

New School News



A koan of sorts

Simultaneously try to focus your mind on mushin & zanshin now! If your head didn't explode you can practice true aiki in this enigma of nothing and the absolute. When we enter into this place of no mind with awareness, we can practice without judgment or ego. Letting go makes true aikido possible.

Sensei Wisdom



2010 DOJO HOLIDAYS

MARTIN LUTHER KING DAY 1-18

PRESIDENTS DAY 2-12 - 2-15

EASTER 4-2 - 4-4

MEMORIAL DAY 5-29 - 5-31

LABOR DAY 9-4 - 9-6

THANKSGIVING 11-25 - 11-28

WINTER HOLIDAY 12-24 - 1-2

First Monday Seminars
Open to All
Students

6:30 – 8:00 p.m.

February – Ukemi

March – Pins

April – Kokyu

May – Basic Jo & Ken

June – Ichi, Ni, San

July – Moving Technique

August – No Seminar

September – Basic Suwari

October – Ki

November – Jiyu Waza

December – The Mystery

Black Belt Schedule
2010

January – Basic

February – Cardio Waza, Jiyu,
Circle, Randori

March – Pins

April – Misogi, Kotodama,
Kokyu

May – Jo & Ken Kata, Tori,
Nage

June – Joint Locks & Pressure
Points

July – Attacks & Atemi

August – Black Belts Choice

September – Suwari Waza &
Ground Technique

October – Ki

November – Black Belts
Teach

December – Sensei's Choice

Monday 2/8 Adults and Kids 5:30 Class 6:30 Promotion	Tuesday 2/9 Adults 5:30 Class 6:30 Promotion	Wednesday 2/10 Kids 5:30 Class 6:30 Promotion	Thursday 2/11 Kids 5:30 Class 6:30 Promotion	Friday 2/12
<p><u>Orange Adult</u> Marya Ruth</p> <p><u>Orange Kids</u> Presley Sydney Liam Teddy Becky Dominic Cameron Johnny Riley Misha</p>	<p><u>Orange</u> Kathleen</p> <p><u>Green</u> Paul Xyth Laurel</p> <p><u>Purple</u> Cynthia Max Tyler Aysen</p> <p><u>Blue 5th Kyu</u> David Robert</p> <p><u>Blue 3rd Kyu</u> Cass</p> <p><u>Brown Wooden Fish</u> Barry</p>	<p><u>Green</u> David Selena Anthony Jasmine</p> <p><u>Purple</u> Thomas Alex Cole</p> <p><u>Red (Report)</u> Spencer</p> <p><u>Brown 2nd Kyu</u> Wesley Warren Michael Ivy</p> <p><u>Brown Wooden Fish</u> Hugo Sydney</p>	<p>Village Charter School</p> <p>Ukes needed</p>	<p>DOJO CLOSED</p>

MORE SPECIAL DATES

Congratulations to Rowan Corbin (Junior Black Belt Presentation, 1/30)!

Wednesday, March 10, 6:30: Mr. Chris King, Nidan Presentation

Saturday, March 13, noon: Dustin Stuffick, Shodan Presentation

Friday, March 19, St. Patrick's Day Potluck and Movie Night

Heavens exploding
Rain and light fill up the sky
Nature in full force

Waves crash on the shore
Ocean breezes carry the
spray
A day at the beach

Wind through the branches
wildlife fills the canopy
Echoes in the woods

--Mike James

Poem
by
Kathleen Silver

When I was a child I would walk in
the fog

to hide the softness of my
heart.

It was not for solitude
but for longing that I would go
the path covered with wet
cottonwood leaves.

This I remembered today
as I saw the fog laying quietly
over the laguna.

This moment allowed me to look
deeply into my path
from there to here.

It allowed me to be stunned by life's
beauty

and relieved by its constancy
and chaos

To hold the light of love in my heart
for a moment longer

Before I turned
on my way
home.

Cass Smith-Tobin's
Third Kyu Essay

Aikido has both physical aspects, such as throws and pins, plus mental aspects, such as centering and ki. While I hope to never need to use the physical aspects outside of the dojo, I use the mental aspects of Aikido on a regular basis. I find it useful in both good times and bad.

For example, my vertigo used to make escalators a real challenge but now I can get centered before stepping onto an escalator and have no problem. At work, I do software support and sometimes have to deal with irate or demanding coworkers. When this happens I maintain my 'space' while mentally moving to the side so their angry energy can flow by without hurting me.

As for good times, I did centering exercises several times on my wedding day so that I was focused and calm enough to really enjoy and remember it. I sometimes use the step-turn or four-directions exercises to unwind and relax.

While I enjoy training at the dojo, I'm glad that Aikido has proven to be so useful in the rest of my life, too.

Osae Waza *

by Tricia Thomas

How many times have you wished for a do-over? Surely you've experienced some sort of conflict situation and handled it in a way that, later, when you've had time to consider it in detail, fills you with regret. Wouldn't it be a wonderful gift, in that moment of conflict, to be able to press a pause button just long enough to calm yourself down and reconnect with your pure, positive intention?

I've had this experience many times in my life. Faced with the challenge of speaking my truth to someone I care about, wanting to convey my feelings without diminishing theirs, I begin a conversation with reason and patience, only to lose my temper in the face of their resistance. How I wish I could simply freeze the scene and draw a deep breath. Re-center and start again. Take the opportunity to sit in silence and create resolution.

In Aikido, there is a practice called osae waza that fulfills this purpose. Osae waza simply means "pinning down technique." The performance of pins can be a brutal practice, weighted with the idea of pain compliance. When your uke is giving you a hard time, how tempting it can be to throw him to the mat and crank his arm until he taps. But remember: There is no revenge in Aikido! Taking control by inflicting pain is not the way of the peaceful warrior.

The way we practice pins in our dojo has a more creative, spiritual objective. The essential message is: Hold the space. Become still. Be the calm center. Bring yourself to a peaceful pause, and hold yourself and your partner there until you both resonate with healing energy. From this place of peace, you can begin again. With a pin, you're

saying, "I care enough about you, and about me, to create a space for us both to reconsider our actions."



An aiki pin is one where the attacker cannot continue his attack, but has the option of leaving.

One of the concepts we work with on the mat is called "mushin." Literally, it means "no mind." In practice, it means to let go of judgment and expectation, to abandon agenda and technique, to allow your movements to flow from a place of intuition – the source of your wise being. A mind that is

not fixed by emotion or thought is open to all possibilities. This state of mind is especially useful in the performance of pins. I've found that when I clear my mind of negative emotion and busy thinking, what bubbles up is joy. Can there be a better vantage point from which to create a new reality?

During osae waza, I often experience a blurring of distinction between my uke and me. I am simultaneously the one doing the pin and the one being pinned. When I allow myself to abandon judgment, it's almost impossible not to feel a connection with my attacker. After all, we're in this together, creating whatever comes next. So it is off the mat, in our everyday relationships.

Every moment is a new beginning. The past is gone, the future doesn't yet exist, and there is only Now. Each and every Now is a chance to create something new, take a different course, think a different thought, feel a different feeling. Most often, we create the same things over and over, habitually falling into predictable, familiar patterns, creating by default rather than deliberation.

By practicing osae waza, we remind ourselves that each moment is a new opportunity to turn toward a positive outcome. With every pin, we can create a new reality.

*An excerpt from her Ni Dan presentation, held 1/9/10.

Can you win by losing? – by Zoë Suzanna 1/27/10

It is widely known the Samurai were superb warriors in their time, particularly prior to the advent of the gun. One of the main reasons as to why they were so good is they had to be willing to die at any moment. That was their way of life. They may perish in a duel, in battle or if the one they served demanded they commit seppuku (hari-kiri). Death could literally be waiting around the next corner. Is it really any different for us today?

No one knows when we will pass on and the Samurai were keenly aware of this. They prepared daily in meditation that this would be the last day they would be alive. They were willing to lose their life in battle and the more skilled ones at letting go, more often survived than those who were either afraid of losing their life or who were angry and wanted to fight.

In Aikido last night, we practiced Kaeshiwaza which is the practice of reversing our partners attempt to throw us. For example if my partner attacks me and I do an Ikkyo poorly and my partner is aware of it, s/he can reverse it and throw me in another technique instead. Those who are skilled in this can go on for quite a long time reversing technique after technique. But, this is not easy.

To be successful in it, one must be willing to be thrown - to lose. For at the moment when your opponent has almost thrown you is when a reverse can be applied and your opponent thrown. It is not a competition to see who can reverse to the most or anything like that - rather it is a practice in letting go, in losing. For in losing, victory can be had. The proverb- "sometimes when you win, you lose..." points to this.

Thanks for bearing with me - I am actually going somewhere with this idea. I have found those skilled in conflict resolution do so not by fighting, but rather by letting go of the fight. If two people are fighting or having an argument and one disengages, there no longer is a fight; there is no more argument. But to disengage properly requires letting go, to be willing to lose. As a result, an understanding and possible reconciliation can occur.

Too often I see people want to fight about a subject almost to the point of death. They are relentless in their attacks and their main goal is to win even when their arguments become obviously faulty - especially through name calling. I'm guilty of having done this in my past way more than I care to admit.

It seems natural and acceptable by society as a whole to fight. Media constantly portrays the notion that fighting is the best way to solve anything and the ones who give up or walk away are losers and weak. After all, who wants to be weak? Our fragile egos cannot tolerate being attacked for in our ego's point of view, it is the most important in the world. It's as though the ego says "How dare anyone challenge me!"

But let's look at this a little more carefully. To not fight someone who is angry with us, to not return insult for insult, to not participate in the Old Testament thinking of an Eye for an Eye is not a weak position - rather it shows strength and courage of one who can with stand such abuse. It's always easier to get angry and retaliate than it is to practice patience.

Practicing patience is hard work. Parenthood provides many opportunities for this. One quickly learns which battles to fight with a child. Some things children do are not worth the battle while others are. Knowing which battle to engage in is important.

In dealing with others, it's important to choose battles carefully. Is it really worth it to begin an all out fight just because someone called you a name? Can a name really hurt you? Can a series of letters which make a sound really hurt you?

By letting go, we loosen our egos grip on our mind and things begin to happen we did not for see. I have found very often when I get into an argument with someone that at some point I can see some mistakes I had made or see that what I was fighting for was stupid. At which point I am able to step back and say- "Ah! I messed up - I am sorry." Some times this yields unexpected results in that I gain more than I was originally asking for.

Those practicing Mahayana Buddhism sometimes take Bodhisattva vows. Holding these vows helps the aspirant to progress towards enlightenment. One of the vows is: Do not add fuel to the anger of others by neglecting or ignoring those who are angry with you. Instead of closing yourself off, try to communicate and dissipate their anger. If you cause a problem for others or you have suspicious projections that they are harming you, and then through pride, laziness, malice or other delusions you do not clear the air by apologizing when you have the opportunity you incur this downfall.[1]

What this is saying is that even if you did not intend to anger someone and yet they believe you're the cause, one should make amends. Let go of winning in order to win the peace. Our egos hate to lose. By allowing ourselves to lose, our ego loses its grip on our mind. As a result, a truer victory can be had in winning the peace. The Samurai of the past let go of the ego daily in their meditations on death. They were prepared to lose their life and yet, the skillful ones often won their life for another day merely by letting go.

[1] - http://www.viewonbuddhism.org/resources/bodhisattva_vows.html

Turkey (or Chicken) Tenderloin with Cranberry-Shallot Sauce
(Offered by Barbara Smith-Tobin from an Eating Well recipe)
4 servings

2 turkey tenderloins or skinless, boneless chicken breasts (~ 1 ½ lbs. total)
¾ t salt
¼ teaspoon freshly ground pepper
4 teaspoons canola oil, divided
½ cup shallots, roughly diced
2 teaspoons chopped fresh thyme or ½ teaspoon dried
¾ cup reduced-sodium chicken broth (or more as needed)
1 bag (~3 cups) fresh or frozen (**not** thawed) cranberries
½ cup dried cranberries
2 tablespoons light brown sugar, or more to taste
1 tablespoon fruit-flavored vinegar, such as raspberry or pomegranate (or more to taste)

1. Preheat oven 450 degrees.
2. Sprinkle meat with ¼ teaspoon salt and the pepper. Heat 2 teaspoons oil in large skillet over medium heat. Add meat, cook, turning to brown all sides. Transfer to baking sheet, place in oven. Roast until cooked through, ~ 15 – 25 minutes (depending on size).
3. Meanwhile, add remaining 2 teaspoons oil to pan. Add shallots, cook, stirring occasionally, until browned, ~3-5 min. Add thyme and cook until fragrant, ~ 10 seconds. Add broth, cook, scraping up any browned bits, for 1 minute. Stir in both cranberry types, and cook until most of fresh cranberries have broken down, ~ 6-10 minutes. Add more broth if it becomes too dry.
4. Stir in brown sugar, vinegar and remaining ½ teaspoon salt into the sauce; cook 1 minute. Taste for tartness: if too sweet, add more vinegar. If too tart, add more sugar, cook another minute to blend flavors. Cover and remove from heat.
5. Let meat rest on clean cutting board for 5 minutes after removing from oven. Slice thinly, serve with sauce.

Good with mashed yams.