

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



# The Aikido Center of Los Angeles LLC

## 忘れられた心を探す合気道 合気道場

# The Aiki Dojo

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

Rev. Kensho Furuya Foundation

Los Angeles Sword & Swordsmanship Society Kenshinkai

Nanka Yamanashi Kenjin Kai Southern California Yamanashi Prefectural Association

Los Angeles Police Department Martial Artist Advisory Panel

\$3.95  
Donation

February 1, 2004

Volume XXIII. Number 2.

### Sensei's Message:

## Year of the Monkey

I hope that all my students and friends will enjoy a great New Year and continue their training in the tradition of O'Sensei and Doshu.

This year is the Year of the Monkey according to Eastern Tradition. Monkey is "saru" in Japanese so we say, "ma-zaru" which also means "evil goes away," as a typical play on words.

Of all the animals in the Zodiac, the monkey resembles man most closely so many people consider this a very lucky year. However, as monkey resembles man, the monkey is also the animal most susceptible to his own delusion and fantasy.

In Zen painting of the Muromachi Period, 16th century, a popular subject was the long armed monkey reaching down from a tall tree for an image of the moon in the pond.

The monkey mistakes the reflection of the moon for a peach and is going to so much trouble to grab it. In Zen, we ask ourselves if we know the difference between the moon in the sky and its reflection below. Just like the monkey, we are so confused by the mere image of moon or peach. This reminds me of an old Greek myth about Narcissus, a god who was cursed because he lost an important competition. He was so engrossed with his own beauty that during a race, he stopped by a pond to admire his own beautiful reflection in water. I wonder if man is imitating the monkey or the monkey is merely imitating man! More and more, the old traditions of Aikido and traditional martial arts are dying. Of course, we like what is new and innovative, we are so obsessed with the sensations to be thrilled and excited so we are always trying to re-invent Aikido to our own Con't.



## 2004 New's Year's Celebration At The Japanese American National Museum. On January 4.

Members of the Dojo participated in the Japanese American National Museum's New Year's Celebration in Little Tokyo. Despite the beautiful but biting cold weather, many attended the demonstration held in the outside plaza of the Museum. Greetings were presented by Chris Komai. Participants were Sensei, James Doi, Ken Watanabe, Tom Williams, David Ito, Mark Ty, James MacDonald, Maria Murakawa and members of the Children's Class. Our demonstration was very, very well received. Many thanks goes to the Museum for all of their support and encouragement.

## Dojo Featured In Sushi & Tofu Magazine Special Martial Arts Issue For February:

We are featured in a special edition on Martial Arts in the February issue of Sushi & Tofu. Our Dojo, along with a short interview with Sensei, is covered along with other schools of martial arts in the Japanese American community. The monthly publication is free in shops and restaurants throughout Little Tokyo and the Los Angeles area. This popular magazine enjoys a circulation of over 150,000 issues per month. We have also placed a nice display ad in this special issue which usually features Japanese culture, food, restaurant reviews and special events.

Aikido Center of Los Angeles

www.aikidocenterla.com

**Year of the Monkey:  
One Hundred Monkeys Tsuba**



Japanese Sword Guard: One Hundred Monkeys Design by Mitsuhiro of Yagami in Hizen Province. 19th Century. Signed: Hishu Yagami Ju Mitsuhiro. This year is the year of the Monkey. "Ma-saru" means "evil be gone" and is an auspicious symbol. Chinese and many Asians here and in Asia celebrated their New Year's this year on January 22. Happy New Year & Best Wishes to all of our friends.

**Congratulations!  
Ken Watanabe Promoted To 5th Dan  
At Hombu Dojo Kagami-Biraki  
January 11.**

Many congratulations goes to Ken Watanabe who was promoted to 5th Dan at this year's Kagami Biraki New Year's Ceremony held in Hombu Dojo. Doshu Ueshiba Moriteru Sensei conducted a demonstration and presented the special Dan ranks before the celebration. Congratulations and Best Wishes.

**New Year's Celebration At Consulate  
General of Japan. January 9.**

Sensei was invited to the annual New Year's Party at the residence of the Consulate General of Japan this year.

**30th Anniversary Special Guests:  
Johnny Mori & Jake LaBotz  
To Perform At Celebration.**

We are very honored to have special guest performers on our 30th Anniversary Celebration at the New Otani Hotel. It is our great pleasure to have Johnny Mori, veteran performer, musician, and master of the Japanese taiko, as one of our honored guests and who has also consented to perform at our event. Jake LaBotz, country blues singer, composer and actor will also perform.

*Everyone Invited!*

**Double Celebration**

**Nanka Yamanashi Kenjinkai  
So. Calif. Yamanashi Prefectural  
Association  
Our 100th Anniversary, 1904-2004**

**The Aikido Center of Los Angeles  
Our 30th  
Anniversary  
Celebration**

**Date: April 28, 2004.  
From 6:00pm**

**Place: Hotel New Otani  
120 S. Los Angeles St.  
Los Angeles, CA. 90012  
(1st & Los Angeles Sts. in Little Tokyo)**

*All are cordially invited to attend our 30th Anniversary Celebration of our Dojo and Furuya Sensei's 45th Anniversary in Aikido. Please email in your reservation at: [aclafuruya@earthlink.com](mailto:aclafuruya@earthlink.com).*

*\$100.00 per person. \$65.00 for Yamanashi Kenjinkai Members over 65 years old. Please send this in with your names to:*

**The Furuya Foundation  
C/O The Aikido Center of Los Angeles  
940 E. 2nd Street #7, Los Angeles, CA 90012  
Attn: 30th Anniversary**

## Dojo Kagami Biraki Ceremony: Dan Grade Promotions January 13.



Dr. Jeff Johnson with the Mrs. & family of seven offering their New Year's Greetings for 2004. Jeff is a pediatrician at the USC Medical Center in LA and resides in Long Beach.



## Mempo

This is called a "mempo" or the mask worn to protect the face and neck and is an important part of Japanese armor. The face piece is generally made of one or two pieces of iron, pounded very thin and modeled to the features of a face, many times with a fierce expression. Often, the piece around the nose and mouth is a separate piece. Whiskers are often added for effect. The inside of the mask is always lacquered bright red. The quality of workmanship is usually indicated by the number of folds or "wrinkles" on the side of the face. Many have none. Very good quality masks have three to five of these folds, the more folds indicating the higher quality of workmanship.



The bottom piece is made of strips of iron lacquered and held together by silk thread. As in this case, many colorful threads are used and it is quite beautiful.

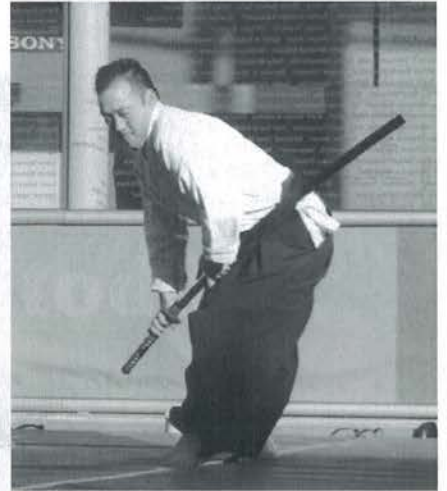
Of course, the throat piece protects the vulnerable area of the throat but this does not explain why it is always made very colorful and very elaborately. In the case one falls in battle, as the enemy is about to take one's head, the fallen warrior can be proud that he can, even at this moment, display his pride and prestige as a warrior by displaying very beautiful armor. It is the custom of warrior, before entering battle, to burn incense inside his helmet. When they fall and their head is taken, the beautiful fragrance will please their victor.

The mental attitude of the Samurai is very different from what we think today. Many of us assume they must be like medieval knights or cowboys of the Wild West or even long-haired teen-agers brandishing laser swords as in the movies. . . . There is a great sense of pathos embracing the Buddhist view that all living beings are transient and a samurai warrior may never live to see tomorrow. For Westerners, we assume that this is a form of nihilism or existentialism but it is not. Within the reality of imminent death, there is a total expression of one's life to see to the final details of one's end and to show their heritage and pride to the victor with a beautiful neckpiece to please his eye and the fragrant incense of the helmet to please his other senses.

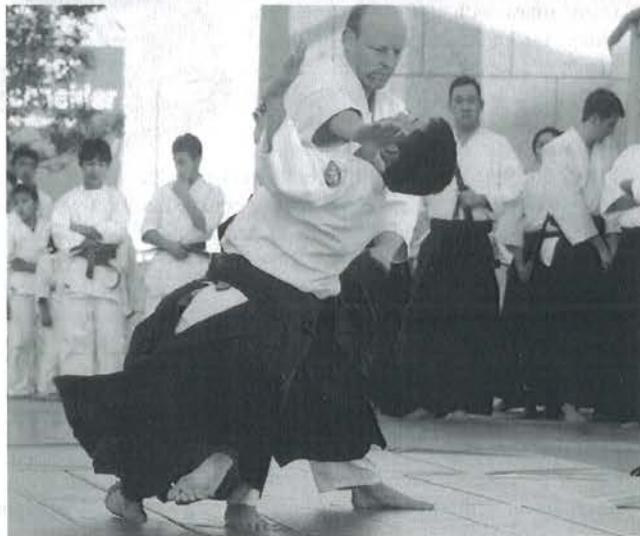
Today, we transform Aikido into self-indulgent play without any sense of the greater view of life. We are so obsessed with instant and immediate self-gratification where everything must conform to our

Continued:

## Japanese American Natl Museum New Year's Celebration Demonstration.



Ken Watanabe, 5th Dan.



James MacDonald, 2nd Dan, demonstrating Irimi-nage.



James Doi demonstrating Kokyu-nage.

### Sensei's Message Continued:

tastes and likes. Yet, we forget that we are only speaking from our own inexperience and lack of years. We must be constantly aware that as we kill the traditions of Aikido, we also kill a bit of the wisdom and spirit of Aikido too. This may be the inevitable winds of change. . . . it may also be the whims of ignorance. I apologize for being so critical here, especially in my New Year's message but I feel a deep urgency that if we are too laxed now in our training and commitment to Aikido, that we are in danger of losing it. . . . I fear that no one like O'Sensei will ever appear again to show us the Way. Why so many people ignore his teachings today, I do not know. . . . Again, I think that we are much too much taken in by our own ideas. As for myself, I think we are much too busy reaching for the reflection of the moon like the monkey and we are too busy admiring our own beauty reflected in the pond, that we have truly lost our real focus and direction. Please continue to train well and in good spirits for the New Year! Many thanks & Best Wishes. Sensei.



Tom Williams, 4th Dan, executing Nikyo.



Many attended the New Year's event. Left: Mark Ty, 3rd Dan, Sankyo.



David Ito, 3rd Dan, applying Ushiro-waza to Mark Ty.



Maria Murakawa, 1st Dan., executing Kokyu-nage.



Ken Watanabe leading Children's Class demonstration.

## Letters & Questions:

### How Much Should I Do In Zazen?

11-28-03: Aloha Kakahiaka e Sensei! ("Good Morning" in Hawaiian) I have been training in Aikido for just over three years, here in Hawaii (Aikido of Hilo with Barbara and Robert Klein Sensei) and I will be testing for ikkyu next month. I have been following your Daily Message website for at least half of that time, and I have read your great book KODO, but I have yet to send you an actual query. My question for you today has to do with the relative benefits of misogi breathing versus zazen practice.

For the last two years, I have been breathing misogi for 15 minutes, daily, in addition to my solo weapons practice (jo and bokken). I was inspired to both of these activities principally by two different books: The Sword of No-Sword, the Life of the Master Warrior Tesshu, by John Stevens and Ki, the Road that Anyone Can Walk, by Walter Reed. I usually sit in seiza, use a 15 minute countdown beeper on my watch, and I am no longer ever tempted to "watch the clock." I usually attain a 10 or 12 count exhalation/inhalation cycle immediately. I exhale through my throat and mouth, quite audibly, leaning forward throughout the exhalation, then slowly inhale through my nose, leaning back into a straight-backed posture. I concentrate on exhaling actively, and inhaling passively . . . actively breathing out but letting the air re-enter me, without pulling it in. We occasionally practice this on the mat in our dojo, but not daily. My personal off-the-mat practice of this misogi breathing -- along with a lot of free-diving, "lucky I live Hawaii!" -- has allowed me to slow my normal, unconscious respiration rate drastically, and I notice that I "catch my breath" in my daily activities far less often now. (I also notice that the daily breathing helps to "temper" my aggression(?), which seems to accompany the increase in ki-extension/control that can come with the daily weapons training: Maybe this is a topic for a separate query!)

I am now reading The Zen Way to the Martial Arts, by Taisen Deshimaru, and have finally become inspired to begin zazen. This morning I sat for 15 minutes (actually 23 minutes since I didn't hear my watch beep!), in a comfortable half-lotus (although one knee still floats a bit), pushing the earth with my knees and pressing the sky with my head, and with my hands and eyes and mouth and tongue per his description on page 56. I found that I needed to stick with a conscious 12-15 count for my exhalation, and I didn't bother noting the inhalation, other than to notice that it was much shorter. Also, I had a bit of trouble keeping my exhalation inaudible -- all that misogi practice, plus my old yoga breathing I guess.

Anyway, my question is this: Should I continue with my daily misogi breathing now that I am starting a daily zazen practice? I am planning to sit zazen in the mornings, and fit my misogi breathing in with my weapons practice, whenever I can fit them into my schedule for that day. Thank you, Sensei, for your time and patience, and also for your website! Respectfully, "Mon", Heraldo Farrington, Volcano, Hawaii.

### Sensei's Reply:

Focus on one type of practice at a time, it is not necessary to try to do too much or everything all at once. Your meditation session should develop to at least 50 minutes long for each session. Misogi should be at least 30 minutes long. Focus on the quality of each practice without trying to overdo or push yourself too much. Please let me know how you are doing after six months, and I can much better guide you.

11-29-03: Sensei good morning. :) I'm Boni from the Philippines. I emailed you bcoz I think you are more than capable to answer or enlighten me on my inquiry on the subject of Reasons for studying or practicing Aikido.

I always have the passion for martial arts when I was in the elementary the only martial art I was exposed to was Karate so I studied Karate, I didn't even know it then that Karate has so many styles or ryu as we call it. I always have this dilemma before (even until now to be honest) that there is still something more out there other than Karate. Ofcors I've seen Kung fu movies. It took years for me (until my high school) to encounter or know about Aikido. To tell you the truth sensei I only knew Aikido when I saw the movie of Steven Seagal :) I didn't even know it then that it was Aikido. I immediately admired him (Seagal) and was craving to practice what he did in the movies. well, to make the story short I eventually did find a teacher and dojo after researching the name of the art Seagal was showing, finding out its origins and asking around my classmates and etc. (at first I even referred to Aikido as Taekido! hehe) To be direct to my inquiry my reasons were really to be unique among my peers who were either practicing Tae Kwon Do or Karate. In other words to stand out, to kick butts! (just like Seagal) pls don't tell anybody sensei i would be very embarrassed hehe :) I was very surprised that what I saw in the movies where very much different in the dojo (Ki Society). But I continued to practice bcoz what I saw as advance techniques in Karate was just basic to Aikido or so i think. well, eventually after having been discharged from our military academy here I and came back home I still practice Aikido but I wanted more which maybe my sensei sensed my yearning that he brought and introduced me to his senseis which he still practice from. This they introduced me to my present club, the club "43". which "no control" "all the Way" philosophy were practiced. to sum up I practice Aikido along with other arts to make me combat ready which eventually I was able to test it with snatchers and muggers. And this subject of "right reasons for studying the Art Aikido" came up which somewhat confused!me. was I within the wrong reasons in undergoing such study, Sensei? If you don't want to respond to this sensei I totally would understand. Good day, Sensei. Boni Tongson, Philippines

### Sensei's Reply:

I think you already know the answer in your heart. There are many good dojos and instructors in the Philippines. Please find a dojo associated with Aikikai Hombu. Don't think of fighting so much, please.

### Greetings From Warsaw, Poland

11-29-03: Hi! I found your website during surfing internet and I thought that you can help me in some way.

I'm training aikido in Warsaw where I live and learn but I'm seriously thinking about moving for a year or two to US. I have a friend in California so I probably will move there. My main problem is to know what possibilities of training Aikido are in California. Where are dojos located, how much I have to pay for training etc.

I have one more BIG question: is it true that somewhere in California is dojo of Steven Seagal? It's my real dream to meet and train with Steven so I would be very happy if you could answer this to me. with best regards, Arek Urban

*Hibi Kojitsu: Everyday is a good day.*

## Aikido Center of Los Angeles

www.aikidocenterla.com

11-30-03: Aloha Kakahiaka e Sensei! Thank you, very much, for your prompt (and inspiring!) reply regarding my questions about zazen and misogi. I have just finished my morning zazen of 30 minutes -- we'll see how close to 50 minutes I develop after six months! I will maintain my daily misogi breathing as well, and I remain grateful for the opportunity to train along this Path with the help of so many others.

I look forward to someday visiting your dojo in Los Angeles: The closest I have come so far is the alley outside, around one o'clock in the morning, last October, when I had to pick up my brother at the downtown train station. My father was ill with terminal leukemia at the Veteran's Hospital in West Los Angeles, and while I never had the time to train in LA, I did manage to get to the station early in order to find your dojo. I remember looking at an un-remarkable, brick-faced building in the heart of the ware-house district, while a group of people argued loudly over some dispute just a half-block away . . . but the sign proclaiming "Aikido," plus my awareness of the daily training that occurred within, and the sudden realization that you were likely asleep upstairs, made me "see" the temple, the monastery, the dojo, beautifully set in the heart of the City. I guess it is easier to imagine the sacredness of spaces away from the "corrupting Metropolis" -- and I am grateful for my training which occasionally allows me to see past the illusion of appearance, and to feel the "heart within."

Anyway, I hope to someday return to your dojo, and actually see the inside! In the meantime, I promise to develop my zazen and misogi, and I look forward to your interview on The Samurai program on The History Channel next Monday evening. Mahalo nui loa, Mon, Heraldo Farrington, Volcano, Hawaii

12-09-03: Dear Reverend, In my part of the world, winter's face is a solid sheet of rain flooding the freeways and blackening the sky. In the evenings the roads are jammed as Christmas traffic is added to the over burdened streets. But, the rain freshens the air and its clouds color the sunsets. Happy people and children beaming at the holiday's festivities glitters like fine crystal whenever the sky clears. I hope that it is only cold in your part of the world and you are enjoying this time of the year.

Despite the shortcomings about "Last Samurai", it generated a television program that you expressed some regard for. Some good out of everything I suppose. I take it that Mishima was featured in the program and based on your clarification, share your misgivings. I will try to view the program on a evening I am at home. In the recent past you have avoided book recommendations to your general correspondence. I hope that you will make an exception to my question about movie videos which involve Japanese martial arts. Would you share list of a few that you consider reasonably accurate portals of budo culture. My purpose for asking is so that I can view them from this perspective. Among my favorites are Ran, Yojimbo and Sanjuro. I don't recall the title or the names and titles of the persons portrayed, but there was another film about a tea master who shared his time with a general. There are others I do not recall at this moment and I realize that any list is subject to limitations, but I value your opinion as your knowledge of martial arts culture is far greater than most Americans. If this is something you can share, I would appreciate it. If not that is OK too. Sincerely, Wesley, Hawaii.

### From Society of Aikido Centers:

12-10-03: I am Honored to receive an email from you. I am in the

Society of Aikido Centers, though not the Ichi-ku kai?. Yes you are correct that it is strange for Aikidoka to react with such angst. I hope to afford the luxury of visiting your dojo in the future, and have ordered your book KODO, I have studied some Iaido and i am ok at lime cutting. I have ordered a video of the Iaido Style you teach, although i hate videos, my Aikido system currently has no Iaido Dans, save one in Mexico. My instructor Bill Sosa passed away last year and things are strange now in my new system, your Aikido I witnessed on the Discovery Channel reminded me a little of Sosa sensei who trained under Koichi Tohei Sensei, (I hope that does not leave distaste because of the old split). I pay it little attention. I am seeking the old ways, my new instructor is a dear friend yet she wishes to change everything, ( it is her right as the Soke). I have meditated and feel I am not truly loyal if I speak my dismay over leaving out the traditions. Any advice? William Ross

12-10-03: Good evening, (or morning rather) I saw the Discovery Channel show that featured your dojo and I was extremely impressed with your Aikido.

At the time I had been practicing Ishi Yama Ryu Battojutsu for 6 months. My dojo also taught Aikido but I never took the time to stay for a class, after all I was already practicing one art and had plenty of studies I was working on.

I never really knew what Aikido was or what the physical expression of it looked like until I saw the show. It sparked my interest so I decided to give it a try. I loved it and have been practicing the last 7 months.

Anyway. I'm in my senior year of high school and will be graduating this June. Ever since I survived a bout with cancer, I've decided to dedicate myself to world peace. O Sensei said that Aikido can give us world peace, and when I read that, it really touched me, so I began to practice more often.

After high school, I plan to continue studying aikido and battojutsu along with Nichiren Buddhism for the summer. But after that, I'm not sure what I want. Aikido and Buddhism mean so much to me and has taught me so much. I haven't found an "academic" study that can really hold my interest. So part of me wants to continue studying here and live at the temple with the monk (the only temple and monk on our island). But the other part of me wants to find an Aikido uchi-deshi program.

Do you have an uchi-deshi program at your dojo? I've been looking around and many dojos don't say on their websites whether they do or not, my dojo doesn't have one. So now... hmmm... I'm not sure what else to add.

I guess if there is one thing I believe in more than anything, it's world peace. That it IS possible, through hard work and dedication. I feel that aikido, in just this short time, has given me so much, if i can give just that much back to the world, then I can be happy. I want to teach, and help others. And hopefully, make this world a better place. Any suggestions on how to go about that? Like I said I'm looking for an uchideshi program. Many Thanks -Nathan Gidney

### A Tale of A Donkey:

12-11-03: A man and his son go to the market to sell a donkey. They pass some travelers who laughed at them. "How stupid, they are both

## Aikido Center of Los Angeles

[www.aikidocenterla.com](http://www.aikidocenterla.com)

### **Donkey continued:**

walking and have a donkey! Why don't they ride it?" Ashamed, the son asks his father to ride the donkey.

They pass another group of travelers who get angry at them. "Look at this cruel father! He sits his arse on the arse and makes his son walk. How cruel!". Ashamed, the father and son swap places.

They pass yet another group of travelers who get even more angry at them. "What an ungrateful son! He sits on his donkey whereas his old father walks in the dirt! Such disrespect!". Ashamed once more, father and son decide to ride together.

They pass a last group of travelers who get angry as well. "Look at this poor donkey forced to carry those two fit people on his back. What a way to treat an animal!". Ashamed, the father and son do not know what to do... How can they please everyone?

I certainly always enjoy your stories, explanations and posts. Keep posting sensei. Domo arigato gozamaishita. Yann Golansky

### **Greetings From Israel:**

12-11-03: Thank you so much Sensei. I hope your cold is gone and that you are feeling well now. A fellow Aikido instructor from Israel called me today on the phone.

His name is Assaf Shnabel. He said that he lived in L.A in the past and that he trained several times at your dojo. He said that you are the most inspiring person he ever had the opportunity to be taught by. He was very excited of the fact that there is a possibility that you will be in Israel next year.

I told him that he can contact you through the mail address posted on your Dojo's web site.

I am working on the essay about my trip to Kyoto. I will have the photos ready tomorrow night so I think that on Saturday I will send to you everything. Best wishes, Ze'ev. Aikikan, Israel.

12-11-03: Sensei, When I was reading your daily message I was struck by two things. First, I was amazed that Aikidoists would respond in such an attacking manner with respect to the information you presented. Why should you have to take verbal ukemi from people who are not in harmony with the message behind O'Sensei's teachings? I find the whole situation unacceptable for people to respond in such a way. I remember you mentioning the subject on Tuesday night during the photo shoot, but I didn't know the context. My respect for you aside, Aikidoists should be training for understanding and harmony, not for attack. I am saddened to know that in a community of people striving to learn harmony that tolerance is lacking.

You have covered the clapping element before bowing in years previous, and I don't remember you having to be so apologetic before.

Second, is it human nature to turn so quickly? It seems, through the

**Visit Our Website Daily!**  
**[www.aikidocenterla.com](http://www.aikidocenterla.com)**  
**For Sensei's Daily Message**

parable, that the emperor was changed not by his own nature, but by the greed, jealousy, and corruption of other ministers. Inherently, the emperor was good and enjoyed a healthy relationship with the minister who modeled kindness and devotion. Here it seems as though the emperor's ignorance and choices in friends is the problem, and not human nature. Human nature has always been something which I have tried to understand. It seems that so many of our global ills are labeled as human nature. I often wonder, what isn't human nature? If everything manifested by humanity is its own nature, then it is human nature to be kind, forgiving, compassionate, and any positive quality we can imagine. I wonder what natures of humanity reside within those who offer such abrasive attacks on the subject of clapping. Very Best, Steven Shaw, 1st Dan, Los Angeles, CA.

### **Aikido For My Child:**

12-11-03: Sensei Furuya Sensei: My son has expressed an interest in learning martial arts. He has a very mild personality... friendly but quiet and a bit shy... until you get to know him better. I am his mother, my name is Theresa. My favorite sushi restaurant has given me a Japanese name... Hanako. My son's name is Jarrod.

I would like him to gain more confidence in his abilities. I do not feel that with his personality, the more aggressive martial arts like Karate or Tae Kwon Do suits him. I thought maybe Aikido would be more suited for him. It is subtle, yet strong. It is not aggressive, but can stop aggression.

We would like to come down and visit your dojo one weekend to see your school and observe the class if it is permitted and perhaps have an opportunity to speak to you. As you know, martial arts in the U.S. is very much influenced by the movies and video games. Some dojos seem to just go through the motion... or are just interested in the quantity of students and less on the quality of instruction. I would really like my son to understand the beauty and art of learning a martial arts and to appreciate the philosophy behind it. Of course I know, much depends on him. Children today are interested today... tomorrow they're not. I thank you for your time... and I hope to hear back from you. Sincerely, Theresa "Hanako" Pierce

### **Discouraged With Training:**

12-11-03: Dear Sensei Furuya. I am a 15 year old that has been practicing Susumu Ryu freestyle martial arts for about 2 years now. It seems that for many months now I haven't advanced at all. Though every day I learn more and more about the non-physical aspects of the martial arts, I am also losing touch with my techniques and fortitude. This came to me a few nights ago when I was assisting in the sparring during a grading. This being my usually favorite aspect of training I was feeling very confident. But as the rounds progressed, my opponents were getting in more and more hits, while I was struggling to go on. After this I felt quite ashamed at myself for letting myself down. Please could you give me some guidance. Thank-you, Ryan Pedley

### **Sensei's Reply:**

Hello! You do well because you are comfortable with what you already know. As you advance into new territory, naturally you will do badly for a while until you get comfortable with it in the same way. Being discouraged is only a sign of progress in your training. Lesser students will feel badly and quit. It is only because they do not know the real meaning behind having a hard time. To be discouraged is only a part of your training, not something outside of it which is interfering with you unfairly. Can you understand this? Just continue to



**Discouraged Continued:**

do the best you can and you will see that it will pass after a short while and you will be much stronger for it. Never give up. Best wishes and good luck!

**Misogi Training:**

12-12-03: Furuya Sensei, I am replying to you privately to avert any negative reactions to any public post to your inquiry. I chose the name Misogi-no-Gyo because it is the fundamental teaching that I am trying to absorb into my daily life. I became aware of the term misogi in several different contexts when I initially set out on my aikido training. Mostly these were through writings about aikido, Japan, and some of the particular practices of certain religious sects within Japan ? mostly having to do with waterfalls, and the like. Through my Aikido teacher in Los Angeles I was able to meet Seiseki Abe Sensei. I am sure you are familiar with him as a Master Calligrapher of Japan, and a close student of O-Sensei. Through my training with him, he introduced the fundamentals of kokyū, and kokyū-ho and how they related to O-Sensei's Aikido. At the time, I happened to be interviewing him for an article that I would be publishing. He mentioned "Misogi-no-Gyo" in passing, saying that it was a topic in which he "used" to give formal instruction. He mentioned that it was very vigorous, and that because of the very demanding lives most of his students faced, he realized it would be asking too much of the typical aikido student, so he stopped teaching it. Abe Sensei had been lecturing about the roots of aikido, and how certain key concepts could be traced back to Kojiki. The lecture was very involved, and spurred my own personal interests very much. At that time, he demonstrated several of the gyo as he lectured on Kojiki. It was during this time that I could clearly sense the connection between kokyū and aikido and further realized that merely training in Aikido did not necessarily grant any deeper understanding of kokyū, whereas training in kokyū certainly could benefit my sense of what Aikido may be about.

I had been planning on moving to Japan at some point, even before I began my aikido training. By this time, I had already been there twice, having stayed for several weeks at his dojo in Osaka. It was there that I received an even deeper cut into the gyo of Misogi than I had received through his lectures. When one of his personal students asked me if there was anything I would like to ask Abe Sensei, seeing the opening, I asked if there was a possibility to learn Misogi-No-Gyo at some point. After translating my question, I realized I had inadvertently bitten of the tail of the rattlesnake. Abe Sensei stopped what he was writing with his calligraphy brush, put it down on his work table, and somewhat formally turned in my direction. After looking at me for several long minutes of silence, he asked me how many times I had practiced the misogi he had showed me when I was at his dojo. I told him that since that day more than a year before, I had practiced every day. He straightened up even more, which I thought not possible, given his already formal posture, and then said to arrange with my teacher to come to Japan and stay as long as I could arrange to be away from the States. Needless to say, I did what he specified, and have returned to Japan many times since then, each time staying next door to his current dojo, out in the old dojo that he had originally build for O-Sensei back in the early 1950's.

I could say a lot about misogi, but then again what could I really say. What I will say is that for me, Aikido is a Misogi, and not the other way around. Given the prominence misogi had in O-Sensei's life, I think it prudent that I make it a priority in my daily life. I find it interesting that there is very little understood about misogi in general

Aikido community, a point that I have indicated to Stanley Pranin on several occasions. He must have taken note, because he did a full blown write up of misogi-no-gyo after re-interviewing Abe Sensei, at my continued insistence that he had missed something in his past interviews. I had written up a version of my own understanding of the gyo (I posted it both on Aikiweb & Aikido Journal) and it seemed to generate a fair amount of interest from a well-varied group of individuals. I think Mr. Pranin took note because just after that point in time, without mentioning anything to Abe Sensei about it, he arranged to interview him after! a long lapse. Abe Sensei thought this a bit funny when I visited with him last year and mentioned that I had been working to capture his ideas in English. At that point he gave me a copy of the Aiki News article that had just recently come out. However, it is only available in Japanese.

I have just recently opened my own dojo here in New York. I have constructed a formal misogi room based upon the one at Abe Sensei's dojo. I am interested in introducing anyone who may be interested in this practice. I hope that I can inspire them to go to Japan and learn directly from Abe Sensei. I am bringing one student with me early next year, at which point, I will formally invite him to New York. He accepted my invitation back in 1999, and I put together a week-long event for him at that time. I can only hope to have the opportunity to introduce many people directly to him so that they can try to take something for themselves, as he likes to say.

I hope you don't mind that I went on a bit. I thought your question was fair, and given the importance of the subject matter, I thought it fair that I give you a detailed account. Best regards, Shaun Ravens in NY

**Copy of KODO Presented To Aikidoist In Indonesia:**

12-14-03: That is a great HONOR to me Sensei. For a moment I thought you were going to email me your book's script, but after re-reading it I can't believe my eyes.

I am ecstatic at your generosity, but since I currently live in Indonesia. I will accept the book if you let me pay for the shipping cost, probably through your website.

I'm also sad that aikiweb is losing one of the most interesting writers, but I know what other people's hateful words and actions can do to our state of mind. I understand.

Here's my address: Maresa, Sumardi, Pluit Karang Blok N8 Utara, No. 01, 14450, North Jakarta, Indonesia

**New Dojo Friend, Maresa Sumardi**

12-14-03: Hai, sumimasen I forgot to introduce myself, my name is Maresa Sumardi from Aiki Inyo Kai Dojo, Indonesia.

I'd be proud if you could sign it for me and my dojo. I'm positive that my juniors will be happy to know that it was sent to them personally.

And Sensei, anytime you feel like coming to our country, we'll be more than happy to show you around. happy holidays!  
Maresa Sumardi, Indonesia

*One good deed a day, however small, is 365 good deeds a year. 3,650 good deeds in ten years, 18,250 good deeds in 50 years. This is quite a great achievement for anyone in their lifetime. . . . .*

## Aikido Center of Los Angeles

www.aikidocenterla.com

12-14-03: Dear Sensei, Thank you for accepting the article. I sent many photos with the intention that if you like one or any you shall use them. I thought they are too many. Just wanted to give you a large variety and choice.

About Aikiweb forum. It is like the dressing room or the lockers room of a dojo. People talk, chat, give each other advice. Maybe it is strange for them that suddenly a man with knowledge and experience like yours comes in with answers. Maybe that's why not many high ranked aikidoka write there.

I think that the articles section on Aikiweb is better. No need to chat there with silly people. Please consider sharing your knowledge with us through the articles section.

I personally always looked for your new posts and I am keeping many of them in my Aikido notebook. Thank you for that. Sensei, Take care, Your words and attention affects my aikido greatly. Ze'ev, Aikikan, Israel.

### Samurai Program:

12-15-03: Hello, I recently read your critique of the movie The Last Samurai. It was shared by many in an online martial arts group.

Here is a comment made by someone...is there any truth to this?

"Would be nice if this fellow would actually take the time to back up his views with some datapoints.

Fwiw, the History Channel did a "History vs. Hollywood" show on the movie. Their main points there that:

(1) Japan would have gone to Germany or France for military advice during this timeframe, not the USA and

(2) the Samurai were not "the good guys" during this period of history. i.e. they wanted to continue Japan's class society where they were able to behave pretty much as they wished." Thanks for your time, Jye

### Sensei's Reply:

Unfortunately, much information I see on the internet is not reliable, nor is it accurate. Please be very careful what you read there.

12-15-03: Dear sir, Please excuse me. I just read that someone basically asked a similar question that I did in my previous email. Please disregard mine. I do apologize.

A real quick question for you...I recently heard that Aikido founder had studied ninjutsu later on in life. Did he also teach this to his students? Jye

### Sensei's Reply:

O'Sensei never studied ninjutsu. More internet mis-information.

12-15-03: Aloha Kakahiaka e Reverend Furuya Sensei! I was hoping that you might be able to help us? I recently passed the following poem on to a friend and fellow Aikidoka, who posted it in our dojo. . . but our Sensei had us take it down until we could properly credit the author. Unfortunately, I have lost the original source -- in fact, I can not remember if I read it in print or on-line!!! I don't even have the

original copy to quote back to you . . . but the poem goes something like this:

When you are happy, train.

When you are sad, train.

When you feel strong, train.

When you feel weak, train.

When you feel well, train.

And when you feel ill, train.

Train and lust for nothing,

And true aikido will not elude you.

Does this sound familiar? Perhaps you wrote it? Thank you for your time -- now I must go train! Domo arigato, Mon

PS: I enjoyed your appearance on The History Channel's Samurai special -- and also your comments regarding history vs. Hollywood in general. It's amazing how powerful images can be, and it's a bit scary how willfully uninformed our population likes to stay! Here in the West, we pride ourselves on our tradition of questioning authority, but we hardly know how to "consider the source" or apply "critical thinking." "BACK TO SCHOOL, EVERYONE!" Heraldo Farrington, Volcano, Hawaii.

**Sensei's Reply:** I wrote it. Thank you!

12-15-03: Dear Reverend, I am glad to see that you have elected not to engage in dialogue on the Aikiweb. When I was much younger, I spent a few fun filled days in the community of a Mexican resort riding a scooter to visit antique sites. Weaving on the road, tooting at everyone, it eventually occurred to me that most of the people around me worked and lived there. That the roads were not a carnival ride. Forums are somewhat like that, places wherein people are on vacation. Sincerely, Wesley, Hawaii

12-15-03: It is with humility that I write you. From the time when I could almost walk until I was around 16, I was trained in various martial arts, Aikido, Judo, Hapgado, primarily Tae Kwon Do and Ninjitsu. I, now 28, am in search of the path closer to who I was and hopefully still can be. It was never about trying to be like a certain person in films or for the sport, it was for the love of the art. I learned self-discipline and tremendous respect for the culture. I did well in sparring for Tae Kwon Do and after competing in the Junior Olympics, I only feared that my master at the time was more interested in me continuing to put trophies in his window than well-rounded training. Unfortunately I began to question the honor of my master and felt myself forgetting the true reason of the arts. I needed to walk away for the sake of the other students. Honestly, now I am finally ready to return to training and I am in search of a dojo closer to old ways.

If you would accept me to train, I am extremely interested in Iaido. When I was young, I learned the ninja sword but I never felt I learned swordsmanship, just how to use it as a tool. To me, it is a piece of art and an extension of oneself. My skills are very raw, not at all like a Samurai. Hopefully I could untrain myself of certain aspects and build on the "good" of what I know. I would be honored if you would consider training me. I have a great work ethic and will never take the training for granted, and of course, never use it for anything but good.

Continued:

Also, I work in the entertainment industry (but I am not an actor, nor would I want training for that purpose) and am an editor and photographer. I worked for CBS for four years, ABC for three years before that, and PBS for two years prior to that. Unfortunately now, with the economy, I was laid off and I currently do not yet have an income. I currently do not know what I could do about tuition and I completely understand the training is worth more than money. Would you every want to produce a martial arts film of your own? If so, I would love to produce it for you in exchange for training until I find a new job. If that is not of any interest, I would love to begin when I can afford, if you would honor me with accepting me.

Thank you very much for your time. I greatly appreciate it and I look forward to hearing from you. Sincerely, Jason Honeycutt

### Sensei's Reply:

Thank you, but no thank you regarding making a martial arts film.

12-19-03: Well i hope you remember me, i would ask of others but either they are aikidoka or zen , but not both... I have been entrusted into a job i wished for but not at this moment... i have read suzuki's intro to zen b, and manual of zen b. i still after years of meditation need the perfect mantra to unify my since of self with the external world, could you have any insight or guesses to help me reach the "no mirrors" if you understand. williamross WWW//shreveportmartialarts.com Golden light aikido center

### Sensei's Reply:

Too many words, too many words. . . .

#### From Montreal, Canada:

12-19-03: Dear Reverend Furuya, I just thought I'd drop you a personal note to wish you a very Merry Christmas, and health, peace and happiness in 2004. I hope your writing endeavors are continuing (Kodo 2??) and that we may have the opportunity of meeting some time soon. Best regards, always. Respectfully, Ronald Auclair

#### From Argentina:

12-19-03: Sensei: I wrote this mail to send you my best wishes in these Holidays. I want to thank you for spread your wisdom and share your heart with us , unknown people from other countries . I Hope you a peaceful and calm Holidays. Christian Leyes, Rosario - Argentina

#### From Hamburg, Germany:

12-23-03: Dear Furuya Sensei, again your Christmas newsletter reached me, again one year is gone. Many things passed and new things are coming, but the present is more interesting. Plans what to do, actions we do now, and thinking of friends right now when you got an email or letter or phone call. You are for me a really present person, I often think about my short visit at your dojo, the nice company I've had with you and your students. My dojo is running very nice, maybe because I often think of your book "Kodo", or I practice really this way, to come together, be in harmony, serious and present

### Furuya's Law:

*Study Aikido like you would study the wind,  
which can only be seen when it is moving.*

the time. My students enjoy your teachings, there is no supermarket-Aikido here. This is what I've got from as a present, in 4 days at your dojo, or reading your book from time to time. It supports us and helps, so like Shimizu Sensei's help and support. I wish you a very nice time for christmas, new year, good health and fun, sincerely yours, Eckhardt, Bitte besuchen sie auch: www.aikido-dojo-seishinkan.de

12-23-03: Thank you for your response. There is no Zen school here in North Louisiana. I have read the Dhammapada over and over again for the past 12 years; I had studied Suzuki's Intro to Zen and Manual to Zen. Of course Koichi Tohei refers allot to Zen in "Book Of Ki", also read, "Zen in the martial arts" (who has not). Of course the Taoist temple is here but it is not the same, since I seek Zen as Zen not as a religious toy. I practice seeing things without preferences. Being as the trees would in a breeze. Abstracting and unifying as best I can at the same time. And breathing without voices (stilling the mind). I am now responsible for keeping a small Aikido school together in "Tae Kwon Do" Land, I do not mean that in a derogatory way either. I like it when I have no answers, and feel great about it, strange maybe. But as I am married with three children, the manager of a restaurant and the chief instructor of the Golden Light Aikido Center, I cannot travel off to a Zen school for some time from now. Also do you frown on the introduction of Kendo into an Aikido curriculum, as Iaido is non competitive, Kendo is not. Any thoughts. Please visit my web site www.shreveportmartialarts.com We are the aikido link. I built it as a goodwill gesture to soften up the hardened and competitive attitudes of the area martial arts schools.

### Sensei's Reply:

Yes, that is a shame, but I cannot emphasize enough how important it is to study Zen under a qualified and competent teacher. Many Zen teachers will travel and conduct retreats so that you can get the basics at least.

More is not necessarily better and, if you are not sure what to do, I suggest that "mix and match" is also not a good policy for your training. Aikido is Aikido. Zen is Zen. Kendo is Kendo. . . .

#### Professional Advice On Chatrooms:

12-24-03: Hi Sensei - Ah, chatrooms! You know in all these years of internet use I have stayed out of those entirely...I can barely tolerate how stupid and rude people are in "real " life, but in the anonymity of cyberspace it just mushrooms! HH, San Francisco, CA.

#### Ken Watanabe, The Last Samurai?

12-24-03: Hi again, My wife just pointed out to me that the name "Ken Watanabe" is now widely recognized thanks to the movie, The Last Samurai, especially now that the Japanese Watanabe is nominated for the Golden Globe Award. I have a mixed feeling about that movie, but that's another subject.

I hope it will work to his advantage. Whenever he makes an appearance at a martial-art related event, people will instantly recognize his name for sure.

When Kristi Yamaguchi became well known, my kids were bothered with people constantly asking, "Are you related to Kristi?" One benefit, though, was that thanks to her, most people now know how to pronounce "Yamaguchi." When I lived in the East Coast where not many Japanese were around, people often mispronounced my name as "Yama-gotchi" or "Yama-goochi." People still ask me that ques-

## Aikido Center of Los Angeles

www.aikidocenterla.com

now and then, and my stock answer is that, "Well, if we trace our family trees back two-thousand years or so, I am sure our ancestors were either cousins or brothers...." Best, Mike Y., Pasadena, CA.

### Sensei's Reply:

Hello! The Ken Watanabe here in the Dojo and the one is the movie, the Last Samurai, is not the same Ken. The one here in the Dojo really knows how to use a sword.

### Current Samurai Boom In The Massmedia:

12-27-03: Hi Again, The Last Samurai, at best, is a white man's fantasy, in my opinion. But it's a movie like that that creates more business for me (and perhaps yours), and thus my mixed feelings. When I was teaching freshmen Japanese history, I often began the quarter by taking a survey of why the students chose that course. Some were honest enough to say that they thought they'd get an easy "A" (Asian students), and some hakujin students did have honest desire to learn more about Japan. But the group that was most challenging was the young men who had interest in martial arts. They had their idea of what bushido was (or meant to them), and they wanted to learn more about Japanese history in order to be a true samurai.... My advisor and I worked out a plan to deflate their biased views that often gets in a way of objective historical studies. We included in the required reading Ihara Saikaku's "The Great Mirror of Male Love" which depicted (but at the same time caricatured) the samurai homosexual culture. You should've seen some of the student's reactions. While some female students appreciated the fact that even the samurai had the sensitivity to be in tune with their "inner feelings," most of the male students found it repulsive. It provided an interesting platform from which we got into the discussion about how we create in our own minds an ideal image (or demonized in time of war) of the "other."

My father is from Mie-ken, and my mother Wakayama. My father's side is from a small village in Mie, and none of my ancestors on the father's side did anything out of ordinary. My mother's father came to this country around the turn of the century, farmed in Utah, and later fished on Monterey. My grandmother was a "picture bride," and they had four children in the States, two in Japan. It was through my mother's relatives' help that our family came to the US in the 60s. My uncle (my mother's elder sister's husband) was a prominent figure in the Nikkei community back then, and he (died two years ago at 92) more or less sponsored all of my aunt's (his wife's) family members still remaining in Japan to come to the States.

I think there is still so much yet to be told about Japanese-American history. I am hoping to write a "revisionist" history of Japanese Americans some day, to counter the Nisei version of the "victim narrative." But I will probably have to wait perhaps ten more years until the generation who experienced the war (both here and in Japan) becomes a part of the history before we can objectively talk about the effects of the war experience. Best, Mike Y.

### Sensei's Reply:

The movie, the Last Samurai, has cause a big resurgence in interest in all things related to the Samurai. I admittedly have been a little critical of the movie in the personal disappointment that they could have been more exacting in detail and authenticity than succumb to usual Hollywood hype and stereotyping and gross commercialism. But, I must admit, I am asking for too much, I am sure. As much as good

sense tells me to keep my big mouth shut and "cash" in on the current boom of aspiring "samurai" waltzing into the dojo, I cannot. I am sure your "reality check" method worked well, at least, it worked better than all my ranting and raving about. Haha!

I think most people here in this country do not think of it as "stereotyping" because they have taken the 'stereo-type' of the samurai as reality and truth. Often for people, the "fantasy" is more desirable than "truth" or "reality." The problem arises is when we begin to base of lives and thinking on such frivolity.

### Aikido Videos In Brazil:

01-02-04: Hi, I'm an Aikido instructor from Brazil and since we don't have any aikido videos released here, I'd like to know if you can ship vhs videos to my country and the taxes value. I'm interested in all of them, but I can't buy all of them at one time. I have an international credit card (Mastercard), which I always use to shop at amazon.com and others virtual stores, do you accept creditcards? I also have a paypal account.

I'm interested on Kensho Furuya Sensei's instructional videos because of an good interview aired here, about his training philosophy and techniques in aikido and iaido. Thank you in advance. Best regards, Gisela Marques, aizen@cruiser.com.br

### "Mempo" (Helmet Mask) Daily Message:

01-03-04: Dear Reverend, Thank you for today's wonderful page. Our annual Hatsu-geiko, 8:00 am on the first day of the year was greeted by driving rain along the beach front, the remnants of a off shore storm far beyond the horizon. Still, driven by our pathos, about 150 showed up to greet the new year. Unless it is a known fact, please do not characterize medieval knights with long haired teenagers. It is distressing if that is all they were. I am sure that Hollywood has reinvented their armor as well. Sincerely, Wesley, Hawaii

### Greetings From Puerto Vallarta:

01-05-04: Dear Furuya Sensei, I hope You had wonderful holidays and are doing well. May 2004 be healthy, happy, harmonious with heightened awareness of love and compassion for all. I received the December issue of ACLA newsletter. The color photos and pictures enhanced it even more. Thank You very much. I am grateful for all the blessings, amongst which the opportunity to be Your student. My heartfelt wishes to You and to everyone at ACLA for a wonderful and joyous New Year. With gratitude always, Raffi Badalian

### Greetings From Veracruz, Mexico:

01-05-04: DEAR SENSEI First as usual sending you greetings and wishing honestly the best for you. I have been reading pretty well most of your daily messages since nov 2001 but especially after I met you in your DOJO in FEB 2002 during my trip to LA for a Dog Agility show. During those few minutes I had the chance to talk with you after the class in your Beatifull and exceptional DOJO where by the way the practice was held in a harmonious and sincere manner with respect, no discrimination which is so important this dates where color, religion, policy believes etc should be respected, but are not, I decided later when we needed a new leader I wanted you as Friend and a leader in a way, so we affiliated to your ORG last year, and since, I have learned a lot, because my questions have been answered through others questions replies either be of AIKIDO tecnic it self or spiritual and protocol, as well as history of it and its related ARTS which has led me to read more, look for more information

## Aikido Center of Los Angeles

www.aikidocenterla.com

### Veracruz Greetings continued:

even about other things like KYUDO , IAIDO ,JAPANESE HISTORY and I have tried to bring the Martial Arts inside aspects to the Daily Life which has reflected in a more harmonious relation with my patients,students ,wife,daughters and in laws and enjoy my grand son

It would be a real loss not to read your messages and advices to a lot of people that waits for them around the World just for lets say stubborn fellow or who ever writes to you with no respect and love probably as you say they dont even know you and they dont know how to address to you and to evaluate what they get ,mainly if they are not AIKIDO students , so please just dont answer to them, if you dont want to ,it is your right and desition but continue giving us information that we would not get other wise, because it is not easy to find some one who has the knowleged and willing to share it . Your E mail is not a FORUM ,forum gets people in gossiping ,rudeness,anonymous etc I think it is a site for AIKIDO and JAPAN ARTS AND HISTORY info and agree with you it should be treated that way My best wishes and will written again soon . ROBERTO (Magallanes), VERACRUZ AIKIKAI, Veracruz, Mexico.

### On Concept Of Separation Of Church & State:

01-05-04: Akemashite Omedetou Gozaimasu Sensei! Thanks, very much, for your message today -- January 5, 2004! -- and please keep reminding us of our common heritage as martial artists, and specifically, as aikidoka. You are constantly reminding us of our duties to this heritage, and while we are not all interested in 'bastardizing' Aikido to fit our own needs and desires, we often still unconsciously do so in order to make it fit our own limited understanding . . . your Daily Messages go far to help us become aware of this. Please keep reminding us, Sensei!

Speaking of 'bastardization' -- I would like to share some personal thoughts about our common American heritage of the "separation of church and state." I feel that this particular idea has been misunderstood, almost from its inception, and am interested in researching this more. My point is that the "separation of church and state" is not necessarily the "removal of spirituality from government." It is an attempt to keep any one particular religion from dominating our government -- we should remember that the Colonies were subject to the King of England, who was also the Head of the Anglican Church.

Spirituality within any one church or religion is the responsibility of each member, to both understand and to practice, and the 'spirituality' of our state is also the responsibility of each citizen, to both understand and to practice. This spirituality of the state is often mis-named "secularism" -- and attacked by conservatives and lauded by liberals . . . but its real name is "civics" or "civic duty." In other words, the principles of "separation of church and state" do not, in any way, absolve citizens of active participation in the government -- such as voting and serving on juries for instance -- and these activities need not be guided by secularism per se . . . in fact one cannot disregard one's belief system when selecting representatives and deciding the fate of the accused! I believe that this is an example of how our Founding Fathers were able to craft our governmental system, while still maintaining, and practicing, their personal religious beliefs. And they were highly spiritual men.

(Nowadays, it seems as if one must be either completely secular, with no spirituality, or completely beholden to a particular religion ala the Religious Right, who seem far more interested in controlling the per-

trolling the personal activities of others rather than understanding their own . . . while the concept of serving one's country, or one's community, has become "old-fashioned" and trite.)

Which leads us to the Unitarians -- many Founding Fathers belonged to this rather inclusive religion, of which I know little. I plan to delve more deeply into this topic during 2004 . . . I feel that is important to better understand the spiritual lives of our Founding Fathers in order to better understand their ideas and the "true spirit" of their works. It makes no sense to blindly reconnect Church and State without understanding the Spirit of either.

You stated in your message: There is a very old and prevalent movement in America to approach a religious experience or spiritual awakening within the context of daily life in a very close tradition to Eastern thinking. It is for this reason that students of all forms of Eastern disciplines have enjoyed a strong movement in this country for nearly the last 200 years with the early intellectual spiritualism movement of the 1800's.

How does this "early intellectual spiritualism movement of the 1800's" -- which I believe was prevalent throughout many industrialized countries -- relate to Unitarianism, if at all? And can you recommend any texts on the spiritual lives of the Founding Fathers? Thank you for your time, Heraldo Farrington, Volcano, Hawaii.

### Sensei's Reply:

Christianity in America is really not my area of expertise so I do not think I am qualified to do justice to your inquiry.

I do agree with what you say in that the policy of "separation of church and state" is to prevent the intervention of any one religious group into our own civil rights or in government. I do not think that it refers to the content of what we believe in or mean to define what spirituality or religion is for us. I did not realize until recently how strong the Religious Right was even today and among Aikidoists.

What comes to my mind in reference to this is the early stages of the Viet Nam War in which the US government supported the Diem Regime which was French and this small group of French Catholics rather dominated the Vietnamese government over a country which was well 98% Buddhist. It was through the violent protests of the Buddhists for representation and participation in government and the inevitable participation of the Communists which led to this prolonged and tragic conflict of our involvement..

I think where a lot of confusion exists on the internet forum is that some people who hear about "religious" or "spiritual" practice which seems to appear different or seems to "contradict" what they know of their own religion (Christianity), they immediately cry out about violations of religious freedom. But, it is not religious freedom if everything must be judged from the standpoint of their own religion. This, I think, is the big misunderstanding. . . Religious freedom implies freedom of religion for everyone. This is what this "Right" must be about.

Much of this early spiritualism was a combination of Old World European taste for mysticism and a growing interest in the East. One of the very well known movements which still is strong today are those inspired by Madame Blavatsky and all of her extensive writings.

## Aikido Center of Los Angeles

www.aikidocenterla.com

We find books on Buddhism for the general public popping up about the beginning of the 1900's. An early one is Essentials of Buddhism by Kaiten Nukariya, my teacher's teacher in his younger days. The Way of Zen by Alan Watts was first published in the mid-50's. Daisetsu Suzuki was a prolific writer and his books including the British Journal of Zen Buddhism was still relevant today.

I do not know much about the Unitarians although one of my early professors was an expert in this area. Professor Robert Ellwood was also a student of Mircea Eliade of the University of Chicago and formerly a Methodist minister. I was very close to him because his final doctoral thesis was on new religions in Japan. . . . . Of course, this is all ancient history too! This is a very interesting area of study, please update me on your studies and findings.

### **Mokuso (Quiet Sitting):**

01-05-04: Sensei, this time I also have a question - if you have time please write about it in your daily message. It is about the practice of mokuso. It seems that the approach is a bit different depending on the Ryu-Ha or the Martial art. In some places they say that it is meditation and in others they say it isn't. In some places they say that one should close his eyes while practicing mokuso and in others they say that one should keep them a bit open to maintain zanshin... Some teachers shout the word MOKUSO at the beginning and some teachers just sit quietly and just relax... I have the feeling that the original concept and practice of mokuso is lost in many places. Could you please shed some light on this subject and share with me and the other readers your approach, the definition, history and correct practice of mokuso?

### **Sensei's Reply:**

There is no set standard method for mokuso, so it is simply to follow the method of the teacher who is conducting class.

Generally, mokuso means to sit quietly for a minute or two, before or at the end of class. Generally, one sits straight in seiza and keeps his eyes closed. The purpose is to calm one's self, gather one's energy and focus one's self for training.

Meditation, if we are speaking of "zazen," is "sitting" for a longer, set period of time as a religious practice to achieve enlightenment in the manner of Shakyamuni Buddha. Mokuso is not really a religious practice as it is a general method of focusing one's energy or power.

Most Eastern disciplines have this type of consideration of one's mental state or focus before and after practice and it takes many forms. Nowadays, we think of "hyping" ourselves or "psyching" ourselves up. . . .but this is a little different. Mokuso finds its strength in quietness, not excitement.

A good friend of mine worked for the US Olympic team for gymnastics as a coach. He told me one time that one of his players had peeked into the gym where the Japanese team was practicing, very early in the morning. He said that he was surprised to see that their star member was not practicing at all but sitting on the mat in quiet mokuso or meditation. He was so puzzled that he came back to ask my friend about it. The coach said, "Oh, oh, it is going to be very difficult to beat him!"

01-06-04: Greetings Reverend Kensho Furuya I am a 1st Dan TaeKwonDo student in South Africa that has for many years been

interested in Japanese swordsmanship. I recently saw a program on Discovery Channel in which I finally learnt the name of the art - IAIDO. I searched online and found the <http://www.aikidocenterla.com/> website, which in turn supplied the email address. I would love to find out more regarding IAIDO, and whether there are any schools in South Africa where I might become a student of this wonderful art. I thank you for any assistance you might be able to give me, Warren Mante

### **Honesty In Japan:**

01-08-04: Interesting article in the N.Y. Times! -- Kaoru Tamura.  
NEW YORK TIMES January 8, 2004

### **Never Lost, But Found Daily: Japanese Honesty By NORIMITSU ONISHI**

TOKYO, Jan. 7 — Anywhere else perhaps, a shiny cellphone fallen on the backseat of a taxi, a nondescript umbrella left leaning against a subway door, a wad of cash dropped on a sidewalk, would be lost forever, the owners resigned to the vicissitudes of big city life.

But here in Tokyo, with 8 million people in the city and 33 million in the metropolitan area, these items and thousands more would probably find their way to the Tokyo Metropolitan Police Lost and Found Center. In a four-story warehouse, hundreds of thousands of lost objects are meticulously catalogued according to the date and location of discovery, and the information put in a database.

Smaller lost-and-found centers exist all over Japan, based on a 1,300-year-old system that long preceded Japan's unification as a nation and its urbanization. More recently, it has apparently survived an economic slump that has contributed to the general rise in crime.

Consider that in 2002 people found and brought to the Tokyo center \$23 million in cash, 72 percent of which was returned to the owners, once they had persuaded the police it was theirs. About 19 percent of it went to the finders after no one claimed the money for half a year.

If the original owner is not found after half a year, the finder can claim the object or money. But most finders don't bother making any claims, and the objects and proceeds usually end up going to the Tokyo government.

Hitomi Sasaki, 24, sporting a suntan and a nose-pierce, found \$250 in a tray under a plant outside the restaurant where she works.

"I always hand in something I find, like purses," said Ms. Sasaki, who had come to claim the money after waiting half a year. "I imagine that a person might be in trouble, losing money or a purse."

"I used to live in Chicago, so I can tell you how wonderful this is," she said. "Inside the center, I saw a woman come to pick up an umbrella today. Only for an umbrella. It's something almost impossible to imagine in other cities in the world."

Children are taught from early on to hand in anything they find to the police in their neighborhoods. So most of the 200 to 300 people who come to the center every day take the system for granted, as did Tatsuya Kozu, 27, who had just retrieved his leather business card case.

"I'm glad," he said. "I just dropped by here to pick it up, since my office is nearby."

On a recent morning, shelves were heaving under bags containing lost items that spoke of the rhythms of commuting life: keys, glasses, wallets, cellphones, bags. A small bicycle helmet with "Suzuki" on it and a toy horse testified perhaps to a child's fickleness.

Skis and golf bags attested perhaps less to misplacement than to an abandoned hobby; unclaimed wedding bands perhaps spoke of the end of something larger.

Wheelchairs and crutches were harder to explain, though Nobuo Hasuda, 54, and Hitoshi Shitara, 47, veteran officials of the lost-and-found system, had well-rehearsed lines.

"I wonder what happened to the owners," Mr. Shitara said.

Mr. Hasuda said with a smile, "If they didn't need them anymore because they got better, it's a good thing."

One floor was a sea of umbrellas, the most commonly lost item — 330,000 in 2002, or 3,200 for every good rainfall — and, at a rate of 0.3 percent, the least reclaimed.

The low rate is an indication of how rapidly Japan has grown rich in the span of a few generations. "In the past," Mr. Shitara said, "one person barely had one umbrella, or a family had to share one. So your father scolded you if you lost an umbrella."

Everything changes. Mr. Hasuda remembered that at a local lost-and-found center decades ago, people brought in cabbages, radishes, oranges and other vegetables and fruit they had found. Because the products would spoil, the police sold them at a bargain to the finders. Nowadays, fearing contamination, the authorities immediately dispose of any food.

The item with the highest return rate — 75 percent — is the cellphone, which has flooded the center in the last three years. Owners typically call their own phones, or the center traces the owners through their subscription and sends a notification postcard.

The lost-and-found property system dates to a code written in the year 718, according to Hideo Fukunaga, a former police official who wrote a book on the subject, "Notes on the Law on Lost Property."

Back then, lost goods, animals and, mysteriously, servants had to be handed over to a government official within five days of being found. After a year, the government took over the belongings, though the owner could still reclaim them. The code stipulated that people had no right to keep lumber found adrift in a flood.

In the 18th century, finders were given more rights and were rewarded with a certain value of the found property. Finders who did not hand in objects were severely punished. According to Mr. Fukunaga's book, in 1733 two officials who kept a parcel of clothing were led around town and executed.

A new law was created in the late 19th century and then reformed most recently in 1958. Currently, a finder must hand in an object to the authorities within seven days, or lose the right to a reward or own-

ership. In the case of lost money, if the original owner is found, the finder has the right to claim 5 to 20 percent of the sum, though usually it is 10 percent.

Today, the authorities are thinking of ways to update the system by creating an Internet listing of the items at all lost-and-found centers nationwide, or at least those in Tokyo. The system's survival, though, will depend less on technology than on simple honesty.

Last June, Tsutomu Hirahaya, 55, a photographer, found 13,000 yen — about \$120 — on a counter at a betting booth. He handed over the money to an employee and left his name and address. A few weeks ago, he received a postcard from the police informing him the cash was his.

"I feel uncomfortable holding another person's money," Mr. Hirahaya said "I think many Japanese people feel the same way and hand over something they find. I think among Japanese there's still a sense of community since ancient times." Copyright 2004 The New York Times Company. Submitted by Kaoru Tamura.

### Sensei's Reply:

#### **Honesty: The Wayward Wallet & Mysterious Fleeing Umbrellas**

With what we are exposed to in this country, it is hard to imagine an environment with so little crime. Although crime is on the rise today in Japan, young women still feel safe to walk about the city at night unescorted. A single traffic accident or single murder crime may make the headlines on the morning news in Japan, whereas, in cities like Los Angeles, it would only be one of dozens of other murders around the city in a single, normal evening.

When a Japanese associate of mine first visited this country, he couldn't understand why houses had iron bars on the windows and doors - he thought they looked like small prisons. At that time, he laughed when he saw that most cars here had car alarms and such elaborate anti-theft equipment.

On the other hand, my tea teacher was visiting Japan and managed to forget her purse in a restaurant. She had \$3,500.00 cash to buy tea utensils and other shopping. By the time she realized her mistake and got to the nearby police station, the purse had already been turned in with all the monies intact.

Years ago, one of my students had stayed in a hotel while on a tour of Japan and forgot his camera. The hotel manager got his schedule and chased him for three cities to catch up with him to return it. This is very normal in Japan and no rewards are ever expected.

I remember I was in a restaurant in Westwood many years ago and I noticed that there was something by my feet. When I looked down, it was someone's wallet. There was no money in it but it was still filled with credit cards, photos and all kinds of little papers. I had to go through the phone numbers in the wallet but no one would give me any information on this person although they knew him well. They were all very suspicious of me with such a story of trying to return his wallet. Finally, I had to make several calls long distance to Fresno, which was his home. I had to give his parents my number and the owner finally called me. Everyone treated me like a thief and was so suspicious of me. Finally, when the young owner came by to pick up his wallet, he took it and accused of stealing all his money! I was so shocked and had to explain in detail how I found it and how I thought

**Sensei's Reply: Honesty continued:**

that the wallet, photos, papers and credit cards inside might still be valuable to him. After this, he tried to offer me a reward but I refused because I was so disgusted with him, his family and his friends. He was so suspicious of me for trying to do a good deed, that he didn't appreciate the return of his wallet at all - it was too strange for him to even consider that someone could go to so much trouble to return his wallet. I feel like the next time I find a wallet, I should just look the other way. . . . (I think if I lost my own wallet, I would be glad to have it back even if the money inside was gone. . . . No wonder good deeds in this country are so rare!)

During the rainy seasons throughout the year when I was there, Hombu puts out an umbrella rack. It is something that I have never seen in this country. It is a rather long affair, a little locking device secures the handle of the umbrella and you keep the numbered key to retrieve your umbrella later after practice. I always used to keep my umbrella in the last slot, front row to the farthest right, since I lived there at Hombu I used this as my permanent and exclusive umbrella "parking" space.

One day, I went to get my umbrella and I was shocked to discover that it was gone. Someone had actually unscrewed the umbrella from the handle and took it. The handle was still safe in the locking device but the part I really needed, to make the umbrella a useful member of society, was gone!

Although I only paid less than \$2.00 for the umbrella, it was the principle of the matter and I complained to everyone! However, everyone only looked at me strangely and dismayingly and kept saying to me, "don't worry about it, don't worry about it!" I just couldn't understand how they could allow such a crime at Hombu and no one seemed to sympathize with my feelings. I was totally umbrella-less and that hurt a lot!

Several days later, however, I was so surprised to see that someone had returned my umbrella because there it was, all complete and safe, in the rack. . . . When I thought for a moment, I was so ashamed of myself. Someone was obviously caught in the rain going home from practice and just "borrowed" my umbrella for a day or so but politely put it back just as it was on their return to Hombu. Here, I thought that I was a victim of a crime, but it was just that someone needed to borrow my umbrella in the rain - nothing wrong with that at all, something I would have gladly offered to the person on my own.

I think everyone at Hombu knew that my umbrella wasn't stolen at all and they all knew that it would be returned eventually and very politely and quietly suffered my rantings and ravings as just another frantic person from crime-ridden America!

**Greetings From Indonesia:**

01-09-04: Greetings Furuya Sensei, Hope you have a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!!!

I recently came back from my holiday and found your book arriving safely here. Domo Arigato . . . Recently made a donation for your next book from your website, but my bank say it will take +/- 10 days to clear it.

Please write more. (virtual bowing) I also spent the last 3-4 days enjoying the book, and after reading it, I realize that EVERY martial

artists should read it. To me, it is a mirror which I will measure myself with from now on.

My colleagues are all soooooo envious of me now. And the book is already on the hand of its third reader. Sensei, have you ever read the book "Zen speaks"? It is a comic, illustrating various zen teaching stories, very well drawn. The author managed to convey the teaching perfectly and concisely, along with his interpretation of it's meaning. This book is my first exposure to Tao, or Zen. Many of your stories appeared there, such as Sakyamuni's last teaching or the burglar's son but my first exposure to japanese zen-teaching stories like the tea ceremony expert Sen-no-rikyu or Musashi is from you. ( I didn't know Musashi is a zen master, but judging from how he lived, he must be one ) Lastly, my juniors wishes to give you our heartfelt thanks and gratitude. Maresa Sumardi, Indonesia

**Gaku-Jutsu-Do**

01-09-04: Mr. Furuya, I have read Kodo, and found it to be a substantial piece of work. I extracted one particular phrase (Gaku Jutsu Do), that I would like to have created and mounted as a constant reminder in my daily life. I was hoping you could advise if the attached picture is the correct kanji. Thank you, Brian.

学

Gaku: Learning

術

Jutsu: Technique (Fundamentals)

道

Do: Way of Life

**A Little More Honesty:**

**Subject: Keeping Above The Jadedness Of Others.**

01-11-04: Furuya Sensei It has been a treat to read your daily messages on your web site. Your story of finding the wallet was interesting because just before Christmas I too found a wallet. It was just outside a local video store that I frequent. Upon inspection of the wallet I found about \$75.00 cash, alot of fast food coupons, a Chapters book club card, but no ID to speak of. The contents of the wallet led me to believe it belonged to a teenager. I really wanted to return the wallet to its owner because it was so close to Christmas that I knew it would ruin the holidays for that person if he/she were to lose that much money.

The only options available to me were to call the video store and tell of my find and leave my name and number, and call Chapters and try to trace the owner using his card. I did both. Of course I couldn't get any info from Chapters due to their confidentiality policies, but they were nice enough to call the owner of the card for me and pass on my name and number. In a matter of minutes I received a call from the owner of the wallets father,(the person whose name was on the Chapter card), who said he would tell his son where to find his wallet. Again seconds later a woman phoned saying the video store had mentioned my name and number when they inquired about a missing wallet. Before I was able to ask her to describe the wallet, she had said it belonged to the coupon king. LOL. I knew then that it was the right person.



When he came to pick it up he was very appreciative to have the wallet back, money intact. Before I gave it back to him I implored him to put some kind of ID in his wallet so that people who wish to return it can do so easier than I did.

I was sorry to hear your story wasn't as pleasant for you as it was for me. I think part of the reason was that some people grow up in such jaded surroundings that it becomes natural to be as jaded. I think what we need to do as a society is to stay above the jadedness of others as an example to those who are jaded to show them that there are better ways to live ones life. I think you returning the wallet, despite their reaction, was probably a glimpse for them that not all people are dishonest. That one act in their life will more than likely change the way they think and react when it comes time to decide whether they should or shouldn't return something they have found, or when something else is returned to them.

To me it is like the old analogy of throwing a pebble into a lake. The pebble breaks the water in one spot only, but the ripples from the pebble can spread out to the entire lake. Kelly

### Sensei's Reply:

#### Natural Virtue:

This is known as "natural virtue." You naturally feel good if someone does you a favor. Just is if you see a young child in danger, you naturally feel worry and concern. It does not have anything to do with religion or culture or race, it is the way all humans feel towards each other. However, this natural virtue is easy to distort and pervert. When we are suspicious or hateful of others, our natural virtue has been corrupted.

In my case, the person should be grateful to get his wallet back, but he is only concerned with thieves and being hurt. It is a sad world he lives in. We see a lot of this in the world today, we must hurt and abuse each other all of the time. This is how far we have removed ourselves from this natural virtue. In the East, this "virtue" is equivalent to "Do"

### Question On Yagyu, Daito Ryu, Bokken. . . .

01-13-04: Hello Sensei! I hope this new year has begun for you on a good note and that you are safe and in good spirits! I have spent the better half of the year doing much reading on my own regarding Aikido, swords and sword methods. I wanted to ask you if there is any connection between O' Sensei and the Yagyu Shinkage Ryu? Was this school a component of Daito Ryu? Last but not least, is it true that some sword masters regarded the bokken as a formidable weapon? How can a wooden sword best the sting of a live blade? Best wishes and many thanks Sensei! Always, Michael Chamberland.

### Sensei's Reply:

Thank you for your greetings. There is a very strong connection between O'Sensei and the Yagyu but the question is which Yagyu they are referring to. There are many branches of the Yagyu School and many elements in this school's techniques. In recent times, Aikidoists refer to Yagyu School Jujutsu which may be a reference to Yagyu Shingan Ryu which is different from the Yagyu Shinkage Ryu. We do not see any similarities in Aikido technique with the Yagyu Shingan Ryu and there is no historical reference to Yagyu Jujutsu.

In O'Sensei's sword work and in the philosophy of Aikido, there are many, many similarities to Yagyu Shinkage Ryu and I feel the link is

here. According to the legend, Musashi is said to have mastered the sword to the point he only needed a wooden sword to defeat his opponents. The sword is the weapon, a wooden sword is a training tool.

### Hawaii Trip By Bill Allen, 1st Dan:

01-14-04: Sensei, here is an account of our recent trip to Hawaii. My wife, Machiko, and I recently took a short trip to Oahu - the Hawaiian Island housing the city of Honolulu, and the famous tourist destination Waikiki Beach. Machiko and I met while living on Oahu, and were married there before we moved to Los Angeles. This excursion was a chance for us to reunite with old friends and colleagues, and to see how things had changed, and how they had stayed the same.

I looked forward to meeting some of my old professors from the University of Hawaii Mathematics Department. In particular, my Algebraic Topology professor, Dr. Robert Little, has conducted an Aikido class at the University since 1989.

The Aikido Club at the University of Hawaii at Manoa was founded in 1989 under Sadao Yoshioka Sensei (Shihan) of the Hawaii Aikido Federation, and Robert Little Sensei (4th dan) has been the chief instructor of the club since its inception. Little Sensei's classes begin at 6:00 AM sharp, and last for one hour.

Because we were visiting Hawaii so close to the New Year, I was afraid that I might not get to train with Little Sensei at the Aikido Club at UHM. Luckily for me, the club's first practice of the year took place on January 6, which happened to be the last day we spent on Oahu. The early morning classes made it easy to get a training session into our visit.

As I made my way up to UH in the 5:30 AM darkness, I felt a real appreciation for the tropical climate. Even at that early hour, the temperature was in the mid seventies (Fahrenheit), and the Kona winds blowing from the Equator were both relaxing and invigorating. I arrived at the Physical Education Complex, and was greeted by Little Sensei, and his student Chris. Spring semester had not yet begun at the University, so it was just the three of us.

After the warm up exercises, because there were only black belts in the class, Little Sensei went directly into several techniques for morotedori, such as morotedori dai-sankyo irimi and tenkan, and dai-nikkyo irimi omote. There were also a number of counters ending in throws like kotegaishi, koshinage, and shihonage. The class was very vigorous, but with an odd number of participants, each person got to rest for a few seconds as the other two practiced the technique. The last ten minutes of the class were spent again on reviewing techniques for morotedori, but nage was holding a bokken for this series. Little Sensei said that with nage holding the bokken, it is much easier to understand how and why uke is holding morotedori, and refuses to let go of nage's arm (lest uke be cut down immediately).

The training area at the UH Aikido Club is fairly spacious, and with only three people, there was a lot of freedom to move, and to make big movements. The mat is, I think, designed for gymnastics floor exercises, and is somewhat softer than the mats at ACLA. The back wall of the training area is covered by full height mirrors, which add to the feeling of spaciousness. I thought that the mirrors might be a little distracting, but once training started, I was too busy paying attention to the Sensei and training partners to even get a glimpse in them. All in all, I think the training area and teaching is pretty good,

## Aikido Center of Los Angeles

www.aikidocenterla.com

and Little Sensei does not charge University students to attend his class. I think it is a great gift that UH students should make the most of.

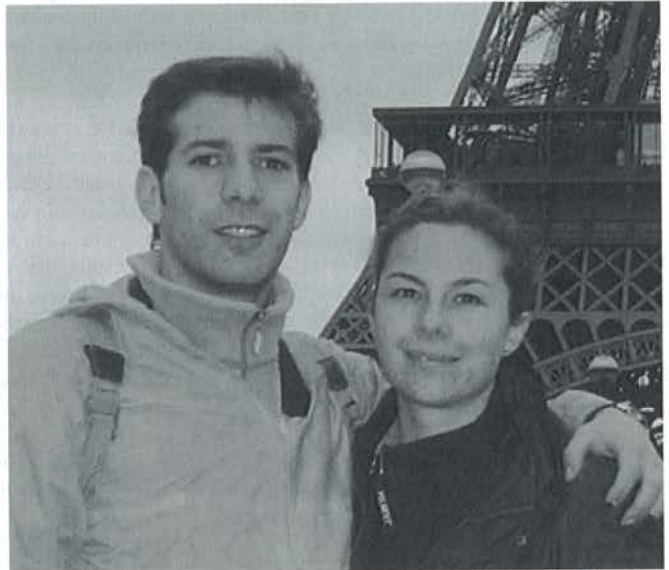
I would like to thank Little Sensei for being so hospitable and gracious in allowing me to train in his dojo, and for conducting a fast and energetic class. I would like to return some time when there are more students to see how the basics are taught. My best regards, and much Aloha, go out to Little Sensei and his student Chris.  
Bill Allen, 1st Dan, Los Angeles, CA.

01-19-04: From our branch dojo, The Veracruz Aikikai:



*Que este año 2004  
Se mantengan la Unión,  
la Armonía, la Salud y la  
Felicidad en sus Hogares  
y Lugares de Trabajo y así  
puedan alcanzar sus Metas  
Con los deseos de su Amigo  
Alvaro*

### Many Congratulations! Santiago's Baby Almost Here!



01-17-04: Dear Sensei, Just a few words to tell you that, everything is ok, still one week more to be a father and I'm a little bit nervous, Susana is fine, tired but ok.

I send you a date about our fly to Los Angeles. Probably we go to LA Saturday 24 of April and we will stay until 7 of May. In this week I will write you to confirm this dates and send you the plane schedule.  
Santiago Almaraz, Salamanca, Spain

#### More Spirituality:

01-21-04: Sensei, I was not sure if I should send this message or not, but here goes. Thank you for your daily message. I have learned so much from it. I've learned about Spirituality, Peace, Harmony, Humility, Patience, Respect, Virtue, and Selflessness. The more I comprehend these ideals, the more I notice that many of the people I encounter do not!!! Especially here in the Northeast, NY NJ. Up here, it is truly a rat race. When the twin towers were destroyed people came together, but now they are back to climbing over each other. Sorry and sad to say this, but this is what is obvious in their actions.

It is true we are smarter than most animals, but most of us act just like animals. Nearly crashing into each other for a parking spot or to get into a lane on the highway. Just yesterday there was a big pickup truck with stickers on the back window saying, "We support our Troops" with a big American Flag next to it. The driver of this truck was dangerously tailgating a smaller car in front of it. If the pickup truck driver wasn't so busy being rude he would have noticed that the driver of the car was a US military member in uniform.

More and more I see people being controlled by their own pride, ego, selfishness, rudeness, aggression, stress, anger, comparing themselves with each other, and putting down others. Who can teach us all good virtue? Maybe we're too busy making sure our bills are paid to practice good virtues. It seems to be getting worse. People don't respect each other as human beings. When people cut you off on the road, your just a car in the way. When I was growing up we were taught to respect our elders, not so these days. To the government and its institutions we are just a number that pays taxes and when you need their help your standing in line for hours filling out forms and fol-

lowing their regulations. The police are rude to us and so is the DMV etc. I know this is harsh, but there is truth in it...Some people do not like to hear this.

It is sometimes very difficult to display good virtue when the rest of the world is not. I gather this is where the spirit must be forged or polished through training!!! Ray Oliande

### Sensei's Reply:

Many thanks for writing. Yes, I know exactly what you mean and this is what I write about each day. As I discovered recently, especially in the general Aikido internet community, even some Aikido people cannot show respect or courtesy to each other. This was a sad revelation for me because it means that many methods of training are incorrect or lacking. Just learning to be strong is not Aikido, and how we treat others on the mat and in daily life is not only important as a standard of the quality of our own lives but of society in general and indeed, this courtesy and respect towards others in the first step into our spiritual training as well. Yet, so many are satisfied to abuse or mistreat others as a form of entertainment or to escape for boring, superficial lives. What does this say about society in general? What does this say about the direction of our lives today?

If we study the lives of the ancient Greeks or Chinese, and in any culture at any period in history, you will find the same complaints! Humans do change, but change comes slowly. We have so many distractions and materialistic diversions today, I feel we do not spend enough time on our inner lives. I think this is the gap that Aikido can fill so well if we allow it. There is a story of a young boy at the funeral of his mother, who, see the smoke rising from the incense and disappearing into the air, decides to enter the priesthood and becomes a famous priest. . . .

I can see how you can get discouraged when you go on the streets, I see this myself as well. Unfortunately, many people do not know the principles of Aikido. If Aikido people themselves cannot set a good example for others, who can? It is here, we must be devoted to our practice and understand that what we do on the mats in our own training can have a ripple effect to eventually spread across the whole world.

### Sensei's Message:

#### Mind's Eye

One of the most outstanding landmarks of Little Tokyo has been the New Otani Hotel building which stands so tall with its distinctive protruding penthouse on the top floor. It is easy to recognize the New Otani from any other building in the city. One can instantly see where Little Tokyo is from many parts of the city by this landmark, now standing proudly for the last 25 or so years.

Recently, they have begun construction of some huge city or federal building across the street from the New Otani and suddenly, our Little Tokyo landmark has been instantly dwarfed and now appears so small. I kept remarking to myself how small the New Otani now appears. . . .

After thinking about this for a while, I realize that the New Otani only appears small compared to the new building next door, it is really the same size it has always been and did not even shrink a tiny inch! The New Otani is still a tall and proud building without any change or

shrinkage - how easy it is to manipulate our own minds without any effort at all to think that it has actually shrunk!

One more funny thing happened to me over the recently holiday. One of my seniors presented me with a beautiful gift of an very old, antique Japanese plaque made of keyaki, a very precious wood in Japan. It is quite a wonderful gift. My student was very thoughtful to think that this plaque would be very beautiful and most appropriate for our dojo. However, when I first looked at it, I was so shocked and surprised!

The plaque is inscribed with the two characters "sei-gi." Sei-gi means "righteousness" or "justice," "correct duty," "correct manners," or "truthfulness."

Why was I so shocked? Although these are beautiful words in their original context, these same words are commonly used by yakuza and gangsters in Japan today, when they extort money or exploit people. Doing loan sharking at exorbitant interest rates and taking away everything one owns in the name of "sei-gi." Everything they do is in the name of "sei-gi" saying "we only demand justice!" or "we are only doing righteously!"

I set the plaque down in the dojo and have been looking at it each day for over a week now since Christmas. Finally I have cleared my mind of the "perception" that it is for yakuza and that it truly means "righteousness." As for "righteousness," I am now looking for a nice place to hang it in the dojo.

It is easy in our minds to pervert even "righteousness" - this so reminds me of my recent experience in the internet forums where we are dealing with people's perceptions and prejudices and not realities. Even for myself, it was a one week battle to rid my mind of the modern prejudice against "sei-gi" as the crude yakuza by-line to abuse people and justify their deeds. . . .

### Hints For Aikido Training:

Watch and listen carefully to the instruction, don't worry about your own ideas at the beginning, just try to catch the lesson and imitate it correctly. It is more important to work towards correctness, than towards strength. To move in a relaxed, natural way seems very weak at first but once you begin to understand this process, you will soon begin to find new strength in your technique. This is recommended over being stiff and over-powering in each movement. Work towards "fullness" and "completeness" of movement.

Treat each other courteously. No one wants to practice with a know-it-all, or one who is arrogant or boastful. These people do not appear "strong" towards others, only immature and silly.

If a student appears arrogant to you, please be careful - he just may be imitating you! If a student appears to bully others, please be careful - he just may be imitating you!

### Going With the Flow:

Most people talk of going with the flow but do not go with the flow at all - it is only satisfying with one's own will for this and that without thought of anything but themselves.

Perhaps this is one small way of going with the flow or sorts so pop-

### **Mempo Continued:**

own pleasures or it must be denied or destroyed. This is not the world of the true warrior. . . . but the simple fantasy of idle, arm-chair dreamers. . . .

Please practice Aikido with not only your own self in mind but with a greater view of Life itself and others around you. . . . Everyday we must wear the beautiful neckpiece to please the victor and scent our helmets to avoid all shame, living fully each day as if it is our last.

### **Going With the Flow continued:**

ular today, but there is another - to go with the flow of one's destiny. This is what the ancients are truly speaking of.

What does this mean? To bow one's head to fate. It does not mean to be defeated or to lose one's hope. It only means that after giving one's 100% in life, one can be serenely leave everything to a higher power than ourselves. We do not control our lives as much as we think. The times, people around us, even a tiny matter happening thousands of miles away by people we have never seen before or know, can effect our lives enormously. How can we say we control our lives?

There is something in operation all around us which we will never understand. Some people call this god, or energy or ki or whatever - the name does not matter at all. . . . What matters is that you become in tune with this unknown power. This does not mean to "understand" it, our simple, flawed, narrow-minded logic or sense can never perceive it. It is only a delusion that we think we are so smart and in control. In this way, our pride is such a useless matter. Go with the flow means to become One with the world. . . . sensing what no one can understand and no one can see. . . .

## **Do: The Path**

*People can be very motivated if there is something to gain. This is true of all physical training and effort.*

*To be motivated and dedicated to something in which there is no merit or benefit at all, is the essence of all spiritual training.*

*If you compare yourself to others, you will lose sight of the Way. If you compare everything to the Way, you will find yourself all alone. . . .*

*Enlightenment is the true battle of "the self making the self into the self."*

(Sensei)

### **The Furuya Foundation:**

**Mr. Ken Watanabe - President**

**Mr. Gary Myers - Secretary**

**Mr. Mark Ty - Treasurer**

**Dr. Cheryl Lew - Senior Counsel**

**Mr. Jonathan Altman - Legal Counsel**

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

## **Affiliated Branch Dojos**

**Aikido Kodokai**  
Salamanca, Spain  
Santiago Garcia Almaraz

**Hacienda La Puente Aikikai**  
La Puente, California  
Tom Williams

**Wyoming Aikikai**  
Sheridan, Wyoming  
Tom McIntyre

**Bahamas Aikikai**  
Grand Freeport, Bahamas  
Seymour Clay

**Jalisco Aikikai**  
Jalisco, Mexico  
Eric Jaracho

**Aikido of Guadalajara**  
Guadalajara, Mexico  
Raul Blackaller

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

**Association D'Aikido Pour Demain**  
Paris, France  
Cyril Danan

**Aikikan**  
Rehovot, Israel  
Ze'ev Erlich

**Valladolid Aikido Dojo**  
Valladolid, Spain  
Felix Ares

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

**Marco Giuseppe Marangoni**  
Monza, Italy

Aikido Center of Los Angeles  
www.aikidocenterla.com

## Welcome To The Aikido Center of Los Angeles



Aikido Center of Los Angeles

### Joining The Dojo:

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



Rev. Kensho Furuya, 6th Dan

### Japanese Swords: Appraisal & Restoration

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

### Our Dojo's 30th Year, 1974-2004.

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

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

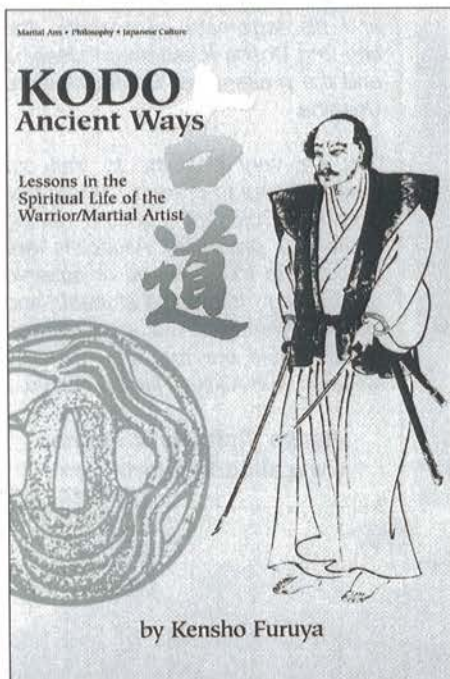
**Please Visit Our Website:**  
**www.aikidocenterla.com.**



### Japanese Swordsmanship: Muso Shinden Ryu & Toyama 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.

## RECOMMENDED: Ways: Lessons In The Spiritual Life of the Warrior-Martial Artist



# KODO

## Ancient Ways: Lessons in the Spiritual Life of the Warrior Martial Artist

Rev. Kensho Furuya

Please place your orders through:  
Aikido Center of Los Angeles,  
940 E. 2nd St., #7, LA, CA 90012

\$16.95 + \$3.00 S&H  
Payable to Aikido Center of Los Angeles  
Foreign postage: \$5.00 S&H

## Our International Aikido Kodo-Kai.

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

### Requirements for Affiliation:

1. Practice correct Hombu Aikido with good spirit and energy.
2. Do not dabble in politics or intrigues. Please get along with each other in the dojo and other dojos in a friendly way.
3. Follow O'Sensei's and his Successors' Aikido with honesty and commitment, pursuing your training with the Beginner's Mind.
4. No competition. No unsuitable, blatant commercialism.
5. No drugs. No harmful abuse. No inappropriate behavior.

## Our Dojo's Mission:

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

## All Black Belt Candidates & Senior Students Recommendations:

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



Ken Furuya and Santiago G. Almaraz. Aikido knife techniques..60 minutes. \$50.00.

## Life Learning:

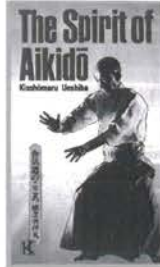
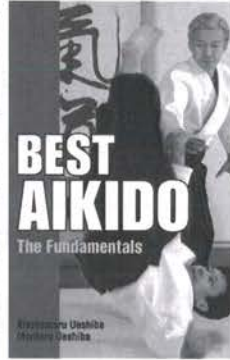
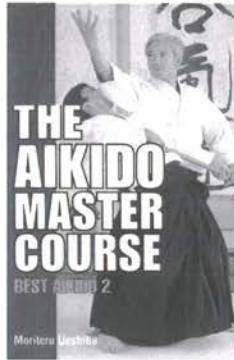
*Just because someone is very talented, young and strong, does not necessarily mean that they will be skillful in Aikido. Just because a person is slow with no athletic ability at all, does not necessarily mean that they will not do well in the art. Often, an average teacher can produce a very good student.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

## Copyrighted © & All Rights Reserved.

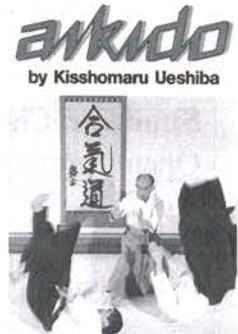
Published by Rev. Kensho Furuya, The Aikido Center of Los Angeles, 940 E. 2nd Street #7, Los Angeles, CA 90012  
Tel: (213) 687-3673. Email: aclafuruya@earthlink.net

No portion of this publication may be copied or reproduced without written permission from the Publisher.

Suggested Readings  
On Aikikai  
Hombu Aikido:  
(Please use books  
and references as a  
supplement to your  
training.)



In Japanese

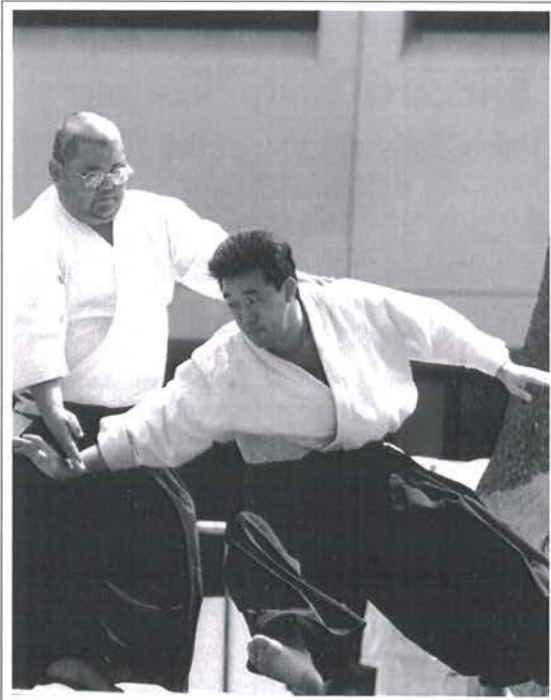


Highly Recommended:

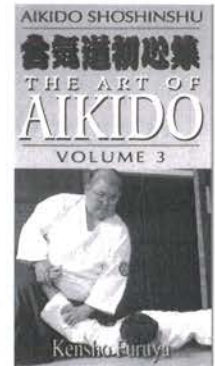
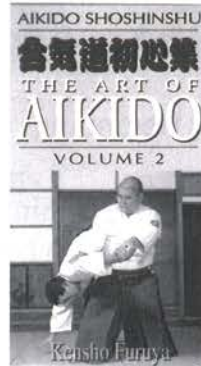
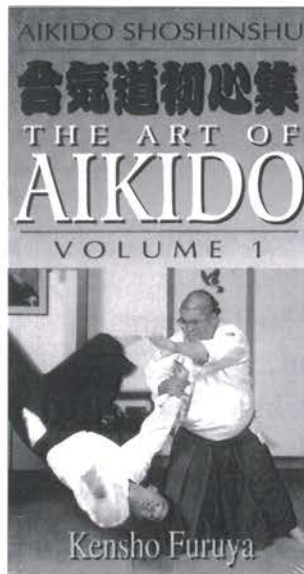
# The Art of AIKIDO

Aikido Instructional Video Series in Nine Volumes

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

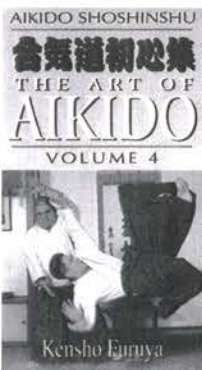


This video series is considered to be the most comprehensive and detailed instructional video on Aikido available today. Clear depiction of each technique and very detailed explanation of all of the fine points. Recommended for students, often used as an instructor's reference by many dojos.

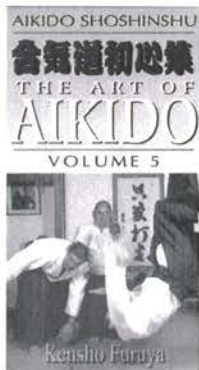


Basic Techniques  
Throwing & Joint  
Techniques, Ikkyo, Nikyo,  
Sankyo, Yonkyo & Gokyo

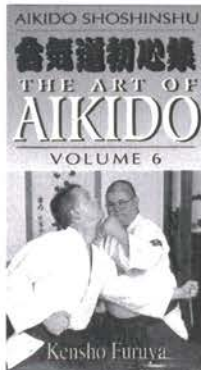
Ukemi-Breakfalling  
Basics Continued  
Free Style Techniques  
Tenshin. Ki. Breathing.



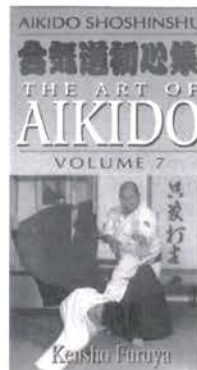
Katatetori Ryotemochi:  
Ryotetori: 2-hand.  
Reigi-saho: Etiquette.  
Koshinage-Hip throws.



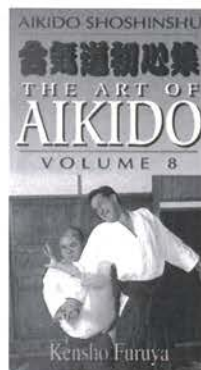
Suwari-waza. Gokyo.  
Hanmi-bandachi. Kokyu-  
dosa. Katatori: Shoulder.  
Multiple attackers.  
Five-man Freestyle.



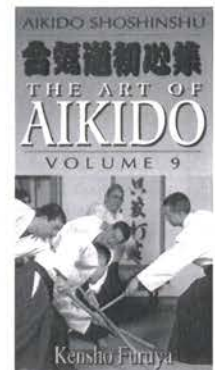
Tsuki: Strikes & Punches  
Yokomenuchi: Strikes to  
the side of the head &  
neck.



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



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



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

## Aikido TRAINING SCHEDULE

### AIKIDO for ADULTS

**Sundays:** Children's Class: 9:00-10:00am

Open Beginning: 10:15-11:15am

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

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

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

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

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

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

### CHILDREN'S CLASSES

7- 16 yrs old

**Sunday Mornings 9:00 -10:00am**

*Affiliation*

**AIKIDO WORLD HEADQUARTERS**

Aikido So-Hombu Dojo - Aikikai

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

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

**Aikido Center of Los Angeles**

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

Los Angeles, CA 90012

Tel: (213) 687-3673

Email: [aclafuruya@earthlink.net](mailto:aclafuruya@earthlink.net)

**www.aikidocenterla.com**

## Iaido TRAINING SCHEDULE

### TRADITIONAL JAPANESE IAIDO SWORDSMANSHIP

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

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

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

*No Classes on the last weekend of the month.*

### Intensive Iaido Seminar

Every 2nd Saturday of the month.

6:30am-8:00am

**Private Classes Available.**

### Finding Our Dojo:

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



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