

NEWSLETTER



No.235 March 2015 AIKIDO YOSHINKAN BRISBANE DOJO

Dojo: <http://yoshinkan.info> Facebook: <http://bit.ly/dojojb> Twitter: <http://twitter.com/YoshinkanAikido>

February Report

New members 5 Total number of adults training 61 Total number of children training 43

Results of Getsurei Shinsa on 27th & 28th February

Jun-Nidan	Cameron Blake	7th Kyu	Neal Windress	5Y2 step	Matt Carpenter
Jun-Shodan	Stephen Cuthbert	9th Kyu	Simon Grant	4Y9 step	Ryan Slavin
5th Kyu	Lily Crampton	10th Kyu	Ken Livingston	4Y5 step	Kaido Mori
6th Kyu	Sushankar Khandabhattu				

Events in March

1. Sogo Shinsa

- Training starts, Friday 13th 7:15pm~
- Steps, Friday 27th 7:15pm~
- Shinsa, Saturday 28th 1:00pm~

2. This Month's Holiday

- Dojo's Holiday – Monday 30th March

A little more knowledge for your Aikido training

Another tip for learning Aiki-waza

The expression Master Gozo Shioda liked using to explain about Aiki-waza was "take the bait." For instance, he lets his *uke* hold his wrist very tight while being in *kamae* posture and he would turn his palm upwards. By just doing it, *uke* groaned making a low sound while his body was getting lifted onto his toes and he despite himself, grabbed Master's wrist even harder to keep his balance. Master called this process/state as "*uke* took the bait." He said this was the exciting part of the Aiki-waza as *uke* got trapped as he intended. This state in my demo, for instance when I am held and fixed firmly by six *ukes*, is the moment when I flow my power into all of *ukes'* bodies through their grip to unite their strength into one and all of them respond accordingly with groans making an "uuh~" sound. They "took the bait" so Master described as they were caught and stuck getting their bodies slightly lifted by me, the fisherman.

When you can start recognising this transmission of power between *shite* and *uke* then you can distinguish whether the techniques are real or fake through looking at any video clips or real performances, even though some of the practitioners may appear to be 'legendary masters.'

If you would like to feel what the "taking the bait" sensation is, then you can try this. Hold your arm straight with your palm side up and fix your strength to keep the height of your arm. Then, drop an object about three kilos on your palm (the weight can vary little according to your body strength but not too heavy or not too light,) then although your arm drops little at first a reaction of arm trying to regain its original position appears. This physical reaction is the state of "taking the bait." If the weight on the palm is too light nothing happens and if the weight is too heavy your arm drops and gives up regaining the position.

Once you got the bite by your prey you should not lose the bite, otherwise it will flee. When the bait is taken, it makes a light connection point where the bodies are touched but the whole bodies are not united yet. Your upper body should be fixed and immobilised so as not to lose the bite while your lower body is free to adjust your weight to unite the two whole bodies, fully bonded. Then, you either drop your weight on the connection point or draw the prey's weight on the point to throw him in any direction. This is the

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second procedure of Aiki-waza involving much heavier and stronger power that gives a great blow. So, you can imagine that the initial bite is essential to make an Aiki-waza work as you cannot throw a thing without a good hold of it.

'O' Sensei, the founder of Aikido, called this initial bite as “結び*musubi*” that means connected or bonded. For instance when you are *ukeing* for Tai-no-henko (2), your hand gets stuck and adhered to the *shite's* wrist (if *shite* can perform it correctly though) and cannot let it go while your body is unified with the *shite*. This is called “*musubi*” and 'O' Sensei even said that was the moment he was unified with the universe. From his perspective, I think, he could be one with the universe and no enemy could exist as they were unified into one. Therefore, he had full control over anybody who was connected with him as if he was moving his own body. Master Gozo Shioda described it differently; when he was explaining the moment of “taking the bait”, he also said “your mind is flowing into me,” as they were unified physically. Well, both of them had reached a highly sophisticated level of Aikido technique, that is too much for ordinary people like us to understand, I think. They, without intending it, let Aiki-waza be masked in mystery.

I have an intention to work Aiki-waza out in a physical sense, although it may end up as mysterious as explaining it spiritually... Well anyway, let's begin.

You need to know how you can let *uke* to take the bait to start with. Once the contact is made, either being grabbed or blocking any punches and strikes, you need to drop about three to four kilos weight on the contact point to activate the reaction of power balance. The problem most people experience here is you are using your arm strength to obtain the reaction. When you use arm strength then you will never be able to lock the *uke's* body as the reaction of *uke* comes from only his arm strength too. *Kamae*-stance is the key from which you are supposed to have learnt how to fix your upper body and transit your centre strength from your lower body to the front edge, your hand. You solidify your body to create about three kilos weight and drop it on the contact by leaning your weight on your toe more or bending your knee more without loosening your upper body, while your armpits are being squeezed in the way you do it for *kamae*. When I say “solidifying your body”, it means you need to lock your joints of upper body; wrists, elbows and shoulders, while your lower body joints are free to use. When you can create this type of weight then your *uke* will take the bait and his contact point is stuck to your body.

However, the weight you need to use for trapping your *uke* to take the bait vary in a subtle ways according to *uke's* body weight and strength. This is very difficult for me too, but your body will know how much weight you exactly need to lock and throw each *uke* which is possible only through your accumulated experience, through years of training. The speed to create the bond and the strength of the bond itself, as well as the speed and strength of the throw, decide the level of Aiki-waza. I still fail to acquire the perfect bond/bite and I am aware of needing to keep developing my sensory ability through everyday training. Everyone, please start training to feel the “take the bait” state as your challenge to progress into the next stage of the Aiki world.

Well, although I cannot say something so high and sophisticated as “being one with the universe” like 'O' Sensei did, I would love to reach his level one day to say something supremely spiritual. You never know.

Osu,

Michiharu Mori