



AIKIDO OF PHOENIX

www.AikidoOfPhoenix.com

## *Aikido of Phoenix Newsletter* *August 2010*

*Aikido of Phoenix's phone number has changed to 480-639-4628!*

### **FROM TERESA MASTISON SENSEI**

The Kids' Corner article on safety has brought to my mind something that I think is crucial to a parent-child relationship and that is the existence of good communication. To me this means an ongoing dialogue of life issues, an open door policy for whenever questions arise and creating an atmosphere of trust and security that whatever is discussed won't be shared or ridiculed.

The topic of children and safety is a passion of mine and the kids' article has stirred in me several strong memories and I ask for your patience as I try to make a point by sharing them.

In smaller cities like the one I grew up in years ago personal safety wasn't really a big concern. I remember heading out on my bike in the morning and telling mom I'd see her later for dinner. I gave a general description of what I had planned for the day, but not always and it usually changed depending on which friend was home and available. There were plenty of times that no one even knew where I was because I was at my "secret" place. I often went there when I was bothered by something and needed time to think or I was mad and needed to vent. No one would have known where I was had anything happened to me. Another time when I was a teenager I was walking downtown alone when I thought I was going to be asked directions by someone in a car, but got exposed to indecency instead. I was very frightened so I returned to the store I just came out of to call home. No one answered so I walked home after checking to be sure that the individual was gone. Thank God I made it home okay. But what was I thinking walking home alone after that? I don't even remember telling my parents about it. It's not like they were mean or uncaring and I don't have any bad feelings about it (except the actual incident), we just didn't talk about stuff much. To be sure we lived in another time where the need wasn't as great and it was a much smaller and safer community than where my family is today. However, had there been a line of communication already established and practiced I imagine it would have helped me to discuss the incident as well as give me courage and help to report it to the police, which I don't remember doing. As I think of it, I usually just figured things out on my own or asked my friends. I guess it goes along with my independent nature, but I'm not sure why I didn't go to my parents concerning this incident. As someone suggested to me, my brain had never dealt with this type of event before so I had no plan on how to deal with it.

But speaking as a parent now there's nothing more I want than for my children to come to me if they have a question, a problem or want to discuss something. Heaven forbid anything like my incident should happen to them, but I want them to know that they can come to me for anything.

After writing the Kids' Corner article and reliving these memories I just wanted to make a special plea to all parents, guardians, teachers or anyone in charge of children to ask questions and foster a relationship where they can come to you for whatever reason. If they don't share very willingly you have to be the one to initiate the dialogue. They may not always like being "quizzed" but it may start some important discussions and they will remember you caring enough to ask. Listen to what they have to say and be attentive to what they need. The older they get the more they need to know you are available.

### **FROM LUCY MAILLOUX SENSEI**

What a great month, and the class has done an exceptional job of working open hand and then transitioning into knife defenses. Although making transitions from open hand to weapons can sometimes be a little frustrating, it's important that you take it as a learning opportunity and allow yourself to make mistakes so that in turn you can measure your successes. In addition, you should occasionally ask yourself, "What attitude am I bringing to the mat?" It is an important question to ask and one that needs to be answered only by you.

*"Always practice the Art of Peace in a vibrant and joyful manner"* - Morihei Ueshiba (O'Sensei)

These words speak volumes to what O Sensei envisioned of Aikido. We practice an art of peace and although one may think that what we do is passive, it is the complete opposite. However, it is essential to practice in the right frame of mind. If your attitude is one of a combative nature, then your Aikido will suffer. Since we teach Aikido as a budo, there has to be a balance. As I read these words by O Sensei, it helps me to understand that although we train in a serious manner, we also need to enjoy what we are doing on the mat. Aikido cannot become a chore that you have to do; it has to be something that you want to do. With that said, wanting to practice the art of Aikido means that your attitude is a positive one of acceptance, patience and humility.



As you train on the mat, have respect for the art, your dojo, your fellow Aikidoka and yourself. Do not be combative on the mat and become an obstacle to others who are trying to learn. Be sincere in your attacks so that others can practice to their fullest. Take care not to injure your uke by being over zealous, and work within each others' abilities. Always practice on the mat only what has been taught in class and keep in mind that some times the best learning opportunities are when you help others succeed as well.

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.

### **FROM JOHN SCANLIN SENSEI**

"When your eyes engage those of another person, greet him with a smile and they will smile back. This is one of the essential techniques of the Art of Peace." –O'Sensei

"Techniques employ four qualities that reflect the nature of our world. Depending on the circumstance, you should be: hard as a diamond, flexible as a willow, smooth-flowing like water, or empty as space." –O'Sensei

### **Aikido and Dragons**

Dragons are legendary creatures that are featured in the myths of many cultures. They are generally considered in modern times to be large and lizard-like and can emit fire from their mouths. Different cultures, however, have other interpretations of dragons. The two most familiar interpretations of dragons are European dragons, derived from various folk traditions and ultimately related to Greek and Middle Eastern mythologies, and the unrelated Chinese dragon. The European dragon has wings and is depicted as having an underground lair or cave, making it an ancient creature of the earth element. European dragons are usually depicted as evil and hostile. In Chinese art, dragons are typically portrayed as long, scaled, serpentine creatures with four legs and no wings. In contrast to European dragons, Chinese dragons typically symbolize potent and auspicious powers, particularly control over water, rainfall, and floods. Japanese culture embraces dragons also. The Japanese dragon is of Chinese origin. Japanese dragons ("Nagaraja"-dragon kings, or "Nagakanya"- dragon queens) are water deities associated with rainfall and bodies of water, and are typically depicted as large, serpentine creatures with clawed feet and no wings. Although fearsome and powerful, Japanese dragons are considered just and benevolent, and bringers of wealth and good fortune (although I would not want to make them angry!). O'Sensei was a fervent believer of dragon mythology and even had his own guardian Dragon King. His dragon's name is Ame-no-murakumo-kuki-samuhara Ryu-O.

Ame-no-murakumo literally means "billowing clouds of heaven" and represents the vast intelligence of the universe. Kuki translates as "nine fierce spirits", a code for the different levels of raw and subtle energy that fuel the world. Sumuhara means "awakened being" and represents the "center" (hara) of the universe. Ryu-O is the Dragon King- an Avatar who descends to earth in time of great need. It also represents one who can freely roam in all directions. This dragon continues to watch over us as the guardian angel of Aikido, and is present wherever Aikido is sincerely practiced (for example, at Aikido of Phoenix!)

Congratulations, Jonathan. Job well done on your Yonkyu test.

Keep the spirit strong!

### **KIDS' CORNER**

Another school year has begun. A few of you still have some free time left. I hope you have all had an enjoyable summer and were able to create lots of great memories of another wonderful summer.

Going back to school is a good time to review some basic safety issues that you may have forgotten or haven't thought about in a while.

The most important and probably the easiest way to stay safe is to **PAY ATTENTION**. Be aware of everything around you. Make eye contact with everyone you are around. Knowing what is happening around you can allow you to anticipate an action and give you more time to react to it or to avoid it all together. Be sure to report anything out of the ordinary to your parents and/or teachers. If you ever have to defend yourself (with words or techniques) please let someone know about it. Also, if you walk, ride a bike or the bus to school pay extra attention to who and what's around you and report anything weird. Parents want and need to know if something isn't right or if there is a change. If at all possible, don't go alone and always follow the path you and your parents have decided is the safest route.

Remember to blend with all that happens. This can mean you have to physically move around something or someone, or it can mean keeping your mouth shut instead of jumping to conclusions and getting in an argument. It's tough, but NOT talking or reacting right away can sometimes help keep things civil. It also gives you time to consider why something has happened. Maybe there's a reason that's not immediately noticeable. By taking even just a few moments to consider the events you allow yourself the opportunity to react more appropriately.

And, finally, remember to extend positive energy to all around you. Be the first to say hello, smile at people, help someone in need, be a good role model, do your best in everything and always be kind and respectful.

You learn Aikido techniques in the event you should have to defend yourself, but your Aikido training needs to be practiced daily by being a person you are proud of every day.

Good luck this school year and I look forward to all the fun we're going to have on the mat!

Teresa Mastison Sensei

### **CHANDLER DOJO NEWS**

The Chandler dojo will NOT have classes on Tuesday, August 31 or Wednesday, September 1. The Community Center will be stripping and refinishing all the floors so we will not have room to train. Due to how the dates fall on the calendar each month still provides us with four weeks of training. Enjoy the break and we'll see you when classes resume on Tuesday, Sept.

### **SOUTH CHANDLER DOJO NEWS**

The South Chandler dojo will NOT have classes on Saturday, Sept. 4 or Monday, Sept. 6. The Snedigar Recreation Center will be closed in honor of Labor Day. Enjoy your long weekend and we'll see you back on the mat Saturday, Sept. 11.

#### **Dojo Field Trip**

Our Saturday, September 11<sup>th</sup>'s class will be to attend the Arizona Aikido Fall Bridge Camp, featuring Hiroshi Ikeda and Mary Heiny. As usual, we will meet at Lucy Mailloux Sensei's house for breakfast and then carpool to Prescott for the day. Be sure to bring a lunch and plenty of beverages for the day! If you have any question please see Sempai, Dojo Cho or myself.

### **MESA DOJO NEWS**

The Mesa dojo will NOT have classes on Monday, Sept. 6 as the Red Mountain Center will be closed for the Labor Day holiday. Classes will resume on Friday, Sept. 10.

### **LOOKING FOR STUDENT ARTICLES**

This is an invitation to any Aikido of Phoenix student who is interested in writing an article for future newsletters. We welcome students' insights and perspectives on how Aikido is relevant or helpful in their lives. You can take any subject and share your thoughts about how Aikido plays a factor or how you use your training in your everyday life or a particular event. See your respective Sensei if you are interested in contributing to the newsletter in any way.

### **RANK PROMOTIONS**

*3rd Stepping Stone* - Isaac Cluff

*Yonkyu* (1st purple belt) - Jonathan Scanlin

### **AIKIDO OF PHOENIX HAS NEW PHONE NUMBER**

Effective immediately Aikido of Phoenix has a new phone number. Please replace 480-699-2334 with **480-639-4628**. The old number will be effective for only a short while longer, however the new number is effective immediately. We made this change to better manage our business and hope it doesn't cause too much inconvenience. Please make a note of the new number.

### **NEW STUDENT INFORMATION**

If you have recently joined us I'd like to welcome you to Aikido of Phoenix. We hope you have an enjoyable time training and we encourage you to ask any of the instructors or fellow students if you should have questions at any time. We are glad to have you on the mat!

Each month that you train you will need to register with the city by filling out a registration form (online through the City's website or at the location) and paying the city fee. You also need to pay the instructor fee for each month that you train. You may do that through our website ([www.AikidoOfPhoenix.com](http://www.AikidoOfPhoenix.com)) or at the dojo. You can register for multiple months at a time to help save a little time and effort. If you need to take a break you do not need to register, but as soon as you get back on the mat the city requires you to be registered. If you have any registration questions, don't hesitate to ask another student, Sensei or myself. You can contact me through email on our website, at the dojo or give me a call at our new phone number (480-639-4628).

Teresa Mastison Sensei

Following is a list of materials available to all our students. You may find them useful in your training.

Aikido of Phoenix Student Guide \$15

DVDs \$25 each

*Kids' Safety* (self-defense techniques for kids or anyone)

*Aikido for Kids* (Aikido basics, all kids' tests demonstrated)

*Aikido of Phoenix Student Guide* (supplement to book)

*Go Kihon Waza* (5 techniques for each attack)

*Kobudo - Weapons of Aikido* (jo and bokken forms)

**FRIENDS  
OF  
AIKIDO OF PHOENIX**

Do you have a business/service/product that you would like to promote? Do you know a business that you would recommend to your friends? We are always interested in helping each other by sharing information and/or making recommendations about businesses. If you know of a business or want to share information about your business please let Teresa Mastison Sensei know and she'll get the relevant information into the next newsletter.

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