



# ABUNDANT PEACE AIKIDO & TAI CHI

## Connections

Editorial

January 2009

The Ten Essentials

Tai Chi Etiquette



Happy New Year! I write these words having just returned from a short swim; we have the afternoon off, and are on Day Four of the ASU Winter Intensive Seminar. It is 77 degrees today, the coldest day we have seen since we arrived just in time for our Christmas dinner!

Now that I have finished bragging, I will say that this seminar is better than last years', although I believe

that is more because I am better equipped to understand what is being taught, than I was one year ago. For our aikido students, I look forward to sharing with you at least a little of what I have seen and experienced.

To those students, either of aikido or tai chi, who may at some point consider attending a weekend seminar, or perhaps even longer, I cannot say enough in support of taking such a plunge, if your circumstances permit it. The value of immersing yourself in study, even for a relatively short period of time, cannot be overstated; I feel that my understanding of true aikido has been vastly accelerated from having undergone just such an immersion.

December was another good month for our school, with one major milestone; Joo and Michele successfully completed their test to 3<sup>rd</sup> Kyu, which for both of them represents the culmination of an enormous amount of training and effort. Congratulations and well done to both of them!

We also enjoyed another Club Christmas Party, on Saturday, December 20<sup>th</sup>; there is always more than enough delicious food, and the company was pleasant as well.

On behalf of Brad Schultz and his family, I offer you the very best wishes for 2009, and hope that you all enjoyed a wonderful Holiday Season, spent with family and friends as your circumstances permit.

Stuart Krause

Tai Chi has become the most widely practiced of the martial arts, has become almost mainstream in nature, and has surrendered many of the traditions that are maintained by others. Most notably, in martial arts practice generally, the teacher is addressed on the mats by a particular title; in the case of Japanese Arts that title is "Sensei", or teacher; the Chinese arts generally use the term "Sifu".

The term "Sifu" is the combination of two symbols, which represent "teacher" and "father". Together, the term can most readily be understood as "Master" and is used to express general respect for the addressee's skills and experience. Although not required in our school, there are traditional Tai Chi Chuan schools that do follow this practice.

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Another item that is optional when studying Tai Chi Chuan is the wearing of the Kung Fu or Tai Chi Uniform. Again, this is not required, but if any of our students are interested, the wearing of the uniform is both permitted and encouraged. For some, "looking the part" inspires greater focus and effort; if you are interested in acquiring a Tai Chi uniform, speak to Sifu Brad and he can arrange to have one ordered for you!

Tai Chi Staff

This is a reminder that Sifu Brad would be happy to offer training in the Tai Chi short staff, early in 2009; all we need are enough students to make it worth while. If you are interested in taking part in such a course, let Sifu Brad know. Bear in mind that training with weapons brings great value to our empty hand training, and can therefore be very beneficial to the practice of empty hands Tai Chi.



The fourth of the "Ten Essentials" of Tai Chi practice, as taught by Yang Cheng Fu, is "Separate Empty and Full".



This principle was expressed as

***"in the art of Tai Chi Chuan, separating empty and full is the number one rule. If the whole body sits on the right leg, then the right leg is deemed 'full' and the left leg 'empty'. Only after you are able to distinguish full and empty will turning movements be light, nimble and almost without effort; if you can't distinguish them then your steps will be heavy and sluggish, you won't be able to stand stably, and it will be easy for an opponent to control you."***

Reprinted from [www.yangfamilytaichi.com](http://www.yangfamilytaichi.com)

Next month: "Sink the Shoulders and droop the elbows".

## 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 7<sup>th</sup> 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.

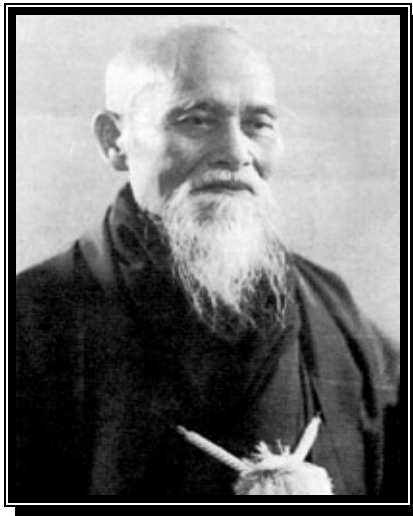
Sensei Brad will return from his Christmas break on 7<sup>th</sup> January; however, classes will be offered as scheduled until that time.

Aikido Special Training for the month of January will be held on Tuesday, the 20<sup>th</sup>; from 6:30 to 9:30 PM; the subject will be close quarter drills.

Our next mat maintenance session will be held on **Saturday, 17<sup>th</sup> January 2009**; all students are encouraged to attend and help out, **from 1:00 to 2:00 PM**; all supplies will be provided! We will also provide a light lunch, for those who are interested, starting at 12:30 PM.

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

Finally, remember to keep an eye on our web site, [www.abundantpeace.com](http://www.abundantpeace.com) for a detailed listing of workshops and seminars.



## Quote from O Sensei

*"In extreme situations, the entire universe becomes our foe; at such critical times, unity of mind and technique is essential - do not let your heart waver!"*

*-Morihei Ueshiba-*

## Club Special

During the months of January and February, Tai Chi students can try Aikido, and Aikido students can try Tai Chi, free for one month! This is to give those who are already a student at Abundant Peace School a chance to explore the similarities and differences of the other Art. Both Tai Chi and Aikido are Internal or Soft-Style Martial Arts, and they are based on similar principles, even though their expression appears quite different. So, if you have had any interest or curiosity at all about the 'other' Art at our Club, now is the time to "expand your horizons"! Remember, the classes for both arts are conveniently held back-to-back 3 times a week.



This photo shows Joo and Michele, sitting with Sensei Brad, immediately following the ordeal of their test to 3<sup>rd</sup> Kyu. They both did very well, through a test that lasted more than one hour; watch our web site, for more photographs of their test! This is a major milestone on the aiki path, as they are now both entitled to wear a brown belt!

## Promotions & Advancement

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



### ADULTS

Joo T; 3<sup>rd</sup> Kyu  
Michele L; 3<sup>rd</sup> Kyu  
Chris L; 5<sup>th</sup> Kyu  
Rebecca L; 5<sup>th</sup> Kyu  
Dave D; 8<sup>th</sup> Kyu

### KIDS

J.D. G; Junior 14<sup>th</sup> Kyu  
Thea D; 14<sup>th</sup> Kyu  
Tamara K; Jr. 9<sup>th</sup> Kyu

## Poetry Corner

*new year brings a gift*

*abundant new beginnings*

*choice remains master*

## Dojo Etiquette

Etiquette of practicing Aikido, as written by Morihei Ueshiba, "O-Sensei":

1. In Aikido, one blow can determine life or death. When practicing, obey your instructor, and do not engage in useless contests of strength.
2. Aikido is an art in which a person learns to deal with not only one but multiple attackers. It therefore requires that you practice at all times with careful awareness not only in front of you but in all directions.
3. Practice at all times with the feeling of pleasurable exhilaration.
4. The teachings of your instructor constitute only a small fraction of what you will learn. Your mastery of each movement will depend almost entirely on individual, earnest practice.
5. Daily practice begins with light movements of the body, gradually increasing in intensity and strength. There must be no excessive strain. That is why even an elderly person can continue to practice pleurably without bodily harm, and will attain the goal of his or her training.
6. The purpose of Aikido is to train both body and mind and to develop a person's sincerity. All Aikido techniques are secret in nature and are not to be idly revealed to others in public, not shown to rowdy or unprincipled people who will misuse them.

**Morning classes will continue in 2009, from 6:00– 7:30 AM on Mondays and Thursdays. All ranks are welcome to attend, and the mat fee is only \$10.00!**