



ABUNDANT PEACE AIKIDO & TAI CHI

"Connections"

Editorial

October 2008

The Ten Essentials



Wow; this fall has begun with a bang; our web site is up and running, (check it out at www.abundantpeace.com); we hosted a very successful aikido seminar, together with Northern Alberta Aikido; and, all classes are back to their regular schedules, including morning aikido on Mondays and Thursdays!

I arrived early, one Tuesday afternoon, and was struck by the larger than usual kids' aikido class; it was fun to watch, and I am always struck by the positive energy that children possess...a good lesson in the importance of holding onto as much of that youthful positivity as we can, despite the difficulties and weights that challenge each of us through this life.

Putting these newsletters together, I have had to research the lives of our Founding Teachers, Morihei Ueshiba or "O-Sensei" in Aikido, and Yang Cheng Fu in Tai Chi; what has struck me the most about both their stories is the joy with which they trained. So, like our younger students, approach your training with a "young at heart" and joyous attitude!

Stuart Krause

Yang Cheng Fu

Those of us that study the Yang style Tai Chi set owe the opportunity to Yang Cheng Fu (1883-1936). The following history was obtained from www.yangfamilytaichi.com:

"Yang Zhao Qing, called Cheng Fu, or just "3rd Son", was born in 1883 and died in 1936. He started receiving his father's teachings at an early age. During his youth he worked hard at making a careful study of Tai Chi, practicing hard through both summer and winter with his skill increasing daily. Eventually he became a celebrated martial artist. In order to adapt to the changing needs of society, Yang Cheng Fu began with his father's revised

Middle frame, and made further revisions. He gradually established the Yang family large frame, becoming the most widespread of today's Yang styles. The large frame postures established by Yang Cheng Fu in his older years are open and extended, simple and direct. The structure is compact and precise, with body alignment maintained in movement. The movements are gentle and flowing, and performed at an even speed. There is combined hardness and softness, lightness and heaviness. All of these characteristics make it the representative standard form for Yang Style Tai Chi Chuan, serving as the pattern for all those who would follow in its study. The form established by Yang Cheng Fu can be performed in a high, medium, or low stance. Thus, the degree of difficulty can be adjusted according to the one's requirements and condition.



The form retains the martial arts aspects of attack and defense, and is suitable for strengthening the body, improving health, and curing illness. Because of this, it has deeply received the love of the vast Tai Chi Chuan practitioners."

Orally presented by Yang Cheng Fu, recorded by Cheng Weiming, and translated by Jerry Karin, are "The Ten Essentials of Tai Chi Practice":

- 1) empty, lively, pushing up and energetic;
- 2) hold in the chest and pull up the back;
- 3) relax the waist;
- 4) separate empty and full;
- 5) sink the shoulder and droop the elbows;
- 6) use intent rather than force;
- 7) synchronize upper and lower body;
- 8) match up inner and outer;
- 9) (practice) continuously and without interruption;
- 10) seek quiescence within movement.

We will review these ten essentials, in this and upcoming issues of our Newsletter; the first, "empty, lively, pushing up and energetic" means:

"the posture of the head is upright and straight and the spirit is infused into its apex. You may not use strength. To do so makes the back of the neck stiff, whereupon the blood cannot circulate freely. You must have an intention which is empty, lively (or free) and natural. Without an intention which is empty, lively, pushing up and energetic, you won't be able to raise your spirit."

-Reprinted from www.taichi.firenze.it

The Tai Chi beginner program for fall 2008 began on September 20th; if you are interested, or know someone who might be, there is still time to register for this course!

Saotome Sensei Seminar



Our annual pilgrimage to Aikido of Missoula will soon begin; eight of us leave this week, to attend the Saotome Sensei Seminar, and three or four intend to remain, to attend some regular classes and enjoy a brief vacation. These

seminars are always excellent training, and with a large group making the trip we will no doubt have a little fun at the same time!



Announcements

Sensei will be away, from Thursday 25th September to Monday, 6th October, returning to regular classes on the 7th; those senior students available to teach classes during this period need to let him know.

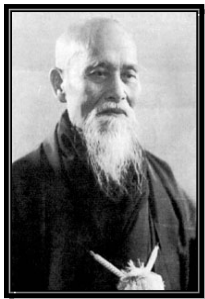
Children's aikido classes have resumed their regular schedule:

Tuesdays and Fridays, 5:30 to 6:15 PM.
Wednesdays, 6:30 to 8:00 PM.

Bokken training will be the focus of adult aikido weapons training; if you need a bokken, please let Sensei know.

Finally, Sensei has announced the 2008/2009 schedule of seminars and classes; go to www.abundantpeace.com under the seminars page; check for details.

Quote from O Sensei



"The totally awakened warrior can freely utilize all elements contained in heaven and earth. The true warrior learns how to correctly perceive the activity of the universe and how to transform

martial techniques into vehicles of purity, goodness, and beauty. A warrior's mind and body must be permeated with enlightened wisdom and deep calm."

-Morihei Ueshiba-

Hayashi Sensei Seminar



We were proud to host the "second annual" seminar with Cyndy Hayashi Sensei, 6th Dan, in conjunction with Northern Alberta Aikido, on the 12th and 13th of September. Thirty or so students attended, to study with

a unique and special teacher. Hayashi Sensei presents aikido that is both fun and energetic, with a focus on the practical and the martial.



For those who attended, it was a great weekend; expert teaching, the opportunity to train with some

new faces, to learn new perspective on our favorite technique, and to share a social evening. Before the weekend was out, all of us were already looking forward to the "Third Annual" Hayashi Sensei Seminar!



-Thanks to Joyce for the great photos!-

Promotions

Congratulations to the Following:

ADULTS
Ian - 9th Kyu



Dojo Etiquette

It is an ancient and honored tradition that all members of a traditional Arts School must actively support the learning environment by helping to care for and maintain the learning environment. This is expressed in many forms, from the simple to the elaborate; in our School, one expression of this is found in the act of sweeping the mats, before and after practice.

Students should view this as an opportunity for personal growth; sweeping should be approached in a meditative manner. Before class, view it as an opportunity to clear your mind and prepare your spirit; after class, it is a chance to reflect upon what you have learned. Symbolically, the act of sweeping is a form of misogi, or purification; it should therefore never be seen as demeaning, but rather, should be viewed as a privilege. All students should feel free to participate in this helpful ritual, without being asked!

Morning aikido classes are cancelled for Monday, 29 September, and will resume on Mondays and Thursdays thereafter!

Poetry Corner

Another time honored martial tradition is that students of the Arts of War must balance this pursuit by studying the arts of peace with an equal focus and vigor. One need look no further than Saotome Sensei, who has written several books, or Ikeda Sensei, who is known for his study of calligraphy, for examples of this philosophy. In that tradition we offer this poetry corner, and a tanka style poem written by Stuart.

soul of a poet
and heart of a warrior
o sensei wandered
the tapestry of his life
endless search for perfect grace