



The Art of Peace

Manifest yang in your right hand, Balance it with yin of your left, and guide your partner.

- Morihei Ueshiba

Words of Wisdom

Sensei Isaiah Wisdom

Thanks and Praises

I want to say thank you to all who participated in the Girl Scouts Realistic Self-defense class.

Thanks Sean, Katie, Kathleen, Mike, Celia, Jessica, Carlos, Hanna, and A.J.

Special thanks to Laura for setting it up with her troop.

I would also like to thank the following:

Sean, for his donation to the Kids' Scholarship Fund.

Tricia, here for Wonderful Drawing and Assistance in adult beginners.

Ruth, for setting up the Yahoo account.

AJ, Kathleen, Carlos, Eve, Sean, and Tricia, for teaching and covering classes.

Wode, for the newsletter and Movie Night flyers.

Barry for our website.

All the students of NSA for your continued support.



The Spiritual Side of Aikido

Between the sharpness of the sword and the softness of the soul is emptiness, the beginning pulse of all creation, and the center of the universe, the responsibility to lovingly protect all things. This is true Aikido.

When people ask me about the spiritual side of our practice, I become a bit uncomfortable. Sometimes I think that I'm not qualified to teach the true spirit of aikido (lets just stay in the realm of technique). I now think the time has come to take some risks. I have been provided with a lot of paper tools that I'm willing to share, if they're not useful, throw them away. Our first adventure in this direction will be on Saturday, January 3rd from 7:00 am to 9:30 am. ~ Sensei Wisdom



Misogi? What's that about?

Wode's Editorial Column

Hi, I'm Wode the editor. If I don't know you yet, I sincerely look forward to meeting you.

We've got a new look for the newsletter and are calling it the NSA Quarterly. Not too original, but it works. I'm calling Wisdom Sensei's space: "Words of Wisdom," as I thought it rather catchy. We have a Japanese culture section; and in this issue is: tanka poetry. Don't miss the wonderful feature article "The Practice of Centering" by Kathleen Silver. The kids have their own page, and I'm looking for a junior reporter. If you have any ideas for the Quarterly, get them to me. I'm very open for suggestions!

Now, a special great big ARIGATO GOZAIMASHITA to Tricia Lewis for all her hard work as editor of the newsletter. Tricia, you are a "tough act to follow!" and I hope I can make you proud of me.

So, please be safe, but have fun, especially now that we are at the beginning of the long holiday season. Be very good to yourselves and I'll see you around the dojo. ~

Wode

Aikido Kids' Page

A Japanese Ghost Story:

Kiku-mushi

From Mimi-Bukuro (Edo period)

Mimi-Bukuro is an anthology written by Negishi Shizue, a high-class samurai in Edo period. "Mimi" means ear, "Bukuro" or "Fukuro" means a bag. The author, Negishi once was a bailiff of Sado island, a remote large island in Japan Sea. At that time, he began to write what he heard from people and put the manuscripts in a big bag. Finally, that collection of stories was mount to more than a thousand and was published in ten volumes. Those stories cover various genres from historical events to ghost stories. Some of these stories can be found by searching the internet.



In the era of Genroku (1688-1704), in the town of Hyogo, near Osaka, lived a samurai named Kita Genpa. Genpa was married to a jealous woman, and she saw his heart straying to their beautiful young housemaid Kiku. One day, his wife hid a sharp needle in Genpa's

food and had Kiku serve it to him. Genpa was injured by the needle, and almost swallowed it. He was very angry. His wife lied to him, pointing the finger at the unfortunate maid. "Kiku put this in your food on purpose to hurt you." She said, "I saw her do it." and he believed her. The enraged Genpa bound Kiku's hands behind her back and threw her down the well in the garden. When Kiku's mother heard of her daughter's death she was so grieved she threw herself in the same well and died.

Soon after, all of Genpa's family died and another samurai moved into the house.

In the year of Kwansei (1796) suddenly some strange new insects began emerging from the well. The word "mushi" means "bug". These "mushis" were so strange they attracted the attention of many people. A great Haiku poet Sogai who traveled Hyogo saw them. He was so astonished by their appearance; he brought several of them back home to show to his friends. One hundred years after the death of poor Kiku, one of my friends saw this famous little "mushi" and he told me about it.

It is a golden colored bug, and if you look at it closely under a magnifying glass - it's shaped just like a woman with her hands tightly bound behind her back.

Kiku-mushi. Kiku - "bug".

Tomodachi is "friend" in Japanese.

Wanted: Junior Reporters

New School Aikido Newsletter has openings for a Junior Reporters. This is a wonderful opportunity for a creative student in the junior division of the dojo to get good experience in reporting and writing.

The **Aikido Kid's Page** will be your section of **New School Aikido Quarterly**. You will work with the editor to decide what goes into this section. You can interview you fellow students; tell about your own experiences in Aikido, draw manga, create games. The possibilities are endless. Plus, you get a genuine laminated New School Aikido Quarterly Reporter ID Card to carry with you and show when you do interviews. It's really impressive and kewl!

If you have the necessary skills: eagerness, reporting skills, writing skills, good sense of humor, and an ability to work with others on a deadline, please contact me at the dojo or by e-mail at: jokarou@yahoo.com. ~ Wode

Hey Kids ~ and Adults!
Remember to



Brush your Teeth
and
Wash your Gi

The Practice of Centering

By Kathleen Silver
October 2003



*Night stretches
a fat black cat
after a slumber in the autumn sun.
Leaving the dojo, it is now dark.*

When I get up on Monday morning I remember that I have a private lesson with Sensei Wisdom at 10am. (Here I would like to put in a plug for private lessons. Everyone should take a private lesson every once in awhile if possible. A private lesson affords you and your sensei time to focus on *your own personal work* on the mat. A private lesson can be very revealing to you. Private lessons are given by Sensei Wisdom, Sensei Fontella and Sensei Eve Silver – we are fortunate to have such wonderful teachers!) This Monday Sensei Wisdom and I again began working with “centering”. It is for me one of the most important parts of my practice. I do not see centering as just an “in the dojo” thing. It is really one of the things that I value most in life because it seems to be the most effective way for me to *be* in life. What I wish for myself is to be more centered naturally because when I am centered I can allow deep emotions such as fear, anger, and grief to be present but not to dominate me. When I am centered the babble of my lower mind does not predominate my time. And perhaps the hardest to work with, when I am centered pain in the body is not all consuming. I am in harmony within myself and the beings around me. Time and space are expanded. Imagination and clarity of mind unlimited and heart pure and full. Sounds great, huh, but it doesn’t happen as often to the extent that I would want...so I practice.

Speaking about centering can be like pulling a thread on an old sweater. Everything is connected: hara, breathing in, breathing out, heartbeat, rhythm, music, timing, dropping down, relaxing, feeling heavy, directing ki, quieting mind, serenity, perfection, solidity, control, harmony, tranquility, light. All a part of the place called center.

As we worked with centering this Monday morning, we played with jiyuwaza. You know how Sensei says, “Bow when you are ready...” What is the ready that we wait for? It is the centering. First allowing ourselves to drop into that quiet place of no thought, only having a sort of silent awareness, making sure our body is relaxed, remembering our own personal rhythm and opening ourselves in compassion to our partner and being willing to take them into our center.

How do I find that silent space within? I can tell you that I practice going there. You can sit yourself on the floor or in a chair or on the ground outside (it’s better to find a quiet
New School Aikido, Santa Rosa, California

place) and practice being still inside. Thoughts and feelings can come and go like clouds if you do not attach yourself to them. If you get stuck on something it can help to put your attention on your breathing and then make an effort again to go back into the silence. If you try this for a few minutes you will see that you will be practicing pulling your attention back to the quiet over and over again. If you are willing to sit for 20 or 40 minutes a day over a period of time, you will find that there comes a moment when things really do get quiet more easily and you will be able to quickly take yourself to that place. You can practice this on the aikido floor anytime you remember. As with all these exercises, the trick is to remember and be willing to go there.

To relax my body, I must bring attention to my body. For instance, check your shoulders. Right now, check your shoulders, can they drop into a more relaxed position. A little exercise that is easy to practice for relaxing the body is to lie on the floor or on a flat surface, close your eyes and go to each part of your body and check it. Allow it to relax-such as: relax your toes, your calves, your knees, etc. You can be inventive-like envisioning white light filling that space of your body or filling that part of the body with healing energy on the breath. It’s actually a good exercise to try if you can’t fall asleep easily at night, but for what we are working with, it teaches you to relax, essentially on command, so you can do this on the mat. Of course, if you’re not fretting over the day at the office or at school, it happens a lot easier. Again, anytime you remember on the mat, give it a try. Just let your air out and relax any tension you find out of your body. You can send it out on your breath. When I’m on the mat I often check my shoulders and my toes. When you start a jiyuwaza Sensei will also suggest you move around a bit-this allows the nage to relax their body more easily whether conscious of it or not and not to be so planted to one spot on the mat. We are dealing with a natural fight or flight response and we are asking ourselves to do neither-to be centered, relaxed and compassionate.

The silent mind works well with the relaxed body. Sensei Wisdom and I had an interesting conversation about finding your personal rhythm. Sometimes the rhythm changes, but there is a basic rhythm or pace you have in your life which is most comfortable to you. This comfort with your rhythm helps you to maintain your centering. It is a link between your body, your heartbeat and breath and your center and the world around you. If you do much international travel in your lifetime you will recognize that countries have rhythms, as do families. Last night in my household we had dinner at 9 pm. Pretty late, huh? Each one of us at the table had had a very long day. Each one of us was tired. And the normal fast passed rhythm of the Silver household was slowed more than a notch or two. It was very noticeable to me. Our dinner was exceptionally harmonious. In aikido at some point the rhythm of the nage and the uke need to blend together. And as the nage, you are in charge of the rhythm of the moment. To find your rhythm you must listen and feel. Listen inside of yourself for the beat that feels comfortable. Breathing in and out, relaxing down, calming the emotions that come from knowing that attack is eminent. As the uke begins the attack
Quarterly ~ Autumn 2003

it is important to stay in the groove of your own rhythm. As Mozart says to Harry Heller in Steppenwolf as he was listening to a piece of music being played on a junky old radio, “You must learn to listen beyond the static”. Can you feel your own rhythm? Can you listen beyond the static of your own life, your busy day, your homework, your client, your argument, your flirtation, your competition, your being a parent or a child, your manhood or womanhood, the rush of the attacker? All things that fill our days. So let’s back up a bit, especially for you who are just beginning. Perhaps in class you have done the exercise of feeling your partner’s pulse while doing circular breathing. There is a reason Sensei has us do that exercise. You are feeling their heart beat. They’re rhythm is connected to their heartbeat, as is yours. To find your rhythm feel the beat of your walk, on the clip of your speech, the tempo of how you drive your car (if you do), or ride your bike; the rhythm of how you eat and on and on. Sometimes it is faster or slower but all in all there is a rhythm that is most comfortable to you at any given moment. This is your rhythm, and it is a part of your centering. Sensei Wisdom suggests beating on a drum or some surface and finding the rhythm that is most comfortable to you so that you can actually hear the rhythm and feel it in your body very easily.

I have noticed that one of the important parts of the jiyuwaza is learning not only what your rhythm is but keeping your beat going consistently-and being able to sustain the rhythm. Again, it is a matter of practice.

If you have a chance, read Aikido and the Dynamic Sphere. There is an excellent section on the nage and uke relation to center: “Your own center must become the center of your attacker’s action...If a man attacks you, he has lost his own point of independence and balance by the very irrationality of his act, and you must substitute your own center in an attempt to return the situation to normal. Thus he attacks, you evade; he plunges into a vacuum, you lead and guide him back around your own center and neutralize his attack.”

This is a state of understanding, which blends a higher emotional state-compassion—with a higher mental state-directionality. All possible because the mind is still, the emotions are calm and the body is relaxed.

It is an interesting journey, which we embark upon when we step upon the aikido mat. There are many possibilities. We are really creating maps for ourselves here. Maps, which lead to places, which we do not ordinarily go to. Aikido practice causes a kind of stretching of the inner self, which helps us expand the possibilities of our everyday life and yet it tends to make life even simpler...

*Standing quietly upon the mat,
Time circles an attack.
Rhythm, body relaxed, breath full
Jiyuwaza.*

Japanese Culture

Tanka Poetry

A Traditional Form of Japanese Poetry

by Mimi Nishioka

Tanka is a popular form of Japanese poetry carrying a rich history of over one thousand years, which makes it the oldest of poetry existing in Japan today. It is known for its simplistic yet meaningful verses - with its lyrical words reminiscent of a melody or a tune when cited. What gives Tanka its distinction is its composition of 31 total syllables, which follow a 5-7-5-7-7 pattern when broken down. It is not an exact science though, and one will occasionally see slight variations of this rule. Many will note that this pattern is similar to that of the better-known Haiku poetry’s 5-7-5 rhythm. Not surprisingly, Haiku’s origin lies within Tanka.

Below is an example of a well-written Tanka poem, by Ueda Miyoji, a famous Tanka artist (English translation by S. Noritoshi):

生くるとは (5)	
IKURU TO WA	<i>To live is to break</i>
愛にこころを (7)	
AI NI KOKORO WO	<i>One’s heart for the sake of love;</i>
砕くこと (5)	
KUDAKU KOTO	<i>A couple of doves,</i>
嘴合はず鳩は (8*)	
KUCHIAWASU KOTO WA	<i>Beaks touching on their way,</i>
日向をあゆむ (7)	
SHINATA WO AYUMU	
上田三四二	<i>Are stepping out in the sun.</i>
UEDA MIYOJI	

* The fourth line contains 8 syllables, which is an exception to the Tanka rule

One that is fluent in both Japanese and English would be able to sense the subtle differences between the original poem and its English translation. The emotions and gist of the original poetry remains in its translation though, and along with it, the succinctness, simplicity, and reflection on nature - all traditional elements of Tanka - are still in place.

Reference: The Tanka Journal, Nihon Kajin Club, 1992, Vol 1.

**In the Winter Quarterly we explore:
The Japanese Tea Ceremony: Omote Senke**

New School Aikido Calendar

October 27 th ~ 31 st	Promotions
October 31 st	Halloween Potluck and Movie – “R” Rated
November 27 th ~ 28 th	Dojo closed for Thanksgiving
November 30 th	Dojo cleaning 1 ~ 3 pm
December 6 th	Sensei Smartt Seminar
December 12 th	Deadline for Articles for Winter Newsletter
December 13 th	Overnight Kids’ Camp ~ Volunteers needed
December 19 th	Holiday Party
December 24 th ~ January 2 nd	Dojo closed for winter break
January 3 rd	Meditation Seminar 7:00 am ~ 9:30 am

“To injure an opponent is to injure yourself. To control aggression without inflicting injury is the Art of Peace~ Morihei Ueshiba

	<p>HARMLESSLY COMES DOWN TO EARTH REGARDING</p> <p>UKEMI-WAZA AND BREAKFALLS</p> <p>RIGHT Many martial arts teach methods of introducing an adversary to the ground, abruptly. In order to prolong the usefulness of your training partner during this learning process, it is helpful if they are familiar with the rudiments of breakfalling.</p> <p>NOT RIGHT Some schools of aikido develop ukeki-waza (only receiving technique) to remarkable degrees of grace and control. A practical result of this is the ability to fall over while holding a pint of beer without spilling a drop. *soft styles use cocktail instead.</p> <p>Although rapid-inflated frontal air-bags are known to reduce the risk of injury, their use in Judo competition is not widespread.</p> <p>The Shaolin monks of Yungchun perfected the "feather fall", leaping off the bed tower and landing noiselessly on the gravel courtyards below. They did this by only jumping when no one was listening.</p>	<p>Movie Night at the Dojo</p> <p>Returns on Friday, January 30th, with an outstanding Japanese film written, directed and edited by Hirokazu Kore-eda.</p> <p>Slyly humorous, utterly original, "After Life" asks: "What is the only memory you would take with you?" No MPAA rating (suitable for all; thoughtful mature themes). Running time: 118 minutes. Japanese language with English subtitles.</p>
www.fudebakudo.com		

Get your New School Aikido Bumper Stickers!
 Support the Aikido Kids Scholarship Fund!
 Only \$1.00 donation!
 Stick 'em on yer bumpers!
 Let everyone know you are Aikido Kew!



Attention Business Owners:

If you want your business card in the newsletter, you may submit it along with a generous donation to the Aikido Kids' Scholarship Fund.

New School Aikido

Class Schedule

Monday

4:30 - 5:20	Junior Beginners
5:30 - 6:20	<i>Junior Intermediate</i>
6:30 - 7:30	Adult Beginners
7:30 - 8:30	Adult Black Belt

Tuesday

4:30 - 5:20	Junior Advanced
5:30 - 6:30	Adult Intermediate
6:45 - 7:45	Adult Advanced
7:45 - 8:30	Jo

Wednesday

4:30 - 5:20	Junior Black Belt
5:30 - 6:20	<i>Junior Open Class</i>
6:30 - 7:30	Adult Black Belt

Thursday

4:30 - 5:20	Junior Beginners
5:30 - 6:20	<i>Junior Intermediate</i>
6:30 - 7:30	Adult Beginners
7:30 - 8:15	Boken

Friday

4:30 - 5:20	Junior Advanced
5:30 - 6:30	Adult Intermediate
6:45 - 7:45	Adult Advanced

Saturday

10:00 - 10:50	Special Kids
11:00 - 11:50	Junior Open Class

Sunday

12:00 - 1:00	Adult Open Class
--------------	------------------



Drawing of O-sensei by J. Akiyama, used with permission

At **New School Aikido** you are invited to come try or observe several FREE classes to see if this is the right place to begin your training. Once you've decided, then we can discuss your becoming a regular student.

1. Anticipate that you'll be nervous and excited. You've never done this before and you'll be meeting new people.
2. Wear comfy sweats or stretch pants and a black or white t-shirt. No shorts or levis. We go barefoot on the mat, so easy on/off shoes are good.
3. Arrive 15 minutes before class begins to get oriented and stretched-out.
4. Introduce yourself to each person you train with. Ask a lot of questions.

Stay well within your personal comfort zones while training. You don't need to master this in one night! You may be a little sore the next day, so take it easy.

New School Aikido

880 Piner Road, #55

Santa Rosa, California

707.571.2013

www.NewSchoolAikido.org