



AIKIDO OF PHOENIX

www.AikidoOfPhoenix.com

Aikido of Phoenix Newsletter *April 2010*

FROM TERESA MASTISON SENSEI

“Do not fail
To learn from
The pure voice of an
Ever-flowing mountain stream
Splashing over the rocks.”

O’Sensei - The Art of Peace



Do not try to control anything or anyone except yourself. Like the water in the mountain stream, when you come to a troublesome situation or against a formidable opponent, your goal should be to blend, redirect or go around it. The water can not move the rocks, but it can go over and around them and over time wear them down.

Training in Aikido helps you learn how to blend, redirect or go around obstacles. It is not easy because many of those obstacles are mental. We have preconceived ideas to overcome. We have past experiences that haunt us and create doubt, hesitation or the false belief that strength is might. These things prevent us from achieving our true potential. Therein lies the challenge and the reason we train - to better ourselves.

To better yourself is a life journey, but one step at a time and you will get there.

Good luck on your journey.

FROM JOHN SCANLIN SENSEI

“Always practice the Art of Peace in a vibrant and joyful manner”
-O’Sensei

How many Aikidoka does it take to screw in a lightbulb?

- Eleven. One Sensei to explain the circular motion involved 10 times, and 10 students to practice it 100 times.

How to tell if you are practicing too much Aikido:

-You spontaneously go into katate tori hantai nikkyo when someone shakes your hand.

-You unconsciously start doing jogi one when sweeping the floor with a wooden broom.

-You threaten your children with irimi nage as a discipline tool.

-You attempt to practice shomenuchi ikkyo with your pet dog as uke. And.....

-You bow when entering the grocery store!

These are the best I could come up with. Do you know any Aikido jokes? If you do, let’s hear them!

Thanks to all the crane folders. It was great fun getting together. Good job to all the Snedigar kids who attended the Open House. It was fun and you did a wonderful job of showing everyone how hard we work!

Keep the spirit strong!

FROM LUCY MAILLOUX SENSEI

Exploring the dynamics of working with our bokkens has added so much to our training. It is amazing how the mind can interfere with ones training! Although the bokken is an extension of us, it is easy to get overly consumed with the mechanics versus the blending and becoming one with the weapon. At times we can focus more on the sound of the bokkens hitting together, and sure it looks great in the Highlander movies, and I am a Kill Bill fan, but it is essential to focus on the fundamentals of the defense. Some times it is hard to visualize that whether it is open hand or with a weapon, the fundamentals of Aikido are there, which is why we focus on them so much.

Being that the sword is a bladed instrument; the goal is to allow the blade to do all of the work. If free to do so, the edge will find its own path so there is no need to do anything extra. It is should also be the goal that the bokken is not "hitting" or "sawing," rather it is "slicing". Hold your weapon with great care, have a firm relaxed grip with your shoulders down. If your shoulders, forearms or hands start to hurt, chances are you are holding your weapon incorrectly.

Fine tuning and relying on the kihon-waza is how we build and grow within the art. However, this takes time and lots of patience! O Sensei during an interview was once asked, “The Aiki Path is long, isn't it?” His response to the question was, “The Aiki Path is infinite. I am 76 years old now, but I am still continuing my search. It is not an easy task to master the Path in Budo or the arts. It is a lifelong training.” Perhaps the best lessons that I have taken away from this answer is to focus on what you do not know, accepted that there is always much to learn, and don’t expect quick progress but train for slow and consistent progress.

As always, remember to train for success, learn to anticipate and overcome obstacles, and failure comes when you do not sincerely dedicate yourself to your commitments and accept that you will not succeed.

Congratulations to Amanda Redington who has been invited to test for the rank of Sankyū.

KIDS' CORNER

What is an aiki taiso? An aiki taiso is an exercise that you do by yourself that is directly related to Aikido techniques. We do aiki taiso for several reasons and I think it's important that you know why.

First, the motions involved in doing the aiki taiso makes the Aikido techniques a little easier because you know how your body is supposed to move when doing that technique. Second, when you are practicing the aiki taiso correctly and in the right frame of mind, you are practicing extending your energy throughout your entire body. This makes your ki flow and you and your uke (partner) will feel the difference.

I present you a challenge. Practice your aiki taiso at home. Even if it's just one aiki taiso that you remember, practice that one with a focused mind slowly and with intensity. This means that you think about the movement as you do it, slowly and methodically. Picture your ki (energy) flowing through your body as you do the exercise and feel the difference.

I say this is a challenge, because you have to make yourself think while you do the aiki taiso. You can make your body go through the motions, but to gain the benefits you have to engage your mind. This is not easy. It takes real focus and you have to decide to do it. That's why it's a challenge. I can't make you do it, but if you want to improve you should make yourself do it.

The two aiki taiso that we do most often in the kids' classes are udefuri chayoko undo, the spinning exercise and tenkan undo, the handshake exercise. Practice these slowly like in slow motion thinking about your ki flowing through your arms, legs and body. I visualize my ki as water so when I do these water is spraying out of my hands as I go through the motions. What does your ki look like? Imagine it flowing throughout your body as you do the exercise. Your muscles will naturally contract when you do aiki taiso this way and your muscles will tire a bit, but eventually you will do it naturally and you won't muscles won't be as involved.

I hope you take the challenge. Practice a different aiki taiso each day. You only need to practice a few minutes at a time especially if you are focused and do them slowly. If you need to see other aiki taiso besides the ones I mentioned above I'd be happy to show you. All you have to do is ask.

I wish you well as you challenge yourself!



RANK PROMOTIONS

Hachikyu (green belt) - Landon Shivers, Steven Shivers

Shichikyu (orange belt) - Jacob Stout, Joshua Ferrigno

Rokkyu (yellow belt) - Tawnya Edwards

AIKIDO NOTEBOOK MATERIALS AVAILABLE

Several months ago I shared my ideas for keeping an Aikido notebook. This is a notebook or folder of some kind where you can keep notes, questions, or ideas about Aikido that you can review occasionally to help you remember what you learned. I have found doing this invaluable and I hope those of you who have started your own notebook have found it helpful too.

If you are interested in beginning an Aikido notebook please see me and I can provide a few materials that will help you get started. A good suggestion is to use your notebook as a place to keep your testing papers, copies of the articles you find interesting in the Aikido of Phoenix's newsletters or other sources and notes on techniques or philosophies that were discussed in class. It is your notebook. Use it in a way that will benefit you.

-Teresa Mastison Sensei

FAMILY RATE CHANGE COMING SOON

Beginning June 2010 for the Chandler and South Chandler dojos, each person who registers for Aikido will pay an individual city fee instead of a single fee for a family. By making this change the city will align all their classes to reflect the same policy across the board. We are the only class that offers a family rate, which has caused some frustration and confusion. Currently, you can view the Chandler and South Chandler Aikido class information online, but you can't actually register because their system is not set up to handle the family rate. In addition, the fees currently listed online are incorrect because the system is unable to distinguish between family and individual rates so charges both. This is very misleading especially for potential students. In June, when this change happens, it will then be possible to register for Aikido classes online and the information posted will be correct.

However, this change will increase the amount families pay the city, but the instructor fees will remain the same. Currently, the family city fee is \$11 or \$17 depending on which dojo/class you attend. When this change goes into effect, each participant registered for class will pay the city fee for an individual - \$8, \$11, or \$13 per person depending on which dojo and class is attended.

As always, we want to make Aikido available to anyone who truly wants to train. If this change creates a problem we ask that you talk to us and we will figure something out. The City of Chandler also has scholarships available.

MESA DOJO NEWS

Aikido of Phoenix's website has been updated to allow Mesa students to register with the city of Mesa through our website. We have included a link that will take you directly to the page you need in order to start the registration process. Once at this page you will need to login to the WebTrac system and proceed with registration. We hope this makes the registration process a little easier.

Chandler and South Chandler students will have this same opportunity beginning in June when students will be able to register for classes online and we link it through our website.

ORDER YOUR AIKIDO OF PHOENIX T-SHIRT NOW!

We are now taking orders for the new Aikido of Phoenix t-shirts. The shirts will be steel blue in color with the Aikido Of Phoenix logo in white on the front and a dynamic Aikido image on the back, also in white. They will be made out of a 50/50 cotton/poly blend material and cost will be \$15. We will have kids and adult sizes.



The front of the t-shirt will have the AoP logo located on the left where the pocket usually is.



The back of the t-shirt will have this dynamic image with Aikido of Phoenix's philosophy underneath along with our website address.

"Teaching Aikido as a complete budo"
AikidoOfPhoenix.com

ENJOY A DAY AT THE ARIZONA ASIAN FESTIVAL

For more information visit their website at
www.aaaaz.org



ARIZONA ASIAN AMERICAN ASSOCIATION Presents
16th Annual
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Free Admission

Location
Heritage Square Park
115 N 6th Street
Phoenix Az. 85004

April 10 -11 2010
Saturday 10:00 am - 7:00 pm
Sunday 10:00 am - 6:00 pm

Visit our website
<http://www.aaaaz.org>

Join us on face book


Take the light rail


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Avenue of Cultures
Children's Wonderland
Poster and Essay Contests
Games and a whole lot more

Sponsors
         

Partial funding provided by the Phoenix Arts Commissioner through appropriations from the Phoenix City Council, the Arizona Commission on the Arts through appropriations from the Arizona State Legislature and grants from the National Endowment for the Arts.

