

Ken shinryu 流神劍

TRADITIONS FOR THE FUTURE

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Kancho's Corner

4 Ways to practise Aikido

There are four ways in which we can practise Aikido. These are:

Katai – rigid

Yawara - resilient

Ki no nagare - flowing

Aiki - spirit



In our partnered *Kihon Dosa* practice we generally employ *Ki no nagare* as our method. Our partner pulls and we flow with that force towards them (*Tai no henko* & *Hiriki no yosei 1*). Or our partner pushes and we accept and turn, again flowing with the direction of their force (*Tai no henko* & *Hiriki no yosei 2*). This method trains us to develop one of the basic premises of Aikido... use our opponents force rather than resisting them. This method is also the main way in which we practice our *kihon waza* and *Jiyu waza* and for the same reason.

Issues can arise however if this is the only training method that is used. Some schools train this way exclusively and it soon more resembles a dance than a martial art. Rather than a pathway along which strong *kihon* slowly refine into effective *Aiki*, untested basics with no *Chushin ryoku* (centre line) or *Kokyu ryoku* (breath power) instead become a mere empty shell of *Aiki*. To quote the legendary *Morihiro Saito Sensei*... "Aikido is generally believed to represent circular movements. Contrary to such belief, however, Aikido, in its true *Ki* form, is a fierce art piercing straight through the centre of opposition." Unfortunately the widespread public conception of Aikido is based on the former 'dance-like' image.

In our school, because we still employ strong grips and strikes as *Uke*, we manage a fine balance of *Yawara* and *Ki no nagare* in *kihon dosa*, *kihon waza* and *jiyu waza* practice. That said, there is much to be said for the *Katai* training method. An exponent who is proficient in *Katai* can easily learn *ki no nagare* however a person who has trained only *ki no nagare* will often not be able to move at all if gripped strongly. *Katai* training is what exposes a trainee to the reality of physical strength and how to overcome it under the worst possible conditions. If *Katai* is the only method employed however Aikido can degenerate into a contest of unrefined physical strength that also can never lead to effective *Aiki*.

It's often said that Aikido techniques don't require muscular strength to perform, and that it's not "harmonious" to resist a training partner who is attempting to perform a technique. Although there is some truth to this statement, it's based on an incomplete understanding of the nature of physical power and resistance. Beginners in Aikido rely on muscular strength to overcome resistance. This is natural, and should not be discouraged because it is all they have at the time. As we progress, we become proficient in technique, and less muscular strength becomes necessary to overcome resistance.

In basic training, constructive resistance can be applied directly against the technique... but the key word here is constructive. Resistance is counterproductive if it's based on egotism, or a desire to compete with, humiliate or intimidate a training partner. It's also counterproductive if you don't have direct experience of what is constructive resistance for the person opposite you... and that can only be acquired through years of experience. Under no circumstances should a training partner

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Kancho's Corner Cont'd

be deliberately injured or subjected to a dangerous situation. After all, the purpose of constructive resistance is to help a training partner learn effective technique, and counterproductive resistance defeats this purpose. The key point is that if you are not an experienced Aikidoka you cannot possibly know what is 'constructive resistance' for your training partner, so you should only resist your partner under the direction and guidance of the teacher.

Resistance is only constructive if it results in students growing and improving their technique and spirit. The level of resistance must not be excessive, because trainees will never learn techniques if they are prevented from performing them. Preventing a person from performing a technique is further counterproductive in that it defeats self-confidence... the thing Nishioka Sensei identified as the glue to which skill sticks.

As for the Aiki method, this is something to which most of us can only aspire. Perhaps after several decades of meaningful, sequential practice along the above defined path we may find ourselves beginning to feel a technique in a sense 'perform itself'. This is not to be confused with the product of mindless repetition. It can only come from *mindful* repetition. In my experience there is also a variety within Aiki ranging from the fierce 'piercing' technique referred to above by Saito Sensei to the mysterious 'nuki waza' so beautifully demonstrated by Inoue Kancho at the AYNSW seminar in Sydney earlier this year.

At the completion of a recent Junior grading I asked the students to tell me what was the most important thing they'd learned in preparing for their test. One of the students – with a look of sudden comprehension – called out these three words with real joy... "Practice... just practice!"

Osu!

Sensei David

Upcoming Events

- July 21st—23rd 2017

David is travelling down to Sydney to do some teaching AYSW, Sydney on July 21st—23rd. A big thank you to Darren and Peggy for their hospitality and if anyone is interested in join and participating in this, please contact Hayley at info@kenshin.com.au for more details.



Contact us today to book your place in any of these events!

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Members Corner



Self-Awareness within Martial Arts

Be self-aware, rather than a repetitious robot – Bruce Lee

We all make silly mistakes from time to time. History is full of them, the Trojans accepted the Greek's "gift" of a wooden horse, and the Tower of Pisa started to lean before construction was finished. As a society we readily recognize these events as mistakes, even epic errors. On a more everyday level, we invest in pyramid schemes, drive too fast, and make snap judgements that we later regret. But what drives our perception of these actions as mistakes, as opposed to bad luck? Self-awareness allows us to understand what we can and cannot control and how our abilities play a role in our actions (mistake). However, at the opposite end of the scale there is the Psychological phenomenon known as The

Dunning-Kruger effect (bad luck). This is a specific form of the 'above average effect' or what is known as *illusory superiority* – this is the tendency to judge oneself more favourably than an average peer. This in some literary circles is the context for "pride coming before a fall". The effect of illusory superiority has been found in many different aspects of life, including performance in academic contexts, in working and social environments, as well as, sporting abilities that require particular skill. The Dunning-Kruger effect is a cognitive bias in which low-ability individuals incorrectly assess their ability as much higher than it really is. Dunning and Kruger believe that

individuals with low ability are simply unable to recognize their skill level, and therefore evaluate their ability inaccurately. Their research also suggests that high-ability individuals may underestimate their effort and may mistakenly assume that tasks which are easy for them are also easy for others. And this is where self-awareness can close the distance and generates self-improvement.

Learning to be self-aware is like learning Aikido and SMR. When we are learning we have to pay attention to how and where our feet move, our hands and body motion, what our partner is doing, timing, stance, floor space, and other students. Martial Arts isn't learned from books and Self Awareness isn't either. A martial Artist needs awareness of their body movements. Self-awareness is what you develop when you pay attention to your expressions of thought, emotions, and behaviour. Self-awareness is a practice, a muscle that grows with time and effort that ultimately provides us strength. So as martial artists, this is something that we should be relatively skilled at - actively seeking self-improvement and remaining aware of where our skill level sits through self-awareness and assessment.

However, I believe that it should reminds us that we are all prone to overestimating our abilities, to making impulsive decisions, and to delays of attention. This simple understanding makes little mistakes seem, a little less ridiculous — and a little more human. And from a growth perspective remaining aware of these mistakes should help us to understand that they are never an ending but a jumping off point to work on yourself and where you are going in the future.

Tamara Buriss



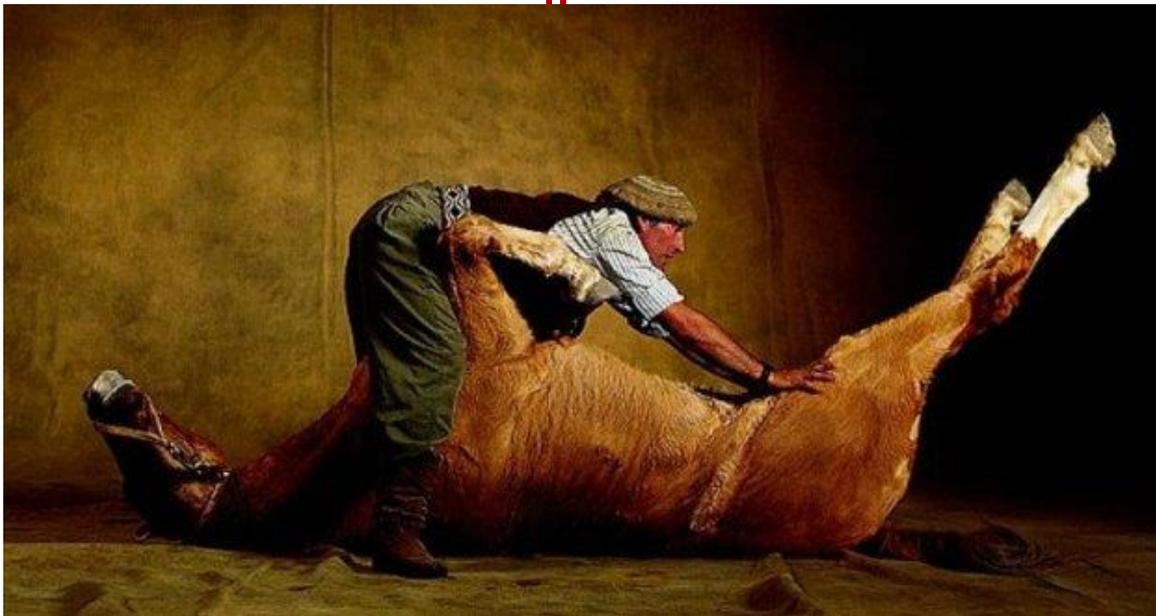
Aiki Insights

Dead Horse syndrome...

The tribal wisdom of the Dakota Indians, passed on from generation to generation, says that, "When you discover that you are riding a dead horse, the best strategy is to dismount."

However, in government, education, and in the corporate world, more advanced strategies are often employed in such situations including...

1. Buying a stronger whip
 2. Changing riders
 3. Appointing a committee to study the horse
 4. Visiting other countries to see how other cultures ride dead horses
 5. Lowering the standards so that dead horses can be included
 6. Reclassifying the dead horse as living-impaired
 7. Hiring outside contractors to ride the dead horse
 8. Harnessing several dead horses together to increase speed
 9. Providing additional funding and/or training to increase dead horse's performance
 10. Doing a productivity study to see if lighter riders would improve the dead horse's performance
 11. Declaring that as the dead horse does not have to be fed, it is less costly, carries lower overhead, and therefore contributes substantially more to the bottom line of the economy than do some other horses
 12. Rewriting the expected performance requirements for all horses
- And of course the best of all...
13. Promoting the dead horse to a supervisory position.



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I'd like to recommend that you have a look at this [website](https://www.aikiinsights.com/) and become a subscriber. <https://www.aikiinsights.com/>

When I was last in Melbourne I was interviewed by its founder, Marvin Oka, and I have since listened to all the podcasts on the site.

There is an absolute wealth of information for Aikido and Budo students - all being shared in a conversational format by some very highly experienced Teachers including Joe Thambu, Robert Mustard and Darren Friend Sensei's.

The information is suitable for absolute beginners through to students and instructors with many years practice behind them.

Accelerate your development in Aikido - Double your results from your training efforts - Improve your mind-body coordination - Develop your Aikido spirit - Embody and apply Aikido principles in daily life.



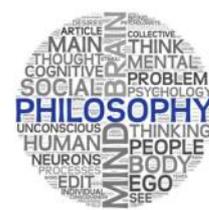
Learn how to learn Aikido

Get insights and teachings from various Sensei that make a difference to how you train.



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Learn tips and techniques to enhance your Mind-Body connection when doing Aikido.



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