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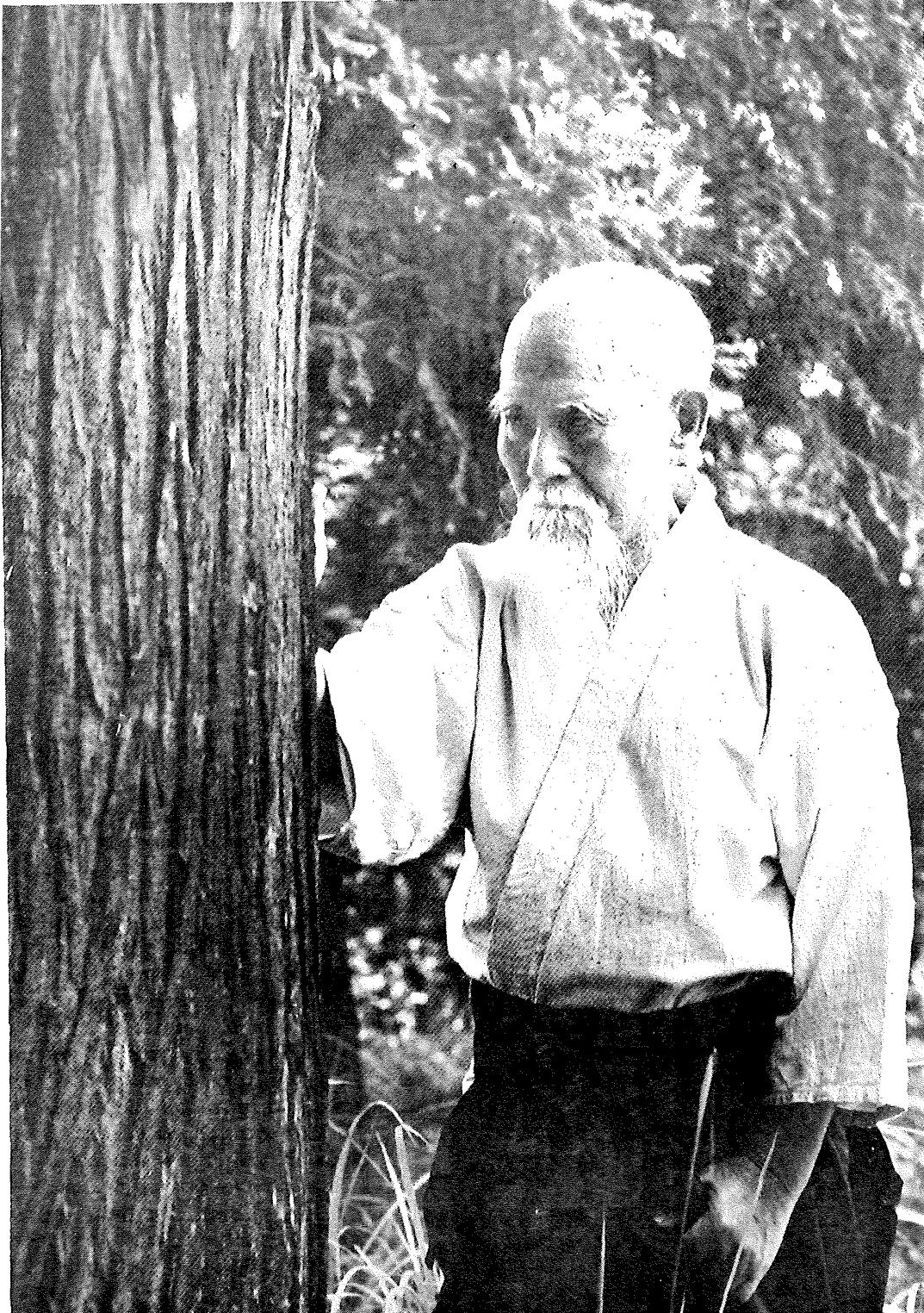
AIKIDO FORUM



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WORDS FROM THE EDITOR

It is my great pleasure to present our first issue of the AIKIDO FORUM which will be published semi-annually, in the fall and spring. Its intent is to foster discussion, inspiration, sharing and education in the Aikido community.

We are extremely honoured to receive, for our initial issue, original articles from Doshu Kisshomaru Ueshiba and Shihan Bansen Tanaka.

While I feel a great responsibility in creating such a journal, I am also excited with this endeavour and the prospect of contributing to the promotion of Aikido. I am fortunate to have able and hardworking staff: Mr. Bob Moline, Dr. Paul Munson and Mr. Ralph Kopperson.

We are sending the first issue without committed subscriptions in order to publicize our endeavour. However, the second issue will only be sent to subscribers, so please make your intentions known.

I hope that you will offer your comments and suggestions on our endeavour and consider submitting an article for our future issues. It is our hope to reflect the ideas, experiences, and expertise of Aikido practitioners and instructors from all over the world.

Submitted articles must be typewritten (double spaced), be less than 1600 words, and be accompanied by a brief autobiography (40 words or less) including your Aikido rank and dojo name. We prefer that the articles be submitted in English but we do have limited translating abilities in French, Spanish, Dutch and Japanese. Please retain a copy for your own record and submit your article to:

The Editor
 Aikido Forum
 P.O. Box 5581, Station B
 Victoria, B.C. Canada
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THE PURSUIT OF TRUE AIKIDO
by **Doshu Kisshomaru Ueshiba**

Congratulations on the first issue of the AIKIDO FORUM. I am very pleased to learn that Aikido has grown this much and rooted itself in Canada enough to produce its own publication. I have a feeling that people, not only in Canada but also everywhere else, are developing respect for Aikido as an art that contributes to society and humanity.

It is a fact that many people have forgotten the importance of "kokoro" (the mind, spirituality) as the most essential part of human existence. This may be due to the rapid advancement of scientific technology for the last couple of decades. As has been pointed out by many people, impediments in peoples' spiritual growth have surfaced in various forms along with this technological advancement. In this sense, I believe Aikido offers a promising solution to the mental and spiritual crises that the human community is facing, and I recognize that peoples' pursuit of Aikido as a spiritual self-discipline is deeply rooted.

Although Aikido started in Japan, the truth in Aikido philosophy appeals to everyone in the world. Aikido unifies the mind and the body, and there is no contradictions in Aikido movements.

When the mind and the body become one, and join the stream of Great Nature, we call it "ku" (atmospheric pervasiveness) and "mu" (formlessness) to describe the ultimate form of the union among the mind, the body, and nature. This introspective pursuit of the higher level of the mind-and-body state is the reflection of peoples' indefatigable efforts to embody the central philosophy of Aikido in movements and daily life.

The significance of Aikido techniques lies in the circularity of mental and physical movements without resisting nature. Creating conflicts and aggressive confrontations is not true Aikido. Therefore, in contrast to the other Japanese martial arts, competitions have been excluded from the process of Aikido training. If competitions were to be adopted, the emphasis would be inevitably placed upon the win-or-lose aspect. Practitioners could easily develop attachments to such an aspect, and the true spirit of Aikido would be lost entirely.

As I mentioned earlier, Aikido presents

itself as a great vehicle for humanistic self-discipline in the process of human development. Aikido can serve as one of the remedies for the spiritual starvation of mankind.

In the training of Aikido, I believe it is most important to practice the basic techniques (which some may find less appealing) and to appreciate the true meaning of Aikido and express it in your body movements.

Aikido in Canada does not have a long history. Rather, it has started its development relatively recently. I hear that the Aikido practitioners in Canada are training very seriously with their responsible instructors, and trying to improve their personal beings. I am very pleased about this. I believe that more and more people will find the true value of Aikido and start their training.

I pray from my heart that the true spirit of Aikido will be actualized, as the circle of Aikido continues to expand all over the world. I believe that it is not an easy task for the instructors to promote the true Aikido spirit, because monitoring the quality of Aikido becomes harder as the number of practitioners gets bigger. However, it is necessary for the instructors to overcome this difficulty and promote Aikido in response to society's expectation about the social contribution of the art.

Founder Ueshiba said, "If people from all over the world can train their mind and body together through the art of Aikido, we can deepen the understanding of each other. We can build and expand a spiritually rich society, without contradictions between our beliefs in harmony and our daily actions, and without wars and disputes." I pray for the prosperity of the whole human community through Aikido training, and let us continue our efforts toward this goal.

I hear from Ishiyama Shido in that Aikido in Canada is growing year by year. I am extremely happy about this. I pray for the continuous development of Aikido in Canada, and my congratulations on the first issue of the AIKIDO FORUM.

True Budo is the work of love.
O-Sensei

AIKIDO AS A SPIRITUAL ART
by **Bansen Tanaka, 8-dan**

It is my great pleasure to be informed of the first publication of the AIKIDO FORUM. Congratulations. Many people can share their views through a journal like this, and beautiful exchanges of ideas and experiences will be promoted.

Aikido is a spiritual martial art. It is a way of bettering the mind. Aikido practitioners should be careful not to get attached to the physical aspect of Aikido. The art is for training the spiritual self. Therefore, close attention must be paid to how we use and focus our energy in order to avoid misleading ourselves to physically confined and attached training.

While science has advanced greatly, the spiritual advancement in the human community has been slow. World peace will not be accomplished unless we make an effort to improve our spiritual existence at the rate of technological advancement.

When we train in Aikido, we must study and understand the function of ki-flow (i.e., use and direction of the vital energy). The present human community is a reflection on how we project our energy toward the future.

"Ki-flow" refers to the way we behave spiritually. It is the movement of spiritual energy flowing out of our personal physical existence. Spiritual power is created by this ki-flow. This power is "kokyu-ryoku" (breath power), the power arising from the unification of the polarities of the universe. The universe is breathing in its great rhythm, and we project our vibration to become one with the universal energy. The universe echoes back to us with its great energy.

This is the essence of Aikido training, which we must make efforts to attain. Aikido is a training for cultivating and nurturing spiritual energy within us. Close attention needs to be paid to where we are going in our daily training. It is important to set an appropriate goal and work toward spiritual growth, without deviating from the essential purpose of Aikido. We must practise in our prayer to become one with God.

Now is the time for the evolution of our attitudes toward Aikido. We claim Aikido to be a spiritual martial art without competitions. However, as long as we approach Aikido in the traditional focus on physical training as a combative art,

the future of Aikido is hazy.

Founder Ueshiba developed Aikido techniques which we practise now, and they cannot be changed. However, in order to actualize the Founder's original intention, we need to change the direction of projected energy instead of confining it to physical techniques. I think this shift in the focus in training will lead us to a higher level of Aikido.

The progress in the training of ki-flow means mastering the way of irimi and tenkan, which I call "Hansha-do" (the way of reflective movements) embodying the way of Divine Light. Founder Ueshiba's techniques were all based on the way of Divine Light. He used to throw his attackers with the sound of "a". He was the master of divine techniques.

The basic and applied techniques you currently practise are very important, and they are the introduction to true Aikido. In the process of learning such techniques, you need to cultivate the inner resource for creating thousands of techniques. Your verbal descriptions of the true spirit of Aikido must be embodied in your Aikido movements. At the rate no slower than that of scientific and technological advancement, we must improve the way we approach Aikido. Aikido itself has not changed, but we must change the way we train ourselves in this art in order to embody what the Founder wanted us to accomplish.

I introduced a focussed training in Hansha-do with irimi-and-tenkan movements to my students at Osaka Aikikai three years ago. (Two Canadians are currently practising this at our Aikikai.) I believe all the Aikido instructors are seeking the essence of Founder Ueshiba's Aikido. However, I wonder if many of them are satisfied with their present techniques. I feel sad that not many people are actively seeking the evolution of their Aikido. The focus of my training is the embodiment of the way of Divine Light through the practice of Hansha-do, and I am hoping that many people in the world will share my view on this matter.

In one move, you are in full control of the opposing forces. This is Aikido. We need to think of becoming the winner without fighting in the present society. This is what the training in reflective movements of irimi and tenkan is for. Aikido knows of no opponents, and has no competitions. Please remember that Aikido is a

spiritual training, not a combative training. It is my sincere hope that you will continue your spiritual pursuit of Aikido with this awareness, and facilitate further growth of Aikido in the world.

Tanaka Shihan is the Chief Instructor of Osaka Aikikai. He met and started his training with O-Sensei in 1936. He is considered to be one of the most spiritually advanced disciples of O-Sensei. He is the author of Aikido Shinzui (The Essence of Aikido), vol I.

Aikido training is to discover the true Self by unifying the god-given soul and the body through the kototama sounds of "su" and "u" which echo out of the bottom of the hara in the audible sounds of "a-o-u-e-i." This process is identical to the integration of the movements of water and fire, that is, the divine acts of merging water and fire by the two gods (Takami-musubi and Ka-musubi) who ascend in a right-turning spiral and descend in a left-turning spiral.

O-Sensei

PRESERVING AUTHENTICITY IN AIKIDO TRAINING

By Yukio Kawahara, 6-dan

The martial art is a way of facilitating spiritual growth through a training in martial techniques. Bujutsu or martial discipline is a physical education as a guide to the Way of Being. However, the traditional Japanese martial training developed out of the need for self protection and overcoming the opponent. In this respect, I have a concern about Aikido students' attitudes toward martial training. I get the impression that some people neglect the martial aspect of the art and get carried away with the philosophical aspect. Without understanding the martial spirit inherent in martial training, some create a pseudo-martial art by simply seeking a feeling of harmony. However, you cannot dilute or disregard the strictly martial side of Aikido, including the manners by which you relate to your instructor and fellow practitioners.

Therefore, I wish to remind students of some basic manners on and off the mats,

such as the following:

1. Show respect to the instructor and senior practitioners. Some people seem to believe that they are entitled to practise in their own way as long as they pay their fees. They forget that they are at the dojo in order to be trained.

2. When visiting another dojo, introduce yourself and obtain permission from the instructor. Do not assume that the permission will be granted automatically. The manner of presenting yourself to another martial artist must embody your utmost sensitivity to a potential life-or-death confrontation.

3. Respect those with higher ranks even off the mats. Honour their expertise and accomplishments with respect, and try to learn from them as much as you can whenever you are with them. Similarly, do not treat teachers like buddies or peers and lose manners.

4. Follow the instructor's directions during training. Do not engage yourself in unassigned instructions, personally modified (wrong) techniques, and verbal or physical conflicts with other practitioners. Do not step on or leave the mats without the instructor's permission during class.

I want to ask local instructors to train their students carefully in these manners, and to strive to maintain the order and unity of the dojo.

There are places where people unquestioningly practise pseudo-Aikido which is useless as a martial art. I think there are problems with the way Aikido is interpreted and practised. If local instructors are conscientious and respectful enough toward Aikido as a strict martial art, they would be more careful about when and whether to start their own clubs or not by judging their level of expertise and readiness as a martial art teacher.

By strict martial art training, I do not mean rough practice. What is most important is your attitude toward training. You need to constantly ask yourself: What is "budo"? Budo training is a serious business.

Learning a Japanese martial art is, in a way, learning the Japanese culture. Some people disregard or distort this cultural background of Aikido by claiming that this is Canada and they should practise the way they feel like. I wish to suggest that we strive to preserve the appropriate manners and seek authentic Aikido as a strong mar-

tial art in North America.

P.S. We were fortunate to have Yamada Sensei from New York and many earnest practitioners from various places at our 1985 B.C. Aikido Summer Camp. Thank you. Also, I wish to thank the Summer Camp participants for the great surprise-gift presented to me.

Kawahara Shihan teaches at Vancouver Aikikai and University of B. C. Aikikai and serves as the technical director of the B.C. Aikido Federation. He travels extensively across Canada to give seminars as well as teaching at various Aikido training camps in Canada and the U.S.A.

THE UNEXPECTED TEACHER by Scott Macphail, 2-dan

Of the many stages that Aikido practitioners experience, surely being a new student is one of the most difficult. We can all remember feeling clumsy and confused, while the soreness in some of our shoulders might have lasted for months. Gradually though, the beginner progresses to the stage where he gains some basic knowledge of techniques.

At this level, the student is eager to practise with more advanced students. This is of course beneficial, but if the beginner senses impatience in the senior student's attitude he begins to worry. This, in addition to the physical problems, can make the new student's lot seem unnecessarily harsh.

It is only after passing through this second stage that observant practitioners realize how important working with beginners can be. Two areas of opportunity for learning from beginners are in their methods of practice and in the many questions they ask.

In the former case, it is normal for the new student to be stiff and unbalanced on the mats. The more advanced students can use these common traits to test their own stability and awareness. The beginner often tightens up in response to quick muscular movements. The same technique done at the same speed feels much smoother to both uke and nage when the use of muscle is not stressed. Moving the body correctly, while guiding uke's energy, leads to a more flowing technique without the distortion caused by force.

Questions asked by beginners can be just as helpful to senior practitioners. For example, you may be asked why uke's free hand could not punch you during ikkyo, or why uke should follow nage's movement as lightly as possible. Basic answers to these questions could mention controlling uke's whole body from the point of contact, and following lightly to allow nage to practise the form without having it altered by a resistant uke. But the more advanced student could go beyond these answers. He/she may point out the importance of practising any technique without leaving openings, or elaborate on the basic philosophy of harmonizing in Aikido.

Once you have passed through the first few levels of Aikido, it becomes obvious that the sensei and senior students are not the only people you can learn from. The overlooked beginners, given their due, are often valuable sources of inspiration to your study of Aikido.

Mr. Macphail is the instructor of Duncan Aikikai, an assistant instructor at Victoria Aikikai, and the treasurer of the British Columbia Aikido Federation. He works for the B.C. Provincial Government as a computer draftsman.

MY THOUGHTS ON BEING A WOMAN IN AIKIDO by Liz McKinlay, 1-dan

When asked how I feel about being a woman in Aikido, my initial reaction is, "Tremendous!" I feel that I am one of the privileged few. I wish that more women would stick with practice long enough to reap the benefits that Aikido has to offer on so many levels. In this article I'd like to focus on one particularly rewarding level -- that of male/female relationships.

Over the years I have established a lot of friendships with men in Aikido. I have found that Aikido helps me to get to know the opposite sex in a unique way. I may not even know my partner's name, but I learn a lot about that person from throwing and being thrown by him. I see his reactions to pain and discomfort, his way of dealing with correction or advice, his sensitivity (or lack of it), his capacity to change and adapt, his way of overcoming discouragement, and his level of commitment and perseverance. No one has the

time (or energy) to be phony or shy or silly. This type of nonverbal communication and involvement cuts through a lot of the male/female game-playing that we are socialized to act out. One develops a feeling of camaraderie that I have seldom seen outside team sports, but Aikido is even more useful for learning about relationships.

In team sports individuals come second to the good of the team. In Aikido the individual's development comes first. Thus, from Aikido I have learned how to adapt to a partner's needs and limitations, without compromising the pursuit of my own goals.

In relationships with other women in Aikido, I see a different and unique phenomenon. There seems to be an almost instant bond that develops between women taking Aikido. Whether it is because of the small number of women in a predominantly male class, or because of a self-selection mechanism in the type of women who practise Aikido, I don't know. It may have something to do with their general attitude. In classes where there is a majority of women practitioners, they undoubtedly set the tone of the class -- supportive and considerate. I feel that these attitudes do much to increase the sense of "family" in the Aikido community.

Some people say that this is a drawback; when women practise together, the martial spirit (the sense of life and death potentials) is often missing. But I remember the Founder's sayings. O-Sensei said, "Aiki is not a technique to fight with or defeat the enemy. It is a way to reconcile the world and make human beings one family ...To compete in techniques, winning and losing is not true Budo...True Budo is a work of love."

Love is the key to both Aikido and relationships. O-Sensei's words have a profound meaning on each level. As long as both women and men practise with intensity to "win over the mind of discord within themselves", they will be following the true way at many levels.

Ms. McKinlay is the instructor for Terrace Aikikai in northern British Columbia. She works for the provincial government as a Regional Personnel Officer for the Ministry of Highways and Transportation.

Editor's note: Those interested in the issue of the study of Aikido by women should be aware of a significant seminar being given by Yamada Shihan, from New York Aikikai, and senior female instructors, on April 19th, 20th, 1986 at:

Aikido Kensankai
 3734 Avenue du Parc
 Montreal, P.Q.
 phone (514) 845-2729

This seminar will focus on women of all levels to stimulate their practice and to create an opportunity to discuss related issues. Suggestions for topics of discussion and requests for information on the seminar can be directed to:

Ms. Pringthongfoo
 4605 Jeanne-Mance
 Montreal, Quebec
 phone (514) 282-0581

INJURIES IN AIKIDO by Ernie Ball, 2-dan

As a student of Aikido and a physical therapist I would like to offer my views on the subject of injuries in Aikido.

Whilst considering this topic, based upon my own experiences, I came to the conclusion that actually very few injuries are caused by Aikido practice in the acute sense. Thankfully I can recall only one or two accidents during my years of training which could be regarded as serious, i.e., requiring hospitalization or treatment by a physician. Of course, there are always a number of minor sprains and strains, but this is normal in any activity where there is physical contact, especially where the joints of the body are involved.

I believe that many of the problems we see in the dojo today are the results of past mistakes in training and/or conditioning; or, congenital problems involving the structure and mechanics of a joint, which after many years of training could result in symptoms such as pain, instability, swelling and weakness, often making continued training impossible. For a student with these particular problems qualitative instead of quantitative practice would appear beneficial.

Often the way a person is built means

that he or she may have a predisposition toward certain problems, a general laxity of ligaments or an obvious lack of mobility are good examples. Correct stretching techniques and warm-up exercises can do a lot towards helping these problems.

We understand that Aikido practice is based upon the laws of nature. Therefore, I believe, it accommodates everyone, provided we ourselves obey these laws. I think that all students should be striving to prevent long term future problems and helping to manage present ones. By continuing to improve in our training and leading our juniors at a correct pace, we can all help to prevent many of the chronic types of problems from emerging in future students.

With regard to the possibility of acute injuries, I have found that the following circumstances are usually present at the time of injury.

- a) When inexperience creates the inability to take correct ukemi.
- b) When the attitude of oneself, one's partner, or both, results in the incorrect application of a technique or ukemi, i.e., forcing the technique.

Here are a few of the techniques which may present certain problems under these circumstances.

- a) Shiho-nage -- One of the most dramatic of techniques, particularly when uke is taking forward or sideways ukemi. Points of concern are the head, neck, shoulders, collar bone and elbow joint. In backward ukemi it is mainly the head and neck that are vulnerable; but probably the most common error that occurs is that uke becomes caught between taking forward and backward ukemi, resulting in undue force against the elbow joint.

- b) Koshi-nage -- areas at risk are the neck and head, particularly if uke's hands and arms are locked into nage's body such as in hiji-garami koshinage, or, if uke is brought down very quickly and low to the mat.

- c) Udekime-nage -- Possible undue force against uke's elbow joint causing a hyper-extension injury. This can occur if uke is unable to keep up with nage's techniques and is somewhat behind at the point of execution.

There are other conditions which can also contribute toward accidents which have nothing to do with technique. Here are a few: mats that slip away revealing hard floor causing ankle or knee injuries, stu-

dents becoming over-tired and taking poor ukemi, and probably the most common cause of bumps and bruises, when students are unaware of each other on the mat and end up projecting their partner into another person. It would seem good all-round practice to be aware of changing conditions around us and use space more effectively.

I can recall taking ukemi for Chiba Sensei many years ago during a jo-tori exercise, I was very tired at the time and eventually failed to keep up with Chiba Sensei's technique. The result was a shattered jo, myself holding one end and Chiba Sensei holding the other poised ready as if to strike, which thankfully he did not, much to my relief and the subsequent amusement of my fellow students.

It could be said that the better the ukemi, the better harmony, therefore the better the Aikido. An endless discussion could then occur on what constitutes correct ukemi, but I am sure that we would all agree that if correct ukemi is performed there is much less chance of injury.

Finally, I would like to say that these are entirely my own views based upon my experiences, and whilst it is obviously very negative to begin practice thinking about injuries, it is prudent to consider for a moment, especially where beginners are concerned, the effect of what we do during training. We must work to keep everyone practising for a long time, gaining in health and strength and consequently practising better Aikido. I hope that this article is of some use and interest and I wish everyone a continued positive and injury-free practice.

Mr. Ball is the instructor of Wetaskiwin Aikikai in Alberta. He began Aikido under Chiba Sensei in England in 1966 and came to Canada and started his dojo in 1982.

"A SLUMP"

by **Jim Wright, 3-dan**

When one talks about a "slump" the first thing that comes to my mind is the traditional September "slump" Freddie Baseball, the consistent 300 hitter, has when his average drops to below 250 and he hasn't hit an extra base shot in twelve games. The initial connotation of a

"slump", in my mind, is one associated with a competitive sporting event with a tangible beginning and a tangible end.

When I was requested to write an article concerning "slumps" and how to "get out of them" I really had to re-orient my thinking to be able to address this issue.

What is a "slump" in the non-classical sense of the word?

To me, a "slump" is a down period associated with unfulfilled expectations.

When most individuals start Aikido they have very specific reasons for doing so. These reasons are as diversified as the individuals who start. The one commonality that I have discovered among all aikidoists is that these reasons change before the individual becomes an Aikido student; that is to say that the motivational forces that kept the neophyte interested during his/her first waking moments of practice do not stand the test of time.

A "slump" occurs upon the realization that one's preliminary motives are no longer being replied to.

I can recall, quite simplistically, my reason for starting martial arts. I had been bitten by the "mystique" and the seemingly effortless nature of martial arts and decided to take what was available at the time, something that sounded like yakido or whatever. After all it didn't matter, I will spend a couple of months at it, learn all their is to know, then go on to something really interesting like fungoo.

I soon learned that a martial art was, at first (there are rewards that come later), nothing more than sweat, hard work, and totally without the traditional rewards associated with overtly similar looking sports like wrestling, etc., with its winning and losing.

My God, what a shock this was. What do you mean I don't get one of those coloured belts? My friend just won a trophy for shooting down 1,121,111,569 xzprocks in "blast that asteroid" and the girls won't leave him alone. While all I get is this funny looking suit that looks straight out of a Saigon 50's rock show with the flood pants and the sleeves on the shirt that don't even cover my elbows. There is no glory, no mystique!!!!!!! Why, ah, I, I, I, I think I'll QUIT!!!!

Most people reach this or a similar crossroad. Their motivation is surely different than mine, but I believe that the scenario is similar. As things change

we are either pulled or pushed from Aikido. It may be a passive push as defined by the lack of new stimuli replacing what was lost when our first reasons seemed no longer valid. Or it may be an active push as defined by our discovering an apparent conflict between one's nature and the requirements of the martial arts.

With respect to a pull, I would define this as a coincidental situation that requires a re-orientation of one's priorities due to external factors, even though the desire to learn Aikido has not changed. This could be school or one's family life and, as such, is the personal dilemma of the individual facing the decision.

In terms of the "push", all are going to experience the "wall". It is our choice to surmount the wall or not.

It seems to me that Aikido is not for everyone, but to be able to make the decision to continue one must be prepared to investigate a broad spectrum of comparisons.

The first step in breaking this barrier is to decide if there is anything worthwhile that can be gained from Aikido versus something else. If one can decide that one hour of Aikido a week is more important than watching "as my stomach churns" then a "relative" decision has been made. Some of the criteria that can be used in deciding are: physical fitness, self-defense, a social context, and to a varying degree a spiritual connotation. There seems to be something of quality inherent in this discipline that should make a relative choice easier.

Once a decision has been reached one either leaves or remains. For those of us still around, welcome to the world of changing motives.

At many stages of one's Aikido career "slumps" will occur. Whenever they are reached the use of this methodology can help in overcoming the problem. Once the expertise is gained the difficulty in surmounting these obstacles diminishes.

The most important factor in "getting out of a slump" is recognizing that a "slump" has a tangible solution and that the goals one may have been seeking were either unattainable at this stage or were not challenging enough.

It is also important to accept that the reason has changed, and that it's OK. It is not necessary to be a zealot who practises 10 times a week when all that is comfortable is twice a week. Conversely

many times a week are available for those that need and want them. Set attainable goals. After all, a sheet of rice paper is not very thick, but pile many sheets one on top of the other and soon the top of the first wall is in sight. Aikido is as flexible in its demands as it is in the results that can be obtained; a sense of fulfillment without building insurmountable goals. How better to climb over the wall than by not building one in the first place.

One of the most interesting aspects, that attracted me to Aikido after my initial stages, is the open-endedness of it all. Aikido can be done forever. This is both frightening and challenging. When the realization that Aikido is neither for a term nor a fixed period of time, a sense of commitment is elicited. Many of us are not able to make the decision and leave. The question arises, at least in my mind, why make the decision? There is plenty of time later if one wishes. But remember, there is a very strong positive correlation between one's level of intensity and the progress gained, therefore expect out of Aikido only what one is prepared to put into it.

Mr. Wright is an instructor at Aikido Kensankai in Montreal. Although he does not smoke, he works for Benson and Hedges as an inventory manager.

**AIKIDO
AND THE CANADIAN AIKIDO FEDERATION
by Tom Koch, 2-dan**

Not more on the constitution! Boring. Didn't we have enough of that in the over-long Summer Camp meeting? So what! All we want of the Canadian Aikido Federation (CAF) is that it leave us alone.

Sorry, the CAF is not going away. That document, the new constitution, that we worked on for two years and passed last summer, has direct meaning and impact upon you. It takes effect as of January 1, 1986, and it is very important for your dojo, your province, and your country.

Simply, the new constitution means that the B.C. association is now a part of the Western Region made up of B.C., Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba which must elect delegates to the western board. The national federation now has a six-member

board, three from the west and three from the east. It is no longer possible for Vancouver and Victoria to consider themselves in isolation. We are now, officially, part and parcel of this new western entity and, as older, more established dojos, need to put our region's needs on a par with those of the provinces.

Over the years, Victoria and the Lower Mainland have worked on their own development. These have been the centres of development. Now, with Aikido established and growing from both areas, we have to begin talks with Alberta on a more consistent basis, and think of ourselves as leaders for the region. This means getting representatives who will look to the good of the whole area, this means thinking like Canadians working in Canada to propagate a Japanese art. A balancing act to be sure.

Practically speaking it means setting the dates for seminars earlier and figuring out how to make them more accessible to other dojos in the area and in the province. If Terrace, Rossland, Edmonton and Wetaskiwin don't know of training opportunities, they can't take advantage of them.

So when we organize seminars, we have to do so far enough in advance to assure that everyone interested will have the chance to practise.

For years we have had main dojos and unincorporated clubs (e.g. UBC, UVic, Camosun, Duncan) which have existed under the umbrella of the home dojos. But now, representation in the CAF is based upon the number of dojos, so it will help us, and the region, to have each of those clubs made into independent dojos (paying the annual dues). That increases our political power in the organization. It assures our continued strength in the regional and national scheme of things.

Kawahara Sensei needs feedback from our representatives to discuss how to better spread Aikido in the west. As our technical director, he knows Aikido and its teaching. But the purpose of our organization is to better disseminate Aikido. To do this, we need to provide the technical director with information and assistance. Sitting back and waiting for someone else to make decisions is rather like waiting for a shomen-uchi to turn away on itself. As we must move to meet the strike, we need also to move to meet the changes that this growth that we have engineered has

helped to create.

Chiba Sensei, in San Diego, says his task is to build a bridge between cultures. To do this, he needs students willing to enter into the experiment. In Canada, and in the west, it is no different. We have the chance to build something unique, but to do it, we need the materials. We need active, interested individuals in dojos ready to accept the challenge of building a western Canadian Aikido.

Mr. Koch is an assistant at Vancouver Aikikai and the Vice-President of the Canadian Aikido Federation. He is a freelance writer, broadcaster and journalist.

AIKIDO AND POTTERY by **Henri McKinnon**

What does pottery have to do with Aikido? Good question. Let me guide you through the potting process and you will know the answer.

We kneel in front of the unformed clay -- clay that has been cleaved from the earth and awaits our touch. It is alive, yet has such infinite potential to become more than mere unformed earth in a creative dance with us. Together we can rise from earth and water, twist and turn as round we go through the shaping experience of life and the final purification of fire to full expression, only to be smashed and returned to the potential state again.

We grasp the clay in both our hands and kneel in front of the wedging board. Push down and away with a slight turning motion. Down and around, down and around, setting a rhythm and allowing the weight of our body to provide the force necessary to move the clay. Wedging the clay allows the water-suspended platelets to line up in a symmetrical, natural pattern which increases the standing strength of the pot. Down and around, down and around with smooth strokes and an even rhythm to remove any air bubbles and unify the clay. Wedging reminds me of the warm-up exercises before Aikido practice.

We place the clay on the top of the pottery wheel. We sit above the clay, and quietly draw our ki together and project it from our hara beneath the navel. If we are centered, the clay will center itself

when we lean slightly forward and push on it. Wet your hands with slurry (clay mixed with water), and push straight through the clay toward a point well ahead of the wheel and in the direct line of your projected energy. Today we are working on a wheel that is both kick-driven and motorized. We use the motor only when a great deal of force is needed, and otherwise kick in a slow steady rhythm.

The clay is now centered. We are ready to open the clay and form the pot. With our steadied hand we press down firmly on the center of the clay. As the clay spins around and around, our hand enters the clay, only to stop slightly before we hit the bottom of the pot. Steady now as we draw the spinning mass outward. Pull the clay upwards once we have opened the base of the pot to the desired diameter. We draw our elbows close to the body as we allow the energy of the spinning clay and wheelhead to force the clay upwards against our steady and receptive hands. Higher and higher the wall of the pot is drawn as the inside and outside hands rise gracefully, guiding the energetic and malleable clay. We repeat this process until the clay is evenly spread in an upright cylinder. The walls now stand strong, balanced and aligned.

The most creative moment has come; the Yin and Yang energy is balanced within and without the pot. The cylinder is drawn out, outward reaching as the inner hand presses and the outer hand receives. We stop as the shape comes full and a light touch of the taut-held wire and the bowl has freed itself from the wheel. The bowl is gently lifted and moved to a resting place to dry and await its decoration.

A week has passed and now the bowl is dry enough to be stacked with its brothers and fired to the bisque state -- dry, neither too hard nor porous. Give a quick dip in the tenmoku iron glaze and an effortless brush stroke or two. Now the pot is ready for the final initiation -- the glaze or high firing. Hotter and hotter the gas burns. After fifteen hours the flames are shooting twenty feet past the pots to roar and burn the sky. We dampen the flue, pushing the flames back. The fire, hungry for oxygen, draws the metallic oxides to the surface of the bowl, forever uniting clay and glaze -- they are one now.

The kiln cools for two days while we rest, sleep and dream of the pots we have

grown with. Finally the time comes when we cradle the smooth and shining bowl in our hands. This pot will be given as a gift in appreciation of the universe that has created us both.

A pause, a smile of shared thanks and we may begin the dance of creation again. We are both the created and the creator in the process. We are the unshaped earth, the flowing water, the formless air, and the final fire. The finished bowl and ourselves may at any moment be smashed to the ground and broken, but we will be formed and shaped again.

Ah yes, time for Aikido practice.

Mr. McKinnon is a member of Victoria Aikikai. He has been a professional potter, teacher and businessman. While his work has changed form, his goal of learning and growth has remained unchanged.

AIKIDO SUMMER CAMP
 by **Larry Dettweiler, 1-dan**

As I drove up the familiar Island Highway on my way to Gabriola Island and B.C. Aikido Summer Camp, I thought about the experiences that have left me an ambulatory but hobbled representative of my species; the semi-athletic, over-achieving, middle-aged male.

Several of my toes have fallen prey to my Aikido partners' feet or knees. My ankles often ache and sometimes sprain as a result of high school football injuries. My knees, damaged ten years ago in a mindless obsession with long distance running, are functional but always ache painfully after a few minutes of seiza.

Football, rugby and running have tattooed a record of misadventures along my spine from top to bottom. Each vertebrae has its own story of abuse. Swollen discs, pinched nerves and tingling extremities still plague me. One of my shoulders has been separated (albeit only slightly), while the other still aches from a rotator cuff tear. Although I have injured my neck on several occasions, the worst and most lasting injury occurred when I was 19 and enrolled in a gruelling circuit training program at University of California, Berkeley. As I was completing my third circuit of 15 activities designed to raise me to the condition of a world-class rower, I hoisted myself into my final

chin-up only to hear a pop accompanied by excruciating pain. I fell to the floor and blacked out. I remember drifting in and out of consciousness in classes for two weeks as a result of the muscle relaxants which seemed to relax my cognitive and attentive processes but did not do much to alleviate my pain.

On the inside of my lip I felt the protruding scar from the tear that occurred when my tooth split the skin in a bloody collision between my Aikido instructor's hand and my face. He gave no apology but rather regretted that his hand and my face ended up in the same space at the same time. This was followed by a ten minute lecture to the class focussing on the importance of avoiding injury by remaining alert and being sensitive to your partner's movement. The ice which was numbing my lip must have had the same effect on my brain since shortly thereafter I experienced the worst near-injury of my Aikido career. While practising during a visit to Stanford, a young black belt who had just returned from Japan was showing me an atemi to the face when my concentration lapsed. I followed poorly and his elbow hit my glasses, shattering the unbreakable lens into pieces which miraculously fell to the mat.

After reading this, one might be tempted to ask why someone with my body but a reasonably good mind, ten years of university training, a wonderful family, a great job and no visible signs of serious mental illness would consider involving himself in such a seemingly self-destructive venture as Summer Camp. The answer is really quite simple -- or should I say answers.

The first answer has to do with the "edge." In his book The Ultimate Athlete, George Leonard refers to the "edge" as that place where one is flying, gliding, running or otherwise careening along the thin line between the ordinary and the extraordinary, life and death, order and chaos. In my case, the edge is a place where feelings of exhilaration, exhaustion and immortality all seem to occur at once. On rare occasions, while practising Aikido, I have felt myself on that edge where my body becomes irrelevant and my spirit soars. Needless to say, this doesn't happen often. Once experienced, however, ordinary life becomes trivial.

On another, and perhaps more important level, the sense of community, harmony and shared accomplishment that blurs race, re-

ligion, nationality and rank is the lesson Aikido has for me and, I suspect, for the world. As we prepared meals, washed dishes, sang, drank and, most importantly, practised together, I felt that sense of community. The presence of practitioners from many countries enhanced this feeling as multilingual sounds bounced off walls and carried up and down the hill. The strong representation from eastern Canada and Quebec in particular gave this camp a truly Canadian spirit.

Also, this camp was a chance to prove to myself that I could practise intensively without injury. Accustomed to being one of the oldest students in Victoria, the presence of others ten or twenty years my senior was inspiring. I managed to practise in a controlled and moderate fashion for most of the camp and found others to be respectful of my concerns and helpful with suggestions for avoiding further aggravation of old injuries. I realize now that most of the injuries I have suffered over the years have been at my own hands. As the years have passed, the most important and difficult lesson for me in any physical activity has been to pay attention to my own body and my own intuition regarding my limits. At camp this year I tried to pace myself, to practise a limited amount each day and not to listen to the little voice that kept telling me I was letting someone down by not pushing myself beyond my limits. This camp was a big step for me in the direction of life-long Aikido.

Most importantly, I came to camp to improve my Aikido. As a child psychologist I see parallels between my understanding of Aikido and the young child's understanding of the nature of reality. A small child's concept of reality and knowledge of the objective world begins with his or her own body. Gradually this knowledge grows to include the people and objects which surround the child. One of the major factors in this expansion of knowledge is the ability to see objects from different angles, a process that is aided immeasurably by the ability first to crawl, then to stand and eventually to walk around objects. In the same way, I began as an infant in Aikido. First I became aware of the movement of my own body. Gradually it came more and more under my control. Then I began to become more sensitive to the movements and energy of my partners. Although ten years of sometimes

sporadic practice has left me feeling more of a beginner than ever, each instructor's teaching has allowed me to rise a bit higher and see Aikido from a different perspective. Whatever understanding I have of this art I owe to my instructors. The Summer Camp was another step toward increasing that understanding. I would like to thank Kawahara Sensei, Yamada Sensei and Ishiyama Sensei for their excellent instruction and their dedication to the dissemination of O-Sensei's message. It is through their instruction that I hope some day to be fortunate enough to glimpse a view of the world as O-Sensei saw it; a harmonious world of people at peace with themselves and at peace with each other.

Dr. Dettweiler is the instructor at Camosun College Aikikai and, when not injured, practises at Victoria Aikikai. He is the co-ordinator of the Psychology Department at the college.

AIKIDO AS A METAPHOR OF LIFE

by **Bob Moline, 1-dan**

Every serious Aikido student discovers the parallelism between the emotional activities of everyday life and the physical activities of Aikido practice. Why I have become so entranced by this concept lies, no doubt, deep inside me. Although I did not understand it before I found Aikido, the need for such a connection surfaced repeatedly as the reason for my 10 years of sporadic practice of two other martial arts over a 20 year period. Each time it did surface, I lost interest because those arts did not support that need. Aikido does supply that connection and I receive what I believe to be a major benefit in life-skill development and, as a consequence, practise faithfully. The parallelism has become such a significant part of my life that sometimes I am amazed when, speaking with friends who do not study Aikido, I meet blank stares as I describe the jewel which I consider to be one of the basic secrets of life. But then I remind myself that it is precisely because of the differences in people that the Art, and therefore the metaphor, exists. If there was no disharmony would there be Aikido?

Looking back I recall my initiation to

be the light/heavy exercise of alternately tensing all muscles and being easily lifted, and then relaxing to become virtually attached to the earth. I was overwhelmed to understand that fear, anger, nervousness, and other detracting emotions cause tenseness, making our centres vulnerable, rendering us subject to external uncontrollable influences; whereas calmness and understanding allow us to preserve our centres and control those external influences. To this day, that teaching is my personal, ever-present benchmark against which I measure whether I am maintaining the calmness that preserves my centre.

The metaphor does not exist solely with physical technique; another manifestation is in Aikido manners. I have come to think of manners as "ensuring that the right person gets the right information at the right time" making it a matter of communication as much as a matter of respect. A bow transfers information to another. When the information you wish to transfer is respect, it would be most unfortunate if, because of inattention to necessary detail, you bow improperly and transfer disrespect. The result could take many forms. Some may be detrimental to your Aikido practice, for even the most forgiving and understanding practitioner will eventually conclude that continued improper bowing is not mere ignorance but rather a calculated insult.

On that basis, it is easy (for me at least) to see a need to ensure that in my interpersonal relationships the right person has the right information at the right time. I am driven to try to properly establish accurate information with others about the status of our relationships. My goal is to communicate the appropriate information so that, if I were to die at this moment, all will properly understand their relationship with me. It would be a tragedy of major proportions if my spirit has to fret for eternity over the fact that although I love my daughters, some momentary foolishness when we last saw each other resulted in anger and we are forever separated with what should be a temporary emotion permanently frozen as our parting attitude.

I find some aspects of this endeavour particularly difficult and consequently my progress is slow. However, Aikido has shown me the path, I just need the continuing support that Aikido gives to keep moving along the path. Where it ultim-

ely leads is of little concern to me because the small portion of the path that is visible to me, and the speed at which I am moving along it; when related to my age, indicate that I will not find the end in this life. I do hope to find O-Sensei waiting on the other side where he will help me continue my journey for eternity.

Mr. Moline is the current president and an assistant instructor of Victoria Aikikai. He is employed as a Telecommunications Engineer by the Government of British Columbia.

In Aikido there are no forms and no patterns. Natural movements are the movements of Aikido. Its depth is profound and it is inexhaustible.

Doshu

The Spirit of Aikido

AIKIDO IN HOLISTIC MEDICINE

or HOW TO THROW A COLD

by Philip Kempling

Implicit in naturopathic medicine is the understanding that nature cures. Nature can only cure by one coming into harmony with the forces (ki) of nature. Health is the natural consequence of obeying nature's laws. Disease is the consequence of disobeying nature's laws.

It is not the intention of a naturopathic physician or holistic practitioner to 'kill' a cold or 'kill' the virus causing the cold.

In Aikido, we seek to harmonize and become one with our opponent; we do not oppose or try to fight or kill him. An aggressor is one who has lost his Aiki (harmonizing energy). We, in encountering such an aggressor, seek to restore Aiki and bring peace. This is the way of Aikido. This is the way of medicine in harmony with nature.

When a cold virus enters the body, we must seek to understand the nature of this opponent and the nature of the imbalance that has caused this disease. If one sees with eyes of wisdom, he will know that a cold virus is not an aggressor at all, but an honourable opponent. It is a partner to the body, leading the body back to the state of balance. Its function in nature

is to return complex substances to their simple form, so they may be recycled through the creative-destructive cycle of nature (yin-yang). For example: a tree grows up in the forest, grows old, dies, and falls. Bacteria, viruses, fungi and other creatures decompose the tree so that the creative cycle might renew itself in new life forms.

The reason for the cold virus proliferating in someone's body is that it has found a favourable environment within which to grow. What makes the environment favourable is an accumulation of waste products in the body. The cold virus thrives on waste and toxicity. The cold virus is an opportunistic organism seeking a food source. In doing its job, it unhappily and unjustly takes the rap for causing the disease, yet the true imbalance already exists in the body. The cold virus challenges the body to cleanse itself and restore vitality or die.

One of the past great masters of naturopathic medicine, J.H. Tilden, M.D. author of Toxemia Explained, elucidated: "In the process of tissue building, metabolism; there is cell building, anabolism; and cell destruction, catabolism. The broken down tissue is toxic. In health when nerve energy (vitality) is normal the toxic material is eliminated from the blood as fast as evolved. When nerve energy is dissipated from any cause (physical or mental excitement or bad habits) the body becomes enervated and, when enervated, elimination is checked causing a retention of toxins in the blood or toxemia. This accumulation of toxins, when once established, will continue until nerve energy is restored by removing the causes. Disease is nature's effort at eliminating the toxins from the blood. All so-called diseases are crises of Toxemia."

Disease then, is the imbalanced harmony of elements in one's body. Aikido is the way of living in harmony. Health is the consequence of living in harmony. We must learn to honour our body and care for it with the same respect that we bring to the practice of Aikido. When the body is sick we should say sumimasen (I'm sorry) to our body for we have lost Aiki and caused the body disease (dis=loss + ease=peace, tranquility). We must then seek to restore Aiki by understanding the source of the kuzushi (unbalancing) and bring the body back to balance. It is wise to seek the

assistance of a teacher (doctor) who understands the laws of nature, in the same way that we seek a sensei to teach us the way of Aikido.

The philosophy of Aikido teaches us that the essential quality of the universe is energy. When we learn to be one with this energy, we live Aikido and we experience the vitality that is life itself. This is the way.

Dr. Kempling is a member of Victoria Aikikai. He earned his doctorate in Naturopathic Medicine in 1979 and opened a practice in his home town of Victoria.

In a sense, Aikido cleanses the evil with the truthful breath instead of using a sword. Aikido brings the physical and materialistic world back to the spiritual world.

O-Sensei

MY TRAINING AT OSAKA AIKIKAI by Sue Pollen

Regardless of inherent differences between Japan and Canada, Aikido practice here is familiar and comfortable. At Osaka Aikikai, hard physical exertion coupled with soft, silent development of the spirit are the same as I remember them being at Ishiyama Sensei's Victoria dojo.

Aikawa (Suita City) is Tanaka Sensei's central dojo. Both Ishiyama Sensei and Kawahara Sensei trained here before emigrating to Canada. In addition to Aikawa, Tanaka Sensei provides instruction at 30 or so other locations for more than 1000 students. Eighty men, 20 women, and 80 children practise in Aikawa. Seven of us are foreigners.

My impression after practising four months is that there are both handicaps and advantages for foreigners. For me, a major handicap is the language. Although I understood some Aikido techniques and basic principles before coming, I feel there are additional concepts that I'm not picking up since my Japanese is so limited. The advantages, however, are larger than the hurdles. Foreigners are given extra latitude and patience by the instructors and most of us return this courtesy with increased diligence. We also

have the opportunity to develop friends more quickly than do foreigners who are in Japan only to work.

There are two daily practices. The morning one begins at 11:00 am and ends at noon. The pre-class warmup is the students' responsibility and may begin as early as 10:00 am. After class students may ask for individual help or remain to stretch, practice yoga or do jo-kata. The evening classes are either one or two hours long beginning at either 5:30 pm or 6:30 pm. Students clean the dojo after the evening class. There is also a Sunday morning class, so altogether there are 20 hours of instruction per week.

There are no separate classes for beginners, but a teacher may work individually with a beginner for the first week. There are no separate classes for men or women; we all practise together -- men, women, beginners, advanced.

Every class begins with tai-no-tenkan and ends with tenchi-nage or kokyu dosa. Four or five techniques are taught, with the class relaxing completely between the waza, and the same partner is kept for the entire class. The style is similar to that taught in Victoria and Vancouver, emphasizing flowing movements. However, we are not taught shiho-nage or kote-gaeshi, but may use them as jiyu waza.

Tanaka Sensei supervises the instructors but does not teach often. Instead, the classes are regularly taught by his uchidechis (Honzawa Sensei and Tanaka Sensei) and by the senior instructors (Teratani Sensei and Nomura Sensei). One instructs and the others work as partners with the students. Each sensei has a different physique and temperament, and adjusts the ma-ai and speed to his own advantage. With a group of instructors working simultaneously, the student has a clear and immediate example of Aikido versatility.

Kyu tests are conducted every other month, beginning with 5th kyu so that it is possible to earn a shodan within two years. There is no list of test requirements; foreigners learn by watching. Testing takes place during the regular class at one end of the dojo. Unless you are being tested, the class is spent as usual and one is able only to catch glimpses of the action during breaks in the waza.

I've enjoyed practice, except for the embarrassment I felt during my sankyu test

but the support of Rachelle Pelletier, a fellow Canadian, carried me through. My Aikido training at Osaka Aikikai has become an extension of what began in Victoria with teachers like Bob Moline, Larry Dettweiler, Job Groot and Scott Macphail who work under Ishiyama Sensei to bring Aikido to the West Coast where, as in Japan, it is an art.

Ms. Pollen is a former Victoria Aikikai student who has moved to Japan with her son to study Aikido and Japanese culture.

Budo is not a means of felling the opponent by force or by lethal weapons. Neither is it intended to lead the world to destruction by arms and other illegitimate means. True budo calls for bringing the inner energy of the universe in order, protecting the peace of the world and molding, as well as preserving, everything in nature in its right form. Training in budo is tantamount to strengthening, within my body and soul, the love of kami, the deity who begets, preserves and nurtures everything in nature.

O-Sensei

LONGUE VIE A L'AIKIDO FORUM by Pierre Gosselin, 2-dan

C'est avec plaisir que je vous adresse quelques mots suite à l'invitation de M. Ishiyama. Tout d'abord, j'aimerais vous dire combien j'ai apprécié mon premier contact avec l'Ouest Canadien en participant au camp d'été sur l'île Gabriola. La chaleureuse intimité ainsi que l'atmosphère familiale où il fait bon vivre m'a le plus touché. Plongé dans la nature et faisant fi du quotidien, cette expérience demeurera pour moi un souvenir inoubliable grâce à vous et à tous ceux qui y ont participé. Voilà bien l'esprit de l'Art, c'est à dire un climat d'harmonie et de développement mutuel! C'est ainsi que l'Aïkido grandit à l'intérieur de chacun et chacune et qu'Il s'étend autour de nous. Comment lorsqu'on se sent épanoui et heureux ne pas manifester son enthousiasme? Pourquoi ne pas le dire quand toute cette vitalité déborde et se communique?

De la même façon, ce journal que vous

lisez présentement est un moyen de communiquer et aussi un moyen de faire connaître l'Aïkido. Il est un lien qui unit votre pensée à votre action et la diffuse à l'entourage. Il vous faut donc le soutenir et l'alimenter en y participant entièrement: ce sera là le gage du succès.

Dans l'Ouest comme dans l'Est et partout dans le monde, c'est de cette façon que doit vivre l'Aïkido. Au Canada, il y a plus de trente dojos regroupant chacun en moyenne une vingtaine de membres ou plus. Cinq nouveaux dojos se sont joints aux rangs de la Fédération Canadienne d'Aïkido en 1985. De nombreux séminaires laissent entrevoir l'activité intense de la communauté. Notamment dans l'Est, de septembre à décembre, chaque semaine aura son séminaire et nombreux seront les aikidoïstes qui s'y rendront.

L'histoire se répète sans cesse reproduisant les mêmes phénomènes dans les communautés. C'est, je crois, par des contacts étroits et des relations soutenues que l'Aïkido se développe et évolue à l'échelle globale: locale, régionale, Canadienne ou internationale.

Au Canada, l'Aïkido est en pleine expansion. Il n'en tient qu'à nous tous de maintenir cette ascension en manifestant notre intérêt et en s'impliquant personnellement dans la mesure du possible dans toutes les sphères d'influences. Ainsi l'Aïkido jouira du meilleur essor possible.

Toutes mes félicitations et longue vie à l'AIKIDO FORUM!

It is with pleasure that I write these few words at the invitation of Mr. Ishiyama. First of all, I would like to say how much I enjoyed my first contact with western Canada while participating in the Gabriola Island Summer Camp. The warm intimacy and family atmosphere which makes one feel so good, touched me the most. Surrounded by nature and unconcerned by daily cares, this experience will remain unforgettable to me thanks to everyone who participated. This is the spirit of the Art, that is, an atmosphere of harmony and growth. This is how Aikido expands inside and around us. How could we not show our enthusiasm when we feel so happy and fulfilled? Why not communicate this overflowing vitality to one another?

In the same way, this journal is a communication tool and also a way of letting Aikido be known to others. It can unite

our thoughts and actions which can then be diffused to others. You must therefore support and contribute to it, giving of yourself -- that will be its measure of success.

This is the way Aikido must exist in the west, in the east, and everywhere else in the world. In Canada there are more than thirty dojos, each consisting of an average of twenty members or more. Five new dojos joined the Canadian Aikido Federation in 1985. Numerous seminars are proof of intense activity in the community. From September to December in the east there is a seminar each week, where many Aikido students participate.

History repeats itself, and the same phenomenon reappears in each community. It is, I believe, by close contact and supportive relationships that Aikido can develop and evolve at the global level: local, regional, Canadian and international.

In Canada, Aikido is in full expansion. It depends solely on us to continue this expansion by showing our interest and becoming personally involved in any way possible. Thus Aikido will develop in the best way possible. Congratulations and long live the AIKIDO FORUM!

Mr. Gosselin is the instructor of Laval University Aikikai in Quebec City and president of the Canadian Aikido Federation.

AIKIDO PEOPLE AND AIKIDO EDUCATION

by F. Ishu Ishiyama, 4-dan

Because of its depth, power, beauty, and wide applicability to mental and physical health, Aikido has attracted many different types of people. In my twelve stumbling years as an Aikido instructor, I have come across people with different motives for starting Aikido. As an instructor, I have had to deal with students with a variety of motives, needs, beliefs, and stages of personal development, while constantly re-evaluating my own. In dealing with their inner conflicts and struggles for growth in the context of Aikido training, I realize how important it is for the instructor to have a broad perspective on the learning process in Aikido. Learning and teaching can be left to chance, but it seems to help to be aware of where everybody is in their development. In this

brief article, I wish to share some of my views (still in the process of formulation) on Aikido as a holistic martial art education.

Some get attracted to the physical, practical, and combative side of Aikido. (I was fascinated by the efficiency of an Aikido technique in delivering pain when I was first hammered into the mats by a young Aikido instructor -- I was only 16). Some get captured by the philosophy of harmony and self-discipline expressed in graceful movements and nurturing interpersonal relationships. Some seek inner peace and integration of the mind and the body. Some just want a status of being a "martial artist" without realizing what they are getting into. Some try to fulfill a dream of becoming a heroic warrior or at least a disciple of an omnipotent "master." One student seriously asked me if he could be licensed to be a samurai, and I had to disappoint him badly. One visitor to our dojo asked if I was the master. I responded in my usual laconic manner, "No, I'm just an instructor here. But please take your shoes off inside the dojo." He gave a scornful look at me and the dojo, and disappeared quickly.

Interestingly, some try to resolve their inner conflicts and other emotional or spiritual crises through Aikido. They do this consciously or unconsciously on the mats as well as in the relationships with instructors and fellow students. They may be physical, emotional, social and/or spiritual problems such as: fear of death and physical assaults, fear of losing control over self, low tolerance for pain, need for power and recognition, an inferiority complex and self-criticism, fear of direct physical contact, and male-female competitiveness. Some seek to fulfill their need for security and acceptance in a "safe and non-threatening" martial art community. Furthermore, some practitioners hope to reconcile the body-mind dichotomy, and integrate their philosophy and action into a unified spiritual lifestyle. Some people regress and act out such unresolved issues on the mats during practice and in the manner they conduct themselves in relationships with other practitioners. Lucky are the ones who succeed in resolving and transforming them into a higher spiritual quality in their personal growth.

Until our eyes are fully opened in enlightenment, we have to constantly face

the unresolved tri-chotomy of the mind, the body, and the spirit within ourselves. We may preach harmony, and yet our techniques do not work. Although we may appear to move gracefully and effectively, we still keep running into interpersonal conflicts on and off the mats. We may talk about love and non-attachment, and yet get attached to anger, power, money, and prejudice.

Indeed, the meaning of Aikido training resides in this process of self-confrontation and reconciliation of the disparities among the mind, the body, and the spirit, at a higher level of human consciousness. It is an intrapersonal and interpersonal process, and also a transpersonal process affecting the collective future of mankind. In this sense, Aikido education should be holistic and integrative.

We may start Aikido with a personally specific motive, and Aikido is used as a means to fulfilling it. However, a fascinating thing happens. Aikido starts taking its own life in us. Aikido forces us to see the unresolved and unfulfilled parts of our personalities and confronts us with a task of reconciling the opposing forces within ourselves toward an higher level of human functioning.

Aikido as a martial art discipline keeps us grounded at the very concrete physical and behavioural levels while our spirit soars at another level. Philosophy without action is hollow. Techniques must be exact and convincing, and yet graceful and gentle. Our conduct on the mats must reflect intense alertness and mutual respect while enjoying the camaraderie and excitement of seeking technical and emotional-spiritual improvement of the self. Furthermore, our daily behaviours and verbalizations must be congruent with what we seek to attain.

It is a big job to be a responsible student of a martial art. It is even a bigger job to be an instructor! Some might say, "It's no fun anymore. It's getting too serious." Some might compromise and settle on a happy medium. Some might focus on the physical side and deny or neglect the emotional and spiritual sides because they know deep down that it is too painful and threatening to look at their own emotional and spiritual immaturity and unresolved issues. Some might prefer to seek the "soft" side of Aikido because it feels good, while avoiding the "hard" side

which demands lots of hard work and drives them to their physical and mental limits.

Out of the need to evaluate my students' progress and the need to provide adequate directions and global perspectives on training, I have tentatively formulated an integrative model of Aikido education: see Table 1. I hope that it reflects what I have learned from many excellent teachers. It helps me identify my students' weaknesses in development. I consider four developmental phases or levels: (1) fundamental, (2) basic, (3) application, and (4) integration (including variation and transformation). The main focus gradually shifts to higher levels as the more basic levels are completed. In terms of the areas of training, three dimensions may be considered: (1) mental and spiritual, (2) physical and technical, and (3) cognitive. People develop toward a higher level over years in each dimension, and each individual shows a different pattern of development. Each dimension requires specific work and presents challenge. Personal development in these dimensions is spiral. But progress in one dimension does not necessarily mean progress in the others. Some improve relatively quickly in the physical and technical dimension, but they may be immature in the mental and spiritual dimension.

For example, in terms of mental and spiritual development, beginning students need to understand and accept the basic premise and framework of martial art training. Training is not for self-indulgence of any kind. The instructor has to clarify the goal of Aikido training, the reason for Aikido being non-competitive, and the importance of ukemi and dojo etiquette among other things. Therefore, the instructor's depth of understanding and personal integrity will influence how far his/her students will go in training. The instructor's values and attitudes get transmitted non-verbally to students. While self-actualization and spiritual growth is an important goal, students who show poor manners and lack of intense awareness of the life-or-death business of martial art training need to work on concrete day-to-day aspects of practice before philosophizing and intellectualizing Aikido.

In the technical dimension, it is essential to develop strength and master the use of the body effectively with full awareness. For example, if a person has

not developed enough strength and control in the use of the elbows, the legs and the hips through repetitive practice of static ikkyo, he/she will not be able to do ikkyo and other related basic techniques effectively in non-static (flowing) movements. Focussed attention to the specific body parts by a trained instructor becomes crucial at the earliest phase of students' technical development. If, say, the tension of the elbows and the stability of the hips have not been practised with clear awareness during the step-and-turn in shihonage, the technique becomes useless no matter how quickly the technique is done. Accuracy and stability should come first before speed and gracefulness. If the instructor does not know what to look for specifically in each technique at the fundamental and the basic phases of technical development, it becomes the blind leading the blind.

It takes an experienced teacher to show the specifics and guide students through the phases of technical development systematically and effectively, without misleading students to wrong forms and inappropriate conceptualizations of techniques. Here is the big difference between self-taught local instructors and shihans who have received a solid training and have attained a high level of technical mastery and awareness. Shihans have spent years studying and experimenting, for example, on how to move the elbow to what degree at what speed in a given technique. Therefore, technical supervision by a shihan is essential to local instructors' development. If your learning by observation is not enough, you must ask your shihan to show you these specific points.

Due to limited space, I can only present the model without sufficient explanation. The model is still incomplete, reflecting incompleteness in my own understanding of Aikido. Also, I am quite aware of the possibilities of misunderstanding and confusion due to the lack of concrete and specific explanation of the model, but it is my hope that you will find this model stimulating and meaningful.

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Table 1
AN INTEGRATIVE MODEL OF AIKIDO EDUCATION

DIMENSION	FUNDAMENTAL	BASIC	APPLICATION	INTEGRATION
Mental & Spiritual	Appreciating rationale behind martial art training and Aikido practice; dojo clean-up & other silent forms of self-discipline & self control	Recognize goals of Aikido & personal goals; work on weaknesses in personality; concentration power; awareness of spiritual self; increased capacity for self-control	Social application of Aikido principles; integration of spiritual self into lifestyle; contribution to society; openness to confront self	Leadership in Aikido & community; helping & teaching others; maximized effectiveness in living; completion of life mission
Physical & Technical	Strengthening legs, joints, hips, elbows through basic Aikido forms, ukemi, sushuri, shikko, hanmi; irimi & tenkan footwork; increased body awareness, flexibility & dexterity	Increasing stability & accuracy in basic techniques (e.g. 1-4 kyo, kokyuho, iriminage, shihonage, kote-gaeshi, koshinage); concrete and discriminative awareness of specific points in each technique; proper timing & maai	Increased speed and kokyu power; kokyunage; freestyle & tai-sabaki; application of gokyoku; weapon techniques; hanmi handachi waza; mastery of ukemi; kumitachi; kumijo; atemi; combative practicality; teaching ability	Kaeshiwaza & henkawaza; true kokyunage by tai-sabaki; successful embodiment of ki, mind, & body in physical movements; healthy lifestyle (effective care of the body)
Cognitive	Understanding training format & rationale; knowledge of Aikido history & philosophy; basic knowledge of Japanese terminology	Understanding logic behind each technique; ability to explain Aikido philosophy & practice to others; recognizing general similarities & differences between Aikido & other arts; understanding Japanese culture	Understanding process of technical improvement & slumps; study of techniques & training methods of other martial arts; study of Zen and Kendo; knowledge of and discrimination between effective & ineffective practicing and teaching	Clear conceptualization of a system of technical & mental education, teaching methods, & religious & psychological implications