

NEWSLETTER

No.280 December 2018

AIKIDO YOSHINKAN BRISBANE DOJO

Dojo: yoshinkan.info Facebook: facebook.com/AikidoYoshinkanAUS/ Twitter: twitter.com/YoshinkanAikido

November Report																																	
New members 0		Total number of adults training 42		Total number of children training 42																													
Results of Getsurei Shinsa on 16th & 17th																																	
5th Kyu	Caitlin Baptist	3Y1 step	Stephen Cuthbert	2Y1 step	Duong Thai																												
9th Kyu	Danielle Gravalin	2Y8 step	Roland Thompson	S3 step	Van Morris																												
		2Y3 step	Greg Burley																														
Events in December																																	
1. Sogo Shinsa			3. This Month's Holiday of Adults' class																														
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Training starts, Friday 30th Nov 7:15pm~• Steps, Friday 14th 7:15pm~• Shinsa, Saturday 15th 1:00pm~			<ul style="list-style-type: none">♦The dojo is closed from 23rd to 26th, and is open on 27th to 29th, and is closed again from 30th December to 2nd of January 2019.																														
2. Children's Class Holiday through X'mas and New Year's Day			◆DECEMBER & JANUARY																														
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• No children's class during school holidays. The last day of this year's children's class is on Thursday the 13th December. The first children's class in the New Year is on Thursday the 31st January 2019.			<table border="1"><thead><tr><th>S</th><th>M</th><th>T</th><th>W</th><th>T</th><th>F</th><th>S</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>16</td><td>17</td><td>18</td><td>19</td><td>20</td><td>21</td><td>22</td></tr><tr><td>23</td><td>24</td><td>25</td><td>26</td><td>27</td><td>28</td><td>29</td></tr><tr><td>30</td><td>31</td><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td></tr></tbody></table>			S	M	T	W	T	F	S	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	1	2	3	4	5
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30	31	1	2	3	4	5																											

Sharing the feelings of Black Belts

Sandan

Remaining centred ... In the dojo And in life.

It is now over 10 years since I commenced training at the Brisbane Yoshinkan Dojo. When I arrived in 2007 I already had experience in two other martial arts - now a distant memory of another life in another country.

My daughters (aged 21 and 23) tell me I am slow in moving into the digital world. I grew up in an era of dial telephones – not push button mobile phones. This means I am a slow adopter of social networking – Facebook, Instagram etc. I tell my daughters that perhaps I don't want to be in that world all the time. I am mindful of the need to remain centred and Yoshinkan Aikido teaches and supports my personal aim to remain centred despite all the ups and downs of my life. My journey to 3rd Dan has been very much about trying to remain centred and balanced in both my life efforts and my Yoshinkan aikido efforts always under the constant generous teaching and support of Mori Sensei. For this I am eternally grateful – thank you Mori Sensei. My busy life has meant that I have not always been able to practice in the dojo as much as I want because of my work challenges in the digital world. By contrast Yoshinkan aikido allows me to exercise deliberate segmentation of my digital work life from the traditions of our Yoshinkan dojo. In a sense I get a rest from my busy work life when I walk through the door and I am greeted by a smiling Mori Sensei or Shuko San. This is the greatest thing for me.

The Yoshinkan dojo does not differentiate about your age or your background - we are all the same in the dojo which for me, is a wonderful thing. The majority of my lifestyle in particular, my working life, is coloured by my age and perspective and the impressions and bias of those around me. Yet in the Yoshinkan dojo this does not matter - in this sense the Yoshinkan dojo is open, inclusive, and accepting of all.

NEWSLETTER

With age comes perspective and as I have journeyed through Aikido I have trained and watched others grow and develop their aikido – allowing me to share their journey. In this journey I have been mindful and reminded of the increasing challenge I face physically to keep up with all the younger, faster members and the amount of time it takes me to recover from injury. Fortunately we have a very caring nature in our dojo thanks to Mori Sensei and Shuko San.

On the other side of age, I have found my mind set has grown stronger and my attention and focus on detail of Yoshinkan Aikido has increased and I am constantly challenged by Mori Sensei to improve – thank you Mori Sensei. This attention to detail has mirrored into my daily life with great benefits in work and home.

Age and mind set are key learnings for me in my continuing Yoshinkan Aikido journey. My mental focus in Aikido grows stronger and my mental stamina and strength are personal attributes that benefit from Yoshinkan aikido under Mori Sensei's experience, generosity, and kindness.

Osu!

Murray Booth.

Nidan

Often students who write for the Dojo Newsletter are full of thanks, praise and self-reflection and perhaps even some inspiring quote or words of wisdom. There is a reason for this. The Yoshinkan Brisbane dojo is very much a spiritual place. Of course this has nothing to do with the building itself (although the positive energy created there may well be soaked into the walls and mats), it has everything to do with the people past and present who train at the Dojo. This of course starts with Sensei and Shuko San. My quote for this letter is 'if you can see it you can be it'. Sensei shows us what is possible through dedication, discipline, humility and love. It is almost impossible to see anyone who 'lives' what they do every second of every day in this current age, yet we have this opportunity every time we come to the dojo. In the world we find ourselves in today it seems 'too hard' for us to be as dedicated and disciplined as Sensei and Shuko San are. But that is not the point. The time we spend on the mats with each other often reminds us of our frailties and flaws, but if we stick together, if we keep going, we eventually see our strengths emerge. Sensei's ability reminds us we are on a path worth travelling. Something that I am most thankful for.

I have had some injuries that put little obstacles in my way to Nidan, I had to let go of any sort of ego about obtaining belt levels, or grading higher than my classmates. I have realized that there will always be obstacles but all I have to focus on is getting myself to class. Maybe there are weeks that I am injured or sometimes work is too busy. Sometimes I feel that I should be fitter or I should know my shitei list better, my weapons skills could be much improved and my ukemi's should be smoother, I don't want to disappoint Sensei. Like our Sempai Emmanuel, I am always as nervous as anything before gradings worried that I might fail in some way. I'm still learning to let go of these things. I hope to show my best in honor of Sensei and my fellow students. I know that now I have achieved the level of Nidan nothing changes, I still have to just keep training. It is nice though to be able to have come this far after 7 years and see that my skill has slightly improved, and more importantly I have gained confidence, focus and peace of mind that flows into the rest of my life.

I didn't plan to ramble on so much but I must end with some thankyou's. To Kaido for your support and one on one training to help me reach Jun Nidan, some great challenges made so much easier with your support. To Emmanuel and Richard who despite having the massive pressure of their own gradings, still took time to offer instruction and advice which was invaluable. To Murray who went through the shitei waza list with me inside and out over and over again. All of the blackbelts, too many to mention individually, who make the time on the mats so worthwhile. Of course THANKYOU to Sensei and Shuko San who provided a path for me that I never knew would be so rewarding. And lastly I wish to

NEWSLETTER

thank my wife Ana for her 100% support of me training. She graded for her Brown belt on the same day. The feeling of being out on the mats for that very special grading day (due to the 6th Dan gradings and the large crowd watching) and bowing to sensei with my wife was both an honor and a joy. Something I will never forget.

OSU!

Stephen Cuthbert

Shodan

After 7 years I am able to achieve Shodan (including 3.5 years of skipping from 2012-2015 due to various reasons, mostly, laziness). I could feel the weight and the pressure when receiving the belt and the certificate from sensei on the day I came to the dojo after grading. Getting Shodan does not mean setting foot at the peak of the mountain; in reality, there are still ranges of mountains ahead for me to continue the journey.

Aikido has changed my life physical and mentally. I can surely say that I am more fitted and stronger now than when I was in high school. When I first started Aikido, I could not even do push up in warmup session but now, I can do 30 of them without sweating. Moreover, my senses have been improving a lot and I can react quicker to people's actions than in the past.

I also realise that Aikido is more effective and superb than I have expected, even when the technique is executed only a quarter of what we usually do in class. Two weeks ago, I tried the kote gaeshi lock on some of my male co-workers in my company and one guy in the other company, who are all much taller and bigger than me, in a bar after work. To my surprise, they all screamed, lost their balance, nearly fell backward and said it hurt so much when I only tried putting the lock on their hand and lowering my arms a little bit to my chest height (it was not even a proper kote gaeshi!). One of them fell straight to the ground when I "sneakily" put the lock on, quickly lowered my arms to my belt height and just kept them at the centre of my body, without stepping forward or spinning like what we always have been practicing. Now knowing how powerful Aikido is, I can imagine what would happen to people if the full technique is applied on them, with full power, full speed and without holding back.

I wish to express my special gratitude to Roland for being my training partner and uke. Thanks to you, I could execute and display my techniques effectively in the grading.

I would also want to send my appreciation to Greg and Louis for nagging me all the times to stay in second classes and train diligently, spending the whole first class on Wednesday to train with me before the Shodan grading as well as always being my training partners since brown belt time.

I would like to take this opportunity to express my appreciation to Tfer and Van for your advices and helping me to deal with various life issues so that I can focus on training without worries.

Great deals appreciated go to the contribution of Vladimir, Janna, Dean, Lawrence, Cameron, Stephen C., Joey, Matt, Ryan, Richard, Emmanuel, Kent, Wikrom, Charles, Andy, Kaido, Jason, Murray, Dominic and other blackbelts for your help, your teaching and knowledge since I started my Aikido journey as a white belt.

Last but not least, I would like to express my deepest gratitude to Sensei and Shuko-san for your teaching, your kindness as well as your encouragement. I would have neither overcome my fear, weakness and limit nor been able to be what I am now without your strict training and support.

Osu!

Duong Thai