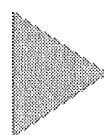


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Aikido Forum

Table of Contents

Co-operative Training - Katate-tori	1
Bob Moline	
"Beyond the Known" - Book review	3
George Hewson	
Beware the "Wrestler's Wrist"	4
Amanda Wood	
The National Coaching Certification Program (NCCP) ..	5
Walter Lantz	
HIV Prevention in the Dojo	6
Dr. Tony Leong	
Shoulder Separation in Aikido	7
Dr. Tony Leong	
The Sounds on the Mats	8
Blake Handley	
What Aikido means to me	8
Oria Airpolo, age 12	
"Women in Aikido" - Book Review	9
Darien Mikitka	
Interview with Kanai Sensei	10
Aikido Forum	
Poem "A Link"	12
Jim Salkeld	
Open forum with Kawahara Sensei	13
B.C. Aikido Summer Camp	
Canadian Aikido Federation registered dojos	15



a journal of aikido
education & training

Number 13, February 1994



Editor's Message

The Aikido Forum is the only Canadian journal on Aikido and its continuing success depends on you.

In this issue #13 (this may explain the many hurdles in getting this one completed) we are adding the perspective of the Junior Aikidoist in the form of letters, drawings and poetry. Victoria Aikikai has a very large junior class and when asked if they wanted to contribute to the Forum, they were most eager.

As the new (interim) editor of the Aikido Forum I am looking for fresh new ideas for its contents, examples are:

1. Martial Arts and the Law.
2. Women and Aikido
3. Aikido and Marriage
4. Attend any seminars lately?

5. Know of a "significant other" who is not practicing Aikido and would like to air some thoughts and feelings?
6. Your impressions of Aikido through different mediums: photographs, book reviews, poetry, letters etc.
7. Perhaps you know of a new dojo in Canada who would like to subscribe to the Aikido Forum; or would just like other Canadian Aikidoists know they exist so we can visit when passing through.

I haven't received any submissions for issue #14 so unless I hear from you the Forum could be history.

In closing I would like to thank everyone who did contribute to this issue, we are all volunteers who are "fitting in" the many hours of work to see the Aikido Forum reach this final stage.

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Our thanks to the various dojo representatives for raising the profile of the Aikido Forum in their areas. Our policy is now to mail all issues directly to the subscribers. We look to the dojo representatives to provide us with a public relations function. We invite anyone in a dojo to volunteer in advertising the existence of, and encouraging articles for, the Aikido Forum.

The intent of the Aikido Forum is that it be a place for discussion on matters relating to the practice of Aikido. To that end, articles are invited from Aikido practitioners throughout the Aikido community. Articles can be submitted on paper (typewritten, double spaced), MS-DOS or MAC diskette. Please provide a paper copy to ease our frustration in the event we cannot read the disk. Articles Submitted must be less than 1600 words, and be accompanied by a brief autobiography (40 words or less) including rank, dojo name, and a personal telephone number. We prefer the articles to be submitted in English,

but we do have limited translating capabilities.

As well as articles, Aikido graphics are invited. We'd like to present some of the visual impact of Aikido within these pages. We are particularly interested in graphics suitable for scanning and reproducing as small (2"x2" or less) images for visual impact in white space.

Most of all, our aim is to provide a "participatory forum" for the exchange and growth of information and understanding of Aikido. We invite participation from authors, artists and new subscribers, readers, critics, subscription promoters, distribution helpers, and whoever else might have something to offer the Forum or the Aikido community in general.

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Co-operative Training – Katate-Tori



Bob Moline

Some time ago, in the Aikido Forum, I wrote a series of articles suggesting that meaningful Aikido training is a blend of harmony and martial rigor. I suggested that, although neither can be practised as entities themselves, there are a number of “lesser” training elements that can be practised and would, in their sum, develop both harmony and martial rigor in a student. Kogeki (attacking), ukemi (receiving technique), maai (distancing), and kuzushi (unbalancing) were the elements on which I wrote. Now I would like to continue in the same vein with the kogeki-kuzushi of katate-tori attacks.

First, my definition of ‘ideal’ Aikido training. I believe that it occurs when nage and uke are both fulfilling their dual obligations to themselves and each other, when both the attacks and techniques have martial realism, energy efficiency, and yet at the same time allow for enjoyment and learning. What follows is offered from that frame of mind.

There are of course two types of practise: static – where the technique starts after uke grasps nage, and dynamic – where the technique starts as uke moves forward to grasp nage.

Static Practise – Uke:

There must be a division in both your mind and your actions between your attack, kogeki, and the aftermath, ukemi. Despite the fact that you know beforehand what nage is going to do to you, the basis for proper training is a realistic attack. An unrealistic attack would be one that you modify in some way because you are aware of the technique-to-come, or one that you modify to assist nage in doing the technique. (By the last phrase I do not suggest that you should refuse to help nage but rather, when you assist, that you should use appropriate ukemi not inappropriate kogeki.)

An example of the first type of poor attack might be footwork that has no value except the simplification of your ukemi. For instance, in gyaku-hanmi katate-tori ikkyo, nage should be learning to fix your point of balance on your front foot (which should be on the attack line) to prevent the weight-shift that starts the front snapkick, and move to your ‘safe’ side to avoid the possibility of a kick with the back foot or a strike with the free hand, and to make kuzushi. If you shift your weight to the back foot because you want to slide your front foot off to the side, moving with nage to keep balance, your attack is actually katate-tori plus front snapkick (why else would an attacker shift weight to the back foot except to kick with the front one?). So to use what would have been the kicking foot to slide with nage, alters the basic technique; the kuzushi that would have been there

for a katate-tori response, had you not slid your foot, is not there. In fact you have done the ukemi for wrist grasp and front kick, where nage recognizes that he or she has been unsuccessful in trapping the front foot, expects the kick, and moves quickly to evade it, forcing the foot to slide rather than kick. This is quite different than the ukemi for the wrist grasp alone where nage focuses on preventing uke from unweighting the front foot. For the ukemi you are doing, nage should actually go further to the side to create kuzushi on the front foot once it has stopped sliding, because if uke is on balance the threat from the free hand or back foot is real.

An example of the second type of poor attack might be taking a weak grip on nage’s wrist – loose fingers or a bent wrist – because “nage will be removing the hand anyway”.

On the other hand, it is not true that a slow attack is a poor attack, at least for basic training, as long as the only difference is speed. A slow motion attack can be helpful when learning a new technique. One point worth mentioning though is that when you attack katate-tori in slow motion the final closing of your fingers should be at the same slow speed as the rest of the attack.

When your attack is poor you are cheating both yourself and nage. You should grasp firmly, with a straight wrist, closing the grip from the smallest finger forward, leaving the index (ki) finger relaxed and making as much palm contact as possible. Your feet should be in hanmi stance, on the attack line, and you should be in the proper ‘forward-energy’ position to add a punch with power and accuracy. That kind of ‘prepared-to-continue-the-attack’ energy is vital to meaningful training; ‘too-prepared-to-cooperate-with-nage’, or ‘simply-waiting-for-the-technique’ energy will not give nage the proper feel for the situation or for the technique.

Static Practise – Nage:

These techniques are difficult because the starting position is uke’s strongest gripping position, and the maai is so small that the follow-up punch, grab or kick is only a split second away. The nage-uke energy connection is via your wrist so that is where the work must be done. The very first thing that uke should feel when you start the technique is kuzushi because that is what will stop the follow-up attack (or at least reduce its power) and give you a brief moment of advantage in which to act.

Therefore you must understand from Sensei’s demonstration whether kuzushi is to be created by leaving uke’s grip strong, by weakening it, or by breaking it. To

state the obvious – a strong grip is fully and properly attached to the wrist, a weakened grip is poorly attached, and a broken grip is fully detached. This is a sequence: strong-weak-broken. You start at “strong” and use that, or you move to “weak” and use that, or you move through “weak” to “broken” and use that. Those are the only choices available and you should knowingly select the right one.

An example of kuzushi via the strong grip is ai-hanmi katate-tori kote-gaeshi where you should first lead uke slightly forward by the firmly attached grip. Uke’s focus on the attack will be changed to a concern for balance, or at least an awareness that something is changing, giving you the safest opportunity to make your next move.

Next is kuzushi via the weakened grip. Weakening uke’s grasp requires uke’s hand to remain attached to your wrist but yet be easily removed when necessary. For instance in gyaku-hanmi katate-tori shiho-nage ura when you turn the palm down, the thumb towards the tanden and step off the line, uke’s grip is threatened and he or she follows in a futile attempt to keep the grip strong, loses posture (therefore balance and strength) and briefly creates self-kuzushi, allowing you to “take over” and continue the kuzushi and the technique. If you “under move”, uke’s grip will remain strong and removing uke’s hand will be a contest of muscles; if you “over move”, uke’s grip will break and you may have trouble getting the proper grip on uke’s hand.

I suggest that the weakened grip created when uke is unresponsive, ie does not create self-kuzushi, is not the weakened grip that you must have in order to do basic technique. It is really the brief transition between a strong grip and a broken grip. In the above shiho-nage example if uke does not follow in an attempt to keep the grip, the technique is not safe to do because uke’s hand will slip off your wrist leaving uke on balance and perhaps having enough strength to counter you. You should either use atemi or move to make a safe maai.

And lastly, the grip is generally broken only after you have taken control over uke with your free hand. For instance in ai-hanmi katate-tori kote-gaeshi, you take the wrist of uke’s attacking hand with your free hand before breaking the grip, or in ai-hanmi katate-tori irimi-nage, you take control of uke’s neck with the free hand before breaking the grip. However, it can also be done when you wish to free the grasped hand to use atemi, for instance in tenshi-nage when the upper hand is used to strike uke’s face rather than go over the shoulder to throw.

Dynamic Practise – Uke:

In this type of practise, move directly at nage, obeying all the rules identified in the static case above – commit to the attack, act as if nage will not move and your attack will be successful, strive to get to the static-practice starting position, follow nage’s energy, separate kogeiki from ukemi. These are

your initial obligations in the nage-uke contract, and perhaps the most important of all since a technique can only be as valid as the attack to which it responds.

Dynamic Practise – Nage:

This practise is difficult because of the timing needed to deal effectively with uke’s attack. Again you must manage uke’s grip, but this time you have initial choices that are not present in static training. In flowing practise you can use uke’s attacking energy before the attack connects, or you can let uke make contact but prevent him/her from getting the grip strongly, or you can let uke grasp strongly and then pick one of the three alternatives of static practise. It depends upon the requirement of the particular technique that is to be practised.

An example of a technique that does not allow uke to make the grip at all is ai-hanmi katate-tori kote-gaeshi where you offer one hand as ‘bait’ but capture uke’s attacking hand with your free hand before it can complete the attack.

That same technique can also be done with uke’s attacking hand making a weak connection to your wrist, but perhaps a better example is ai-hanmi katate-tori ikkyo where you let uke’s attacking hand touch your wrist but keep the ‘bait’ at uke’s fingertips so that uke makes self-kuzushi, becoming more and more vulnerable as he/she chases your wrist.

And in some of the kokyu-nage techniques it is vital that you let uke get and keep a strong grip because the throwing power gets to uke through the grip. (In fact sometimes you have to first weaken the grip and then allow uke to reattach firmly.)

Summary:

As beginners we must treat this as an issue of guiding uke’s body, later it will become the guiding of uke’s energy, and eventually we realize that a big part of it is the guiding of uke’s mind. When we develop that skill we will find that uke voluntarily moves to disadvantageous positions saving us the need to do it. Since someday we may meet an attacker that is stronger, healthier, fitter or whatever, we should practise as if each attacker is so, and strive to minimize our physical effort. We must try to attach uke’s mind to something which is to our advantage rather than to his or hers – the initial target of the attack, the stretch to make the grip, or even the grip itself – and then we will have the edge that permits energy-efficient, martially-valid technique. This requires us, as both uke and nage, to become less and less ego-centric in our practise, thinking less about ourselves and more about the reality of the technique.

Bob Moline, sandan, lives in Dryden, Ontario where he manages the Dryden Municipal Telephone System and teaches at Dryden Aikikai.

Book Review



George Hewson

Beyond the Known:
The Ultimate Goal of the Martial Arts
Tri, Thong Dang
Charles E. Tuttle Publishing Co., 1993
ISBN 0-8048-1891-6
paperback, 164 pages

According to Tri humans are not intended "to withdraw from the world or to ignore the inner voice." Since we are obliged to confront both the social and the personal aspects of our existence, morality is central to our lives. It is along such ethical lines Asian martial arts (Budo in Japanese) have offered a contribution to the world. In the West, however, martial arts are often viewed as a means to gain a prize or win a coloured belt. They have lost the original meaning, the serious purpose, and the vitality of Budo. Tri states that the legitimate study of martial arts involves an intense investigation into the art of living and is dramatically different from business transactions. The need is to address the quest for courage and authenticity, to maintain the form while seeking the inner essence, to look beyond the appearance and behold the heart.

In order to expound his view in detail Tri chooses to deal primarily with the complex and extraordinary relationship between pupil and master: "The story is intended to be a karmic tale of arrogance and love, of power-lust and compassion, of teacher and student linked in a...search for the Tao." The plot, if one might call it that, involves the training experiences of Lam as he is guided by Master Tai-Anh. The method of writing is to present a brief episode followed by a dialogue that is blended into the story. This technique, reminiscent of a Christian clergyman quoting from Biblical scripture then offering a homily, detracts significantly from the story-line and makes the book openly didactic. Rather than allowing the events to illustrate the points he wishes to make, Tri feels compelled to explain in detail. The result is a series of lectures thinly disguised as a novel.

Perhaps Tri's pedantry may be excused because he does have a number of important ideas to communicate and the plot, although fantastic and unconvincing, is useful in providing at least some context for them. Above all, Tri is successful in encouraging the reader to consider carefully the question of student-teacher relations. For example:

"The notion of discipleship is often rejected by people of the Western world where independence, competitiveness, and individuality are so highly valued. In the Eastern world, however,

discipleship is a crucial stage in the development of the martial-arts practitioner. It is the testing ground..on which the student must resolve incredibly challenging and often painful personal crises before discovering meaning..."

This raises the question of how to recognize a master. Tri urges inquiring individuals to look beyond physical strength and technical wizardry: "It is the degree of inner spiritual purity that matters...it is this quality that the would-be student must seek in the master." But how can a beginner identify such a quality? Tri suggests looking for modesty, honesty, and teaching by example as guidelines. His additional point that teachers should be healers with knowledge of breath and massage techniques is well taken.

One related issue that Tri does not address is what to do when one is disappointed in one's teacher. Loyalty is important and no one should expect an instructor to be perfect either technically or spiritually, or to make the right decisions all the time. Even masters make mistakes. But at what point does the student reject the teacher if that person's behavior is unacceptable? Tri ignores this issue in his story where the teachers, even if initially flawed, are eminently worthy of emulation. (I hope to return to this problem in another article.)

If it is difficult to locate and identify a master, is it not even more difficult to know when one has arrived at a stage where one can begin the formal instruction of others? In Canada, where there are few senior instructors, many relatively low-ranked black belts find themselves responsible for dojos. (Not that high rank always guarantees good teaching.) Tri offers a warning in the form of a story about a big toad and little frogs that sounds much like the idea of satisfying one's own ego by being the "big fish in a small pond".

There are no exciting battle scenes in Beyond the Known so don't expect any vicarious thrills. The pleasant story does, however, provide a good introduction to East Asian thought as manifested in the martial arts: Buddhism is represented in the notion of Karma (present situation based on past action); Confucian attitudes are contained in the emphasis on the relationship between teacher and pupil as well as the obligation to contribute to society; Taoism is included in the discussions of Chi (ki—universal energy) and yin/yang (harmony of mutual opposites). Students unfamiliar with the philosophical underpinnings of Aikido would benefit substantially from reading this book. Teachers may find some good quotations or parables.

There is little in the book about women. All the main characters are men. Some of the junior teachers are female

Beware the Wrestler's Wrist

Amanda Wood

I have been fighting a battle off the mats for a couple of months now, and it was suggested that I write to the Aikido forum to warn others of the little virus that has been nick-named "Dettweiler's Disease" (after Larry Dettweiler of Victoria who had the first official case) and "Wrestler's Wrist" (the more Common nick-name).

Molluscum Contagiosum is the official name that my dermatologist diagnosed a couple of months ago. I had been trying to convince my regular doctor for months that the red "rash" on the inside of my wrists has got to be more than eczema; especially after several bouts of cortisone creams had done diddly squat.

Apparently I was blessed with my new friends when I had a case of eczema break out on my wrists causing the skin to be less resistant. It was then transferred from someone who also had the virus. The dermatologist explained that it is very similar to a wart, and therefore I would have the same sort of treatment. It was then I learned that I was going to be a human chemistry experiment.

Take one canister liquid nitrogen, add one excited dermatologist (they don't see such a bad case very often - they even took photographs!), and one pair of wrists attached to exasperated owner; mix and watch the body's reaction to minus 220 degrees Celsius being sprayed directly on to one's arm. Then after a couple of weeks, return for round two and repeat procedure. Then wait a long time (I don't know how long yet!) for the red to fade away.

My advice: watch out for any unusual skin rashes or spots that look like small warts, and go and see your doctor as soon as possible. You are most vulnerable when the outer layer of your skin has been exposed, so wear a wrist band while the area heals. Take it from me, don't procrastinate, this "little" problem will not go away by itself, and wearing wrist bands make it easier for uke to hang on!

Amanda Wood, Renfrew Aikikai, Vancouver, B.C.

Book Review

cont'd from page 3

but they seem to be of the token variety and there is no attention paid to the problems faced by women in what remains a male domain.

Throughout the story none of the dojos or students appear to have any economic base. This is a major omission, as anyone with experience in dojo administration will tell you.

Moreover, the characters are types rather than real people with psychological complexities.

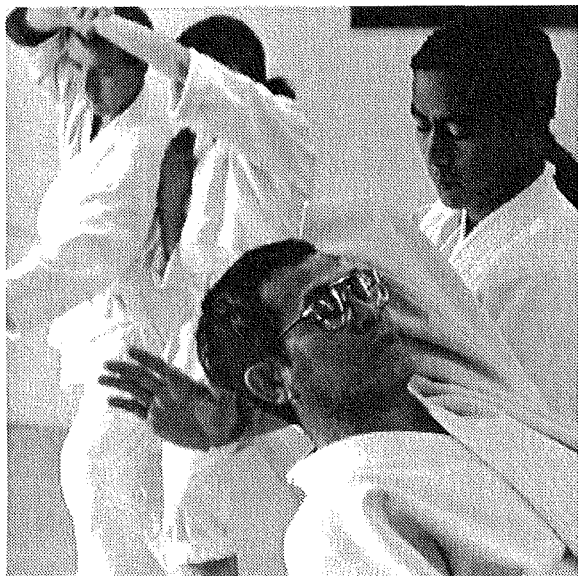
Despite its limitations, I recommend *Beyond the Known* for its several strengths in addition to those already mentioned.

It has good descriptions of various martial arts activities, including Aikido. Tri has been deeply influenced by the message of O-Sensei to whom he pays tribute as one of his two most inspirational teachers.

We are reminded that the number of days or years of training are far less important than how the training has been done. Wholehearted effort for a short time is more valuable than months of drifting aimlessly through practice. And what is the aim? To learn the forms, and then transcend the form: "Our work must always be to learn to go beyond the known, beyond what is borrowed, beyond

our fear of pain, and beyond our desire for pats on the back to the higher knowledge that is intuitive, inexplicable, and beyond intellect."

George Hewson, 4th dan, trains at the Japanese Canadian Cultural Centre Aikikai in Toronto. He is a high school history teacher currently seconded to the Royal Ontario Museum.



NCCP: What's in it for Aikido?



Walter Lantz

The National Coaching Certification Program (NCCP) is a five-level educational program for coaches of any sport. The first three levels (assistant club coach, club coach and provincial coach) are organized into Theory, Technical and Practical components.

A level I participant might be a parent who has volunteered to help with their child's soccer team, or a Judo student who will be asked to run warm-ups or occasional classes. I was reluctant to spend any time on what I thought would be perfectly obvious aspects of running a Judo class. However, I was thoroughly pleased at what I learned at Level I, and have since taken Level II. I am convinced that Aikido instructors and participants will also benefit from this course.

To begin with, I learned about the four stages of a proper warm-up: Joint Rotation, Stretching, Moderately Vigorous Exercise, and Activity Simulation. I learned why the order is important, and the dangers inherent in skipping any of them.

We watched videos of coaches giving anecdotes of their experiences, and of situations where appropriate and inappropriate coaching techniques were being used. I'll never forget the 10 year old boy who was being pushed to tackle his teammates during football practice, and given push-ups as punishment for avoiding collisions. He said "I thought it was going to be fun; but it's not fun." When interviewed, his coach stressed the necessity to get the boys started early on the hard road to success at college football. He had not learned that the children must first want to play football, and that that desire for children is based on fun. Fun is important for adults as well, but often takes place after, rather than during the practice. I decided to plan more social events for my club, and found that the members responded positively.

The most important lesson I learned was regarding the correcting of techniques. I think that I was typical of coaches. I looked at the student while they did the technique. When I spotted what needed improving, I said, for example, "Your left arm should be higher." What I did not communicate was that the right arm was perfect, the foot placement and timing were very good, and that on the whole, the technique was very good. By mentioning only the point that needed improving, I was focusing on the negative, and failed to give the student any positive reinforcement. I should have pointed out the good parts first, and then said "To improve the technique, raise your left arm higher." What is your method of correcting techniques?

Fundamental to the NCCP program is instruction in energy systems. Our bodies have three energy systems: Aerobic, Anaerobic Lactic, and Anaerobic Alactic. The first is characterized by marathon runners—they maximize on the

gradual output of energy, and last about 2 hours. The second is characterized by the 400 metre runner who must run for 1 minute. The third is characterized by the 100 metre sprinter who pours everything into a 10 second burst. Most sports or physical activities require conditioning in all three areas.

What energy demands does Aikido make upon its participants, and how is energy system training relevant to a non-competitive non-sport? Because strength is not supposed to be used in Aikido, the only energy system which is relevant is aerobic energy. Why get into aerobic shape? If you don't, you will tire during the class, or seminar, and be physically less capable of continuing the practice. In other words, if you are in aerobic condition, you will have the opportunity to learn more.

To get aerobic benefit from an Aikido or any other practice, it must include 20 minutes during which the participant's heart rate stays at approximately 130 beats per minute (220 less age, times 2/3). If the practice is continually broken, the conditioning effect is lost, and the participants are just burning calories. Aikido students who have difficulty lasting through a practice, or are planning to attend a seminar, can prepare their bodies through aerobic training outside of the class. A 20 minute jog, swim or stair machine workout, three times a week for 12 weeks, is ideal. Once aerobic fitness is achieved, it can be maintained by one such workout every ten days.

I found the Theory Level I course to be useful in a variety of other ways. I spoke with other coaches, and compared notes and training methods. I became more aware that success in my sport did not just depend on traditional training methods, but that modern sports theory, training, psychology and sports medicine could be applied with excellent results.

The things I have mentioned here are part of the Theory Level I course. This course takes 10 hours, and may also be undertaken in home study. I think that the class environment is better because of the chance to mix with other coaches. The Technical component must be developed by the specific sport body and is designed to ensure that coaches have the technical knowledge of their sport to coach it. The Practical component is simply coaching for a given number of hours after the other components have been completed.

Nobody has organized a Technical component for Aikido, so NCCP certification is not an option. Nevertheless, I strongly advise anyone who is involved in teaching Aikido to take the Theory Level I course, and I believe that it would be useful for students as well. For information on NCCP courses, contact Sport B. C. at 737-3000 in Vancouver.

Walter Lantz instructs Judo at the UBC Judo Club, and has studied Aikido. He is a technical writer and publisher.



HIV Prevention in the Dojo

Dr. Tony Leong

HIV stands for Human Deficiency Virus, which is the cause of Acquired Immuno-deficiency Syndrome. (AIDS). People afflicted with AIDS suffer from fatal infections and cancers. However, a person acquiring the HIV virus may live for eight to twelve years before developing the symptoms of AIDS.

Epidemiology

The Centre for Disease Control in the United States estimates that there are between 1 and 1.5 million HIV carriers in the United States, and approximately 1 in 250 adults in the United States thought to be infected with HIV. It is estimated that there are currently more than 50,000 Canadians living with HIV infection. The World Health Organization recently estimated that up to 40 million individuals around the world may be infected by the year 2000.

Transmission

The major way of transmitting the HIV virus is through unprotected sexual intercourse. It is also transmitted via blood, e.g. in IV steroid users, and via breast milk. In the Dojo, blood transmission is of primary concern, since the following fluids are not implicated in the transmission of HIV, i.e. sweat, saliva, tears, respiratory droplets, and sputum. Urine is also not implicated.

The World Health Organization has issued a statement, stating that HIV is not transmitted through handshaking, skin contact, swimming pool water, communal bath water, toilet seats, food or drinking water. No known cases of HIV transmission has occurred through wrestling mats.

The risk of HIV transmission in sports is exceedingly low. To date there has been one reported case of wound to wound transmission between two soccer players, and the evidence in that case was doubtful. Nevertheless, it must be emphasized that HIV infection, when it does occur, is fatal, although the incubation period may be up to 10 years, between the time of acquisition of the virus, and the manifestation of AIDS.

In addition, hepatitis virus B and hepatitis C are similarly transmitted and are less fragile than HIV.

Recommendations for dealing with wounds in the dojo are as follows:

- 1) No practitioner shall be on the mat with a bleeding or potentially bleeding wound. If bleeding occurs, the wound should be cleansed with antiseptic and securely covered.
- 2) Blood contaminated clothing should be removed and replaced before continuing practice. Clothing should then be washed in hot soapy water.
- 3) The mat should be cleansed using one part household bleach to nine parts water. This solution should be freshly made. Alternately, an alcohol based spray such as "Lysol" may be used.
- 4) During cleaning, gloves should be used, and the soiled paper towels or cloths should be placed in a plastic bag for suitable disposal; the cleaner's hands should be washed with soap and water after removing the gloves.

The question arises, should an HIV positive practitioner be allowed to practice in the dojo? Since the chance of HIV transmission during sports is extremely low, the position of the American Academy of Pediatrics is that HIV infected athletes should be allowed to compete in all sports, and that routine testing of all athletes for HIV is inappropriate.

The Canadian Academy of Sports Medicine's position is that an HIV positive individual should not be excluded on the basis of HIV infection, but that the individual should seek medical care to assess the health and benefits from participation in the sport.

Nevertheless, it is good practice to be conscious of infectious disease transmission in general, as other agents, e.g. Staphylococcal folliculitis, impetigo, Herpes Simplex, are easily transmitted through skin contact.

Therefore, mats should be washed after each practice, and each practitioner should participate in the cleaning, not only as a point of etiquette, but the act of cleaning the mats also cleans the hands. This eliminates the major source of general infectious disease spread, i.e. via transmission from hand to mucous membranes.

Shoulder Separation in Aikido



Dr. Tony Leong

Injuries to the shoulder include strains, sprains, fractures, and dislocations. A very common injury to the shoulder in Aikido is injury to the acromioclavicular (A/C) joint, commonly known as shoulder separation.

The A/C joint connects the end of the clavicle, or collar bone, with the acromion of the scapular. It is stabilized by two sets of ligaments, the A/C or acromioclavicular ligament, and the CC, or coracoclavicular ligaments, and two sets of muscles: the deltoid and the trapezius.

The injury occurs when the practitioner lands directly on the tip of the shoulder, rather than rolling progressively on the “unbendable arm” during ukemi (forward roll), distributing the force of the throw via his back and slapping arm, this may also occur if the practitioner lands on the shoulder rather than doing a breakfall. A faulty landing results in dislocation of the joint with action-reaction forces causing shearing moments at the A.C joint.

Injuries to the A/C joint are classified according to the degree of disruption of the tissues involved. There are 6 degrees of A/C joint injury, but from a practical point of view, types I to III are most common.

Type I involves a partial disruption of the A/C ligament, but leaving the coracoacromial ligaments intact. There is local swelling and pain and tenderness, but there is no step deformity.

Type II sprain entails a ruptured A/C ligament and capsule with incomplete injury to the coracoclavicular(CC) ligament.

Type III separations involve complete tearing of the A/C and CC ligaments, with gross anatomic distortion.

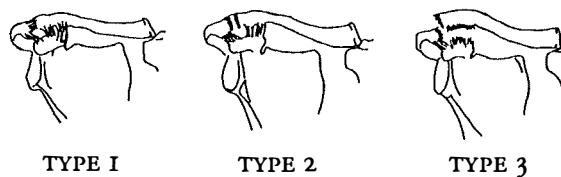
The treatment of A/C joint injury is as follows:

The practitioner should protect himself from further injury by ceasing practice.

Aikido is an act that requires presence and focus. Lack of focus because of pain from an injured area may predispose the practitioner to further injury of the A/C joint or other parts of the body.

Ice should be applied for the first 24-48 hours to decrease swelling and to provide pain relief. A suggested regimen is to use ice cubes, or chemical cold packs, or a bag of frozen peas applied for 15 minutes every 2-3 hours.

A physician should be consulted to rule out other injuries. (X-rays may or may not be requested, depending on his



judgement.)

In all cases, the area should be rested, on the advice of a physician, until the symptoms are abated and full strength and function has returned. Non-steroidal antiinflammatories, e.g. Ibuprofen, may also be used to decrease inflammation. These should generally be taken with meals or with a cyto protective agent to avoid the development of gastric irritation. Physiotherapy may be helpful to decrease pain and inflammation, and to rehabilitate the muscles involved. Technical advice should be sought from a senior student to avoid repetition of the injury.

As a general guide, persons with ‘Type I’ injuries may need to be off, for 2-3 weeks. ‘Type II’ injuries require 4-6 weeks, and Type III injuries greater than 6 weeks.

The treatment of ‘Type III’ injuries have been controversial, but recent data strongly favours non-surgical treatment, despite the cosmetic defect. Although surgical fixation results in a seemingly better cosmetic appearance initially, the procedure of placing a pin into the joint may result in early degenerative arthritis.

In all cases, it is advisable upon returning to practice, that a marker, e.g. a piece of tape, be placed on the dogi over the injured area to advise practice partners to be aware of that area, and to adjust his efforts accordingly.

In summary, A/C joint separation is a common injury in Aikido. Optimal treatment consists of accurate diagnosis, rest, ice, anti-inflammatory medication, physiotherapy, and maintenance of fitness and technical analysis to prevent reoccurrence.

This information is intended for educational purposes only. Practitioners should seek the advice of a physician upon injury.

Dr. Tony Leong, 4th kyu, is a family physician with an interest in acupuncture and sports medicine. He is a Certificant of the College of Family Physicians of Canada and has a diploma in sports medicine from the Canadian Academy of Sports Medicine. He practices Aikido at Victoria Aikikai.



The Sounds on the Mats

Blake Handley

EEE-YEH... The hall echoes. ERR-RUP... Again the silence of the practice is broken. My partner readies herself for the attack. My fist draws up from my center and lunges toward my practice associate.. KI-YAA... The sound travels with me as I attack with serious intent. There is a moment on the mats when you are entirely focused on what is happening around you. Your body and mind are in momentum together. Energy abounds, gathering to propel your attack. All energy comes together at one focused point and for me it resounds in a grand Ki-ai.

From my experience, Aikido is a silent art. During practice we learn with our eyes by observing sensei. Our body learns by doing the form over and over again. There is little time for discussion or theory. Each technique we practice contains elements that are part of O'Sensei's original technique, part of our sensei's own technique and the root form of the practice. More variables come into play when we add that part of ourselves. I have lately been troubled by my seemingly unique contribution: Vocalizations.

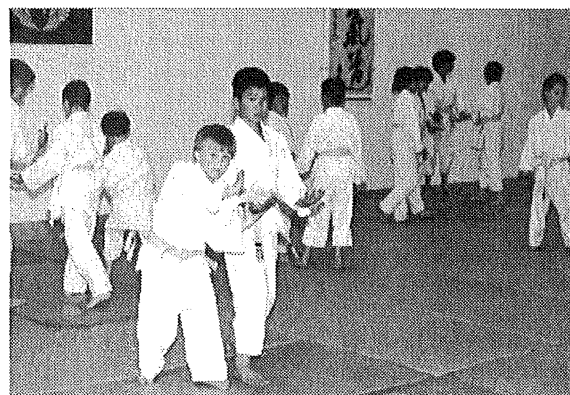
To me, vocalization means to use committed ki or energy. We are taught to attack with full intent. This to me means to give your everything with the intent of being a good uke to that person you are facing. Tsuki means nothing if it stops before it reaches your goal. Kotegaeshi is not possible if the momentum stops before the movement can be redirected. To me, vocalization is a part of the involvement of Ki and commitment to the attack.

There are moments when the silence of a dojo is broken because of this roar coming out of the corner. There are times during bokken practice that a growl sneaks out of the line like a thief through a window. When this happens energy grows in the room and I sense my commitment to the other practitioners. There are other times when absolutely everything stops and people look over as if to say "Oh Blake's at practice" as if I have my own calling card to announce my presence.

In many ways, my personal calling card is an appropriate identification method. As I became aware of my own vocalizations, I noticed other techniques. Some practitioners use vocalizations to taunt their partners into taking the correct hand or follow a particular lead. I have observed those who apply sound effects to their style as a mnemonic devised to remember a defense. Although there is no universal code to these vocalizations, sounds like "Biff" means atemi, "Zoup" means a sweeping motion like Shihonage and "Bop" resembles, tsuki, Either way, I am beginning to recognize that these sounds are each a persons way of dealing with the energy that they themselves create.

The practice of Aikido represents serious study of everyone involved. A momentary lapse of attention or judgement could mean serious injury. So for those of us on the mats we need to remember that we are also creating energy. That excess energy needs to be released gradually like steam from a pressure cooker. To me this is the essence of vocalization on the mats. To release energy in a constructive controlled manner in order to maintain harmony within myself and my surroundings.

Blake Handley, 3rd kyu, practices at Camosun College in Victoria, B.C.



What Aikido Means to Me

Aikido is not only fun. It's not just good exercise. It's not just for learning to defend yourself. It is all these things, but to me, they are not what's important. What Aikido means to me is self-discipline. Which will help you to do better in school and in other things, It's learning to work with others, and to help teach, which will also be important skills that are useful in everyday life. Aikido is a challenge, something that cannot be learned overnight or in a year. Aikido is learning to be in harmony with your own mind and body, and with others. It teaches you to do your best and not to give up and to have patience. Something that is important to me is that in Aikido you can see your progress over time. These are some of the reasons why Aikido is important to me.

Oria Airpolo, White Belt, Age 12, practices at Victoria Aikikai (Junior Class).

Book Review

Darien Mikitka

Women in Aikido
Andrea Siegel,
North Atlantic Books,
Berkeley, California, 1993

A recently published book, called WOMEN IN AIKIDO written by Andrea Siegel gives a distinctive, female view of Aikido. The book consists of twelve different interviews Ms. Siegel conducted with women practitioners, all of whom have their black belt.

The book begins with a brief introduction of why and how the author undertook this project. She speaks eloquently of Aikido as being a martial art that is 'heartbreakingly beautiful' and at times 'bone-breakingly painful'. In case the reader is not familiar with Aikido, a thumbnail sketch of the history of Aikido plus the terms and names used in the practice is included.

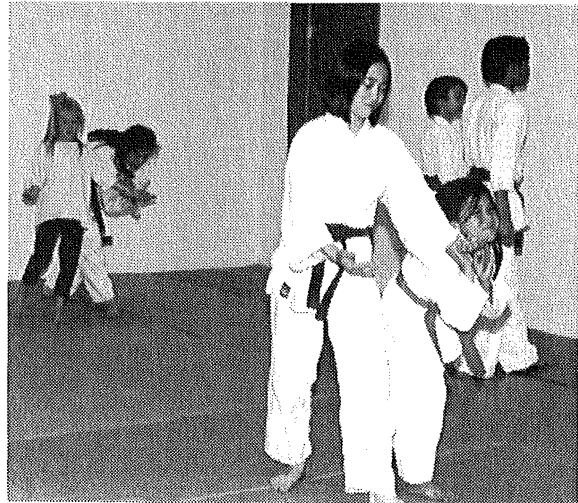
Each chapter consists of one interview, most of which were held in person, but a few were conducted over a telephone. The interview is prefaced by a short, descriptive biography usually outlining the woman's background and experience in Aikido.

One is immediately struck by the articulate openness of these women in how they respond to the questions asked of them. They have given time and thought not only to their practice but the reasons why they practice and how their practice affected their lives.

No pretense is made that Aikido is the answer for all people. It was repeatedly mentioned throughout the various interviews, that Aikido was just one path to follow and other ways are equally as valid. For instance, one of the interviewees no longer practices Aikido, but she had clear and insightful comments to make about Aikido and the role it played in her life.

It was also evident that although Aikido was part of their lives, their lives also had other parts. If a common thread united these women, it was their ability to focus and commit to the amount of training and discipline it is necessary to be ranked as a black belt. Nevertheless, some of the North American myth of a black belt was debunked as it was pointed out a black belt in Japan is earned after only one year of practice.

Mainly the interviews focused on how these women were and are 'empowered' by Aikido. Each woman was different and used different terms, but each in her own way spoke about how she recognized, struggled with and eventually handled the energy she uncovered in her practice. Each tells of her journey. To date most of the books I have read



emphasize the importance of harmonizing and blending. In this book, this is a given, and the next step is learning to recognize the power generated in practice and how this energy can be channelled for constructive use.

One interesting segment spoke of giving up power so as to get it back. Lorraine DiAnne, a fifth degree black belt, described the results of aggressively attacking her teacher, Chiba Sensei. She would attack with all of her being and in doing so hand him her life. He would take it, redirect it and "hand it back uninjured, as it was given him". This level of trust on her part opened up an understanding of what O'Sensei meant about love in his teaching. To her this became "an expression of love within the aggressive style". Attacking with complete trust was a gift that was given back.

If I have any complaint about the book it would be its "California" or "West Coast" emphasis. Many of the women in the book appeared to have shared similar sensei's in California. Even though some of the women now live on the East Coast or in the mid-west, they mostly received the bulk of their training in California. Perhaps this is just how it worked out, but it would also have been interesting to have heard from women who had been trained chiefly in the East. This is a small complaint but it would have ensured there was a balanced overview of the female aikido experience in America.

Regardless, of gender biases, I believe this book has something to say to all practitioners and would recommend reading it.

Darien Mikitka is a 4th Kyu with Victoria Aikikai and is a real estate appraiser

Interview with Kanai Sensei

Forum:

First of all Sensei, I'd like to welcome you to British Columbia. I've been asked on behalf of the Aikido Forum to ask you a few questions. First of all many students who are practitioners in the B.C. area are getting older, and as we get older, we are noticing that this affects our practice, in particular, it affects the way that we take ukemi and the way we execute techniques.

Kanai Sensei:

(laughing) That's my problem too.

Forum:

Recently, there are more and more older students who are coming to class for the first time. Do you have any particular thoughts about that?

Kanai Sensei:

I'm there right with you. I'm thinking about it too; getting older. Medically speaking of course, your joints get stiff, hard. But its certainly true that Aikido is not necessarily just for young people. Certainly there are manifestations of age, but I really don't think that there's any special technique or practice for older people, an Aikido for old people, an Aikido for women.... That's my opinion. Basically if I think about myself, I don't really think that my Aikido has actually changed. I don't feel my youthful Aikido and my mature, aged Aikido are really very different.

Forum:

Sometimes as you get older, when you practice a technique like shihonage, when nage has moved under your elbow and forces you and you cannot turn in full to counter your arm, you must take a bigger fall. And as you get older, as uke should you just be extra careful in following nage? Because it gets hard to continuously take that impact all the time.

Kanai Sensei:

There are many ways of taking ukemi. It is inconceivable that there are special forms of ukemi for the aged or for women. However, you might experience difficulty in taking ukemi, even though you are taking the ukemi in the correct way. That's something that I have not encountered as of yet. Considering that I might experience that too eventually one day, this is a very important issue for me to address. It is a sure phenomenon that people age physically. However, it is inconceivable that the way you take ukemi should change according to your age, because the ukemi itself is structured in such a way that you won't get hurt, by principle.



Forum:

So if injuries occur, is uke not paying attention?

Kanai Sensei:

That's a possible reason. It may be caused also by the partner that you are working with. It is hard to make a pointed response without watching you practice.

Forum:

Sensei, another question I often ponder in my own training is how to stay sharp and have good attention in training and not to allow the techniques to become mechanical?

Kanai Sensei:

If you really can think about what it is exactly that you're doing, you won't get tired. The Japanese word is maneru, for mannerism. If you don't want your waza to get tired or mechanical, just think about what it is that you're really doing, and you shouldn't get tired and you're waza should not get stale.

Forum:

How do we convey this to our students if we are teaching? Does it involve teaching in a martially rigorous manner with lots of atemi, in order to keep the student aware of the implications to not paying attention? Or is there something that you can do just by demonstrating the aliveness in oneself?

Kanai Sensei:

If the teacher himself has considered carefully, and if you yourself can formulate and conceptualize, and be aware of what you are going to teach, each class, each technique within a class, has a kind of purpose, then they should be

able to pick up on that. It shouldn't be necessary to do anything special. If you yourself are bored, it seems that your students will be bored. If you don't ask yourself, or you don't know just why it that you're doing a keiko, then perhaps you will get that feeling. It will be impossible to avoid. If you really know why it is that you are training, then it shouldn't be a problem.

Forum:

What I've noticed in some classes, is that there seemed to be a lack of aliveness, and this is why I've brought this question out. It has troubled me for a while, because I've noticed that even though I myself feel very alive, and am wanting to have spirited training, I've noticed that it doesn't always carry over to the rest of the class.

Kanai Sensei:

So you have classes where nobody seems to pick up, and everybody seems dull....

Forum:

Yes.

Kanai Sensei:

I have that problem too throughout the year.

Forum:

Studying basic technique seems to me like an onion - when I peel off one layer, there's always another layer underneath. Is this a natural process in learning basic technique? To always come to realize that you really don't know, so you go back and try again?

Kanai Sensei:

Your understanding of techniques improves or deepens as you train further; however, all the important things are in the basic technique. So you just realize that the answers are within the techniques that you have been practising over and over.

Forum:

After spending many years on one basic technique, I sometimes wake up and feel that I know nothing about the technique. Is this natural?

Kanai Sensei:

That's the beginning (of the training, or the process of understanding). Because you recognize your ignorance, you start questioning a more fundamental principle of Aikido. What is the principle that makes the techniques work? What is the underlying principle of Aikido? That's the awakening you're experiencing. It is my understanding that when you started Aikido, when you try to understand in terms of a move and the feeling or the ideology, such as harmony and flowing well, you fail to grasp the essence - the very 'stuff' of techniques, and depend too much on feelings and moves that you get from practising. If you pretend to create an image of what Aikido is, and it is a fantasy about Aikido, and by thus creating such images and fantasies, you seek them, then you will never come to a point of understanding

what Aikido is. By following images and fantasies, you don't come to understand the principle of Aikido - what makes Aikido techniques work - what the underlying fundamental principle is.

Forum:

So is the fundamental principle of Aikido discovered through practice?

Kanai Sensei:

Without practising and physically understanding the principle or without going through the process of physically understanding or mastering the principle, its like building a castle with sand. It is my thinking that although there are many good books on Aikido, especially in terms of the philosophy and ideology of Aikido, many people develop an image of a ball. People like circular things in general, so when people think about ukemi, they think about people rolling circularly. That's the image people have, and that's what people think of. That creates a gap between the reality of ukemi in Aikido, and the projected, personally constructed image of ukemi. I do not think that ukemi is like a human ball tumbling.

Forum:

You said that you do not think that ukemi is a circular rolling? Could you explain that?

Kanai Sensei:

Simply speaking, I consider the human body to be something like a stick, but its a very flexible one. Its a stick with joints, and no matter how it is thrown, part of it bends and absorbs and springs right back. So although I can't give you a clear cut answer to the question "What is the real ukemi?", at least I can say that the human tumbling ball doesn't have enough logic to suffice for 'what ukemi should be'. Some people teach Aikido movement to be circular, and they tell people to move circularly, over and over.

Forum:

My understanding of the word 'ukemi' is to receive through the body. If that is true, does it follow therefore, that when we take ukemi we are receiving part or all of the technique?

Kanai Sensei:

That is correct. Also, the basic meaning of ukemi is that you protect yourself from your opponent's further attack, or any attack.

Forum:

Sensei, at this point, in the interest of not keeping you too long, I'd like to thank your for your time. If there other topics you would like to explore, we would be very pleased to listen.

Kanai Sensei:

Please ask the question that you wish to. If you have a burning desire to get clarification on certain things, this

is a good opportunity, and I would be happy to answer those questions.

Forum:

Would there be any advantage for an aikidoist to study offensive techniques taught in other Martial Arts?

Kanai Sensei:

Many people think that Aikido's offensive techniques are not as realistic and practical as other martial art's offensive techniques, but that's because people have not grasped the principle of the techniques. People do throwing techniques or joint techniques, and others, but there's no continuity or consistent principle that governs those activities. Lots of people do not know how to attack or how to use their body in attacking their opponent in Aikido practice, and that's because they have not grasped and they cannot apply the basic principle. In the future, I firmly believe that the foundational principle will be clarified and polished, and no matter what you do, the same principles apply. And it works.

Forum:

When you mentioned 'in the future, does that mean for us as individuals, or does that mean that someone is going to clarify this for us?

Kanai Sensei:

Yes, including myself. In the future, this will be clarified, At this point, that principle has been neither clarified but systematically presented- nor perfected yet. For example, when we do taijitsu without weapons, we have a certain way of moving. When we have weapons in our hands, we move in different ways. And there is no clear consistency that is governed by the principle. Eventually a consistent

principle that is applicable to taijitsu and weapons, will be qualified and understood. Hombu for example has never presented a consistent principle for sword-swinging, or the use of the jo, so each instructor does things differently. And the principle is very unclear, if there is any. There are some people in Hombu who understand this point, and I have also talked with them about this. So eventually these issues will be systematically dealt with.

Forum:

There are many different styles practised by uchi-deshi at Hombu Dojo. Would their styles also be unified into a more organized form?

Kanai Sensei:

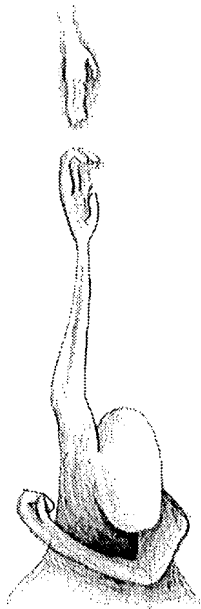
There is a question of "What is the difference between Aikido and other martial arts?" By clarifying what the principle is that governs Aikido techniques, we can appreciate individual uniqueness or individual styles, but what they teach the students will be consistent in terms of the teaching of the principles.

Forum:

Is there going to be a directive from Hombu?

Kanai Sensei:

There is talk about this. In various places there are people who realize this is happening now, and there is talk about it, and it will happen. There will be some clarification of what the basic principles are. Even though a quick solution cannot be found immediately, there is a gradual movement in the right direction, to clarify and unify, or understand the governing principles. A positive change will eventually take place.



"Maai"
Campbell Orr
Age 12
White Belt

A Link

Turn the first link of a chain

Tighten it link by link

By moving the nearest

Make the furthest end lift

Keep the chain taut

Keep the connection

*Jim Salkeld,
Shodan, Vancouver Aikikai*

Open Forum with Kawahara Sensei



The following was an open forum with Kawahara Sensei during the 1993 British Columbia, Aikido Summercamp held at Gibsons Landing.

Student:

To what extent are creativity and flowing forms appropriate to Aikido?

Kawahara Sensei:

One of the unique features of Aikido is circular movement. So long as you do not collide or run into the partner, that is fine as a way of practicing. We practice ikkyo in a circular way but as a technique it should not be done like this. Also in Martial reality if you did tenkan you would not turn around into partners back.

O'Sensei used to say, "when you turn, a technique is born."

There are Aikido practice forms that are much like dance forms; it is hard to say to what extent Aikido practice is not a martial art, and from what point it becomes a martial practice.

If you came to my dojo, you would hear me explain what I am trying to do. So when you do Aikido do it your own way; but it is important not to deviate from the basic forms.

There are many foolish people who take ukemi in ikkyo by moving away from partner and then say "this technique does not work on me." Or some people do kaeshiwaza, or counter techniques, against ikkyo. It is impossible to do such counter techniques for resisting movement if Aikido is done correctly. Because we practice in a circular way, it becomes possible to reverse the movement.

In the old days we used to practice with a clear awareness of what we were doing in each part of the movement; so we used to do techniques which looked much more gentle than the way we practice now. Because we all practice as uke and nage with full understanding of what is happening rather than resisting or getting into unnecessary conflicts.

Student:

Can we borrow attacks from other Martial Arts?

Kawahara Sensei:

It is not necessary. In Aikido there are offensive techniques that we don't practice. When you can do Aikido properly you will understand.

O'Sensei use to say, "if anything dangerous should happen to you just run away." That is a true story.



What is the point of practicing to hit someone? The most important and best thing to do is make friends with people.

Student:

Why was ikkyo considered the first technique and does it have more relevance than other basic techniques?

Kawahara Sensei:

When you face the partner your ki flows from the top down, through the floor and up. That is how you match. With ikkyo you are moving in straight but directing the energy up; that is the mental function, the extension of your mental energy. That is the first principle.

Student:

How can you move into yokomenuchi without running into the side blow?

Kawahara Sensei:

This is the old way of entering. Move in to strike the other shoulder so partner cannot complete yokomenuchi. This is very difficult.

One master said, "I used to do it this way many years ago but still the partner can strike me."

You may consider that this old technique has been replaced by modern methods of receiving yokomenuchi, but the basic moving in has not changed.

It is important to match your movement with the partner and quickly move in to immobilize partner's elbow; this is also part of the basic. If you receive the partner's yokomen and immobilize the elbow he cannot complete the attack. After colliding with the arm, if your

head goes forward you cannot complete the movement. So when you move in and your head and partner's head line up, the hand which takes partner's wrist should be at your face level. No matter how high or low your centre is relative to your body, it should be at eye level. When the hand reaches eye level you should turn very fast.

The first part of the practice is to stretch the arm. So to strengthen your technique, pay attention to these key points.

Even if you practice properly with these key points in mind, other people may not perceive your technique as

convincing: "I can hit you here or there." Your response can be, "if you can hit me, I can also hit you."

So people who criticize you about practicing correctly do not know what you are practicing. This is based on impressions they might have without knowing the danger of the technique you are doing. Disregard such criticism and practice; that is what O'Sensei use to say as well. Otherwise you would not learn how to do aikido and develop the tanden or lower abdominal power.

Forum:

Thank you Sensei.

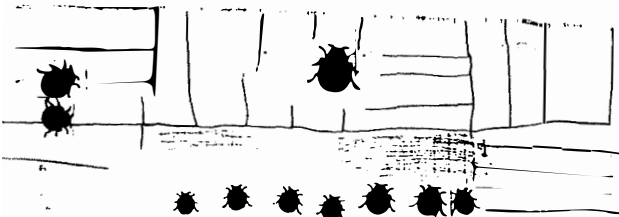
Kiff
white
8

what it mens

It mens having fun
 it all so mens meeting new peple
 larning new moves
 Wrking with new kids
 laring new strys
 laring a bot a sensei
 here is a Peter of my favat sensei



Jeremy Nancy
 10 White Belt



What Aikido means to me is
 having fun with other people.
 Aikido (A) helps me learn how
 to defend myself and learn
 to harmonize with the rest.
 It takes a lot of practice
 especially for me to learn
 how to do the techniques

Mara
 Age: 12
 Rank: 6th

What Aikido Means to Me

I Love aikido but the break fall
 is my favorite part.



6k Martin MacPhail



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