



# AIKIDO

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## GREETINGS FROM SENSEI

"The Way of the Warrior has been misunderstood as a means to kill and destroy others. Those who seek competition are making a grave mistake. To smash, injure, or destroy is the worst sin a human being can commit. The real Way of a Warrior is to prevent slaughter - it is the Art of Peace, the power of love.

The world will continue to change dramatically, but fighting and war can destroy us utterly. What we need now are techniques of harmony, not those of contention. The Art of Peace is required, not the Art of War."

O'Sensei Ueshiba,  
Founder of Aikido

Dear Beginner,

Welcome to Aikido, and I hope that you find within it that which you are seeking.

Aikido is regarded as an Asian art, yet it embodies much that is great about the development of civilisation in both East and West. Historians suspect its origins lie in Ancient Greece, the cradle of modern civilisation, where the first known research into bioenergy began.

During Alexander the Great's rampage of exploration and conquest, some of his officers settled in India to carve out personal kingdoms. Like Greece, India was a highly advanced society by standards elsewhere, and the cross-fertilisation of ideas between Indian and Greek cultures engendered a classic case of hybrid vigour.

Like the Greeks, Indian sages had for centuries been working out methods for improving the mind. Access to Grecian knowledge about the nature of bioenergy led to further advances, culminating in the discovery of a form of meditation which opened the innermost levels of the mind to the creative energies of the universe, providing objective insights into the nature of reality and producing what is called satori or 'enlightenment' in Buddhism.

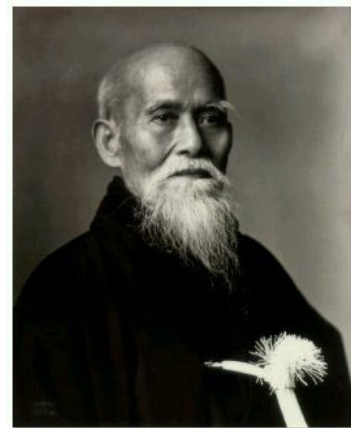
A master of this named Bodhidharma decided that India's neighbour, China, should be informed of this great discovery, and made a remarkable journey alone and on foot across the Himalayas in about 400 AD. After many tribulations he settled at the Shaolin Temple, built by the Chinese Emperor a century earlier as a centre of research for academics translating ancient Indian texts into modern Chinese.

Here he began teaching the new form of meditation which the Chinese named ch'an, now known as Zen. Like the ancient Greeks, Bodhidharma's ideal was 'a healthy mind in a healthy body', and to enhance his student's "chi" - life-energy - he also taught them a secret Indian method of unarmed combat for which this temple was soon to become famous. His methods enhanced life-energy while also increasing longevity and resistance to disease, and appears to have been based on the Grecian combat art called pancratium.

Bodhidharma's teachings reached Japan a century later, where 'chi' was pronounced 'ki' - the 'ki' in Aikido. As in China they were largely the prerogative of the nobility, but during the following centuries Zen gradually permeated all levels of Japanese society, influencing every aspect of art and science. There, as in China, the nation discovered that people benefited enormously from a combination of martial art training for physical fitness and meditation for willpower and clear-mindedness. Zen has been a major factor in Japan's rise to pre-eminence in world affairs.

From this we can see that Aikido is a wonderful way of exploring some of the innermost aspects of Chinese and Japanese culture. But we should also realise that practising such a profoundly Eastern art exposes us to ways of doing things which at first can seem rather strange. Take the importance of ceremony and etiquette in Japan for instance.

To understand this we must first realise that in Japan, ceremony and etiquette are the outward clothing of spiritual and inner discipline. They are designed to produce the perceptiveness and awareness that enhances social affairs by lubricating personal interactions while preventing frictions. They



O'Sensei Ueshiba, the Founder of Aikido

make combat training safer by ensuring that no one is unwittingly injured through inattention, carelessness or conceit, attitudes that render people insensitive to the welfare of others.

Etiquette in an Aikido class begins with a pause to bow with dignity at the door before entering the dojo. This is to calm and focus ourselves before beginning our training. Training formally begins with a ceremonial bow to the memory of O'Sensei, the Founder of Aikido. A second formal bow is made to the kami or "inner essence" of Ai-Ki-Do

The teacher and the class then exchange bows, the teacher to show his respect for the students' desire to improve themselves, the class showing its gratitude to the teacher for his kindness in agreeing to teach them.

There are also brief, friendly bows to one's training partner at the beginning of each exercise and to everyone you have trained with at the end of class. This is to cement friendships and show appreciation for each other's generosity of spirit during the physical hardship of training.

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We are also on the web  
Check us out at  
[www.aikido.net.au](http://www.aikido.net.au)

## GREETINGS FROM SENSEI (continued)

So much bowing seems very strange to Westerners, but a little experience shows that when done with good intent, it creates a very good atmosphere. It reassures your training partners of your respect and concern for their well-being, and the mere fact of having to remember to bow at appropriate times develops awareness and perceptiveness - the things that save you in emergencies.

One result of this attention to courtesy is that after training everyone leaves with increased enthusiasm and energy, free of any resentment for the bumps and scratches etc that are an inevitable part of martial art. Learning to consciously treat each other with consideration and respect, in the Japanese manner, is an important part of rising above pettiness.

It is worth remembering that O'Sensei Ueshiba, founder of modern Aikido said, "Martial art begins and ends with courtesy." I hope the above helps you to understand why this is so.

Kind regards,

John Turnbull Sensei.

## CLUB ACTIVITIES

**March** (exact date to be determined)  
Beginners Dinner

**27<sup>th</sup>/28<sup>th</sup> March**  
Seniors Mountain Training  
Cejacks Hut or  
Round Mountain

**April** (exact date to be determined)  
Coastal Training  
Beginners welcome  
(club membership required for insurance purposes)



Outdoor Training

## Committee Contact Information

President : Caroline McGregor  
Treasurer : Ian Dunn, [idunn@nla.gov.au](mailto:idunn@nla.gov.au)  
Publications : Annette Vincent, [annettev@ozemail.com.au](mailto:annettev@ozemail.com.au)  
Beginners Representative : Tamara Abed

[aikido@webone.com.au](mailto:aikido@webone.com.au)

## Club Membership Information

Welcome to the beginners who have just started with us. It is good to see we have a large group of new students starting with us again this semester.

Beginners will be glad to know that there are no fees due from them until they complete the beginners course at the end of this semester.

Once a student has completed the beginner's course they are required to join the ANU Aikido Club and start paying training fees. The training fees are \$180 (student) or \$210 (employed) for 6 months. This works out to about \$1 per class!

For Beginners this will need to be paid within a fortnight of the completion of the beginner's course if you wish to continue training with the group. This amount goes solely towards paying our instructor. All that we pay instructors comes directly from this student contribution.

The annual membership fee is \$75, or \$50 for students.

This covers membership with the National Aikido Federation and the local ANU Aikido club, and helps pay for Dojo weapons, medical supplies and other equipment and is used to subsidise club events.

Membership with the National group gives each member benefits such as injury insurance, access to National Aikido Federation events and the ability to train at member Dojos in Sydney and Melbourne.

Non students also need to be members of the ANU Sports and Recreation Association to use ANU facilities. Annual SRA membership is \$120

Please speak to John Turnbull Sensei or Ian Dunn if you think you will have trouble paying these amounts. We are happy to make alternate payment arrangements for people with financial difficulties. A reminder to seniors, the fee for the next 6 months is now due.

## The Final Word

"A fundamental axiom of aikido is that the gentle can control the strong through the study of technique. However, aikido is more than simply a physical skill. To coordinate with the opponent's movement and power it is necessary that the mind as well as the body be pliant. In other words the mind must be alert and flexible in order to be able to take advantage of the opponent's movements. Taken a step further, this

means that the *aikidoka* must understand his opponent and share his feelings; so the final objective is not to inflict injury but to cultivate a sense of harmony. Thus contest, which leads to superiority and defeatist complexes, is avoided in practising aikido, and the techniques are safely assimilated in kata form i.e., in cooperation with a partner each movement is repeated until it has been thoroughly

absorbed and has become a reflex action. Aikido is not concerned merely with relationships between people; it is a form of training in which the aikidoka learns to harmonize with nature through the practice of natural techniques. A movement that is awkward or forced can not be aikido."

From 'Dynamic Aikido' by Gozo Shioda