



AIKIDO

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AIKIDO AND SPORT

"There are no contests in the Art of Peace. A true warrior is invincible because he or she contests nothing. *Defeat* means to defeat the mind of contention that we harbor within."

O'Sensei Ueshiba,
Founder of Aikido
'The Art of Peace'

As I write, the Olympic Games are in full swing. What a wonderful thing for international peace they are, bringing people together from all around the world to socialise and enjoy themselves. But how more fulfilling the lives of athletes would be if the time and energy they spend training were used instead for Aikido. Athlete's careers are short-lived - they seldom last more than a decade or so; Aikido means a lifetime of steady progress.

O'Sensei once commented: 'Sports are widely practised nowadays, and are good for physical exercise. In Aikido, too, we train the body. But we also use the body as a vehicle to train the mind, calm the spirit, and find goodness and beauty - dimensions that sports lack. Training in Aikido fosters valour, sincerity, fidelity and beauty, as well as making the body strong and healthy. In Aikido, we train not to learn how to win, we train to learn to emerge victorious in any situation.'

He also often stated that 'the only true victory is self-victory'. By this he meant that when one person is beaten by another, no real progress has been made from the Universe's viewpoint because the defeat cancelled out the victory. But when progress is made without someone being defeated it's a genuine victory, especially when such progress points the way for other people to progress too.

Sport does bring certain benefits, but it's significant that in even the gentlest sports it's unconsciously accepted that winning means 'beating' other people, as if victory can only be achieved by humiliating others. The word beating implies striking someone until they are helpless, the way a violent person beats a dog into submission! To see the truth of this it's only necessary to note how often the beaten ones in Televised sport are subjected to the anguish and humiliation of defeat, and how seldom the victors display any compassion for their 'opponents', and how often spectators behave like screaming savages.

It's different in Aikido, where we train co-operatively for the purpose of helping each other progress. We take turns being attacker and defender, and even when an expert is training with a beginner, the beginner gets to 'win' as often as the expert.

The beginner is a 'winner' because he or she gets valuable personal tuition; the expert is also a 'winner' because he or she gains the creative and rewarding experience of helping another being make progress.



O'Sensei Ueshiba, the Founder of Aikido

If athletes understood the true meaning of victory, they would not be tempted to take drugs to improve their performances, and wouldn't suffer the shame and guilt that cheating brings. Think of the life-long fear of being found out that an athlete endures if involved with drugs, as so many are nowadays. It's significant that the current Games, which have just started as I write this, are already tarnished by drug scandals.

The ideal of course is a life where the physical techniques that bring athletic fitness are combined with Aikido, letting us enjoy the best of both worlds.

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We are also on the web
Check us out at
www.aikido.net.au

STANDING CENTRED BETWEEN HEAVEN AND EARTH

I found a very good book by the Chinese master Lam Kam Chuen recently. On standing centred between heaven and earth he wrote -

'When we stand in the Zhan Zhuang postures, the natural curves of our arms and legs and the relaxed state of our body open us up to the energy of the cosmos. Like the receptor dish of a radio telescope we attract and receive signals.

You cannot think your way into this experience. You have to feel it. Your heart is the key. Open your spirit outwards like the central receptor of a telescope, beckoning and welcoming the galaxies.

When we stand upright with our hearts open, we are aerials, poised erect between the energy of the earth and the energy of space. Our feet take in earth energy through the sensitive points of our soles and, by being relaxed, we

attract the magnetic energy of the universe to our head and body.'

What a wonderful description! I often use the analogy of connecting the positive and negative terminals of a battery so energy - ki - can flow between them, but I like Master Chuen's analogy better. It implies the quiet, calm 'listening' that is so important in opening one's self to the Cosmos and which evokes the powerful, sensitive alpha state.

There can be no conceit or egotism in achieving such a state, but only gratitude, because it arises from the attunement of the mind-body organism with the infinite Universe, just as the telescope attunes with the energy it receives, becoming a resonant part of the vibrating whole. Out of such resonance arises a facility for actions that appear superhuman to people trained only in physical methods of development.

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 Tamara Abed if you think you will have trouble paying these amounts. We are happy to make alternate payment arrangements for people with financial difficulties.

Club Activities

September 26th (Sunday) - Grading

Grading will start at 10:30 am.

Due to the changes in SRA opening hours for weekends, warm up will start at 10:00.

To be followed by lunch and videos.

Cost : \$20 5th-2nd Kyu, \$50 for 1st kyu and \$100 for 1st Dan.

Fee to be paid to the treasurer (Tamara).

Chocolates

The club is currently having a fundraising drive. It would be great if everyone could sell a box of chocolates. Each box contains a variety of chocolates including Caramello, Peppermint, Strawberry, White Chocolate and Milk Chocolate. Each box has 48 chocolates selling at a \$1 each. See Tamara to get a box.

Recent Club Activities

July 24th (Saturday)

Video and BBQ night

Videos :

Yagy Shinkage Ryu Kenjutsu

Ono ha Itto Ryu Kenjustu

Video on naginata

August 13th (Friday)

Beginners dinner & video night

Videos :

Principles of Aikido

1st Aikido Friendship Demonstration, Part 1

