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The Aikido Center of Los Angeles LLC

道の為、世の為、人の為 合気道

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

July 1, 2005

Volume XXIV. Number 7.

Congratulations! All Japan Aikido Demonstration, Budokan, Tokyo. May 28



James Doi demonstrating during last Nisei Week Aikido & Iaido Demonstration.

65th Annual Nisei Japanese Festival Aikido & Iaido Demonstration On August 7. In the Dojo

Lecture: Life & Art of Miyamoto Musashi. August 6.

JACCC & LTSC Children's Camp Musubi Summer School Aikido Demo. August 23.

Special Summer Events:

July 10. Echo Park Lotus Festival. 1:40-2:00pm.

July 16. Pasadena Buddhist Church Obon. 5:30-6:30pm.

August 6. 65th Nisei Week Lecture on Miyamoto Musashi, The Swordsman. 1:00-2:00pm. Presented by Rev. Kensho Furuya.

August 7. 65th Annual Nisei Week Aikido & Iaido Demonstration. 1:00-2:00pm.

August 23. Children's Summer School "Camp Musubi" Aikido Demonstration in the Dojo.

Power Of Politeness:

05-09 :Sensei, I actually do want to say thank you for teaching us proper manners and etiquette in the dojo. Knowing the appropriate forms of politeness was very helpful to me last week when I was in Japan with my wife, Machiko.

We were in Japan to attend a memorial service for my father-in-law, who passed away 7 years ago (6 in non-Japanese counting). The service took place at a Zen Buddhist temple in Karatsu, Machiko's home town. The service was very, very similar to the memorial services that we have in the dojo each year for O Sensei, second Doshu, and this year for Kanai Sensei as well. When we first came to the temple, I took off my shoes, and went up the steps, and bowed before crossing the threshold into the temple. I could see a priest sitting in an adjacent room, where my mother-in-law and some other relatives were. Other people were going into the room to introduce themselves to the priest, so I went to the entranceway, bowed, then sat down in seiza on a zabuton. The priest was looking at me the whole time. My moth-

-in-law introduced us, and as the priest did a formal bow, I simply returned his bow the way we do in class every day. Then the priest said something to me in Japanese, and my mother-in-law just laughed a little, and said to me, "He wonders why you know how to sit and bow politely, better than the Japanese people here." She explained to him that I study Aikido, and he just nodded a little. Then he said something to my mother-in-law, and she explained, "He said your teacher must be good." So, I nodded, and just did another sitting bow to acknowledge his compliment. My mother-in-law chided me a little, "Everyone can see your manners are good, so they know you are nice guy. But it's strange for us to see American people who are more polite than Japanese."

After the memorial service, there was a traditional dinner for everyone at a nearby restaurant. There were just zabuton and small tables for everyone in the room. It is uncomfortable for me to sit cross-legged for long periods, so I just sat in seiza most of the time. I think everyone in the room came by and made sure that I was OK. I would just bow, and say "Thank you, I'm really fine," which Machiko would usually translate for me, and then she would add in Japanese, "Don't worry about him, he's used to it from Aikido." Then one woman asked me if I had "kurobi". When I said yes, she said, "You are kind of <shinjiranaï> for us. It's really nice for us to see a man who can sit like Samurai. My husband is only a little older than you are, but he is moving like this", and she started pantomiming squirming, "after 10 seconds sitting seiza. Just 10 seconds!" Then her husband, who was sitting next to her, just leaned over and smiled at me, "so desu, so desu" and patted his knees.

I just behaved as we do in the dojo everywhere we went. When I bowed to a cab driver after he dropped us off, my sister-in-law said, "Wow! You are so polite!". I thought I might be overdoing it, so I asked, "Is it inappropriate?" She said, "No! It makes our family look very good!". That made me feel very good.

So, I want to thank you again for teaching us proper etiquette. More than that, when it is second nature, I have noticed that it doesn't really matter where I am. When I'm not in Japan or the dojo, I don't bow when I'm introduced to someone, but I FEEL like I'm bowing inside, and it seems that people can sense this. It makes life with other people more gentle and comfortable. --Bill Allen


05-11: Sensei, I would like to think you received a very nice complement recently, from another martial arts teacher. I had an assignment to photograph a young woman who is one of the top 20 high school students in the nation. She is also a two time gold medalist in Tae Kwon Do. They wanted a portrait of her where she trained. Never having been in a tae kwon do dojo, I wasn't sure if they had a particular etiquette so, I decided to treat the space with the same respect and use the same etiquette I would in our own dojo. I introduced my self to her teacher and asked for permission to use a certain part of the training area to set up all my lights and gear. Working by myself, I was on and off the mat many times and I treated the space exactly as if I were coming and going on and off our own mat. At one point he asked me what style I practiced, I told him aikido. I was there about an hour and half and after we packed and were leaving to go to another location, I thanked the Chief Instructor for allowing me to work there and apologized for any distraction I might have caused his class. He said I was welcomed anytime and almost as an after thought, he said, "you know, you are very well trained". I thought what a nice compliment for Sensei. Larry Armstrong

USA Channel Taping. June 19.




A segment for USA's "Ready for the Weekend Movie," hosted by Dan Sachoff and Christine Blackburn, was taped in the Dojo for their scheduled feature showing on July 28. Along with the antics of the hosts, there was a little time to introduce Aikido to the general public. It was an enjoyable taping and great support for the hosts and crew. To be shown as an opening segment on the USA Channel on July 28.






AUGUST 6-7, 2005
Annual Nisei Week
AIKIDO & IAIDO
DEMONSTRATION




AUGUST 6TH
1:00PM-2:00PM
Lecture on the Life and
Art of Miyamoto Musashi,
The Swordsman.
Lecture presented
by Rev. Kensho Furuya



AUGUST 7TH
1:00PM-2:00PM
Aikido & Iaido
Demonstration

AIKIDO CENTER OF LOS ANGELES
940 E. 2nd Street #7, Little Tokyo, Downtown Los Angeles
In the alley at 2nd & Vignes Streets.
For information: www.aikidocenterla.com



Dan Sachkoff, one of the hosts of USA, doing Aikido technique (with Sensei's help). Uke's are (Left to right): Mark Ty, Ken Watanabe, James MacDonald and David Ito.

Our Nisei Week Poster for 2005

Essentials: Suburi Practice

As is common, most people get caught with fancy ideas and techniques in their swordwork. Often, we are stuck on form or kata and lose sight of the very vital essentials. Often, we practice to impress, lacking mastery of the basics. In swordwork, the basics are everything. There is no beginning and advanced - only one fundamental principle - to cut down the opponent. How this continues and transform itself to evolve at many, many levels in one's practice to reach the highest state of non-killing killing or non-fighting is the goal of all swordwork.

However sophisticated the technique or form, I see that most people lack mastery of suburi. Along with suburi, one must master proper grip and stance. Suburi is suburi and there is no limit to how much

you must practice this in your practice. I know some Kendoists who practice 10,000 suburi every morning. . . . this is not uncommon at all. Many Aikidoists only do one dozen or so suburi, once a week. . . . I am not trying to compare one martial art with another, but I would like to illustrate here the difference in proportions in our practice and perhaps our idea or perspective is too small regarding our swordwork.

From suburi, we must master suburi from the standpoint of our Aikido hanmi kamae. It is through the application of Aikido hanmi to our swordwork that we can develop our Aiki-ken from the standpoint of Aikido. Please keep up your suburi training at all costs towards mastery of your swordwork. Please keep your focus on the simple but essential basics of suburi so that we can continue to practice together.

**Shin Koyamada & RSK Sanyo
Broadcasting Company,
From Okayama, Japan. May 20-21.**



With crew of RSK Sanyo Broadcasting Com from Okayama, Japan. Shooting was over a period of two days for Japanese TV.



Shomen-uchi Irimi-nage.



Shin Koyamada during practice and TV taping.

**Chushinkan Dojo Special Practice &
Lecture-Discussion. June 19.**



On a very nice Saturday afternoon, Sensei was invited to the Chushinkan Dojo in Buena Park under the direction of James Nakayama Sensei, 6th Dan, to conduct class and give a lecture-discussion. It was a very enjoyable afternoon followed by a delicious Indian buffet. Many thanks to the members of the Chushinkan Dojo.

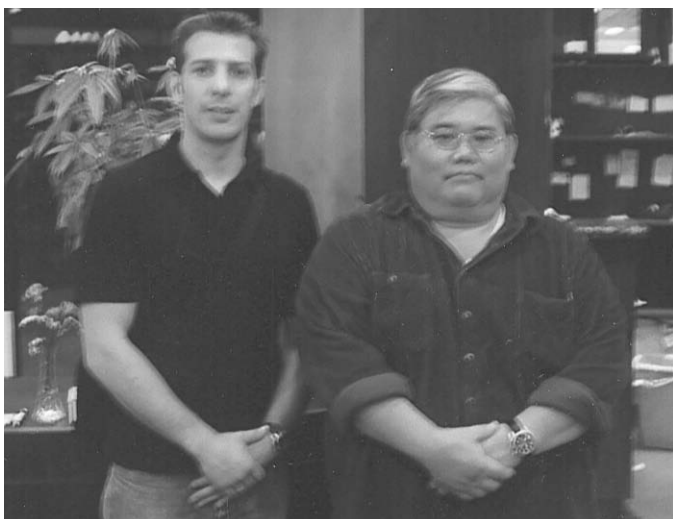


Sensei spoke on many subjects. The main topic of discussion was the life of Miyamoto Musashi, the swordsman. The discussion went over two hours.



Kaiten-nage with Mark Ty as uke.

Santiago Almaraz From Salamanca, Spain. Special Training June 5-19.



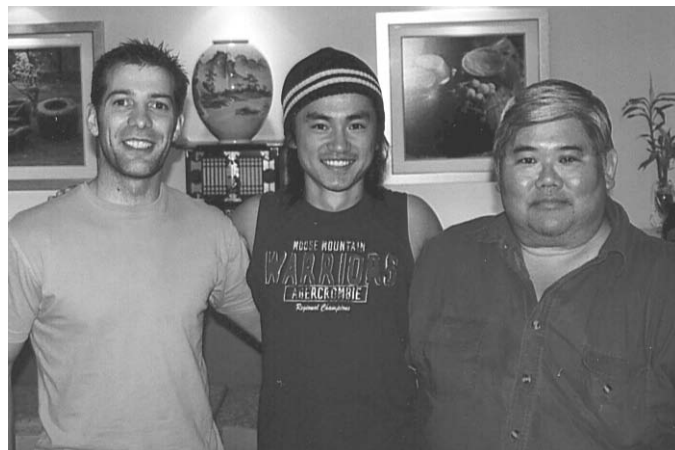
Santiago, head of the Salamanca Branch Dojo, visits LA for two weeks for his annual training. He undertook a total of 47 hours of training in both Aikido and Iaido. Although Santiago worked hard while he was here, we hope that he also had a good time. Best wishes and congratulations in a great job.



Santiago attending Special Practice at the Chushinkan Dojo.



Along with the Aikido training schedule, Santiago took Iaido instruction each morning and afternoon.



Santiago, Shin & Sensei at the Tofu Restaurant in Alhambra.



With Mark Ty and Carol Tanita.



With Ken Watanabe.

06-26-05: Dear Sensei:

Just want to say many thanks Sensei Furuya for all those days that I have the opportunity to practice Iaido and Aikido in your Dojo. And many thanks for all you corrections over my technique. thanks.

Always. Santiago (Almaraz),
Salamanca Aikido Kodokai, Spain

Remembering Kanai Sensei:

By Yasumasa Itoh Sensei, 6th Dan.

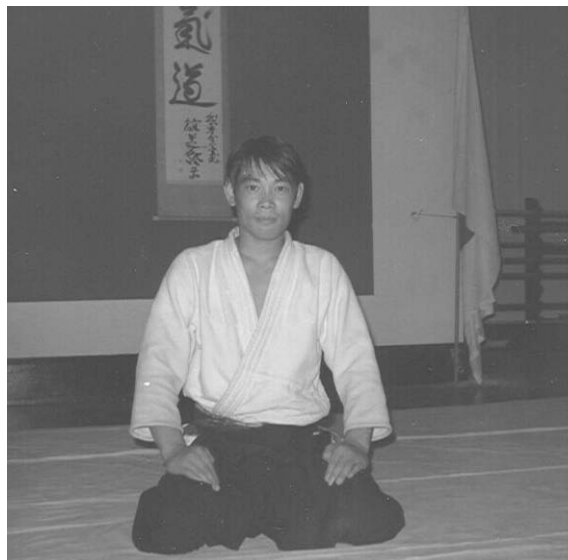
I have kindly received permission from Itoh Sensei of New England and Kei Izawa Sensei of New England to share this wonderful essay with you. It was written by Itoh Sensei for Izawa Sensei's forum devoted to the Kanai Sensei. I am very grateful for their permission to share this wonderful story with you.

Kanai Sensei loved fishing. Whenever he had a chance to do so, he went fishing with a lot of his students, old and new. When he would go fishing, he always invited me to go with him. He loved sea fishing, river fishing or lake fishing and he would spend hours and hours with his line in the water. Although I started by just watching, Kanai Sensei taught me the joy of fishing. Catching live fish was difficult but the fun was trying to catch something through the fishing line without seeing the fish at the other end. Kanai Sensei taught me that joy of the interaction with the fish at the other end of the line.

Once, I asked Sensei that in order to be able to stay still for so long, one must be very patient. Sensei said that he was impatient so that was why he did fishing. Again, I could see the stance of Kanai Sensei that always was challenging himself. It was so typical of him to try to control himself.

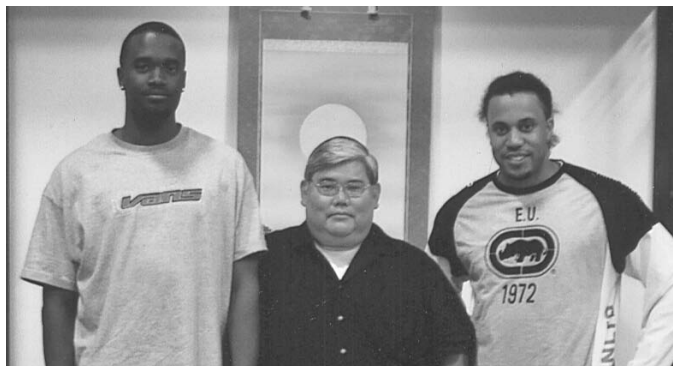
I recall that the instruction method of Kanai Sensei was to let the others find out indirectly rather than giving straight directions. Although there were instances where he would get angry at people who were impolite most of the time, it was not a direct instruction but rather an indirect one, that made us think for a long time. I believe he did not like the method of having to tell the others as to how to do it right but let them come to the conclusion that that was the way to do it right. This method takes a long time and requires a lot of patience. As such, Kanai Sensei always extended his kind considerations to others. Kanai Sensei therefore, was not only my instructor for aikido but he was my mentor for life. His way was a tremendous valuable life text book for me. Having such a wonderful Sensei, I was compelled to do everything for him as best as I could. For example, during the break between the first and second class when Sensei wanted to go to the bathroom, I always folded his hakama properly even though initially he said it was not necessary to do so. But because I was trying my best, in the end he allowed me to do as I wanted, which I thought it was for him.

Perhaps I could have stopped with the hakama folding but I started to enjoy washing his keikogi as well. Sensei would tell me that since he was not perspiring that much that it was not necessary to wash so often. Because it was the least of the things I could do to repay Kanai Sensei in some way, I insisted and continued to do so. Later I found out that he had some problems at his home due to my diligent washing exercise. Kanai Sensei did tell his wife that he was running short of keikogi since most were becoming too small for him. Mrs. Kanai seems to have said that it was not possible that all keikogi would shrink so it must be that he was getting fat. I was told later that he had to take good care of his food intake because of it. I do not know when he realized that but he told me 6 or 7 years later. This was when we went to Japan and went to Iwataya to buy hakama or keikogi. As he was buying a lot of keikogi, I asked him if you have so many keikogi why did he have to buy so many more and he told me that most of



found out that I had caused a lot of problems to Sensei. Kanai Sensei never complained about it. I believe he must have been inconvenienced a lot but he did allow me to continue until I truly realized it. I am so sorry that I did inconvenience Kanai Sensei for such a long time. He had such an incredible patience.

Visiting From Michigan



Jamaro Craig from Novi, Michigan, visited the dojo on April 28. Kodo is required reading at the Chinese Martial Arts School where he trains. He is planning to move to Los Angeles to start Aikido.

Visiting From Virginia. June 23-26.



Nick Kiritz is an old friend of Sensei's and visits the Dojo often.

Ranks & Muga - No-Self:

05-21: From Sean Somers

Dear Furuya-sensei, I have read and enjoyed many of your essays, including the ones on this interesting message list. Thank you for the opportunity to join and participate.

I have always wanted to ask you a question - or to ask you to expand by an answer - about your wonderful essay 'What Does a Black-Belt Mean?', which is posted on aikidofaq.com.

If I may sound sentimental, this essay actually provided me with some well-timed advice that got quite to the heart of the matter in regards to some emotional problems I had during my aikido training.

Owing to political situations between shihan in my area, my sensei - who I think very highly of - is not allowed to test us. I won't bore you with the bureaucratic by ways which have resulted in this situation. Needless to say, there is no certification or testing in our dojo, a university club. Students who wish to test do so through other avenues.

At first, this didn't bother me: I thrived in my practice and concentrated on achieving, however small, any improvements I could muster. I am not a well co-ordinated person, so even backwards ukemi rolls were tiny miracles. I regularly trained for over two years.

During this time I watched many students come, and some of them go. I did not care about my relative merit or standing in the dojo at first. But something inside of me started to rear its ugly head. recognize first and foremost this is an element of my own attitude, and I don't like it . . . but it keeps gnawing at me.

I watched students come and get their kyu and climb up the ranks. I watched myself being treated as a kohai by people who had spent less time than I did. I got mad at myself for even *caring* about this, but I did. I wanted to test. I wanted to mark my progress. I wanted to know if I was actually improving.

Maybe this is a form of self-absorption: I keep mentally trying to get over this attachment, but emotionally it creeps in during training . . . watching others excel and, at least in terms of rank, ascend. As a traditional Japanese dojo, hierarchy is a part of 'reigi', and I sit at the back of the line continuously. Pity that it is, it bothered my ego. Was it rank? Was it need to prove something to people? Maybe this and more.

I found my training faltering, because I just felt like I was in a drop-in centre.

I'm not pleased with this attitude. I've started training again - I read your essay on the bus to keiko, trying to remind myself to focus on the act itself. But some days . . . when I feel looked down on, when someone who just got his sankyu from another dojo throws me particularly hard . . . when I wonder whether I've actually made a difference in myself after the years I've put in . . . even wanting the haka-ma-status . . . eh, yuck . . . I don't know. I know I'm still very much attached to rank.

This is a long and rambling message, sensei - please know that I have wanted to ask your advice for a long time. I would sincerely appreciate your advice in regards to overcoming this kind of rank obsession

that is in me and getting back to training-in-itself. Honto ni arigatou gozaimashita, sean somers

Sensei's Reply: There are many things which seem unfair in our lives. Some of acts of God which we can do nothing about. Many are only a matter of our one-sided view of Life. Do not compare yourself to others. You are you, other people are other people. I know this is hard to do sometimes because we live in such a competitive world, but it is something we must come to understand in our Aikido practice.

Many times, tests are not fair evaluations of a person. Many times, tests do not seem to be presented fairly or correctly. Please do not worry about this - everyone suffers from this at one time nor another.

Do not worry about fair or unfair in practice. Only think about how much power and energy can spring forth from within you to meet and overcome all obstacles which present themselves in your Life. These are all natural things we must encounter in our journey on the Path.

05-23: Dear Furuya-sensei, Thank you very much for your thoughtful, helpful, and kind message. I really do find it encouraging and appreciate your time in writing to me. I hope others on the list may have found this useful as well. Sincerely, Sean Somers

05-24: Sensei's Reply: I will try to expand more on "ranks & self" in the next few days. Of course, this is an often discussed subject because everyone is too overly concerned with rank. As much as we try to ignore it, it is unfair if one is ignored and it is unfair if others seem to be receiving rank very easily. Despite many abuses that occur, I am afraid to say, there are many sincere teachers who are trying their best to be very fair to the students. One must also see that the teacher must consider a promotion from the standpoint of not only the student, but from the standpoint of the art of Aikido, the dojo and all the other membership.

Unfair is not only ranks - so many things in our lives are unfair, it appears. We learn to live with it and move on. I do not say to cop out on everything, but I do say to think what is most important in your Aikido and in your life and focus on that. . . .

Correct Sharing In Practice:

Correct sharing is giving of one's self in practice through correct training. Showing off, comparing strength, showing authority, trying to teach others or bossing people around on the mats is not sharing or correct practice - it is simply bringing in one's own frustrating world of conflict and competition onto the mats.

We bow before entering and mat and we bow when leaving the mats because the mat is a different world from the mundane world of our daily lives. In olden times, the mats were considered as a "sacred space where one studies the Way." At least, this is the original meaning of "Dojo." We should understand and appreciate this and train to be at our very best at all times in practice. This means that we practice our bigger, more compassionate, more feeling, aware self, not our small-minded, selfish, petty, tiny self.

Sharing, giving one's self to others is not imposing one's self on others - it is to become one with others, the essence of Aikido practice. Please understand this when you are in the Dojo.

Our Deepest Condolences: The Most Reverend Trogawa Rinpoche Passes



05-18: Sensei, I am writing to you from the road... making a little music tour and family visit through the mid-west. Unfortunately I have some bad news to pass along. It appears that Trogawa Rinpoche died recently. I am forwarding you an e-mail that I just received. Your student, Jake La Botz

I first met Dr. Trogawa in 1989 through the NY Shambhala center who had invited him to teach for a week and see patients. Just having moved to New York from Boulder, I was asked to help coordinate his visit. On the eve of his arrival, the other coordinator unexpectedly had to travel to visit her dying father and I was left alone to greet him and coordinate his visit. I spent many weeks in his clinic helping out and cooking in a marathon of unforgiving hard labor. Over the years I saw him and here and there, often spending time in his household that tended to be at John Giorno's wonderful loft on the bowery. Poet Allen Ginsberg was on his Chakpori board of directors along with Sir James George and other interesting people. Once I spent a week in Boulder at the invitation of one of his students, Dr. Phil Weber, to cook for the doctor there. In addition to being a great lama and physician, I found him an interesting man in his observations about Western life with a subtle and wicked sense of humor. He had his quirks which always endeared me to him rather than disillusioned me. He was my first real introduction to undiluted Tibetan culture. I will always hold him in high esteem.

A rarefied and aristocratic lama, I was impressed by Dr. Trogawa's uncompromising dedication to his vocation in medicine and the contrast of his sensitive nature in relation to the grittiness of dealing with so much human illness and suffering. Over the years I observed him with hundreds of patients, many terminal. There is no doubt in my mind that he brought a healing presence to so many people, including myself. Although he was an incarnate lama, his path was different than most because his primary vocation was that of a physician. From morning to night he would see patients. He forwent many things by maintaining his own personal practice life in the midst of this kind of busy schedule. He worked really hard on behalf of others. Given his somewhat frail constitution, this always seemed so telling of his dedication.

After one of his visits to the US, I had some unusual experiences which I attribute to spending so much time in his environment. One day out of the blue, I began to see the physical manifestations of disease in people. A young woman walked into his clinic and I noticed the upper part of her face inflamed. Returning from her consultation with Dr. Trogawa she said that he had diagnosed her condition as a heat condition in her sinuses. Then it seemed everywhere I went I saw the dark and light manifestations of illness. For a brief moment in time I was seeing with his eyes. Because of him, I believe in the effi-

cacy of Tibetan medicine, its genius as an indigenous healing art infused with the noble view of Buddhism. He was a true manifestation of the medicine Buddha and the power of compassion as the basis for healing. With him there was no hopeless case.

With his passing, we have lost a link between old Tibet and the present. It was a great privilege to spend the time I did with him and his company of Chakpori fellows. So many memories flood my mind at this time—passing remarks, dreams, fragments of inner experiences in his midst, the simple elegance of his presence, and the subtlety of his mind. I wish him well on his journey from this realm to another where no doubt he will continue his ministry to the suffering of beings. Farewell, dear friend, and thank you from the bottom of my heart for leading me out of the darkness of ignorance, healing my mind. Jacqueline Gens May 15, 2005

05-18: After a long illness, a great Tibetan doctor and practitioner, Trogawa Rinpoche, died in Sikkim on the 11 May. We don't have all the details about his death yet. His body will be placed in a stupa in Sikkim. Before dying he asked his French students to make a foundation for preservation of Tibetan medical plants and for studying Tibetan medicine. Bea Ferrigno, Fort Collins

05-18: Hello Sensei I am so sorry to read that your teacher and friend Master Rimpoche has died.

Like so many things the gift of longevity is bittersweet. My wife's grandparents are in the late 80's and they feel great sadness that almost all of their friends are dead now. Of course they also have great joy when they see their great grandchildren.

It has only recently occurred to me the responsibility I have to train earnestly in Aikido in an attempt to capture the knowledge that my teachers have. They haven't the number of years of Aikido that you have. But with the 25 anniversary of Aikido training for my club's Head Instructor Sensei Longford there is an enormous amount of knowledge that he has worked very hard to gain.

It is interesting how your perspective on training changes when you begin to see yourself as having a responsibility to give to Aikido by becoming a reservoir of knowledge rather than take from Aikido for some selfish gain. I know that you have been saying things similar to this for many years in various daily messages. It has just taken some time for me to truly understand what you were saying.

I think I also begin to understand your passion to pass the vast knowledge you have on. You are a vessel into which so much Aikido knowledge has been poured from great masters like Kisaburo Ohsawa Sensei. Now you too must pour this knowledge into another vessel and so forth through the ages so original Aikido can endure.

Then it also makes sense to me as to why this knowledge must be untainted. If I put my personal stamp on it, create the Ambrose Merrell style of Aikido then the knowledge is tainted and the original is lost. Mujo (impermanence) is something I am working hard to keep at the forefront of my mind. My wife and I have been discussing it and trying to break from the habit of assuming that we, and those we love, will be here in 5, 10 or more years. They/we may not be here tomorrow. These are lessons that you have helped me with enormously Sensei and I hope you will continue to do so for very many more years. Best wishes as always, Ambrose

Letters & Correspondence:

05-05: Sensei: I have what may seem to be a strange question. I live in Houston, Texas and am very interested in becoming a student of Aikido. I recently viewed a documentary on Discovery channel on the martial arts which featured you and I began to do some research, that research has led me to conclude that you are one of the top teachers in the world of Aikido. Is there any way to become a distance student? Flying in periodically to train and returning home to practice etc...? Or would it be better to enroll as a student here in Houston? Thank You, Respectfully, Bertrand McHenry

05-06: Money vs Art: This topic really hits home for me. Every dojo I have ever enrolled in has closed down within a year or two of starting due to lack of funds. There are a few talented men in my area who actually know what they are doing but unfortunately there is no place for them to teach. There is however one dojo in my area, but the man who runs it is purely after profit. He does not understand and it is evident by his western "I know karate and I can kick your ass" attitude. if you figure out how to successfully run a dojo that is true to the way, plz share..

05-07: I was referred to your dojo by Scott Zagarino. He told me that perhaps there was a scholarship option that might allow me to train with you. I have been longing to train in Aikido for years but have not had the money to do so full time. If there are any partial payment options or anything that we can do to allow me to train with you I would be so grateful. I am very serious about training with you if it does become a possibility. Thank you. John Lee

05-07: Dear Sensei, After reading the last few posting, I thought it would be appropriate to respond, not on my behalf but on behalf of my six year old son Armand. He and I started at the same time. Every Sunday, he comes to the Dojo with a smile and leaves with a smile. While he is there, he thoroughly enjoys himself. Most importantly, he seems to have understood, at his six year old level, what is important about Aikido. A while back, and with no prompting from me, he told me that "Pappi, you know that Aikido isn't about kicking butt or pay back, right?" I asked him how he knew that. He said that he had "figured it out himself." Well, I think the way he figured it out was by the way his instructors teach. Maybe its O Sensei's kind face looking down on him and his classmates, maybe it the calm atmosphere that the Dojo provides. Whatever it is, it is because of you and your work. And like you said, "good acts always come back to you." Sorry to keep going on and on. Regards, Leonard

05-09: From Germany For Training: Dear Sensei, I could get accommodation on campus (albeit quite expensive) until July 31. Then the winter term starts, I guess. Do you think chances would be better to find accommodation from one of your scholars for August?

I am looking forward to having tea with you and are grateful for your invitation. I did not only find the stories in your book fascinating, but also the Professor I have worked for here in Mainz, Thomas Metzinger, is one of the acknowledged consciousness researchers, and I had many interesting talks with him about states of meditation. Due to your relation to Zen-Buddhism and Aikido, I hope to receive interesting suggestions from a talk with you. Steven Schlein

05-09: Thank You! Dear Sensei: It is an honor to be allowed to have the rank of shodan. Thank you for your years of hard work teaching

me. I will continue to practice hard. Thank you, Maria Ferrari

05-11: From Jonathan Tien, Taiwan: Dear Sensei: Hope this email finds you well. I am currently in Taiwan, and will stay here until the end of July. My sister Christina plans to undergo surgery here for complication from giving birth to my adorable niece Amber Aliya Chou two and half years ago. She will need about two months of bed rest afterward and someone to take care of her. At the same time, I have gotten in touch with Master Hsu and has received his permission to learn Bajiquan under him.

My time in China was quite a growing experience. I have made many friends and traveled to plenty of exotic locations. I ended my time in China by visiting my father's hometown Changli in Hebei province. From Beijing, it takes about five hours of train ride going east to the coast of Yellow Sea. I don't think I have ever mention this to you, but my father was first an underground resistance fighter during WWII, then a Nationalist official who conducted guerrilla warfare against the communists. He and I visited Beijing in 1990 where he spent his college years, but he felt it was imprudent to go back to Changli for the obvious reason that it would probably be too sad for him and that his past may catch up to him. He passed away in Taiwan in 1997 at the age of 80. While I wanted to fulfill my curiosity and see my father's birthplace, the most important purpose of my trip was to go on his behalf.

I will go to Hawaii in late July. I have been accepted to the China-focused MBA program at the University of Hawaii which begins in early August. The program lasts 15 months - three semesters of intensive coursework followed by three months of internship in China. Very excited about this prospect and the opportunities it could take me. All the best. Respectfully, Jonathan Tien

05-15: From Calgary, Canada: Sumimasen Sensei Furuya desu. I must apologize for not sending a note sooner to express my gratitude for allowing me to attend the seminar at your dojo last month. I really have no excuse and do feel very embarrassed as I forgot my manners until I made it home to the Nakayama KoAididokai in Calgary. It was when Sensei Skoyles mentioned that you had sent him a note I realized my folly. I very much enjoyed training at your dojo on that weekend though I do believe that I was not at my best due to my feelings of intimidation. Perhaps in the future, with your permission, I may return to again train in your beautiful dojo and thank you for allowing me the honor to learn there during the seminar. Humbly David Francis

05-17: From Belgium: Hi Sensei, Thank you very much for your reply. When placing the translation on our site, I will make sure to include both the link to your website and the address of the yahogroup (which I joined in the meantime). I'm hoping to have chapter one translated by June but I'll let you know when it is actually published on the site. If after publication you have some questions and/or remarks could you please contact me ? Thanks.

I'm currently training in 2 different dojo's (training schedules in Belgium are not as frequent as in LA, unfortunately :-). One dojo is located in Thoricourt (www.aikidojo-silly.be), a small village about 20km from Brussels. Sensei at the dojo is Henri Behr (5th DAN). Henri has been studying aikido for 35 years mainly as a student of Tamura Sensei and Alain Peyrache Sensei. The other dojo is located in Aalter (www.aikido-aalter.be), which is (again ;-)) a small village in

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between Gent and Bruges. Sensei at this dojo is Sven De Schryver (1st DAN). Sven has been studying aikido for about 25 years under several sensei (a.o. Alain Peyrache Sensei) but these last couple of years he's mainly focussed on the teachings of Henri Behr Sensei. As to what style we are affiliated with : we were long-time members of the EPA/ISTA organization founded by Alain Peyrache Sensei (www.dojoista.com), who is a student of Tamura Sensei so I think our style could be classified as Aikikai...

Thanks again for your reply and your approval. As said before, I will do my best to translate your essays as accurate as possible. best regards, Bart

05-17: From Aikido Dojo Norrkoping: Dojo, Student & Art: Quote: Of course, the reality is that a dojo must create income in order to pay the bills and survive, but all motivation for change must be made in the light of what is best for the student, the dojo and the art. Because this does not always confirm in the best way and there is always the conflict between existing by the power of money and how to teach the student well - everyone in the dojo, both teacher and student must understand this and work together in harmony to support each other - and support the art and dojo in a noble way of both respect and dignity.

Of course, it is always easy to say, "I will just mind my own business" or "I am here to practice only," and perhaps, in the real world this is true. However, to base one's efforts in Aikido on selfish or ego-centered motives can only bring disappointment and failure in the end. Why? Because from the very beginning you have missed the whole underlying message of what Aikido means.

I was happy to read this in your homepage from 17 of May 2005 Greetings from Peter Nyberg 1:st dan aikikai, <http://www.aikidodojo.nu/>

05-21: Invitation From Egypt: Dear Sir, I'm pleased to see Aikido in your US state. My name is Ahmad Mounir – black belt aikido (approaching Nidan) from the Japanese federation of Aikido under supervision of Sensei Comagaia (7th Dan) and was registered as an Aikido instructor in the Egyptian Federation of Aikido. Now I'm practicing under supervision of two Japanese instructors: Sensei Tatenou (6th Dan) and sensei Ura Uama (5th Dan). We have cooperated with a lot of aikido instructors around the world. We've organized a lot of seminars with Japanese, French, Italian and others. About common international seminars, we invite foreign instructors on our own charge (the visitor pay the airline ticket only – we afford the payments of his housing).

I think we (the Egyptian and Japanese federation) could cooperate with you for common visits. If you are interested contact me quickly. I'll be in Canada by the next month and I can visit your dojo so we can discuss how could be the cooperation and if we can manage seminars with our Japanese instructors too. Last month we have managed a huge seminar containing 15 Japanese instructor (8th Dan, 7th Dan, ...). So I hope to manage something huge soon. Waiting for quick reply Yours sincerely, Ahmad Mounir

05-23: Ranks & Self: Dear Furuya-sensei, Thank you very much for your thoughtful, helpful, and kind message. I really do find it encouraging and appreciate your time in writing to me. I hope others on the list may have found this useful as well. Sincerely, Sean Somers

05-29: Dear Furuya-sensei, I'm sure I speak for many people when I say that your writing - as it is, and from where it arises - is deeply meaning in and for itself. Geographically, I live far away from you, but I none the less take much from what you have to say. I particularly appreciated your response to my problem. After three years in aikido, I have not taken a single test, nor is it likely I will in the future. But, with your words and my sense of the spirit of the art, I keep on with it. So thank you. Only my thoughts, Sean Somers

06-01: Aikido In Iraq: Hi, I need to now more about aikido. I am an Iraqi and i think we need aikido in our live to be in harmony with our self and I need to protect my family I work in dubai now and, i didn't find any dojo here for aikido But i have problem in my shoulders so I'm thinking of self training courses if any body can send to me. Thanks

06-03: Awareness: Hello Sensei: Your Daily Message on the 27th May struck a cord with me because I am reading a very powerful book called "Awareness". It was written by a Jesuit priest called Anthony de Mello who sadly died some years ago.

Sensei have you read this book? If you have I would be very interested to hear your thoughts on it. Indeed if anyone on the group has read it I would love to hear their thoughts.

In case you have not read it I will give you a very brief background. It is a book about 'waking up', recognizing reality, becoming enlightened. It draws mostly on the teachings of Buddhist and Christian masters as well as Hindu and Islamic masters.

Here is a quote:

"There is nothing so delightful as being aware. Would you rather live in darkness? Would you rather act and not be aware of your actions, talk and not be aware of your words? Would you rather listen to people and not be aware of what you're hearing, or see things and not be aware of what you're looking at? The great Socrates said, "The unaware life is not worth living." That's a self-evident truth. Most people don't live aware lives. They live mechanical lives, mechanical thoughts - generally someone else's - mechanical emotions, mechanical actions, mechanical reactions. Do you want to see how mechanical you really are? "My, that's a lovely shirt you're wearing." You feel good hearing that. For a shirt, for heaven's sake! You feel proud of yourself when you hear that."

I feel that the same messages are in this book as are in From the Zen Kitchen to Enlightenment and also as in the Tao Te Ching.

I also feel that I am now catching a glimpse of the sun through a heavy fog. Am I returning to the source or am I more probably seeing a more subtle delusion?

Anyway - I continue on the Way as best I can. It may be coincidence but I my growth in Aikido seems to be improving a lot. And as ever Sensei thank you for your company on the journey! Best wishes Ambrose

Dojo Membership Drive:
Please introduce a family member or friend to Aikido this month. Help buildup our Dojo.

06-05: Perfect Practice? Aloha Kakahiaka e Sensei! Happy Sunday! Last week I was giving blood at the Hilo, Hawaii police station, and in the cadet training room, I noticed this sign, explaining the meaning behind a not-so-simple Hawaiian concept:

KINA'OLE (FLAWLESSNESS)

Doing the Right Thing,

In the Right Way,

At the Right Time,

In the Right Place,

To the Right Person,

For the Right Reason,

With the Right Feeling . . . The First Time!

I couldn't help but think of you, and your constant on-line reminders about Reigi and Correct Training and Natural Way. And I was struck, yet again, by how universal these concepts and practices are, within so many seemingly different traditions and cultures. Many different paths, but only one Way . . . I understand that you may sometimes feel as if you are not reaching us, but I think that you must -- and that sometimes we actually can hear you! Thank you, Sensei, very much, Heraldo Mon Farrington, Aikido of Hilo

PS: I am not sure if this is appropriate for the website -- please feel free to post it as you see fit. Heraldo Farrington

06-06: From Belgium: Hi Sensei, The first parts of the translation have been published on our dojo website : www.aikido-aalter.be. Due to the structure of the site I can not give a direct link but to see the texts, just click on the "Forum" link on the left side and you should be taken to a page containing links to the translations (and some other texts written in dutch by my Sensei). Any comments and/or remarks would be more than welcome. Please let me know what you think of the layout and inform me if you would like to modify something. best regards, Bart

06-06: About Iaido? My name is Eric Ulbrich and I recently became interested in the practice and learning of Iaido. I noticed your website and hoped you could answer some questions and provide guidance. I live in Orange County, CA and I have no clue as to where a quality dojo which teaches Iaido is located nearby. I would not be opposed to travel to LA, if it were not for the hour and a half plus drive (however I can make the drive if need be.) Also, I am currently a student studying film production. This makes my schedule rather complicated and spontaneous due to the massive amounts of homework, classes and on-location film work that I am regularly participating in. I wanted to know if you have any thoughts or suggestions as to how I can work the practice and classes of Iaido into my difficult life. I really would like to learn this beautiful art, however, I have a very complicated schedule. I hope that you can help me in any way, shape or form. Thank you for your time, Eric Ulbrich

06-11: LIFE Hello Sensei, I came across this quote recently and thought it might be a good addition to this forum. Its seems to embody the spirit of aikido as well.

"Life is an opportunity, benefit from it.

Life is a beauty, admire it.

Life is a dream, realize it.

Life is a challenge, meet it.

Life is a duty, complete it.

Life is a game, play it.

Life is a promise, fulfill it.

Life is sorrow, overcome it.

Life is a song, sing it.

Life is a struggle, accept it.

Life is a tragedy, confront it.

Life is an adventure, dare it.

Life is luck, make it.

Life is life, fight for it!"

- Mother Teresa

Larry Armstrong, Aikido 4th Dan.

06-13: Right Answer: Aloha e Sensei! In regards to the query you received about a "good, child-friendly dojo," I thought that you gave a wonderfully open answer to a potentially difficult question, and I was glad that you suggested that the teacher's teacher "should be in some way connected with Aiki Kai Hombu Dojo (Aikido World Foundation) in Japan under 3rd Doshu, Moriteru Ueshiba."

Who knows why this person unsubscribed? I feel that most reasonable people would at least try your advice, visit some dojos, and then try to develop a gut feeling, as you said. If this failed, then a follow-up request would be worthwhile. Same for your advice regarding an affiliation with Aiki Kai Hombu Dojo.

It's hard to say what happened in this case, exactly, but your answer was a great starting point. Let's hope that this person will continue to search for the right questions, and never trust that she has found the one right answer . . . which goes for the rest of us, too. Please keep our medicine pure and bitter, Sensei! Heraldo Mon Farrington, Aikido of Hilo

06-14: From Canada: We can assume many negative reasons that she unsubscribed after she got your answer. The fact is we don't know why she unsubscribed. I guess it is something as simple as she got an answer to her question and left. After all millions of people surf the net for information, and being that the net is so impersonal that most people don't give a second thought to a please or a thank you. But it is still just a guess so I don't worry about why people do things if I know not the reason.

After reading every single one of your posts for the last 3 years on your daily message, and here on the discussion group I half guessed what your response to her query would be. (Sorry if I'm implying your predictable sensei) The answer you gave her was a good one. To me it makes good sense to have the affiliation with Hombu. To her, someone who probably doesn't even know what Hombu is, or who or what a Doshu is might think the answer to be totally confusing and or unrelated to what might be good for her children.

I applaud the woman for trying to get good information for her children from an impeccable source such as you sensei. I would add that in the questions asked of the dojo policies, if there were policies in place for the child's protection such as no adult being allowed alone in a room with a child. The scouting organization use policies such as these to not only keep children from getting into compromising situations, it also maintains the integrity of the organization through these safety rules. Thank you for including me in you discussions. Kelly Allen, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada

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06-16: Children's Demo for Musubi Dojo: Sensei, I know you've done demonstrations for the Koban patrol volunteers. I also know you've put on safety seminars for seniors. But what about children?

The JACCC and LTSC jointly puts on Camp Musubi during the summer. It's a week long summer camp that allows middle school-aged kids a chance to experience Japanese culture.

One of the organizers asked me if the Aikido Center can put on a demonstration at the dojo on August 23 or 24 (during the day). I told them I'd have to ask you because #1) it's right after Nisei Week and #2) since it's during the day, I don't know how much help you have putting on a demonstration. I have heard the kids are between the ages of 11 and 14. There could be as many as 30 of them. If this is too much, please let me know.

If it's a possibility, also let me know. I'll bring Amy (one of the Camp Musubi organizers) to the dojo to meet with you and we can discuss more specifics. Thank you for your time. Hope you are doing well. Nancy Kikuchi, Little Tokyo Service Center

Reply: We are always glad to oblige. Thank you for thinking of us.

06-18: From Chushinkan Member: Dear Furuya Sensei, I am delighted with my new sword, and had not expected to receive it so quickly. Thank you so much for understanding exactly what I wanted, and for taking the time and trouble to convey this to the sword maker.

I have spent the afternoon getting to know my sword. It looks beautiful, but then I knew that your taste is impeccable and that I'd be happy if I left the appearance up to you. The blade is nice and lean with an elegant hamon. I've been trying to figure out what is represented on the fittings - the tsuba is a cloud design, there is a vine on the fuchi, I'm still puzzling over the menuki and could the kashira possibly be a sea cucumber? No....

More important to me than how the sword looks, though, is that it feels just right. It is very nicely balanced, which makes it feel even lighter. I also enjoy the slightly "bony" feel of the tsuka.

I've been practicing iaido for many years with a WW2 blade that felt heavy and badly balanced. I liked using the steel blade, but could seldom make my movements as strong as my instructors wanted. With my new sword I finally feel as if I am in charge. I can easily cut harder than ever before and do strong draws (although doing so in my living room frightens the cat), and therefore I have no excuse to do less than spectacular iaido. This is a real treat - once again, thank you. Sincerely, Christine Dyer

PS Thank you also for coming to teach class and talk to us. We all enjoyed the morning tremendously, and hope that you did too.

06-19: "Thanks!" Is Enough: Dear Furuya Sensei, The students of Chushinkan Dojo have asked me to let you know on their behalf how much they enjoyed your class and lecture. I hope we haven't embarrassed you and disturbed the friendly relationship between our dojos by giving you a monetary gift. Although I wrote a dojo check for their contributions, I'd like to emphasize that the gift represents a spontaneous donation from the dojo rather than a fee for your services. We did not wish to introduce any commercial element into the pleasant

relationship between you and Nakayama Sensei, and hope that we have not done so. With appreciation, Christine Dyer

06-20: Protocol: Sensei, Yesterday in class I was faced with a situation I didn't know how to deal with and I am emailing you to ask for your insight on the subject.

We were doing the techniques that required forward breakfalls (which I haven't learned how to do yet—I will seek out assistance before and after class on Saturday so that I do learn how) and I was with a partner who was doing the technique backwards. I was facing a situation where I knew I was going to become injured if I let him continue, because I had no knowledge of how to take the fall backwards (or forwards, even if he had been throwing me correctly). After the second time he attempted to again throw me backwards, I panicked and pulled away and knelt down off to the side (scared, ashamed and upset).

Did I do the correct thing? If not how should I have handled this better? With thanks in advance, Christopher Page

Response: Safety Zone: if we are doing something that you are uncomfortable with, you bow out and sit down or you tell Mark or Ken or one of the instructors right away. They will either help you or ask you to sit it out. You are never forced to do anything until you learn it and can do it safely. Also ask Mark or Ken about the "safety zone" where you can sit and no one will bother you or ask you to practice. . . . this is where you can take a rest or breather. Best wishes,

06-26: To Change Or Not to Change: Sensei, I was just reading today's daily message and took note of your thoughts on seeking the unchanging in an ever changing world. I have recently been revisiting some of the classics over my summer break from my studies and this got me thinking about something I was just reading from the "Analects". In Confucius' discussions on family and filial piety he advises not to move away while your parents are alive, or if you must leave than go in one direction so that they always know where you are. After all, in his time if you walked all day in one direction, it meant you were a days journey from home. I guess my question is do you think the master would make adjustments in his philosophy if he were able to see the global community that we live in today(the changing) or would he hold true to the greater meaning of being close to ones family no matter what(the unchanging)? Realistically, none of us are ever more than a super train or jumbo jet ride away these days. Being a traditionalist myself, I have a habit of reading these texts with a mind that they are to be adhered to perfectly in order to gain the understanding that is intended. But sometimes I must admit I do wonder what the books would say if they were being written today?

Respectfully, Jason (Aikido of Center City).

Reply: Family Values: Hi. You are probably asking the wrong person here because many people consider my thinking to be as antiquated as Confucius himself.

Of course, today is a totally different world from that of Confucius' time about 500 years before the birth of Christ. Today is so much "smaller" and you can travel from one end of the globe to the other in a few hours by airplane.

What I think you must understand in Confucian times however, is that



Shin taking ukemi during practice.

when they say, "family," it was often that the entire village or town might be made up of one entire clan or family. The family structure of the Chinese family in ancient times was very large and extremely complex and one could have literally dozens of aunts and uncle and cousins in many different types of family ties by blood or otherwise. Even within one typical household, a family would consist of literally dozens of members - very different from today where a typical American family may be two parents and one or two children at the most. In ancient times as well, one did not travel as we do today and one stayed in his own town or village for his entire life always within his own family. Even in Japan in feudal times, the word for "country" or "kuni," also meant one's "home" or "village." As Japan entered the modern world in the 19th century, one difficult concept to comprehend was the "country of Japan" as a "nation." Previously, there was no consciousness of a "nation" as opposed to other nations in the world.

From my own personal point of view, and I am sure that it is very impractical and outdated in this day and age for most people, I would agree with Confucius and say that one should stay with his family longer and support his own family structure for his entire Life. I do believe myself that much of the ills of modern living and today's society are due to the breakdown of the family unit. I think that those raised with a stronger sense of family or under a stronger family unit have greater inner values of sharing, compassion, understanding others and getting along with others.

I myself come from a very small family and I was a single child, as I am much older now and without any family at all, I miss the sense of family and this may influence my thinking.

Despite the many problems one encounters in families, in the past and present, I still think that there is nothing more valuable than the family unit in one's Life and it is a great treasure and blessing that one should not be without. Even though you can travel far away from your family or even if you have lost your family, you will never forget your own mother or father or brothers and sisters for your entire life and their presence will always have meaning wherever you are .Sensei

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You are very welcome to visit our beautiful, hand-crafted, traditional Japanese Dojo during posted training hours. All practicing Aikidoists are welcome to train with us or observe our training. Interested students and visiting Aikidoists are always welcome to join our practice. We are directly affiliated with Aikikai Hombu, Tokyo, Japan. Please make inquiries by email: aclafuruya@earthlink.net.

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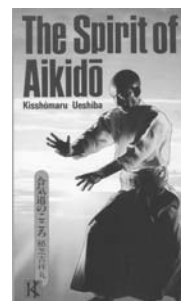
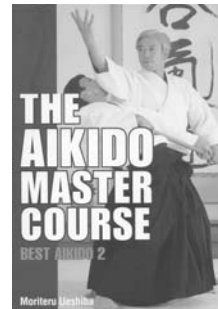
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Recommended Readings:



International Aikido Kodo-Kai.

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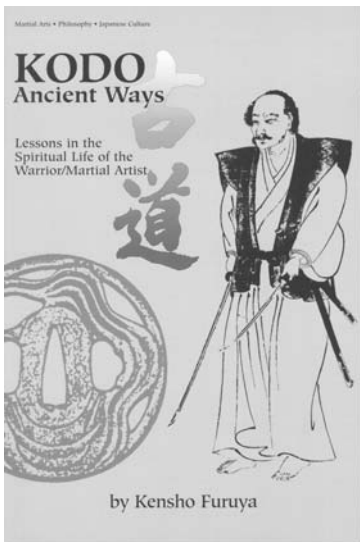
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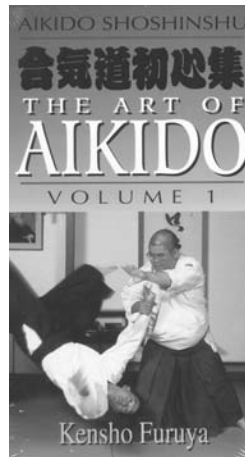
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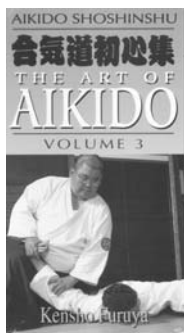
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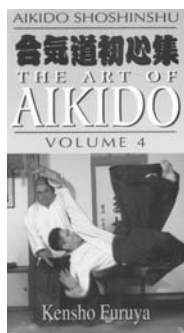
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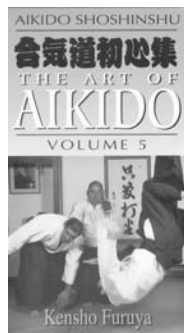
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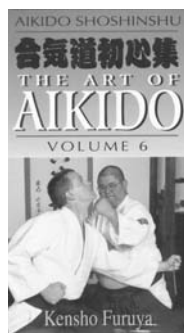
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Reigi-saho: Etiquette.
Koshinage-Hip throws.



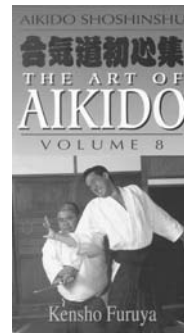
Suwari-waza. Gokyo.
Hanmi-handachi. Kokyu-
dosa. Katatori: Shoulder.
Multiple attackers.
Five-man Freestyle.



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



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



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



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

Aikido TRAINING SCHEDULE

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

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

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

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

Thursdays: Weapons: 6:30-7:30pm.

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

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

Every 4th Saturday: Instructor's Intensive Aikido: 6:30-8:00am. Sensei's Prior Approval. Meeting Follows.

CHILDREN'S CLASSES

7- 16 yrs old

Sunday Mornings 9:00 -10:00am

Sign-up anytime for on-going classes.

We are directly affiliated with:

AIKIDO WORLD HEADQUARTERS

Aikido So-Hombu Dojo - Aikikai

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

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

Aikido Center of Los Angeles

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Los Angeles, CA 90012

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Email: aclafuruya@earthlink.net

www.aikidocenterla.com

Iaido TRAINING SCHEDULE

TRADITIONAL JAPANESE IAIDO SWORDSMANSHIP

Sundays: Open: 7:45am-8:45am

Thursdays: Aiki-Weapons: 6:30-7:30pm

Saturdays: Beginners': 7:15-8:15am.
Open: 8:30am-9:30am

No Classes on the last weekend of the month.

Private Classes Available.

No Appointment Necessary To Join:

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

Finding Our Dojo:

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



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