

An exciting development: Dojo name change!

Many people may have noticed the change in the dojo name recently and I'd like to announce the exciting news about Mori Sensei's change and explain the decades of Sensei's work that have led to this moment. Firstly, all affiliated Queensland dojos under the tutelage and guidance of Michiharu Mori Shihan (8th Dan) have recently changed their name from *Yoshinkan Aikido Dojos* to *Goshu-Ryu Aiki Jujutsu Dojos*. Rest assured, the change is in name only and reflects the training that we already do every day. So, there is no change to the curriculum because the name change simply validates what we already do. To understand this point, let me explain about the name further.

The name '*Goshu-Ryu*' simply means 'Australian-Style' or 'School of the Australian Style'. This reflects Sensei's work over more than three decades while teaching in Australia. Upon arriving in Australia after a decade of training and teaching the Riot Police at the Tokyo headquarters, Mori Sensei says that he embarked on a journey to explore how the *Yoshinkan* system could be applied in contemporary settings as one of the most effective forms of self-defence against people much bigger. Over his many years training in Australia with what he calls, 'big Aussies', Sensei built upon his prior training as an *uchideshi* (live in disciple) at the *Yoshinkan* Headquarters in Tokyo under the founder Gozo Shioda *Kancho* and his senior *uchideshis*, such as Takeno Sensei and Chida Sensei, to develop the system we now train in today: *Goshu-Ryu Aiki Jujutsu*.

Goshu-Ryu Aiki Jujutsu contains all the curriculum and wisdom of the *Yoshinkan* system. However, it also includes much more. You may not realise that much of the curriculum that we practice in our Queensland dojos is an extension from the *Yoshinkan* System; it is the result of the decades of Mori Sensei's work in developing the curriculum in accordance with his vision. Sensei has developed the very contemporary *Shite Waza* techniques, such as defences against kicks and combination punches, amongst others, and has more than doubled the techniques practiced formerly solely under the *Yoshinkan* system. However, he has maintained the integrity of the *Yoshinkan* concepts and principles inherited from *Daito Ryu Aiki Jujutsu* that have been part of our training for over 900 years. Additionally, Sensei has added to and developed further the weapon curriculum, even including things such as the *Tanjo Jutsu* curriculum, amongst others. You may have just thought that all of that which we practice is part of the original *Yoshinkan* system, but, in truth, Mori Sensei has developed and added over two-thirds more into the original *Yoshinkan* curriculum. What's more, Sensei has not just further developed the techniques themselves, but also the way in which the techniques are practiced.

For those that have known Mori Sensei for many years, you may have noticed in the evolution of his martial art over this time a 'tightening' or 'contraction' of the circular motions that are quintessentially associated with aikido. Despite many aikido practitioners around the world criticising his style as 'too aggressive' and 'not circular enough', Mori Sensei believes they don't understand how he generates the circles in a contracted manner to economically control uke in a much more economical and devastating way. In essence, he has cut out any unnecessary or grandiose movements to make his technique more practical as a martial art. I believe, conceptually speaking, Mori Sensei's style and technique is rooted

more profoundly in the 900-year-old art of *Daito Ryu Aiki Jujutsu* than any of the modern forms of *Aikido* one might find globally. What's more, it seems to me Mori Sensei's technique authentically reflects much of the early form of *Aiki Budo/Aiki Jutsu* (as it was called) taught to Gozo Shioda by Ueshiba Morihei 'O'Sensei' between the world wars (before it became known as 'Aikido').

What's more, the certification of our training will be dual in nature. Mori Sensei's *Goshu-Ryu* certification will encompass the *Yoshinkan* certification, however, the ability to additionally apply for specific certification from the *Honbu* (headquarters) will remain for those that desire it. Therefore, you will receive upon successful completion of your gradings the *Shodan, Nidan, Sandan* etc. certificates in *Goshu-Ryu Aiki Jujutsu*, which will be authenticated by the very authoritative and globally renowned 8th Dan Michiharu Mori Shihan (The founder of *Goshu-Ryu*, Master Gozo Shioda's last *Uchideshi*, and the world's youngest ever to be awarded the *Yoshinkan Aikido* 5th Dan rank back in 1993). Additionally, you have the option to receive the same certificates in *Yoshinkan Aikido* (authenticated by the administration of the *Honbu*).

So it seems that the 'old' is really the 'new' and the 'new' is really just the 'old', and we are so privileged to be part of Michiharu Mori Shihan's establishment of *Goshu-Ryu Aiki Jujutsu* here in Australia, and who knows? If the sold-out seminars in Japan this November are anything to go on, maybe even other dojos around the world will see the value in what Mori Sensei does and look to affiliate over time. I hope I have adequately explained this change in sufficient detail, but if you have any further questions, please don't hesitate to ask.

Osu!

Ryan Slavin