

NEWSLETTER

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AIKIDO YOSHINKAN BRISBANE DOJO

Dojo: <http://yoshinkan.info>

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May Report					
New members 2		Total number of adults & teens training 52		Total number of kids training 32	
Results of Getsurei Shinsa on 24th May					
7th Kyu	Michael Mader Ayumi Mori	8th Kyu	Roy Chan	2Y8 step	Dean Jones
		5Y11 step	Lawrence Monforte		
Events in June					
1. Sogo Shinsa			2. This Month's Holiday		
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Training starts, Friday 14th 7:15pm~• Steps, Friday 28th 7:15pm~• Shinsa, Saturday 29th 1:00pm~			<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Dojo Holiday 1st July Monday• Kids class closes from Saturday 29th June and restarts on Thursday 18th July.		

A little more knowledge for your Aikido training

Developing one's senses

During my uchi-deshi life, one of my focus points for my daily training was about developing my senses, both on the mats and off the mats.

I found that kihon-dosa (basic movements) practice in pairs was the best means to catch and read the motion and intention of others. Being shite, we can learn how our force by even a slightest motion travels to the other end, or how it does not travel, and we have to think why. Every one of us has a different body type, size and strength, and the way one grabs shite's wrist varies too. On the other hand, being uke we can learn how shite's force from the kind of movement travels to one's body and how it affects balance in one's body. Collecting all the possible data from both being shite and uke during the kihon-dosa practice is the critical key for making Aikido techniques most effective on all sorts of people's bodies.

Ukeing my senior uchi-deshis' Jiyu-waza was another great training to develop my senses. While being thrown fast and hard, I tried to keep my focus on reading shite's thoughts from subtle motions and to anticipate which technique was coming. This skill of anticipating techniques was a crucial factor to avoid getting injured and to survive my uchi-deshi life, as I had to take most of my seniors' uke all the time for being the lowest/youngest uchi-deshi for many years. I gained a lot of data about which techniques worked better or worse at certain timing, being uke became so useful when performing techniques as shite. I can say that trying to sharpen one's senses consciously during training is essential to improve Aikido.

Furthermore, training my senses was not only done on the mats in my case as an uchi-deshi. The biggest task off the mats was serving my Master Gozo Shioda. While he was staying in his room next to the office where we worked, I had to keep focusing to listen to any subtle sounds I could hear or sense his movements from his room. I was expected to bring in his tea when he wanted, or I had to open his room door before he did. For instance, when he needed to go to toilet. From his vision, he stands up and walks to the door. Without stopping he walks through the door as it opens and goes to the toilet. There again, the toilet door opens as he gets in, and the door shuts behind him. He does his job, and as he walks out of all the doors that he needs to towards his room, they keep opening automatically at the right time. If I failed and Master was stuck at any points, I was scolded badly by my seniors. The

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same manner was applied when he changed his clothes or bathed; as he undressed, his clothes were taken and folded neatly and swiftly one after another and new clothes were passed in order as he needed to dress without any halts; as he entered in the bathroom his stool got warmed up and his back was washed, soap was handed over when he wanted to wash his front and head by himself, and he was rinsed when he needed. The key point was everything had to be done with the right timing without bothering him, otherwise he simply did not prefer you to attend him any longer. Although these chores were nothing to do with Aikido directly, they helped me to read and sense Master's techniques more closely. And that enabled me to copy his movements and learn his techniques much faster and more in depth than the general dojo students.

You may think it is ridiculous, but I personally believe that one day we might be able to even sense a bullet's motion like Master Morihei Ueshiba, if one diligently keeps training one's senses through Aikido training. This is my hope and dream. I know, dodging bullets sounds purely an absurd hope, but Morihei Ueshiba is not the only one who said he was able to foresee the bullet's line.

Hiroo Onoda born in 1922 was found in Lubang Island, the Philippines in 1974. He was a former second lieutenant of the Imperial Japanese Army during World War II, and he was stationed in the jungles of Lubang Island for almost 30 years not knowing that the war was over until he was rescued and got returned to Japan. He gave many interviews and talked about lots of his interesting experiences. The following speeches from his interviews are quite intriguing for us as Aikido practitioners and martial artists.

"At the moment of great danger, being desperate to survive, I felt my head swelled up several times larger and my whole body shook feeling an awful chill at the same time. Then, as soon as I felt my head go back to normal size everything around me became vivid, sharp and clear to my eyes. Even though it was gathering on dusk, the scene got brighter as if it was right at midday. I could clearly see and even recognise each veins of every leaf in the distance. In this way, I had no trouble seeing every move of enemy soldiers far away. I realised that I was able to even dodge bullets by sensing the point when the enemy was to shoot." This is how he described it when he experienced his heightened sensitivity and developed his sixth sense.

Onoda continues by stating, "physically, you can see things that travel in a straight line. As they come stretched in a straight line towards you, it is natural that you can see. When I was shot, I saw a bullet shot out the firing muzzle. If you can avoid a straight thrust, you can avoid bullets too." In his book he further wrote, "Bullets send out a bluish white beam before they fly. So, you just need to dodge the beam." Well, it is very interesting that Master Morihei Ueshiba said exactly the same thing about how he dodged the bullets and he also survived World War II.

I suppose that humans may have a special power to develop but only under the life-threatening condition, when your life is risked in an extreme danger. Which means that just training on the safe and peaceful mats in the dojo may not bring my dream come true... Still, it does not deny the chances of ordinary people to develop some sort of special abilities beyond the accumulation of our daily training. So, let's keep training hard, everyone!!

Osu,
Michiharu Mori