



AIKIDO

Similarities between Aikido and Horseriding:

"The Art of Peace is the principle of nonresistance. Because it is nonresistant it is victorious from the beginning. Those with evil intentions or contentious thoughts are instantly vanquished. The Art of Peace is invincible because it contends with nothing."

O'Sensei Ueshiba,
Founder of Aikido

For those of you who don't know, I'm a keen horserider and spend most of my spare time riding my horses. It is my passion for horseriding that led me to the path of aikido. Below are the similarities I find between aikido and horseriding:

CENTRED ON THE HEAVEN AND EARTH AXIS

"Sit tall, sit tall, sit tall" my instructor would normally yell. Any bit of slouching on the horse can result in a sluggish horse going slower and a goey horse going faster. Sitting relaxed and centred on the heaven and earth axis really improves the horse's movement and allows the rider to become more balanced and secure.

Being centred is also very important. A horse's centre can shift forward or backward depending on its gait; the faster the gait the more forward its centre, unless collected up by the rider. This becomes very apparent whilst showjumping, where the horse's centre shifts forward over the jump. The rider's centre must be with the horse's centre, if this is lost whilst jumping, then the rider will either feel left behind or before the movement, resulting in an unbalanced heavy landing or a fall.

SOFTNESS

Softness is extremely important in horseriding and many riders seek to have a soft horse which responds to the slightest cue. If the rider is stiff, jerky and/or hard, the horse will naturally reflect this. Horses are extremely sensitive creatures and if too much pressure is applied to them will become defensive by shutting down or exploding.



O'Sensei Ueshiba, the Founder of Aikido

AWARENESS

Awareness whilst riding is very important. To feel each footfall, to feel the horse's evenness, where it's attention's focussed etc is all apart of awareness. The horse is constantly asking the rider questions; 'can I go slower,' 'can I go faster,' 'can I go back home,' etc. If the rider is unaware of what the horse is asking them, and doesn't answer, then the horse will go ahead and do them. For example a horse might flick its ear in the direction of home, a slight leg cue will tell the horse to keep going straight. However if the rider was unaware of the horse's question, then the horse's head will start turning and it will take a lot more effort to bring the horse on course. It's the getting more by doing less principle.

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

Similarities between Aikido and Horseriding (continued)

My favourite horse trainer is a student of aikido and incorporates many of its principles into horse handling and training. Below are quotes from him about horse training that I feel is relevant to aikido:

- * It's the little things that count
- * You get what you settle for
- * Softness doesn't come from the bit, it comes from your hands, and it really doesn't come from your hands, it comes from your heart
- * We are not training for today, we are training for tomorrow
- * Build a strong foundation so you always have something to come back to if the wheels fall off

- * Using technique alone is almost like trying to trick or fool the horse, which in the end doesn't work
- * If horse and person both lose their mind, nobody is at home, you have to be the calm of the storm
- * If you start something, you have to finish it
- * getting more by doing less
- * Where is it coming from, how do I fix it.
- * Don't look for the solution, look for the cause. When you find the cause you'll have the solution
- * When you listen to your horse you get an education, if you don't you get an experience. Experience is important as it builds the foundation for your education.
- * Horse training is like a journey with no ending, where all the important things happen along the way and not when you get there

From Tamara, and her horses (Dr Pepper and Lucky Princess)

CLUB ACTIVITIES

April 1st Friday
Annual General Meeting
7:00pm after training.

April 5th Tuesday
Sports and Recreation AGM
Caroline and Anne attending..

April 9th - 10th
Coastal Training
Beginners welcome
(club membership required for insurance purposes)

April (Date TBD)
Trip to Sydney for
aikido demonstration.

Committee Contact Information

President : Caroline McGregor
Treasurer : Tamara Abed
Publications : Annette Vincent, annettev@ozemail.com.au
Women's Officer : Annette Vincent

aikido@webone.com.au

Beginners Dinner - Date TBD

Club Notices

Club Members:

The club is currently applying for a grant with the Sport and Recreation Association (SRA) and needs to supply a list of current members. As part of this requirement, it is important that each non student member of the club is also a member of the SRA. If you haven't already done so, could you please renew your membership with the SRA. The SRA will be checking our list against their list and will fine the club \$300/individual for any discrepancy. If you have any queries please come and see the club treasurer, Tamara Abed.

Participation Rates:

The club is currently recording class attendance of all of its members. This is a recent requirement by the SRA to determine dojo usage. It will also be useful for the club to know how often members are attending, particularly which days are the highest attended, low attendance times of the year etc. Also for grading it is a requirement for members to have attended so many hours of training before they are graded. All club members are encouraged to attend as many training sessions as possible..

The Final Word

Summer School 2005

This year's summer school was held for 5 days in January (12th - 16th). There were 2 sessions per day, sunrise misogi at Mount Rogers and a picnic at Cotter before outdoor training. On the Friday evening activity was seeing 'Seven Samurai'.

The summer school and training weekends are a wonderful opportunity to get some concentrated aikido and it is surprising how much more progress is made during daily sessions than normal training. The absence of distractions helps focus.

Annette Vincent



Outdoor Training at Cotter
Summer School 2005