



Palm Beach Aikikai
Student Handbook

www.palmbeachaikikai.com

Palm Beach Aikikai - Student Handbook

A guide to the philosophy, spirit, etiquette and methods of Palm Beach Aikikai.

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Welcome to PALM BEACH AIKIKAI

If you are a beginner, this handbook will give you some idea of the path you have undertaken and will hopefully facilitate your advancement in the art of Aikido. If you have been training elsewhere and are merely new to Palm Beach Aikikai, this handbook will serve as a reminder of dojo etiquette and will outline some of the uniqueness of your new club.

There are many reasons to train Aikido. Of course the most obvious is personal protection. However, as *aikidoka* (one who practices Aikido), we enjoy the exploration of movements, psychological attitudes, physical principles, and the cultural and historical trappings of the martial arts. We learn about our capabilities for power, speed, timing, and physical control. We also learn to face and overcome the obstacles of self-doubt, stubbornness, nervousness, shyness, and inflated egos. But ultimately we develop courage and learn to act in ways that protect and preserve life.

We are not, however, preparing for some future event. The event is now. There is no competition, no sparring nor fighting for which we are preparing ourselves. We train in Aikido simply because we enjoy the nature of the training and self-improvement. Aikido is a way of life. It is an opportunity to learn how to reconcile the conflicts in our lives. The founder of Aikido, Morihei Ueshiba, told us that the purpose of Aikido is not to defeat others, but to defeat the discord within ourselves. Peace begins within.

Please be aware that you don't "accomplish" Aikido. It is an endless path of polishing and refining both technique and character. You can't master Aikido. You can only master the art of being yourself.

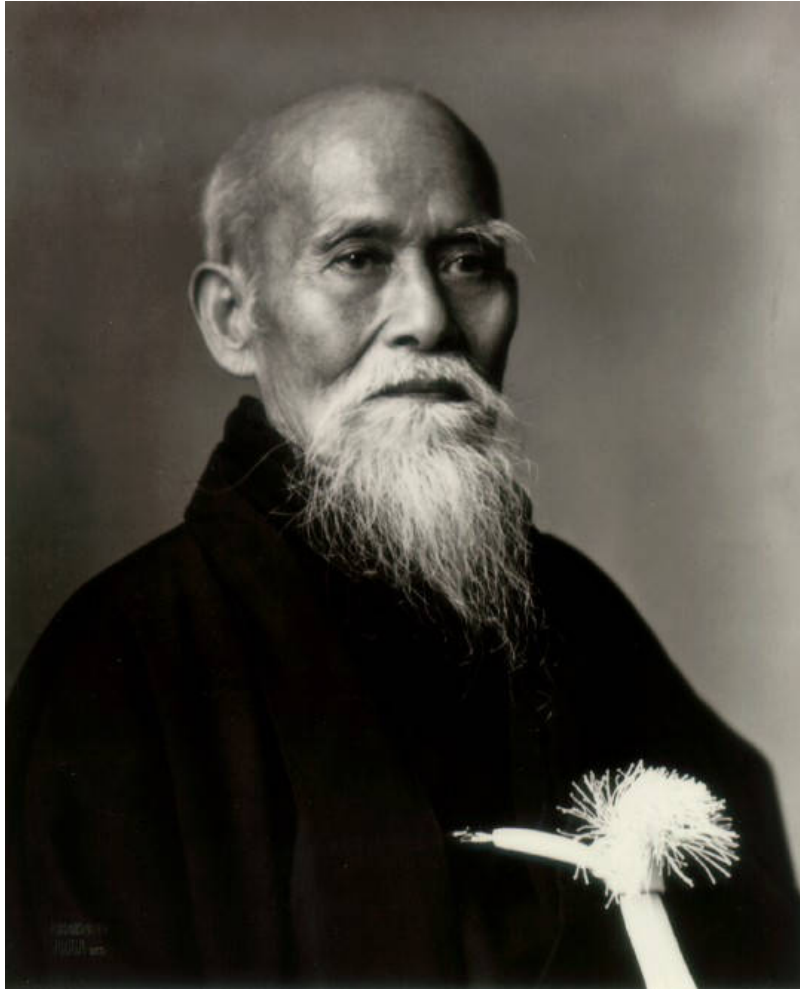
Richard Wagener, 6th Dan
Dojo-cho

AIKIDO

(Pronounced: " eye-key-doe")

The kanji (Chinese character) for “Ai”, when used alone, is translated as a meeting or joining, communication, a confluence or harmony. “Ki” is translated as energy, power, vibration, the essence of life, or spirit. Together, “Aiki”, they mean to join the power, to harmonize energy, to become one with the power of the universal energy, to become one with the energy of the life force. “Do”, (“Tao” in Chinese), is translated as “The Way”. Aikido, therefore, is “The Way of Aiki”, “The Way of Harmonizing Energy”.

Morihei Ueshiba: The Founder of Aikido



O'Sensei (Great Teacher), *Morihei Ueshiba* was born in the town of Tanabe, Wakayama Prefecture December 14, 1883. From an early age *O'Sensei* proved to be adept in mathematics, the Chinese Classics, ancient Japanese culture and *Shinto*. He began his formal martial training while in his teens. He trained sumo, traditional sword, spear, and ju jitsu. In 1912 at the age of 29 he moved to Hokkaido where he met the grandmaster of “Daito-ryu Aiki Jutsu” Sokaku Takeda. Over the years *O'Sensei* trained many martial arts, however it is clear that Daito-ryu and Sokaku Takeda had a profound effect on the technical aspects of the development of Aikido. His prowess and reputation as a renown master of martial arts grew. His reputation attracted many challengers who came to test their skills and refute the increasingly legendary Ueshiba. After one such encounter in which he easily evaded an attacker’s repeated strikes with a wooden sword, and did so

without injuring his challenger, he had an enlightening revelation. Winning as a result of defeating another was not truly winning at all. And from that point on his deep spiritual beliefs and his remarkable art became one.

In 1942, *O'Sensei* , began calling his system Aikido. *O'Sensei* saw the great potential Aikido had to create global healing and encouraged his students to give it to the world. He dispersed many of his top students to locations around the world. *O'Sensei* died on April 26, 1969. His son, Kisshomaru Ueshiba (1921-1999) assumed the role of the second *Doshu* (present leader of "The Way") and continued to teach and spread Aikido. Under his leadership the global Aikido community continued to grow. The second *Doshu* died in 1999. And at that time the founder's grandson, Moriteru Ueshiba (b.1951) became Aikido's third *Doshu*.



Doshu & Wagener Sensei
Summer Camp 2000

Palm Beach Aikikai

Palm Beach Aikikai (Aikido Club), is a member dojo of the United States Aikido Federation (USAF). USAF is the largest Aikido organization in the United States and is directly affiliated with the Aikikai Foundation in Tokyo, Japan. Members of Palm Beach Aikikai who decide to join the USAF are able to test and earn rank recognized in Aikido circles throughout the world. Individual membership in the Federation is \$35.00 annually and goes directly to the Federation.

The Aikido Dojo : Mirror of the Spirit

The word dojo means "place of the way." Originally dojos were adjuncts to temples and religious groups. They were places in which monks and other religious persons were trained in the disciplines and practices of their faith. Eventually, the name dojo came to apply to places where various other nonreligious disciplines were studied, ie. swordsmanship, calligraphy, dance, and other pursuits demanding rigorous training. Given the inclination in Japanese society at large, to embrace rule and order, it is not surprising that the Japanese adopted the model of monastic discipline as the pattern for schools to train people in secular arts. Also, the Japanese religion of Shinto, which is largely responsible for forming the Japanese attitude toward religion, did not have a concept of an external God imposing his will on man and nature, but saw all things in nature as having a spark of the divine. The separation between the religious and secular pursuits was thus not as sharply defined in Japan as it is in the West, nor did religion in Japan tend as much to exclude a variety of ideas. The concept of "do", or a way of life to which one gave one's whole being, came to apply to any important vocation pursued with dedication.

Another great contributing influence in the modern martial arts dojo, is the ethic of warrior societies. These are similar throughout the world, due to the common demands that war places upon soldiers. In order to make people fit, to face the supreme test of combat, intense discipline is necessary. All armies and warrior societies enforce codes that tolerate no rebellion. The most successful of such groups are the ones whose members support the system through their belief in its importance and in the goals for which they fight. Warrior societies in which coercion is applied on unwilling members are rarely stable, productive, or useful.

Formal rules of etiquette help keep one's behavior in order. In the martial arts dojo, the influence of the warriors' special conditions introduces an additional inducement to courteous and chivalrous behavior. The consequences of a discourteous act could be death rather than just discord. This is one of the reasons that warrior societies in any nation put such a high value on courtesy and chivalry.

Since Aikido is a martial art whose purpose is the refinement of the human spirit and the promotion of peace in the world, the Aikido dojo includes the influences of both the warrior societies and the religious dojo. Aikido is not a religion, for it has no dogma or doctrine, but it is a deeply spiritual pursuit. The Aikido dojo is a temple of the spirit, both that of the individual human being and the divine spirit that imbues all things in the universe. The Aikido dojo must also maintain the severity and discipline of a community of warriors, for Aikido is *budo*, the way of the warrior. Aikido is not meant to be an abstract theory of spiritual values, but a practical training that strengthens your courage, your internal serenity, and your ability to relate to others. It is meant to change your mental attitude so that you do not revert to aggression and violence under stress, but instead continue to behave in a fashion that prevents or stops conflict. Aikido is meant to give you the courage of your convictions.

The essential elements of the dojo are commitment, cooperation, discipline, order, courtesy, and a faith in the goal toward which the members of the dojo are striving. Students must share in the responsibility for running and maintenance of the dojo. The Aikido dojo must be a cooperative organization in which all members are concerned with the welfare of the dojo and each other. We are responsible for readying it for our training. Students at a dojo must look at preparing the dojo as a spiritual exercise. The state of the dojo is the reflection of the internal state of its students.

Maintaining personal cleanliness is also an act of consideration and respect; not only for yourself, but also for your fellow students, and for the art of Aikido. The Aikido student must keep his training clothes and

weapons clean and in good repair. Because of the close contact with others, personal hygiene is a must. Fingernails and toenails must be clean and trimmed.

While cooperation is important, the dojo is not a democracy. From your sensei on down through the hierarchy of senior students (sempai) and junior students (kohai), there must be a chain of obedience and humility strengthened by mutual respect. Senior students must provide a good example to their juniors and must support and reinforce their sensei's teaching. As a dojo grows, it becomes more difficult for the sensei to see to the complete instruction of all students personally. It is the responsibility of the senior students to make sure that their juniors are properly taught and that the necessary work in the dojo gets done. Junior students must respect their senior students and not argue or resist instruction. New students come not knowing the ways of the dojo or the essential principles of Aikido. In order for them to learn, they must remain open-minded and humble. Senior students, on the other hand, must behave in a way to merit respect and must not use their position to humiliate or behave arrogantly toward their juniors. The hierarchy of the dojo in no way denies the basic respect that you should show all your fellow human beings. Good technique does not excuse immature and petty behavior.

In your personal observance of the rules of etiquette, it is important to maintain decorum and to exhibit a disciplined and attractive demeanor. You should strictly adhere to the forms of courtesy and should be neat and correct in your dress and attitude. To get on the mat incompletely or improperly dressed, to lounge around on the mat in a sloppy or informal manner is a sign of mental and spiritual laxness. Maintaining proper decorum, conversely, strengthens your internal orderliness.

Thus the dojo's etiquette and rules are not empty formalities but rather serve to create conditions essential to good training. In the modern Aikido dojo, for example, students are expected to have their own weapons for training. To borrow anyone else's weapons without permission is a terrible breach of etiquette. To understand the reason for this you only have to think about warriors who actually fight for their lives. For these people, their lives depend not only on their skill but on the quality and condition of their weapons and their ability to lay their hands on them at any time. It is not difficult to see why touching or taking another person's weapon without permission was a killing matter. A person who committed such a careless and inconsiderate act was not likely to get a chance to mend his ways.

In the modern Aikido dojo we do not want to train killers, nor are breaches of etiquette punished by death. Yet, if you forget or completely ignore the mortal seriousness behind martial training, and the protection against deadly accident that etiquette was designed to provide, your training will lose depth and your understanding will be limited. The awareness that life and death are the issues at stake in budo increases your appreciation of the meaning of both. Your sense of the value, of not only your own life, but the lives of your fellow human beings will become much greater.

(Adopted from Mitsugi Saotome's The Principles of Aikido)

DOJO Etiquette

When you enter the *dojo* you are entering a different world, a warrior's world. It can be a place of respect and friendly camaraderie, or it can be a place of paranoia and mistrust. We, the members of Palm Beach Aikikai have worked hard to create and maintain a safe learning environment for all. On the Aikido mat we are attacked and attacking, retraining our ability to respond instinctively. It is the underlying current of etiquette and social manner which allows us to practice safely, to discipline and redirect our aggressive responses and develop compassion and respect.

Aikido is not a sport. It is a discipline, an educational process for training the mind, body and spirit. Physical technique is not the true object, but a tool for personal refinement and spiritual growth.

The Aikido *dojo* is not a gymnasium. It is the place where the teachings of Master Morihei Ueshiba are studied. It is not a place for the display of one's ego, but a place for uplifting and cleansing one's body, mind and spirit. The correct attitude of respect, sincerity and modesty, and the proper atmosphere are essential to the learning process; and as Aikido is a martial art, essential to the safety of each individual.

By asking to participate in Aikido training, we each agree to adhere to the rules of the *dojo* .

- This *dojo* operates in a strict manner following the traditional rules of proper conduct. Its spirit comes directly from the Founder of *Aikido* and it is the place for the succession of his teachings. It is the responsibility of each student to honor and follow those teachings.
- It is the responsibility of each student to cooperate in creating a positive atmosphere of harmony and respect.
- It is the responsibility of the students to maintain the *dojo*. The mats are always swept at the end of training. Occasional dusting and vacuuming is necessary. Take pride in your *dojo* and its appearance. It is an honor to participate in the responsibilities of maintaining the *dojo*. *Attitude is far more important than physical technique.*
- The state of your *gi* and weapons reflects your inner being. Keeping them clean and in good order is an act of cleansing your mind and heart.
- Monthly membership dues provide a place to practice. It is each student's responsibility to pay them on time.
- Arriving on time, so that you can participate in the opening ceremony, is another act of honor and respect. It is at this time that we ask *O Sensei's* spirit to enter the room and to oversee our training and development.
- The *dojo* membership is one family. The signing of the book is acknowledging your membership in that family and allows us to maintain a record of your training.
- The secret of *Aikido* is harmony. There will be no ego conflicts on the mat, physically or verbally. You are on the mat to transcend your aggressive reactions and to purify your intentions.

- An aspect of harmonizing is sharing. It is the responsibility of senior students to make themselves available for junior students so that their training can progress. Beginning students are often shy about asking more senior people to train, thinking that they are imposing.
- Eagerly seeking a training partner is to compliment that person. Sitting back and waiting to be called may be misconstrued as an act of ego and not one of modesty.
- There will be no competition on the mats. The purpose of *Aikido* is not in fighting and defeating an enemy, but in fighting and defeating your own aggressive instincts. The strengths of *Aikido* are in flexibility, communication, timing, control and modesty.
- Everyone has different physical abilities and different reasons for study. True *Aiki* is the proper and flexible application of technique appropriate to the situation and to the ability of your partner. Your partner gives himself to you and is trusting of you. You are responsible to both yourself and your partner.
- Receive instruction with an open mind and carry out suggestions sincerely and to the best of your abilities. There is no room for argument. To change technique is an insult to the instructor and will only create disorder. On the other hand, ***Takemusu Aiki*** is a spontaneous and creative application of the principle of *Aiki*. If you spontaneously perform a different technique, enjoy the beauty of the moment. It is a reflection of your art maturing. Appreciate the experience but return to the technique demonstrated.
- It is the moral responsibility of each student *never* to use *Aikido* technique to harm another human being or as a way to display your ego. *Aikido* is a positive force of creation not destruction. It is a tool to develop a better society through the character development of the individual. Embody the spirit of the *samurai* by discovering your social responsibility.



Takemusu Aiki is the movement of truth; the protection and creation of life. A spontaneous and creative application which allows the dynamics and structure of the universal laws to be expressed in the human body, and the power of the universal energy to enter the human spirit. The first character *TAKE* is the same as *BU* in *BUDO*. Takemusu is the spirit of the true warrior's Way.

Palm Beach Aikikai CLASS ETIQUETTE

1. Upon entering and leaving the *dojo*, bow in the direction of *O Sensei's* picture.
2. Sign the record book; indicate how many days you've been training since your last test.
3. Remove your shoes as you enter the dojo. Place them on the shoe rack.
4. Make sure your *gi* is clean and neat, and that your belt is properly tied. Either an all white *judo* or *karate gi* may be worn. The *obi* (belt) is not washed, as it stores your *ki* (energy). It should be hung to dry if wet from training in order to prevent discoloration from mildew. Do not wear your *dogi* (training uniform) to or from the dojo. By changing clothes upon entering the *dojo*, we separate our worldly existence from our training experience.
5. Brush your feet before stepping onto the mat. If you were wearing street sandals, you may need to wipe the bottoms of your feet with a damp paper towel.
6. Upon stepping onto the mat, perform a kneeling bow in the direction of *Sensei's* picture.
7. You are encouraged to warm up before class. A few minutes before class is about to begin you should be sitting in order of rank, and in quiet meditation. These few minutes are to rid your mind of the issues of the day and prepare for study.
8. Weapons (*bokken*, *jo* and *tanto*) should be brought to every class. You may store these weapons in the dojo.
9. The proper way to sit is in *seiza* (formal sitting position). If you have a knee injury, you may sit cross legged, but never sit with your legs outstretched and never lean against the wall. You must be alert at all times. At Palm Beach Aikikai we line up according to rank at the beginning and end of each class. During class sit anywhere.
10. The instructor may desire a formal period of meditation. Such meditation may begin with the command "*mokuso*" (empty mind), and end with "*ya mei*" (finish); or the instructor may simply choose to sit quietly.
11. When the instructor bows to *O Sensei's* picture, follow suit. One style of bowing is to bow, double clap, and to bow a second time. This method of bowing comes from the influence of the *Shinto* religion. The bows are gestures of respect for the spirit and the principles of *Aikido* and gratitude to the Founder for developing this system of study and practice. The two claps symbolize unity, *musubi*. The first sends out vibrations to the spiritual world. The second receives the echo of that vibration and connects your spirit with the spirit of the Founder and Universal Consciousness. The vibration which you send and you receive is dictated by your own spiritual beliefs and attitude. Because *Aikido* is not religion, many *Shihan* (master instructor) open with merely a single bow to the *kamiza* or *shomen* (place where the picture hangs). The instructor will then turn and bow to the class, the class bows simultaneously.
12. The instructor will then lead the class in warm-up exercises. Mimic the movements as closely as possible.
13. If you are late, sit at the edge of the mat at wait to be recognized by the instructor. You will then be invited to join in.

14. If you must leave the mat, please ask the instructor before doing so. Understand that he/she is responsible for the safety of all those on the mats.
15. After warm-up exercises and demonstration of the first technique, *Sensei* (instructor) will bow to his/her *uke* (the partner initiating the attack), and then bow to the class. You then bow to your training partner and begin practice.
16. Never stand idly around on the mat. You should be practicing or if necessary, seated in *seiza* awaiting your turn. Do not lean on the walls.
17. When a technique is changed, the instructor will clap his/her hands or announce it. Bow to your partner and then quickly and quietly line up. Sit anywhere in the line during class. It is only during the opening and closing of class that position in the line reflects rank. At completion of the instructor's demonstration, bow to the instructor, to your partner and resume practice.
18. If for some reason it is absolutely necessary to ask a question of the instructor, go to him/her, or better, wait until he/she comes by, bow respectfully (a standing bow is appropriate) and wait to be acknowledged. Never call him/her over.
19. When receiving personal instruction, sit in *seiza* and watch intently. Bow formally when the instruction is completed. When instruction is being given to another, you may stop your practice and watch. Sit formally and bow when the instruction has been completed.
20. Always remember your place. Should *Sensei* make a comment or joke, it is not your place to respond with a come-back. It is his/her class and you are his/her student. It is inappropriate to engage in dialogue, you are there asking for instruction.
21. Respect those more experienced. Never argue about technique.
22. You are there to practice, do not pressure your ideas on others.
23. Keep talking to a minimum. *Aikido* is experiential.
24. At the end of class, straighten your *gi* and sit in *seiza*. (Your outward appearance is a reflection of your inner being). There may or may not be a meditation. The instructor will initiate the bow to *O Sensei's* picture, and then will turn and bow to the class. Students express their thanks for instruction, "*Domo arigato gozimashita, Sensei*" ("thank you very much"). *Sensei* may ask for the class to form a large circle in order to make announcements or discuss some business. At the conclusion of announcements the entire group bows as an expression of appreciation to each other for sharing their knowledge and their patience.

Each *dojo* has its own personality and there might be some variation. However, the general rules of etiquette are the same. Understanding these formalities will allow you to train comfortably at any *Aikido* school.

Training Methods

The Uke and Nage Relationship

During Aikido training, the instructor will demonstrate a technique for study. Everyone will practice that same technique so that everyone understands the movement of defense. With this knowledge, it is easy for *uke* (the one who attacks and receives the energy of the technique) to anticipate the movement and stop it. Stopping your partner's technique in this manner is dishonest and strictly forbidden. Each technique is designed so that a specific style and direction of force may be experienced and studied. Aikido technique depends on blending with the force of the attack. It is that force which determines the movement. If uke holds back the necessary force, there can not be any exchange of the training experience, and that technical application can not be explored. Each attack must be completely committed, given honestly from your center to your partner's center with a fresh mind and spirit. The attack should be given each time with full concentration, as though it were the first time and the only time. There is only one moment -- NOW!

Until you learn to give a correct and centered attack, you can not learn to respond to an attack in a correct and centered manner. Until you learn to respond to the technique being executed, you can not study the reactions and dynamics of energy. When you attack in Aikido practice, you are giving your partner a training opportunity, the chance to hone reactions and refine technique. In turn you are receiving the most valuable learning experience of Aikido training. You are gaining a first hand knowledge, through the nerve receptors of your body, of the subtleties of technique through your partner's movement. You will perceive both his/her weaknesses as well as strengths. As you gain more experience you will understand, from the direct effect on your body, mind and spirit, why a particular movement was ineffective and how a subtle change made that same movement effective. You are learning from your partner's failures and successes as well as your own. You must respect this.

Learning to be a good *uke* is, above all, developing a sensitivity to your partner's ability. It is mean-spirited to attack a beginner with all your strength, making that person's response and study of the technique impossible. It is also foolish for you to attack in a manner that is stronger than that for which you can take the *ukemi* (fall). A good attack is not necessarily the fastest, strongest attack you can muster. A good attack is a controlled, centered and sincere attack, taking into account your partner's situation and your own. This is the beginning step in developing perception.

Nage is the person who is executing the technique, the one who throws. It is at this time that your responsibility is greatest, the dual responsibility of control and compassion. You must perceive your partners pain, find compassion and adjust your movement accordingly. It is at this point that you learn the meaning of *budo* (the way of the warrior): to not only protect yourself , but to protect the enemy. The uke is giving you the great gift of trust, and the opportunity to polish your technique, to experiment and grow. Don't abuse the trust.

The Practice of Meditation

There are two reasons that we make meditation part of our Aikido practice. The first is, that the moment of reality is now! If we are distracted by busy thoughts that take us away from the moment, we will not be acting in the moment, but will find ourselves hurriedly reacting to it. And in a confrontational situation, if you are not aware of the moment, it may mean serious injury or the loss of life. We can not stop the mind from generating thoughts, however, there is a danger in becoming totally absorbed in those thoughts. Attaching your mind to those thoughts places you either in the past reviewing some situation that is probably different from how it actually unfolded, or in the future which has not unfolded yet. As sentient beings we reflect upon our condition. This is natural. The danger is in nervously dwelling upon our condition. We practice meditation to help calm the chatter allowing us to be more fully focused in the moment.

Secondly, the deepest purpose of the martial arts is to serve as a vehicle for personal spiritual development. The martial arts began this emphasis during the sixteenth century, when the need for fighting skills in the Orient diminished. The martial arts were transformed from a practical means of combat-to-the-death to spiritual educational training that emphasized the personal development of the participant. Thus that art of fighting with the sword, *kenjutsu*, became transformed into “the way of the sword,” *kendo*. Soon other martial arts were given the ending - *do*, which means “the way,” or more fully, “the way of enlightenment, self-realization, and understanding.” Today we have *judo*, *karate-do*, *tae-kwon-do*, *hapkido*, *jeet-kune-do* and of course *aikido*.

Meditation, or *zazen* (sitting zen), provides a means to true self-realization. Its purpose is to quiet the distractions of the mind, allowing us to truly relax and become more peaceful. When our mind is peaceful we are free from worries and mental discomfort, and are more likely to be our true selves.

1. Make yourself comfortable. When we prepare the dojo for meditation we make sure we won't be interrupted. The phone is unplugged, the clock is removed, a “do not disturb” sign is hung, and the lights are turned down. We are dressed in our gi, which are loose and non-constricting. Generally we sit *seiza* on low benches or cushions. Make sure you sit up straight and avoid slouching. Focus your eyes on a nearby object or simply close your eyes gently. The idea is to relax as much as possible.

2. Breathe and remain focused. Once you're comfortable, Sensei will announce the beginning of the meditation period with “*mokuso*” (empty mind). Begin to concentrate on you breathing. There are a number of ways to do this. For example, while inhaling and exhaling, say to yourself, “I breathe in, I breathe out.” Some practitioners advise noting only the “out” breath, or counting the number of breaths. Others suggest focusing on a word or phrase that has particular meaning to you - a song lyric, a religious verse, or some personal *mantra*. Repeating the phrase helps to stay focused on your breathing.

It doesn't matter which method you choose, as long as it keeps you centered on your breathing and keeps you from stressing out about the dozens of chores you have to take care of today.

WARNING: Focusing exclusively on your breathing is not as easy as it sounds. A lot of chattering goes on in your brain. For example, if you're counting breaths, you won't make it to five before you're worrying about picking up milk on the way home! Collect yourself, and begin counting again. This is all part of your practice.

3. Don't just do something, sit there. When a thought does intrude - as it inevitably will, seemingly every few breaths - consciously acknowledge it. Then gently refocus your attention on your breathing. No matter how you choose to acknowledge your intrusive thoughts, try not to let yourself be frustrated by them. Simply notice the thought, then return to your breathing. Don't worry about how well you're doing, that will only distract you more.

4. At the end of the session, usually 30 minutes, sensei will announce "*ya mei*" (finish). At that time place your *zafu* or bench in front of you and bow towards it, reflecting on how it supported you in your practice. You may then stretch out on the mat.

Even initially, meditating for just 15 minutes a day helps you not only to relax but also to concentrate better on the task at hand. If you begin practicing regularly, one of the first things you will notice is that your body will require fewer hours of sleep. Meditation helps to eliminate wasteful nervous tension.

"Meditation is not the means to an end. It is both the means and the end."

Krishnamurti

Weapons Training

Three weapons are used in Aikido training: the wooden sword (**bokken**), the short staff (**jo**), and the wooden knife (**tanto**). Weapon's training in Aikido is unique. It is not intended to teach destruction nor how to defeat an opponent. It is utilized to teach distance (*ma-ai*) and timing, footwork and extension, which are then applied to empty-hand technique. Empty-hand technique is based upon weapon's movement. By understanding the weapon's application, (especially the sword) you will better understand the empty-hand application.

Promotion and Testing

On the next page is a list of the testing criteria for each level up to Sandan. The days of training required, are from the last test. In addition to the number of days required, is the recommendation from Wagener Sensei. Kyu ranks are asked to assemble a *Kyu Rank Training Committee*. This committee shall consist of 3 members (Nidan or above) to oversee training and test preparation. Once the candidate has achieved the minimum number of training days and the committee feels the candidate is adequately prepared, the committee shall recommend to Wagener Sensei that the candidate is prepared for testing. Kyu Committee forms are at the front desk and need to be turned into Wagener Sensei.

Palm Beach Aikikai expects weapons proficiency. Weapons test criteria will be demonstrated prior to the day of formal empty-hand testing.

Anyone training for 2nd Kyu and above needs to attend at least 2 training seminars a year led by instructors of Go-Dan (5th degree black belt) level or above.

Test Requirements

6th Kyu (Rokukyu) 20 practice days since beginning

1. Seiza (a) Bowing/Rei (b) Rise from seiza
2. Shikko - knee walking
3. Hanmi (a) Migi hanmi (b) Hidari hanmi
4. Ukemi (a) Ushiro ukemi (1) back fall (2) back roll (b) Mae ukemi
5. Kokyu undo (a) Funakogi undo (b) Ikkyo undo
6. Tai sabaki (a) Tenkan (b) Irimi (c) Irimi tenkan (d) Tenshin
7. Hanmi (w/partner) (a) Ai hanmi (b) Gyaku hanmi
8. Atemi (w/partner) (a) Tsuki (b) Yokomenuchi (c) Shomenuchi
9. Tai no henko (w/partner) as both uke and nage
10. Kokyudosa – Zagi Kokyuho (sitting) (w/partner)

5th Kyu (Gokyu) 40 days after 6th Kyu

1. Shomenuchi Ikkyo (omote & ura)
2. Shomenuchi Iriminage
3. Katatetori Shihonage (omote & ura)
4. Ryotetori TENCHINAGE (o. & u.)
5. Tsuki Kotegaeshi (o. & u.)
6. Ushiro Tekubitori Kotegaeshi (o. & u.)
7. Morotetori Kokyuho

Weapons

Happo-undo (taijutsu)
9 count jo kata (solo & paired)
Ken no Happondo

4th Kyu (Yonkyu) 80 days after 5th Kyu

1. Shomenuchi Nikkyo (o. & u.)
2. Yokomenuchi Shihonage (o. & u.)
3. Tsuki Iriminage (3 ways)
4. Ushiro Tekubi Sankyo (o. & u.)
5. Ushiro Ryokatatori Kotegaeshi (o. & u.)
6. Suwari Waza: Shomenuchi Ikkyo (o. & u.), Katatori Nikkyo (o. & u.), Katatori Sankyo (o. & u.)

Weapons

in addition to above:
1-7 bokken suburi

3rd Kyu (Sankyu) 100 days

1. Yokomenuchi Iriminage (3 ways)
2. Yokomenuchi Kotegaeshi (o. & u.)
3. Tsuki Kaitennage (o. & u.)
4. Ushiro Ryokatatori Sankyo (o. & u.)
5. Morotetori Iriminage (2 ways)
6. Shomenuchi Sankyo (o. & u.)
7. Suwari Waza: Shomenuchi Iriminage, Shomenuchi Nikkyo (o. & u.)
8. Hanmi-Handachi: Katatetori Shihonage (o. & u.), Katatetori Kaitennage (uchi & soto)

Weapons

in addition to above:
1-10 jo suburi
13 count jo kata
Ichi no kumi tachi

2nd Kyu (Nikyu) 200 days

1. Shomenuchi Shihonage
2. Shomenuchi Kaitennage
3. Yokomenuchi Gokyo
4. Ushiro Tekubitori Shihonage
5. Ushiro Tekubitori Jujinage

Weapons

in addition to above:
31 jo kata
1-20 jo suburi
1-3 kumi tachi

Continued on the next page...

6. Ushiro Kubishime Koshinage
7. Morotetori Nikkyo
8. Hanmi-Handachi: Shomenuchi Iriminage, Katatetori Nikkyo, Yokomenuchi Kotegaeshi
9. Freestyle-2 persons

1st Kyu (Ikkyu) 300 days, must attend 2 seminars per year

1. Katatori Menuchi - 5 techniques
2. Yokomenuchi - 5 techniques
3. Morotetori - 5 techniques
4. Shomenuchi - 5 techniques
5. Ryotetori - 5 techniques
6. Koshinage - 5 techniques
7. Tantotori
8. Hanmi-Handachi (Ushiro Waza - 5 techniques)
9. Freestyle - 3 persons

Weapons

in addition to above:
 1-3 kumi jo
 1-3 ken tai tachi
 31 jo kata/kumi jo

DAN TESTS

Shodan 300 days, 2 seminars

1. All of 1st Kyu requirements
2. Tachitori
3. Jotori
4. Henkawaza - Examiner will call the first technique.
5. Freestyle - 4 persons

Weapons

all of the above

Nidan 600 days, 2 seminars

1. Attend 2 seminars per year after Shodan.
2. All of Shodan requirements
3. Tachitori - 2 persons
4. Freestyle - 5 persons
5. Kaeshiwaza - Original technique will be called by examiner:
 ie. to apply sankyo to nikkyo.

Sandan 700 days, 2 seminars

1. Attend 2 seminars per year after Nidan.
 Subject of exam to be determined by examiner at the time of the exam.

Visiting Other Schools

Visiting other schools is a real learning opportunity that every serious student should take advantage of. Try to call ahead of time to introduce yourself and ask permission to train. Upon arriving, ask if there is a visitor's mat fee, if not, offer to make a donation (\$5-10). Schools vary with regard to opening and closing class. Ask if there is any special formality you should be aware of. Be polite, but don't be intimidated. The members of the host dojo should do everything they can to make you feel welcome and comfortable as well. Follow the guide lines as noted in the sections on Dojo and Class etiquette. Keep your mind open, and remain flexible. It can be a valuable learning experience.

Other Organizations and Styles

Palm Beach Aikikai is a member dojo of the **United States Aikido Federation** - Eastern Region. Your senior sensei is Yoshimitsu Yamada (b.1938) 8th dan of New York Aikikai. Other senior instructors include Kazuo Chiba, San Diego Aikikai, Ichiro Shibata, Aikido of Berkley, Claude Berthiaume, Aikido De La Montagne (Montreal).

The **Aikido Schools of Ueshiba (ASU)**, were organized by Mitsugi Saotome (b.1937) in the late 70's, in Sarasota, Florida. ASU headquarters was then established in Washington, DC. There are many ASU schools in Florida, (mostly in the Tampa area) and throughout the U.S. The most easily recognizable difference is that all ranks wear *hakama* and there is great emphasis on weapon's training. Hiroshi Ikeda, Boulder, CO is a central figure in ASU.

The **Ki Society** is another world-wide organization. It was founded by Koichi Tohei (1920-1998) shortly after the founder's death. It incorporates separate classes on the development of "Ki". I do not believe there are any formal Ki Society schools presently in Florida. Generally you could describe the style as a softer style.

Yoshinkan Aikido, was founded by Gozo Shioda (1915-1994). The term "Yoshinkan" means "to cultivate mind and spirit". I do not believe there are any formal Yoshinkan schools presently in Florida. Comparatively speaking, you could describe Yoshinkan as more stylized and harder.

Aikido Association of America (AAA) is a nationally based organization with an affiliation of over 130 dojo in U.S., Japan and Europe. Established in 1985 by Fumio Toyoda (1946-2002), after separating from the Ki Society. AAA is headquartered in Chicago, IL.

There are many other styles and organizations of Aikido, but perhaps the only other major style you should be aware of is **Tomiki**. Founded by Kenji Tomiki (1900-1979) it incorporates competition and training patterned after Judo.

Glossary

Ai-hanmi: when the partners are facing each other in a mutual triangular stance.

Aikikai: aikido club, the name of any aikido school recognized by Aikido World Headquarters.

Atemi: the use of striking techniques.

Bokken: the wooden practice sword, see Tachi.

Budo: any Japanese martial art.

Chudan tsuki: middle level thrust.

Dojo: a place where martial arts training takes place. The “place” of the “way”.

Dojo-cho: the leader of that particular dojo.

Doshu: the title of the present leader of Aikido, Moriteru Uyeshiba, O’Sensei’s grandson.

Eritori: an attack in which the collar is grabbed from behind.

Gi: practice uniform.

Gokyo: “fifth form”, one of the wrist techniques in which the wrist is held palm up; usually employed against a knife attack.

Gyaku-hanmi: the partners stand in opposite triangular stances.

Hanmi: a triangular stance, the basic on-guard position.

Hanmi handachi: nage is in a sitting posture and uke attacks from a standing posture.

Henkawaza: switching from one technique to another.

Ikkyo: “first form”, a wrist technique where the arm is held I without applying pressure to the joints. Irimi, tenkan: basic opening movements in Aikido techniques. Irimi is a motion in which one charges directly towards the opponent; tenkan is a motion in which one turns or pivots away from the opponent.

Iriminage: a throwing technique employing an entering motion.

Jo: wooden staff.

Jo tori: technique applied against attack with a jo.

Juji nage: a type of throw in which Nage uses the pressure of crossing Uke's arms against each other.

Kaeshiwaza: counter techniques. Uke applies the technique to nage.

Kaitenage: a throw in which Nage employs a spinning motion to throw Uke forward; pressure is exerted by holding Uke's head down and pushing the arm on a diagonal.

Katatetori: an attack in which Uke grabs one of Nage's hands in one of his/her hands.

Katatori: an attack in which Uke grabs at Nage's lapel or shoulder.

Ki: inner energy based on calmness.

Kokyu-ho, kokyu-ryoku: kokyu-ryoku is breath power emanating from the abdomen; kokyu-ho is a method of coordinating breath power and body movement to increase one's ki power.

Kokyu nage: a type of throw employing no joint technique.

Koshinage: a throw in which Uke is thrown over Nage's hips.

Kotegaeshi: one of the wrist techniques in which pressure is applied on the wrist away from Uke's body.

Ma-ai: the proper distance between Uke and Nage.

Mae-ukemi: front roll.

Morotetori: an attack in which Uke grabs Nage's forearm with both hands.

Nage: the partner executing the technique.

Nikkyo: one of the wrist techniques in which pressure is applied on the wrist toward Uke's body.

Omote, ura: the description of Nage's position in executing the techniques. Omote is based on irimi movements and is done going toward Uke; ura is based on tenkan movements making Uke move around Nage.

Osae: a pin, a method of holding down.

O' Sensei: Morihei Ueshiba, the founder of Aikido.

Rei, ojigi: proper bowing.

Reigi: etiquette.

Ryotetori: an attack in which Uke grabs both of Nage's wrists in both of his/her hands.

Sankyo: one of the wrist techniques in which pressure is applied against the wrist in a twisting motion toward Uke.

Seiza: proper sitting.

Shihonage: a technique in which pressure is applied against Uke's wrist and elbow using a sword-swinging motion to throw Uke down.

Shikko: a technique of walking on the knees.

Shomenuchi: an attack in which Uke strikes at Nage's forehead with an open hand.

Soto kaiten: an outside turning motion.

Suwari waza: techniques, done from a sitting position, in which Uke and Nage employ shikko.

Tachi: bokken, a wooden sword.

Tachi tori: techniques applied against attacks with a bokken.

Tachi waza: techniques done with Uke and Nage standing.

Tanto: a wooden knife.

Tanto tori: techniques applied against knife attacks.

Tatami: Straw training mats.

Tenchi nage: a type of irimi nage in which Nage breaks Uke's balance by extending one hand up and the other down while moving toward Uke.

Tenkai: To turn from a front-facing to a back-facing stance by turning your hips and turning on the balls of your feet.

Tenkan: a pivoting motion on the front foot, while sweeping the rear foot.

Tenshin: A movement where Nage retreats 45 degrees away from the attack (esp. to Uke's open side).

Tetsubo: Circuit of energy.

Tsugi-ashi: A sliding or gliding foot movement, either forward or backward.

Uchi kaiten: an inside turning motion.

Udekime nage: a type of throw applying pressure to the underside of the elbow.

Uke: the partner initiating the "attack".

Ukemi: protective falling.

Ura: to the backside of Uke, see Omote, Ura.

Ushiro kubishime: an attack in which Uke grabs one of Nage's wrists from behind and chokes Nage with the other arm.

Ushiro ryokatatori: an attack in which Uke grabs Nage's shoulders from behind.

Ushiro tekubitori: an attack in which Uke grabs both of Nage's wrists from behind.

Ushiro-ukemi: back roll.

Waza: technique.

Yokomenuchi: an attack in which Uke strikes at the side of Nage's neck or head with an open hand.

Yoko-ukemi: Side roll.

Yonkyo: a technique in which pressure is applied against Uke's forearm.

Zanshin: unbroken awareness and concentration, a connection.

Zen: a form of meditation based on a Japanese philosophy.

Common Dojo Phrases

Abunai! (ah-boo-nye) -- Watch out! Be careful.

Arigato gozaimasita --(ah-ree-gah-toe go-zye-mahsh-tah) -- Thank you for what you did (spoken at the end of practice).

Do itasimasite (doe ee-tahsh-ee-mahsh-teh) -- You're welcome, don't mention it.

Dozo (doe-zoe) -- Please; as in go ahead (this may be an instruction from your teacher when he wants you to begin practice after demonstrating a technique).

Gomen nasai (goe-mehn nah-sigh) -- I'm sorry; forgive me.

Hai yame (hi yah-meh) -- Please stop! (This will be said by your instructor during keiko when he wants you to stop)

Hajime (hah-jee-meh) -- Please start! (This will be said by your teacher when he wants you to begin; often said with emphasis.)

Konban wa (cone-bahn wah) -- Good evening.

Konnichi wa (cone-ee-chee wah) -- Good afternoon.

Mokuso (moke-sew) -- Please come to attention; make yourself ready for keiko; meditate! (This will be said in the form of a command by your Sensei or Sempai at the beginning of class and at the end of class just before the ceremonial opening and closing bow respectively.)

Ogenki desuka? (oh-gehn-key dehs-kah) -- How are you?

Ohayo gazaimasu (oh-high-oh goe-zyemahs) -- Good Morning.

Onegaisimasu (oh-neh-guy-she-mahs) -- Thank you for what we are about to do (spoken at the beginning of practice).

Oyasumi nasai (oh-yah-soo-mee nah-sigh) -- Good night (as in leaving).

Sayanara (sigh-oh-nah-rah) -- Good bye.

Words of Attack

Hanmi handachi (hawn-mee hawn-dah-chee) - Uke standing, nage sitting.

Jo tori (joe toe-ree) -- Jo taking techniques.

Kao tsuki (cow tsoo-key) -- Punch to the face.

Katate tori (kah-tah-teh toe-ree) -- One hand grab to wrist.

Kata tori (kah-tah toe-ree) -- One hand grab to shoulder.

Kete tsuki (keh-teh tsoo-key) -- Kick to the gut.

Morote tori (moe-row-teh toe-ree) -- Two hands on one.

Mune tori (moo-neh toe-ree) -- One lapel grab from the front.

Mune tsuki (moo-neh tsoo-key) -- Thrust or punch to the gut.

Ryokata tori (ree-oh-kah-tah toe-ree) -- Front two shoulder grab.

Ryote tori (ree-oh-teh toe-ree) -- Both wrists grabbed from the front.

Shomen uchi (show-mehn oo-chee) -- Strike to forehead.

Suwari waza (soo-wah-ree wah-zah) -- Techniques from sitting.

Tachi tori (tah-chee toe-ree) Sword taking techniques.

Tanto tori (tawn-toe toe-ree) Knife taking techniques.

Ushiro kubishime (oo-she-roe koo-bee-she-meh) -- Back choke.

Ushiro ryokata tori (oo-she-roe ree-oh-kah-tah toe-ree) -- Shoulders grabbed from behind.

Ushiro tekubi tori (oo-she-roe teh-koo-bee toe-ree) -- Both wrists grabbed from behind.

Yoko menuchi (yo-koe meh-new-chee) -- Strike to the side of the head.

Parts of the Body

Ashi (ah-she) -- Foot

Hara (hah-rah) -- Stomach

H"i (hee-jee) -- Elbow

Hiza (hee-zah) -- Knee

Kata (kah-tah) -- Shoulder

Koshi (koe-she) -- Hip

Kubi (koo-bee) -- Neck

Kuchi (koo-chee) -- Mouth

Me (meh) -- Eye

Men (mehn) -- Head

Mune (moo-neh) -- Chest

Rokkutsu (roe-koot-soo) -- Rib

Senaka (seh-nah-kah) -- Back

Te (teh) -- Hand

Tekubi (teh-koo-bee) -- Wrist

Yubi (you-bee) -- Fingers

Counting in Japanese

In order to count up to 99, all you need to know is the **Japanese terms for 1 through 10**.

1	ichi (ee-chee)
2	ni (knee)
3	san (sahn)
4	shi (she) (or yon)
5	go (goe)
6	roku (row-koo)
7	shichi (she-chee) (or nana)
8	hachi (hah-chee)
9	kyu (koo)
10	jyu (joo)

Above ten, you would say something to the effect of "10 and 2" to stand for "12."

11	ten (and) one	jyu ichi
12	ten (and) two	jyu ni
13	ten (and) three	jyu san
14	ten (and) four	jyu shi or jyu yon
15	ten (and) five	jyu go
16	ten (and) six	jyu roku
17	ten (and) seven	jyu shichi or jyu nana
18	ten (and) eight	jyu hachi
19	ten (and) nine	jyu kyu

For numbers from 20 through 99, you would say something like "3 tens and 6" to mean "36."

36	3 tens (and) 6	san jyu roku
43	4 tens (and) 3	yon jyu san
71	7 tens (and) 1	nana jyu ichi
99	9 tens (and) 9	kyu jyu kyu

Counting higher is basically the same.

100	hyaku	
101	1 hundred (and) 1	hyaku ichi
201	2 hundred (and) 1	ni hyaku ichi
546	5 hundred (and) 4 tens (and) 6	go hyaku yon jyu roku

1,000 **sen**

3427 **san zen yon hyaku ni jyu shichi** (or **nana**)
(Note: "sen" becomes "zen" after a voiced consonant line "n")

10,000 **man**

23,456 **ni man san zen yon hyaku go jyu roku**

Some anomalies:

Use "shi" for "four" only in the single digit column. So, you can use "shi" or "yon" in 3654, but use "yon" for 40, 400, 4000, etc.

Use "shichi" for "seven" only in the single digit column.

So, you can use "shichi" or "nana" in 9607, but use "nana" for 70, 700, 7000, etc.

600	roppyaku	(not rokyu hyaku)
800	happyaku	(not hachi hyaku)
8000	hassen	(not hachi sen)

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Palm Beach Aikikai

<http://www.palmbeachaikikai.com>

Aiki.Com Aikido products;
formally ***Aikido Today Magazine***

<http://www.aiki.com/>

Aiki Journal Online

<newsletter@list.aikidojournal.com>

<http://www.aikidojournal.com/>

Aikido Online Magazine

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AikiWeb: The Source for Aikido Information

<http://www.aikiweb.com/>

Aikido World Headquarters Hombu Dojo

<http://www.aikikai.org/>

Florida Aikikai

www.floridaaikikai.com/

United States Aikido Federation

<http://www.usaikifed.org/usaf/home.html>

Aikido Schools of Ueshiba

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