



Aikido of Phoenix

Teaching Aikido as a Complete Budo

Satori Dojo Newsletter

January 2006

www.AikidoOfPhoenix.Com

Sensei's Corner

Konichiwa Deshi!

A new year is upon us and I hope you are as excited about it as I am. The new year brings with it opportunity for growth and development. The new year is always full of resolutions and promises made to ourselves. Some of these may be more profound than others. I challenge you to use this time to make resolutions that will make a profound difference in your life. Commit to these resolutions and bring them to fruition. In the end it is a mirror of life in the dojo. In order to be the best Budoka you can be, you must evaluate and decide to be more than you currently are. You must commit to making Aikido a complete art within yourself. Many people pick Aikido (and many other arts) apart as "Incomplete" arts. I hear phrases like "Oh, that works great on the mat, but in real life it won't work." Really?....Well, my Aikido works just fine thank you:) The reason (as Ikeda Sensei would say) "*My Aikido is strong*" is that I have made a commitment to the complete art. Once you do this you begin to see the parallels of Aikido and everyday life.

What it ultimately comes down to is mustering the resolve to make your Aikido strong. Many people will fall to the wayside as the years go on and only a very few will stay the course. Just like that work out

routine that you have promised yourself you would get into; it means nothing until you act—and act continuously.

This is not a minor undertaking. It is however a worthy undertaking and one that will have positive ramifications on the rest of your life. I also encourage parents to explore this concept with their children. You have an opportunity to expose your children to something that can help lay a positive foundation for the rest of their lives. Do not miss this chance.

As with any resolution, the time to act is now. Do not wait until Monday. Urgency in this commitment is essential. I wish you the best on your journey and will do everything possible to help you on your way. Happy New Year to you all.

-In Oneness
Sensei



Masakatsu Agatsu

What it ultimately comes down to is mustering the resolve to make your Aikido strong.

The Kids' Corner

This past month we've practiced with the bokken at the Chandler and Glendale dojo. A bokken is a wooden sword, which is a traditional weapon of aikido and an important part of it's history. Please read the article that Fred Mastison Sensei has written about the bokken later in this newsletter.

I just wanted to touch base on an important point that was brought out in one of the classes. During training with the bokken it is inevitable that information about how a real sword was used "in the Samaria's day" comes into discussion. To accurately describe what the blade is doing and why, I believe, aids a person's understanding of what's happening

and therefore is better able to execute the movement. It was during one of these more "descriptive" times that a student made the comment that it would probably be easier and safer to just run away instead of trying to do something with the weapon. I totally agree, but wanted to share my insights of why it's important to train with the bokken (or any weapon).

It is my belief that the more you understand what the weapon is capable of and how you can effectively deal with it the better off you are. The more you know the better equipped you are to avoiding it all together.

When I first trained with weapons in Aikido I remember thinking how hypocritical of a peaceful art.

But now that I've been training for about 16 years my thoughts and feelings have changed. You must remember that when we train with weapons we are training to improve our skills, our awareness, our extension. Training with a weapon in your hands or in the hands of your partner is just another way to practice all that is Aikido. You can't let the "details of historical facts" deter you from training or allow the facts of what used to be fog your mind. The truth of the matter is that you will probably never be attacked with a real sword. But training with a wooden sword helps you learn to move and extend in a way that you just can't get with open hand techniques. Training with weapons increases your level of attention dramatically.

I also found that after a period of training with weapons that my open hand techniques improved greatly. I believe this was due to the extension needed when I had a weapon in my hands. When the weapon was removed I still extended energy through my arms and hands. My aikido became "stronger" because of my weapons training. I want to expose all students to this possibility and training with weapons is a great way to do that.

In the end we train in hopes that we never need to use our skills. If you have the opportunity to run away instead of doing techniques I hope that you take it. But, if you find yourself in a situation where running away isn't an option then I hope you have trained hard and sincerely.

Teresa Mastison Sensei

Training with weapons increases your level of attention dramatically.

Training with the Bokken

In many of the classes this last month we have been doing bokken work. The bokken is a fantastic way to improve your open hand technique and overall Aikido. The history and training principles of the bokken are also very important to understand. Aikido is an art that has a very strong sword tradition. O'Sensei was a master of Shinkage ryu swordsmanship and many of the techniques we study are rooted there.

The bokken is a wooden sword designed to allow practitioners to train safely in sword technique. In Aikido we train with the bokken for two primary reasons. First is that it is a great way to better understand the art and improve skill. Second is that it is a tradition of the art and it is our responsibility to keep it alive. It is important to remember that we treat all weapons as dangerous. One of the greatest examples of this is found in one story from feudalistic Japan. One of the most storied swordsman of all times was Miyomoto Musashi. Musashi had taken part in an incredible number of duals during his life but one stands out in particular. He had been constantly challenged to dual another swordsman which he ignored for the most part. Not until he was essentially forced into it did he act. The dual was to take place on a small island off the coast of Japan. Musashi climbed aboard a small boat and began the short trip out. He did not bring his sword though. Instead he drew a knife and began to

carve a bokken from an oar. Upon arriving on the beach Musashi simply closed the distance to the opponent and struck him in the head with the bokken—killing him. This is a very powerful demonstration of the danger of the boken.

Etiquette with the boken can be a bit challenging at times. If we break it down however, it is easier to remember.

1. Always treat a bokken as if it were a live blade.
2. Never put the tip of your bokken onto the mat.
3. The bokken is kept in your belt on the left side of your body with the blade curved up.
4. When you are sitting, the bokken should be on your right side with the blade curved towards you.
5. When you bow, the bokken should be in your right hand with the curve down.
6. Always treat the bokken with respect.

Much of the etiquette with the bokken is about showing respect and trust to those you are working with. Thus we strive to keep the blade in a neutral or benign position when possible.

Bokken training is a fantastic aspect of Aikido and one that will help make you a better martial artist. Feel free to ask us any questions at all about weapons training!

-Sensei

Promotions & Test Candidates

Promoted:

Hachikyu—Damien Smith, Scott Nakamura, Kyle Bacalzo, Matthew Pinkston, Michael Callahan, Michael Skalsky, Devon Ryan, Logan Harper, Ranon Mastison

Shichikyu—Kiley Allen, Grady Allen, Connor Poulin

Gokyu—Lonnie Graham

Shodan—Darrell Wyatt

Invited to Test:

Hachikyu—Alexa Gregg, Maggie Sullivan, Joey Sullivan, Jacob Sullivan, Aiden Nixon, Priscilla Wright, Morgan Minitti

1st Stepping Stone—Bowen Clark

Rokkyu—Dustin Klempel

Upcoming Events

January

21st - Glendale, Arizona

Kyusho Jitsu Pressure Point Seminar

Gary Boaz Sensei will conduct a seminar for ONE DAY ONLY here in Arizona. Join us for an intense study of the application of Kyusho Jitsu, "One Second Fighting", principles and techniques. This seminar is open to all martial artists regardless of style or rank. If you want to be able to improve your striking ability through pressure point targeting, this seminar is for you! Aikidoka - learn techniques that will improve your atemi! Jujitsu practitioners - gain an explosive advantage! All martial artists can improve their striking skills! See flyer on the last page for more details.

Just WHO is that?

Over the next few months we will explore more details and history of influential Aikidoka and other Budoka that have influenced our dojo. This month we look at Bill Sosa Sensei. Sosa Sensei was my first Aikido Sensei and the reason you are training with me today.



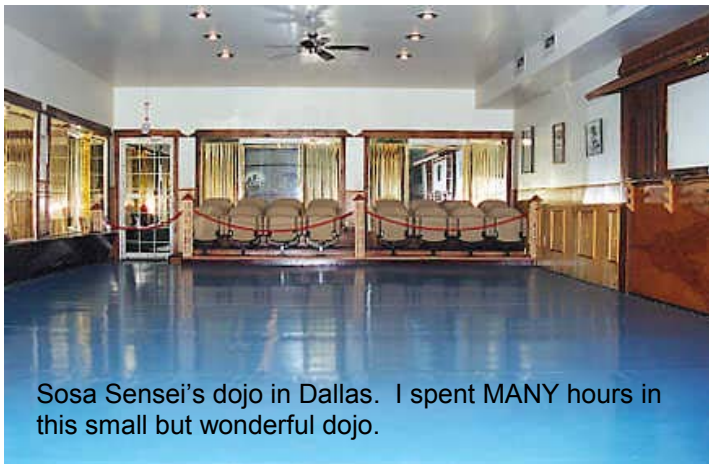
Bill Sosa Sensei 6th Dan **1934—2002**

Sosa Sensei began training in the martial arts in 1953. He started Aikido training in the mid sixties with Isao Takahashi Sensei and Koichi Tohei Sensei, both of whom trained with the Master and founder of Aikido, Morihei Ueshiba.

Mr. Sosa moved from Chicago, Illinois to Dallas, Texas in 1972. He formed the Southwestern Aikido Institute of which he was the chief instructor for 23 years. During this time Mr. Sosa was responsible for much of the spread of Aikido in Texas, the Southwest and Mexico.

In 1981, Mr. Sosa joined Kobayashi Sensei in Seidokan Aikido, and served as a senior instructor for 14 years. In 1995, he formed the International Aikido Association, which was under his direction up until his passing in June 2002.

More than 100 Aikidoka have earned black belt ranks under Mr. Sosa's guidance. His Aikido will continue through his descendants, instructors and students.



Sosa Sensei's dojo in Dallas. I spent MANY hours in this small but wonderful dojo.



AIKIDO OF PHOENIX PRESENTS

KYUSHO -JITSU

PRESSURE POINT FIGHTING
APPLICATIONS TO AIKIDO AND JU JITSU

WITH
GARY BOAZ SENSEI
4TH DAN KYUSHO JITSU
3RD DAN AIKIDO



ONE DAY ONLY
SATURDAY, JANUARY 21ST, 2006
14075 N. 59TH AVE
GLENDALE, ARIZONA

1:00 TO 3:00
5:00 TO 7:00

JOIN US FOR AN INTENSE STUDY OF THE APPLICATION OF
KYUSHO JITSU
"ONE SECOND FIGHTING"
PRINCIPLES AND TECHNIQUES

THIS SEMINAR IS OPEN TO ALL MARTIAL ARTISTS REGARDLESS OF STYLE OR RANK. IF YOU WANT TO BE ABLE TO IMPROVE YOUR STRIKING ABILITY THROUGH PRESSURE POINT TARGETING, THIS SEMINAR IS FOR YOU!

AIKIDOKA - LEARN TECHNIQUES THAT WILL IMPROVE YOUR ATEMI!
JUJITSU PRACTITIONERS - GAIN AN EXPLOSIVE ADVANTAGE!
ALL MARTIAL ARTISTS CAN IMPROVE THEIR STRIKING SKILLS!

Registration

1/2 day : \$25.00
Full Day \$45.00

Information

For more information contact
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480-699-2334

Visit the web site
www.AikidoOfPhoenix.Com/PressurePoint.htm