



ABUNDANT PEACE AIKIDO & TAI CHI

Connections

Editorial

December 2008

The Ten Essentials



November was a busy month, and as life often offers, a mix of good and bad news.

First, congratulations to our Sensei Brad Schultz on his advancement; in November, he was advised by the ASU organization that he was awarded the rank of Sandan, or "third degree black belt". This special, "promotion by recommendation" is not only a wonderful milestone on his personal Aiki journey, but it

carries special meaning for our school.

Abundant Peace is the furthest removed school that operates under the ASU Banner; this promotion recognizes the strength of our school, and the commitment of our Sensei; it is therefore well earned!

On the other hand, 3rd Kyu testing for Joo and Michelle had to be postponed, due to a hamstring injury suffered by Joo a week or so before the test was to take place. We hope Joo recovers quickly and that their test can take place before the end of 2008; on a related note, this stands as proof that Michelle has amazing ki projection!

For the group as a whole, we held our first "Mat Maintenance and General Clean-up" session, on the 15th of November; special thanks to the many who came, and contributed to the care of our dojo. This was a great addition to our community spirit, and left all involved with a very positive feeling...which means it is something we will make a regular event.

Finally, on a personal note it is only a few weeks until I leave for Florida, and the Winter Intensive Aikido Camp; I look forward to both the winter vacation, and the chance to experience this seminar again.

On behalf of Sensei Brad Schultz and his family, please accept my best wishes for this holiday season, and in the New Year!

Stuart Krause

Tai Chi Staff

Traditional Yang Style Tai Chi training is focused heavily on empty hands exercise; the number of weapons practiced is limited to the 13 move saber set, a 67 move sword set, and a 13 move "spear" set, although for safety reasons the spear head has been removed, and this is now a staff set.

The techniques for the staff set remain the same as they were, before the spear head was removed; the primary purpose of this set is training to emit energy. For this reason, this is often referred to as "dou gan" or "shivering staff".



Sifu Brad is willing to offer training in this program, early in 2009; all we need is a large enough number of students, and we can make this happen. So, if you are interested in taking your tai chi studies down this path, please let Stuart know!

Christmas Tai Chi

One of the great gifts of tai chi practice as physical exercise is that it can be done almost anywhere, in a short period of time, with no special clothing or equipment; that makes it the perfect vehicle for maintaining better health and wellness, during the "Silly Season". This is a wonderful time of year, we spend time with family and friends, but we also tend to relax a bit too much, and eat a great deal too much! This indulgence leads to lethargy and poor health; to combat this, I challenge each of our tai chi students to perform at least the "mini-set" once each day during the Christmas Holidays!

The third of the "Ten Essentials" of Tai Chi practice, as espoused by Yang Cheng Fu, is to "Relax the Waist".



This principle can be expressed as

"the waist is the commander of the whole body. Only after you are able to relax the waist will the two legs have strength and the lower body be stable. The alternation of empty and full all derive from the turning of the waist. Hence the saying 'the wellspring of destiny lies in the tiny interstice of the waist'. Whenever there is a lack of strength in your form, you must look for it in the waist and legs."

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www.yangfamilytaichi.com

Next month, we will review the Fourth of these Ten Principles, which is to "separate empty and full".

Ikeda Sensei Seminar



Hiroshi Ikeda began his study of aikido in 1968, as a college student at Kokugakuin College University in Tokyo. In 1978, he followed Saotome Sensei to Sarasota, Florida, and in 1980 he moved to Boulder, Colorado, to begin his own school.

He currently holds the rank of 7th Dan, from Mitsugi Saotome Shihan and the Aikido World Federation (Honbu Dojo); he is the Chief Instructor of Boulder Aikikai, a non-profit school of Aikido in Boulder Colorado, and also manages the operations of Bu Jin Design, a Martial Arts Supply Company.



Although the details of his next seminar in Missoula have not been published, the dates have; 17 through 19 April, 2009, Ikeda Sensei will offer a seminar at Aikido of Missoula.

I don't know about anyone else, but I will be going, and will plan to remain in Missoula for a few days afterward; with so much notice of such a great event, I encourage all of you to make plans to attend!

Announcements

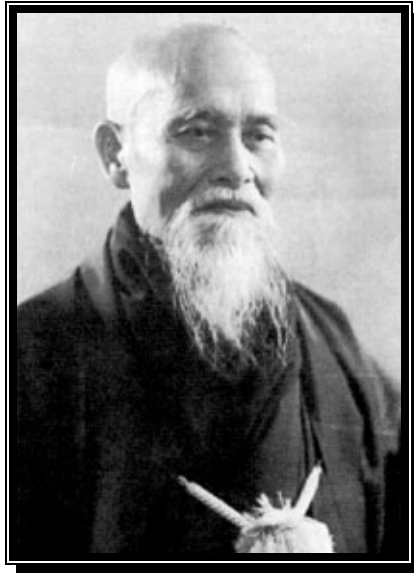
Aikido of Missoula has announced that Saotome Sensei is tentatively scheduled to conduct his annual seminar on the weekend of 25 to 27 September, 2009.

Sensei Brad will be away for his Christmas break; his final class will be held on Friday, December 19th, and he will return to classes on 7th January, 2009. Those students who are available to conduct classes during this period should let Sensei know right away.

Aikido Special Training for the month of December will be held on Tuesday, the 9th, from 6:30 to 9:30 PM; the subject will be material from the Saotome Sensei Seminar.

Our first "mat maintenance" session was both fun and successful; we have a great training facility, but must work together to keep it so. Our next such session will be held on **Saturday, 17th January 2009**; all students are encouraged to attend and help out, **from 1:00 to 2:00 PM**; all supplies will be provided!

The next program for Tai Chi beginners will commence on Saturday, 7th February, 2009; if any students are interested in taking part, or know any who might be, please let Sifu Brad know.



Quote from O Sensei

"Always keep your mind as bright and clear as the vast sky, the great ocean, and the highest peak, empty of all thoughts. Always keep your body filled with light and heat. Fill yourself with the power of wisdom and enlightenment."

-Morihei Ueshiba-

Christmas Party

All students and families are invited to share in our annual Christmas Pot Luck party; this event will take place on the afternoon of Saturday, 20th December 2008. We will begin with some energizing activities at 3:00 PM, with the pot luck social to follow at 4:00 PM. This is always a fun event, and a good chance for our "two schools", aikido and tai chi, to interact both on and off the mats. Not sure what to bring? There will be a sign up sheet posted very soon, and all offerings will be welcome!



Morning classes will continue this fall, from 6:00– 7:30 AM on Mondays and Thursdays. All ranks are welcome to attend, and the mat fee is only \$10.00!



Promotions & Advancement

We congratulate those members of our Club listed below, on their promotion:



ADULTS

Alanna S; 6th Kyu
Chris V; 8th Kyu
Jonathan G; 9th Kyu
Kelci M; 9th Kyu

KIDS

Junior 14th Kyu:

Airk M
Ethan T
Devon D
Nikola K

Cassidy D; Junior 13th Kyu

Zoran D; Junior 12th Kyu

Julia S; 11th Kyu

Stephanie T; Junior 10th Kyu

Tamara K; Junior 9th Kyu

Poetry Corner

exquisite moments

joy with family and friends

the Christmas season

Dojo Etiquette

Last month, we reviewed the meaning of the term "Sensei" and how this honorific was to be applied to our teacher, within our Dojo. While preparing that issue of our newsletter, I found some of the discussions on this topic to be quite interesting; essays concerning the meaning of the terms Sensei and Shihan, and how the calligraphy for these does not necessary relate directly to the usages these terms have today.

As presented, Sensei simply means teacher; it can be applied in any discipline, martial or otherwise. It is also used to describe learned persons, such as doctors or professors.

Shihan means "Master of an Art", and is applied within the ASU to our Head Teacher, Mitsugi Saotome Shihan. This appears primarily in print form, as when one is receiving instruction from him, it is quite appropriate to address him as "Sensei".

Finally, the term "O-Sensei" means "Great Teacher", and in the Aikido Community is applied only to our founder, Morihei Ueshiba. This is not universal, and other disciplines may have their own "O-Sensei". Understanding and using these simple titles of respect can add to our aiki journey.