

NEWSLETTER

No.300 August 2020

AIKIDO YOSHINKAN BRISBANE DOJO

Dojo: <http://yoshinkan.info>

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

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

July Report

New members 3

Total number of adults training 38

Total number of children training 31

Events in August

1. Getsurei Shinsa

- Training starts, Friday 21st 7:15pm~
- Steps, Friday 28th 7:15pm~
- Shinsa, Saturday 29th 1:00pm~

2. This Month's Holiday

- **Dojo's Holiday:** Monday 31st August

A little more knowledge for your Aikido training

A life-giving sword

Visitors sometimes ask me if I am competent in mixed martial arts matches. It is obvious that *budo* and MMA are in the same field for them. Since I know my answer is going to be far too much for them to hear, involving a whole lot of culture and spiritual background, I simply say nothing.

You may have heard of Satsujinken/Satsuninto and Katsujinken/Katsuninto, a killing sword and a life-giving sword. These words were created by Munenori Yagyu, a master of Yagyu-Shinkageryu swordsmanship, at a time around 400 years ago during Japan's Edo Period of feudal government led by *samurai*. Until Edo era, Japan had a civil war period spanning many years and so *samurai* trained their swords to improve their skills for the sole purpose of killing people. However, during the Edo Period *samurai* had to find a new purpose to keep training their swords in a peaceful age, they evolved their training by combining the mindset of Zen into *Budo*, the spiritual way of martial skills; They evolved from simply training the killing sword to the training the life-giving sword. In Japanese, anything it has 'do 道' in its name like *kendo*, *kado* (flower arrangement), *sado* (tea ceremony) is presumed to encompass a spiritual aspect together with the foundation of its art and techniques.

We do not train in *budo* for the purpose of 'beating or winning' as was in the past (done 400 years ago), even if there are competitions today, but we train for disciplining oneself, cultivating one's spirit and ennobling one's soul in the dojo, I believe. Yet, the spiritual side is not everything in training *budo* of course, otherwise it is the same as solely practising Zen meditation. Munenori Yagyu said, "The sword, martial power, itself should be avoided in the first place, yet its skill can be utilised for people if it is used to kill the evil." I interpret these words that we should keep polishing our martial skills when we need to use them for either oneself, for protecting our loved ones or serving our community in case of being confronted with a dangerous situation. Then, one's martial skills such as our *Sankajo* or *Kotegaeshi* can be called upon as a 'life-giving sword'.

Our Aikido training is not easy, but that hard training nurtures our spirit and from it we gain mental strength. When we can control ourselves more in any matters from the mental strength we have gained at the dojo, we can be a person who one wishes to be and can live a fulfilling life. Surely, a life-giving sword is not just about a physical technique, but we can apply it in our daily life to fulfil the purpose of one's life. This is the *budo* culture that we are all learning at the dojo. OSU!

Michiharu Mori