

NEWSLETTER



No.237 May 2015

AIKIDO YOSHINKAN BRISBANE DOJO

Dojo: <http://yoshinkan.info>

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April Report

New members 0 Total number of adults training 51

Results of Getsurei Shinsa on 24th April

4th Kyu	Sushankar Khandabhattu	9th Kyu	Alan Duncan	4Y12 step	Ryan Slavin
6th Kyu	Samuel Herron Charlotte Crampton		Kai Duncan Anika-Jori McCarthy	4Y7 step	Kaido Mori
7th Kyu	Simon Grant			2Y2 step	Lu Jiang
				2Y1 step	Vladimir Roudakov Janna Malikova

Events in May

1. Getsurei Shinsa

- Training starts, Friday 15th 7:15pm~
- Steps, Friday 22nd 7:15pm~
- Shinsa, Saturday 23rd 1:00pm~

2. This Month's Holiday

- Dojo's Holiday – Monday 25th

▲ little more knowledge for your Aikido training

Aikido – not easy to learn, but full of potential to master with a steady training

Most of the beginners who have watched our class or video clips think that Aikido looks quite simple and easy to learn. However, once they join and stand on the mats they find it difficult to follow the instructions as simple as just moving right or left. They tend to move in the opposite direction and lose the sense of right and left in the end. Since they believe they could have performed better they try to find a reason for their poor performance. They usually conclude by blaming their brains being tired on that particular day. But is that so? Should one's brain be blamed for not being able to copy Aikido movements? I think that their brains were functioning correctly but the principle of Aikido is the real problem to be blamed.

The mechanism of Aikido technique is designed to work against human instinct. That is why opponents get tricked by Aikido technique and we can throw or restrain them. Solo movements are difficult enough but when we are paired to do the movements with each other it is much worse since all the commands given from instructors conflict with one's rational understanding. You are taught to not push back when you are pushed or not pull back when you are pulled when your instinct/reflexes is trying to keep your balance naturally. The actions that the instructors are asking you to do are judged as something dangerous to follow by your brain and therefore you end up moving to the opposite direction or getting confused. Because you understand the words instructors are giving you but your body refuses to follow the words, you think your brain is tired. No, it is not your brain to be blamed but the confusion that troubles you is the right response from your brain as a beginner in learning Aikido.

It is surely natural to feel Aikido is too hard to learn, especially at the beginning. Well, the solution is simple, just be a dumb! I know, everyone is proud of one's good brain and no one likes to be dumb but this works. Completely abandon one's thinking brain and concentrate on obeying any instructions one is given, without questioning or doubting, just like a puppet. As you train your body to move against your instinct by repeating kata-geiko (basic form movements) hundreds and thousands times, then you can create a new circuit of Aikido reflexes which will react automatically and you can perform your best Aikido technique if the need arises.



Aikido is something unique in many ways, not only about using the strategy against human instinct. Flexibility is usually a great advantage in any sports but Aikido techniques become much more powerful and sharper as your body stiffens with aging. In fact, my techniques when I was young in early twenties did not produce the maximum effect of Aikido's power due to the flexibility of joints and the softness of bones which slowed the transmission of concentrated force to the opponent. Yet, as I got older, as my joints got stiffer losing youth, each movement began to transfer to the uke's body instantly and more effectively showing a great impact. The effect became obvious not only in the basic techniques but the impact was clearly demonstrated in the Aiki-waza area, since it got much easier to solidify my whole body without the flexibility that was essential for producing the force of Aiki-waza. Generally, your performance gets worse as you age in any sports but Aikido is the opposite –your performance can keep advancing with great strength as you age. That is the fact I feel in my bones from my thirty years of Aikido life. Master Gozo Shioda often said, "You can enjoy Aikido thoroughly after the age of seventy. No limit, so free." I can understand his word to a certain degree now. Aikido is surely an amazing art that anybody can grow stronger with the old age. Don't you think it's wonderful?

Well, the only the demerit you would experience, or what you lose from the years of Aikido training, is the ability of dancing gracefully... Dance, which looks beautiful as a dancer moves to music, rhythmically exercising all the body parts and joints separately, using an advantage of flexibility in a flow where one's musical instinct leads. On the other hand, Aikido practitioners train our body to solidify into one substance locking the joints through training the unnatural movements to develop the 'Aikido instinct.' A technique can be most powerful when it is performed with the best timing, the only moment that requires a single beat. For instance, Shomen-uchi Kokyu-nage; you need to judge the best timing to move into the uke's armpit and throw your uke in ideal harmony against a single blow. There is only one chance. Since we practice Aikido after this single moment over and over, it is just a natural consequence that we lose a sense of rhythm.

Master Gozo Shioda always loved dancing to the songs when he was drunk enough at any parties he attended and his dance was so absolutely odd that it made him look like a pure weirdo. You know, we move the same side limbs forward and backwards in Aikido and slide our feet dropping our centre of gravity lower. Master was excellent at these movements, of course, and it meant his body was certainly not for dancing gracefully. But it was a great entertainment, much better than the performance of an ordinary comedian that people loved, knowing him as a legend of martial arts. We all looked forward to this show time in an excitement, except one person, his wife, who begged and ordered his uchi-deshis to stop him doing it as it was pure embarrassment for her. Well, who on earth could stop the master of Aikido, especially when he was drunk? Too dangerous to even touch him...

As I explained, training Aikido is more like a fight against your instinct to acquire a new circuit, opposite to that of most of other sports, since the movements of Aikido conflict with your instinct. For that reason, people who are good at sports tend to struggle more when it comes to learning Aikido because their instinct of controlling their bodies is more prominent than the others. Yet, Aikido is something that anybody can master through the many years of continued and diligent training. You may become a great master by the time when you reach seventy, only if you can keep training patiently and steadily, and you would also be a great entertainer to make people laugh when you dance...

Osu,

Michiharu Mori