



Aikido of Phoenix

Teaching Aikido as a Complete Budo

Satori Dojo Newsletter

August 2005

www.AikidoOfPhoenix.Com

Sensei's Corner

Konichiwa Deshi!

I have been asked over the years about my philosophies on testing and rank. This last weekend I was asked to sit on a testing board for several tests and it has allowed me to even more deeply believe in my philosophies on promotion. In essence I do not promote any person before I feel they have presented themselves capable of performing and acting at the rank I promote them to. This is not a philosophy shared by all martial arts. Most promote people when they feel they are ready to learn the skills inherent to that rank. While this is fine when the student has been at that rank for some time, it is misleading for the most part because they are usually only that rank by virtue of their belt.



I look for several things when I consider promotion. One is maturity and ability to train effectively on the mat. Second is their ability to take instruction and correct mistakes. One other point is obviously skill relevant to their level. There are many points that are touched on long before skill however. Aikido is a

diverse martial art that forces us to be more than technicians. It is the more esoteric aspects of progress that I look for long before ability to do a certain technique.

All students should have a beginner's mind and always remember that even if they have been studying for years, there is still much to learn. Once students become complacent, they will stagnate and eventually fall away. I can only be a guide. I can not hold your hands and tell you how important it is that you keep pushing yourselves. That is a personal decision and one that defines who you are as a martial artist. A life in Budo is not for everyone. Many people train for a short time and then leave while others may train for many years before they decide to leave the arts. The core of the reason however is almost always the same. They did not feel the challenge, thrill, or excitement they once did. The only cure for this is to remember that it is up to you to seek more. Finely tune your study. Press yourself to truly understand technique. With a sincere desire to learn, you will always make progress and grow. I wish you the best of luck in your training!

In Oneness,

-Sensei

I look for several things when I consider promotion.

The Kids' Corner

Irimi means to 'enter without fear'. Some other phrases that come to my mind are; 'just do it', 'go for it', 'take care of business'. These all help to explain to some degree what is meant by irimi. In Aikido we can execute techniques using a tenkan motion (circular motion) or an irimi motion (going straight through).

We work with tenkan a lot because it tends to be more comfortable and it helps us stay centered. With a tenkan motion you are the center of the circle and you redirect the attacker's energy around you, which really emphasizes the circularity of Aikido.

Irimi is a more direct, straight forward approach to attacks. When using an irimi version of a

technique you go towards the attack and then keep on going. It's a lot more linear and needs good ki extension to be effective.

When I first started Aikido myself I remember struggling with the idea of irimi. Why would I want to go towards my attacker? My natural instinct was to back up and get away somehow. In the beginning of my training I was very literal and thought I was suppose to go straight into the attack. Of course now, after years of training, I realize that's not exactly what is meant by 'entering'. When you "enter without fear" you aren't going into the middle of things with your eyes closed. Irimi is to approach the attack without hesitation. Realizing that you don't go straight into the

attack but slightly off to the side, just enough to get off the line. It's an assertive approach to dealing with attacks be they physical, verbal or mental. It's an approach that can be practiced on and off the mat. When you irimi you react to a situation with assertion, not aggression. You deal with the "problem" up front, without fear of what others might think or how uncomfortable it may be.

A physical attack will obviously involve the use of your body. You move slightly off the line of attack and execute with a resolute attitude. You move through the technique with ki extended and determination to protect yourself.

A verbal or mental attack involves your state of mind. This, to me, is the hardest part of irimi. It is most difficult to deal with situations that are out of your comfort zone, yet they must be dealt with. It is these difficult

times where you can practice irimi. "Just do it" is a phrase I use on myself all the time. We are often times influenced by what others will think of us or by our fears. We can get immobilized by the unknown.

Take this opportunity of a new school year to practice irimi in your daily lives. Enter without fear at the new school you may be at, the new kids you will meet, the homework that may seem too much. You just won't know unless you try. No doubt, irimi is a difficult philosophy to put into practice, but practice it you must. The rewards for doing so are great. Good luck in your new school year and in your irimi training. I'll see you on the mat.

Teresa Mastison Sensei



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Promotions & Test Candidates

Promoted:

Hachikyu— E'lan Wooten

Shichikyu— Mimi Zumbo, Sarah Zumbo, Emily Blakley, Brad Blakley

1st Stepping Stone— Ian Williams

Yonkyu—Phillip Kuhlman

Invited to Test:

Hachikyu—Max Gutierrez, Tracy Forth, Robert Buster, Robbie Bernal, Jessica Lister, Brooke Lister, Thomas Skalsky, Zarin Tuten, Quinn Zapata, Robert Rivera, Katrina Khoo, Isaiah Nixon, Jack Rynd

Shichikyu—Rachel Boesel, Matthew Boesel, Marie Oldums, Isaiah Oldums

1st Stepping Stone—Guy Sheppard

2nd Stepping Stone—Adam Stringham, RJ Ayala

Rokkyu—Sho Shapiro, Joseph Luongo

Special Announcements

Special Promotion: At this year's National Training Camp in Chicago, Sensei was honored to be promoted to 7th degree black belt in Aikijitsu. The convening board of Yudansha wanted to honor Sensei for his years of dedication to the arts as well as his skill level. The board chose to promote Sensei in Aikijitsu due to the persistence of several board members that our Aikido is much more reminiscent of "old school" Aikido as opposed to modern day "martial yoga". He is flattered and bases all of his success on the students that support him.



Chandler and Snedigar: The city's portion of registration will increase by \$1.00 a month starting September 2005. There will be NO increase in the instructor's fee.

Upcoming Events

SEPTEMBER

Sept. 23-25 — Annual Midwest Budo Camp

-Topeka, KS

It is that time of the year again when students of Budo from around the country descend on Topeka for the annual Budo camp. This fantastic camp is held at a local camp property surrounded by 100 year old trees and lake. It is one of the best events of the year. Contact Sensei for more information.

OCTOBER

Oct. 7-9 Annual Aikido of Phoenix Fall Camp
-Williams, AZ

This will be our annual trek up to the lovely North country of Arizona to train and have a great time. Jim Clark once again has been kind enough to allow us to invade his property and train in a fantastic setting. This is open to all Aikido of Phoenix students and everyone is encouraged to attend. See Sensei or the Dojo Cho with any questions.

DECEMBER

Dec. 2 Annual Aikido of Phoenix Christmas Party and Awards Banquet

Mark your calendars now for our annual Christmas party to be held on Friday, December 2 at the Chandler dojo.



[Click Here for more information](#)

Aikidoka Out & About



.A few picture from this year's National Training Camp in Chicago.



The Aiki Store

Fundamentals of Aikido

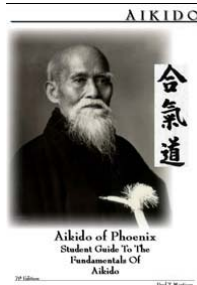
\$25.00

This DVD was developed in an attempt to help you understand the basics of Aikido and dojo life. It covers ukemi (tumbling), etiquette, undos (hand exercises), aiki taiso (exercises you do alone), weapons, and history.

The Aikido of Phoenix Student Guide to the Fundamentals of Aikido

\$15.00

This is our dojo student manual and it covers all aspects of dojo life and related information. From test criteria to Aikido history this is your best source for detailed information on the specifics of our school and style. They are available from the Dojo Cho, Teresa Mastison Sensei.



Kobudo

\$25.00

This DVD touches on the fundamental of the weapons of Budo. We look at two common weapons as well as two that are rarely seen in most dojos. The weapons that are covered are the bokken (wooden sword), the jo (wooden staff), obi waza (belt) and the kuboton (small, key chain style stick).

Go Kihon Aikido Waza

\$25.00

This DVD was made with the goal of exposing students to five kihon (basic) techniques and their application to all the basic attacks.

Kids Aikido

\$25.00

By popular demand we have put together a production that covers all aspects of fundamental kids Aikido featuring Teresa Mastison Sensei. This DVD covers:

Hand stretches

Tumbles

ALL basic technique

Test etiquette

Additionally ALL of the children's rank tests are demonstrated.

This is a fantastic supplement to training!

Advanced Knife defense

\$25.00

This DVD is an advanced look at edged weapon defenses. It covers all angles of attack and discusses movements, body mechanics as well as solid technique. This DVD is for any student interested in improving their knife defense skills.

Friends of Aikido of Phoenix

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