

NEWSLETTER

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AIKIDO YOSHINKAN BRISBANE DOJO

Dojo: <http://yoshinkan.info>

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February Report					
New members 3		Total number of adults training 48		Total number of children training 41	
Results of Getsurei Shinsa on 24th & 25th					
6th Kyu	Darren Evans	5Y6 step	Ryan Slavin	2Y4 step	Andrew Crampton
7th Kyu	Avinash Premnath	3Y7 step	Cameron Blake	S1 step	Neal Windress
8th Kyu	Van Morris				
Events in March					
1. Sogo Shinsa			2. This Month's Holiday		
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Training starts, Friday 10th 7:15pm~• Steps, Friday 24th 7:15pm~• Shinsa, Saturday 25th 1:00pm~			<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Dojo's Holiday: 27th Monday		

A little more knowledge for your Aikido

The technique to slay dragon ~屠龍の技

When I was working as an uchi-deshi at Yoshinkan Headquarters I was sent to the riot police's dormitory to teach Aikido a few times a year. There were ten troops in Tokyo Riot Police and I found a same saying in a frame in every captain's room, "屠龍の技" (The technique to slay dragon.) I felt their firm and strong resolution to devote themselves to training, and I made sure to teach Aikido for them with the utmost seriousness.

The saying is not well known generally but it is adopted as a slogan in particular fields such as hyper-rescue squad, fire-fighting force, riot police, Ministry of Defence and some martial arts. The saying was from ancient China but the meaning or the way of using the saying changed in Japan.

Here is the original story. A long time ago, there lived an evil dragon in the deep mountains and it rushed around a village near by every now and then, harming innocent people. A young man was determined to protect the village from it and he devoted himself to training severely for years to master the technique 'to slay the dragon'. However, it never appeared the village ever again. Yet, the man never neglected efforts to keep training hard for ever in case of the dragon's attack. Out of this story the saying "the technique to slay the dragon" was born in China that meant "the useless technique in reality no matter how much sacrifice one paid to master", similar to "All but trouble for nothing."

The story travelled to Japan and those warriors who held strong responsibility to fight against any dangers to rescue and protect ordinary citizens interpreted the saying totally differently. "The young man completed his life without using his extreme skill since the dragon never appeared in the village. Some villagers ridiculed him for spending his whole life for nothing. But that was not true. The evil dragon did not come to the village because it was frightened to face the young man who earned the

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skill to slay the dragon. The young man's life-long training had a significant meaning to the villagers, though there was never a fight against the dragon." Therefore, the saying became a slogan for those fighters as they regarded their evil dragon as crimes, terrorists, fires, earthquakes, tsunami, typhoon and so on. They never neglected their daily training and polished their skills to be prepared for sudden appearances of the evil dragon. If the dragon never appeared and their huge efforts were wasted, then it was the best result they could wish for. Yet, if the dragon ever appeared, then they were always ready to defeat it.

While the original meaning of the saying was unappreciative of a wasted efforts, it evolved into a tribute of praise to the wasted efforts, working hard behind the scenes though not being appreciated by anybody. I, honestly talking, did not know this original meaning of the saying until now as I researched the words to write this article, and I thought it was very interesting to find two completely different meanings from the same saying.

This saying is quite important for any martial arts practitioners too. I hear that the martial arts fighters who need their techniques and skills to defeat their opponents to achieve results rely on "the technique to slay dragon." Though they tend to be nervous and anxious for their fights, only their confidence based on their tedious daily efforts of training that sometimes appear to be a waste of time support their spirits to be calm and that relaxes their bodies to draw their maximum potential. We, Aikido practitioners, do not have fights but still, we have grading tests and demonstrations as such which give us enough pressure. Here, how much we have trained daily, the accumulation of minute efforts, become the power to cut through stress.

I have been polishing "the technique to slay dragon" for as long as thirty-two years. Through all those many years, I have never needed to use the technique even once in reality, outside the dojo. Yet, I do not think my technique is a wasteful skill. Since I know that I have "the technique to slay dragon" I can visit and walk anywhere in the world without worries and fears. Further, as I am aware that I have dangerous technique my ability of sensing any risky spots or people is polished constantly to avoid using my murderous skills which might give me more trouble in the end.

More than anything, I can live my life with confidence and calmness thanks to the steady and hard training I force upon myself. Well everyone, we shall keep polishing our technique with efforts under any conditions (even if the dojo heats up to nearly 40 degrees!) which may never need to be used. Still, the skills we earn from the daily training at the dojo prepares us to deal with any types of evil dragons in the case we need. Nothing is a waste in the dojo!

Osu!

Michiharu Mori