



No.200 April 2012

AIKIDO YOSHINKAN BRISBANE DOJO

Dojo: <http://yoshinkan.info>

Facebook: <http://bit.ly/dojofb>

Twitter: <http://twitter.com/YoshinkanAikido>

March Report

New members 6

Total number of adults training 59

Total teens & children training 45

Results of Sogo Shinsa on 23rd & 24th March

Nidan	Kaido Mori	5th Kyu	Vladimir Roudakov	5Y5 step	Brent Weston
2nd Kyu	Steven Bannah Tony Starkie		Janna Malikova Michelle Yeh	5Y1 step	Jason Williams
3rd Kyu	Joseph Filitoga Dominic Hogan		Vincent Yeh	4Y6 step	Matt Carpenter
Jun-3rd Kyu	Lisa Milne Karlee Pennisi Mackenzie Lange	6th Kyu	Lu Jiang	3Y9 step	Ryan Slavin Lawrence Monforte
		7th Kyu	Kerry Nicholson	3Y7 step	Francis Hollingworth
		8th Kyu	Stephen Cuthbert	3Y6 step	Greg Dickenson
4th Kyu	John Rolfe Joshua Rolfe Darssan Balasingam	9th Kyu	Joe Lin	2Y5 step	Peter Hills
				S5 step	Cameron Blake
				S3 step	Mai Bui

Events in April

1. Getsurei Shinsa

- Training starts, Thursday 19th 7:15pm~
- Steps, Friday 27th 7:15pm~
- Shinsa, Saturday 28th 1:00pm~

2. This Month's Holiday of Adults' class

- Easter Holiday – Friday 6th ~ Monday 9th
- Anzac Day – Wednesday 25th
- Dojo's Holiday – Monday 30th

A little more knowledge for your Aikido

Ki? Aiki technique

Recently, I was browsing youtube to watch my Master, Gozo Shioda's videos, intending to learn something more from him if I was lucky enough to find good video clips.

These clips brought back memories. I recalled the scenes of then-Headquarters when the videos were taken. My senior uchi-deshis encouraged (forced?) young uchi-deshis to take Master's uke during usual class hours and they never moved, but they were different whenever the cameraman was there. Once they knew they were being recorded, leaving their marks in Yoshinkan history or in front of the public they competed with each other to rush forward to take Master's uke and left young uchi-deshis with no chance. I could not stop giggling looking at a particular senior's appearance on the screen remembering he never missed a shot whenever a celebrity visited the dojo. There were lots of human events behind the scenes that was for sure.

As I was browsing Master's videos I happened to watch other masters' and wizards' videos, some of which were god-awful or too amazing. One of these super Aikido masters appeared in a black gi with a skinhead and a short moustache, and he seemed to have many black belt students. A student ran to punch him and the master pointed his finger against his fist and whirled it once. As the master's finger turned the student flew in the air and got flipped over. The next student rushed at him to give a kick and at the moment his leg was up the master outshot his hand towards it, though it was not touching, the student froze up. In the next moment as the master turned his palm upside down, the student's body got flipped and turned over too. Well, then around fifteen students came attacking him in turn and he skilfully moved his hands around where all the students were thrown or knocked over. The law of physics in the



video clip shared the same physics in the world of "Dragon Ball" I thought. Though I got upset looking at him knowing many viewers were convinced with Aikido being fake I was impressed with his skills of collecting students who obviously held strong faith in him. Well, if general people seek this kind of style I need to reconsider my way of running a dojo to find more students; I may visit an actor's school to further my training...

About twenty years ago in Japan, a very new Aikido style that used 'ki' to throw people received a lot of media publicity. As it interested the public a great deal even I, who hardly watched TV happened to see the demonstration on TV. The master of the style was surrounded by about seven or eight of his students in a circle just like my tasu-dori (against multiple attackers) demonstration. At the moment all of his students were to initiate a motion to attack, the master outshot his both hands emitting his ki forward and spun around his students like a giant stride. Each of his students got blown away, not just falling backwards but in line with the master's spin and as if something had exploded in the centre.

The following day, while I was serving my Master Gozo Shioda, changing his clothes, I sought his opinion. He was the most precious Aikido-ka by then who was taught directly by Master Morihei Ueshiba (the founder of Aikido) and also from Master Sokaku Takeda (the Master of Morihei Ueshiba who taught him Daitoryu Aiki-jujutsu) in person. That meant he knew the reality and genuine skills of these supreme Aikido masters. I thought he might be able to explain this type of explosive ki power. So, I described precisely to him what I saw on TV the previous night and observed his reaction. He was listening to my story enjoyably with a smile and answered me simply, "That's a fake." It was an absolute statement and that was it.

Well, it seems that these types of techniques (not too sure how else to explain them) may be from psychological or hypnotic suggestion but definitely not Aikido, not even 'ki' according to my Master. This kind of magical 'ki' power never exists in the world of Aikido or Aiki-jujutsu, so as I believe from my experiences of Aikido in the professional level. When I come to think about it I never read or saw, through books and videos, a record of either Takeda Sokaku and Morihei Ueshiba throwing or restraining people without touching them, not from my Master either. There are lots of heroic tales from Sokaku that he used miraculous jujutsu locks to beat up attackers; one day when he was attacked by several rogues while taking a bath he used a wet towel as a weapon to knock out the attackers. I do not know how he used the wet towel to break the ribs or shoulders of the attackers and bashing them unconscious but I know that he had definite contact to beat them up with the wet towel weapon, not something magical he used. Morihei Ueshiba seemed to have a special ability to read the movements of opponents or objects like a bullet and sword but he never knocked anybody out by invisible 'ki' power.

The techniques Master Sokaku used that I can guess from published sources are quite common techniques for us. He travelled around Japan to hold seminars. At one of these seminars, he pinned down a big male by holding his wrist during a session and the giant said it felt like an electric shock had gone through his body when Sokaku grabbed his wrist, and he could not move an inch any more. This technique was simply our Yonkajo. At other occasion a brawny man challenged Sokaku and he ended up flat backwards in no time with his shoulder locked, and it was a Shiho-nage. Furthermore, this episode is described as the most amazing technique of Sokaku – several strong men held him by his chest, arms and hips but Sokaku somehow took them all down on the ground in a flash. This is the so called 'Aiki-waza' at our dojo that you have seen me perform. My Master was the expert in this type of techniques. We know that this is a type of Aikido technique but from the eyes of general people it appeared to be very magical that strong males were pinned down effortlessly in a shot, and they called it 'ki' power.

At the beginning when I entered Yoshinkan Headquarters the techniques of all the senior uchi-deshis appeared to me to be so powerful and overwhelming but I could not understand what Master Gozo Shioda was doing at all. Time has passed, however, and I have somehow reached the level where I can understand my Master's world to a certain degree. Well, I would like to share my knowledge and path of how I have come through to the present stage for your reference to acquire the skills of 'Aiki-waza'.



The first and the most important process to reach 'Aiki-waza' is aligning one's 'kamae' (basic stance) to form a solid centre line, as I always mention. Then, training to keep the centre line while moving through simple movements of up and down, Seiza-ho, comes in the second process. The same training purpose is applied to Shikko-ho and any types of Kihon-dosa; always keeping the centre line without misalignment either moving in kneeling position, forward and backward, shifting one's weight, spinning, moving at angles in whatever movements we make. Each step and each move is essential to strengthen one's centre line as well as building up one's physique.

The next step is when we have a partner to train with. While training Kihon-dosa with a partner we should keep; focusing to maintain one's centre line without messing it up even when our part(s) of body is touched/connected with a training partner; observing, sensing and feeling how one's body movement travels to the partner's bone structure; learning a direct correlation between one's certain movement and the partner's body part(s), and these are the keys in this step. Then we move on to practice basic techniques. We need to keep focusing on these learning points as well as developing one's centre line power stronger to perform each lock and throw. Once there are attacks between shite and uke the aspect of force is added in each movement and we need to learn the same key points while contact(s) have strong momentum. After this stage we have Jiyu-waza. We need to use all of our physical senses to feel the movements and the force of the partner with concentration as now the movements are a lot faster and we do not have time to stop and think. No matter how fast the partner moves or how fast we move, we should not lose our centre line while we move in accord with the motions of the partner.

As we build these essential abilities for Aikido steadily in daily training we can advance our physical senses as well as an ability to read an opponent's movements in advance by sensing his/her faint motion and thoughts which is like developing one's sixth sense, I believe. In fact, it is not easy to obtain these abilities and we surely need to go through lots of hard training accumulating a wide variety of experiences that enables us to do the ultimate Aikido techniques, Aiki-waza.

I shall try to share my sensation of an Aiki-waza though it is hard to explain in words; at the moment uke touches my wrist I feel his strength flows in through my skin, muscles and to bones and I feel my force transmits to uke's body through his skin, muscles and to bones even when only my little finger moves; then I turn my wrist a little where uke's hand is connected and I feel my movement affects/transfers to his fingers, wrist, elbow, shoulder and to his trunk; once I master this sensation it is a matter of either throwing or restraining from daily training which has taught me how, through experiences which are absorbed into my body.

Well as you can see, there is no special training method to master Aiki-waza but simple, ordinary and usual training is the key to reach the masters' level, I think. I always maintain my focus on sharpening my physical senses and sixth sense through everyday training whenever I show a technique, even the technique is as basic as Ikkajo. Any students who wish to achieve our Aikido masters' world will need to train in the real world to get closer to them without getting lost in an illusional promotion. I assert that a true master does not exist everywhere, as Gozo Shioda was the only living master then who demonstrated genuine Aiki-waza through twenty seven years of my Aikido life, though many of the youtube clips show various Aikido 'masters' and they are very entertaining to watch if you would like to have a good laugh. By the way, I got shocked when I saw my own video clip in an objective manner and thought, "Gee, you look so fake!" Oh, my god...

Osu!

Michiharu Mori