published by Rev. Kensho Furuya, The Aikido Center of Los Angeles, 940 E. 2nd Street #7, Los Angeles, CA 90012
Tel: (213) 687-3673. Email: aiclafuruya@earthlink.net

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Recommended Readings:



Publications By Furuya Sensei:



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

By Kensho Furuya

\$16.95 plus tax.

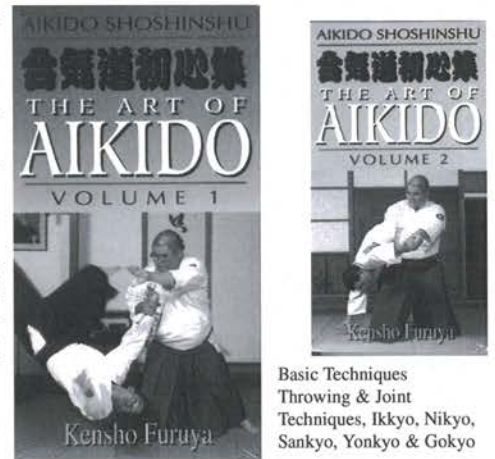
Highly recommended for all students of the Dojo. Please request for your autographed copy by Sensei.

The Art of AIKIDO

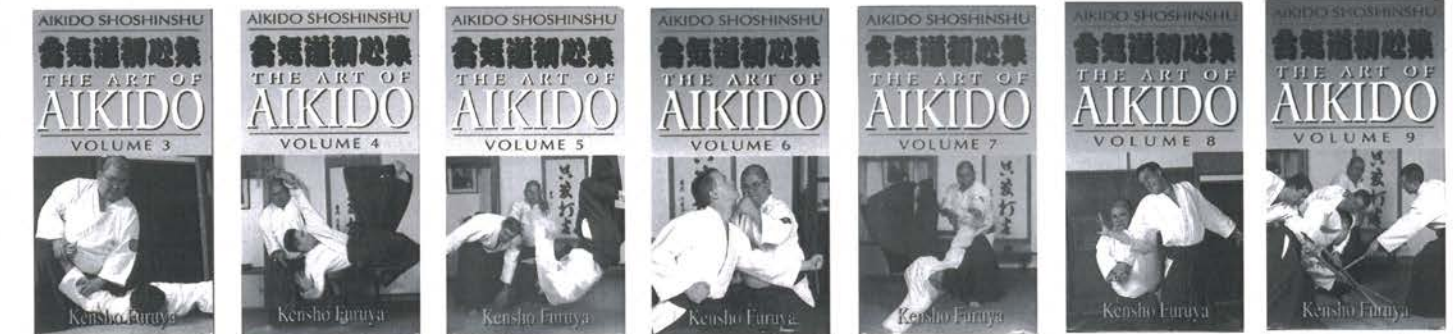
Instructional Video Series s Now Available in a new DVD format.

"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.

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

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

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

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

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

Saturdays: Open Beginning: 9:30-10:30am.
Open Beginning: 10:30-11:30pm.
Every 4th Saturday: Instructors' Aikido:
6:30-8:00am. 2nd Kyu & up only.

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

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Email: aclafuruya@earthlink.net

www.aikidocenterla.com

Iaido TRAINING SCHEDULE

TRADITIONAL JAPANESE IAIDO SWORDSMANSHIP

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

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

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

No Classes on the last weekend of the month.

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.