

# Aikido Times

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE BRITISH AIKIDO BOARD



August 2015



Welcome to the August issue of the Aikido Times. The summer is often a quiet time for news and like many other papers and magazines ours is quite a small issue this time round.

My thanks as always to those who have taken the time to submit articles and course posters. Special thanks to

our regular contributors -- your efforts mean that we always have a issue "of substance". Finally, I would urge you to read the article on page 9 and maybe send in your comments? It is a thought-provoking article!

Brian Stockwell, Editor

## In this issue

Thoughts on aikido training. . . . . page 2

Larbi el Akel Course Report . . . . . page 3

Safeguarding Update . . . . . page 4

Aikido and cardiovascular health . . . page 6

The origin and purpose of solo practice . page 9

Aikido -- Martial Art? . . . . . page 12

Courses can be found on page 13 onwards.

***"We need to remember that the primary goal of Aikido is harmony and good relations between people. If we don't cultivate a harmonious heart along with technical skill, there will be a lack of integration in our practice, which will show up in behavior off the mat."***

*Linda Holiday, Journey to the Heart of Aikido: The Teachings of Motomichi Anno Sensei*

## RIGHT TO REPLY

**HAVE YOUR SAY HAVE YOUR SAY HAVE YOUR SAY HAVE YOUR SAY HAVE YOUR SAY**

Do you want to respond to any item in the Aikido Times?

Do you have your own perspective on any of the issues covered?

Maybe you have something really positive to say about a particular item that you found helpful or interesting. If so then please send in your comments and we can publish these in the new "Right to Reply" section





## Thoughts on aikido training

### Anonymous

Recently I went to an all-day Aikido course, one of a series run throughout the year by my current Association, where there are usually two instructors, different ones for each course, who take alternate sessions during the day.

Entering the dojo for this latest course, I saw that there were considerably fewer students, of whatever grade, than there had been for the preceding couple of courses. I remarked upon this to one of the students waiting for the course to start, and he replied, indicating one of the instructors, that it was because "they" (presumably many of the absentees) "don't like what he teaches."

Well, what a lightweight attitude! Unless you consider that what a particular instructor teaches is actually dangerous (in which case you should be voicing your concerns to your own instructor) you should be attending as many such courses as you can, to broaden your Aikido mind if nothing else.

Obviously there are many legitimate reasons why an Aikidoka might not attend a particular course, but if the student I spoke to was correct in his assumption, it's a sad state of affairs. Aikido is a meal, not a buffet, and I think that as serious and committed Aikidoka we should be accepting it in all its facets, not just picking at the bits we like best, and that goes for instructors as well as styles.

What do other Aikidoka think? Pick and choose, or try for as wide an experience as possible?

*(Editor's note: please send your comments to [mediaofficer@bab.org](mailto:mediaofficer@bab.org) and we can publish these in the next issue)*

## SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

1. Maximum article length will usually be in the region of 1000 words. It may be necessary to split some articles over more than one issue of the Newsletter.
2. No payment shall be made for items used.
3. The focus of articles must be on aikido, its impact on people and the community, or contain content which would be of interest and relevance to aikidoka
4. Contributors must be either members of the BAB or be invited to contribute. Other people may submit items for publication and approval from the Board's Executive may be required.
5. There should be no explicit criticism of individuals or other associations/organisations.
6. All material submitted must be original (i.e. not breach copyright laws). Appropriate credits and permissions should be included within the submission if relevant.
7. Articles may be edited/corrected at the Editor's discretion
8. The Editor's decision shall be final in determining the content of The Aikido Times.

## Course Report

### Larbi el Akel\* 6th Dan Aikikai May 2015 Seminar

#### Phil Bengé

(\*Larbi Sensei is a personal student of Yamada Sensei who is based in New York. )

This biannual event hosted by Rising Sun Aikido (Weston super Mare) has become so popular that a bigger venue had to be found. So with a venue able to cope with the number of students and a tatami of almost 400sqm the weekend was looking exciting.

The Friday night session, held at our normal dojo, was only 2 hours but was well attended with around 30 students making it a little bit tight for space. However, everyone enjoyed the session covering basic techniques from ushiro; being a small group we benefitted from some personal tuition.

The Saturday began with student laying almost 400sqm of tatamis, but unfortunately this did not count as a warm up! Around 40 students trained, with each participant receiving a commemorative tenagui (towel). It was noted that some people had travelled quite a distance with students arriving from Taunton, Birmingham and London. Larbi Sensei covered a wide spectrum of techniques and attacks, however, I enjoyed the suwari waza, even for my old knees. The day also covered kaiten nage and koshi nage, not favourites with beginners but everyone was still smiling at the end of the training.



#### DISCLAIMER

The BAB has taken all reasonable care to ensure that the information contained in this Newsletter is accurate at the time of publication. The content is for general information only, and the views expressed herein are not necessarily those of the BAB.

The BAB accepts no responsibility for the consequences of error or for any loss or damage suffered by users of any of the information contained in this newsletter.

The contents are subject to copyright and may not be copied without permission.

The day concluded with Chantal McGill doing an aikikai Nidan grading in front of a panel consisting of Larbi Sensei 6th Dan Aikikai, Toshiaki Sensei 5th Dan Aikikai & Phil Sensei 4th Dan. The grading went well for Chantal and despite almost running out of steam Chantal passed her Nidan grading.

The evening's social event was held at a local pub with restaurant and we had access to a private room with Skittle alley. For those not versed in the ways of 'West Country folk' most traditional pubs have a skittle alley and teams. For a group of aikidoka it led to a night of fun and humiliation, it appears skittles and the balls do not recognise black belt rankings. Larbi sensei & Toshiaki sensei were both surprised at the complexity of the game but shocked at the aggressive way the balls were hurled down the alley. There may be a market for 'Zen Skittles'.

With a good breakfast we began Sunday training with a light warmup before going onto shomen uchi attacks and exploring a range of techniques. We also covered Jo dori some bokken work. The day ended with Larbi sensei being presented with a personalised hakama bag to remind him of his visit.

Although Larbi sensei only speaks a little English he is able to teach with such a relaxed fun attitude and using the language of aikido to portray his philosophy and knowledge of aikido.



## Safeguarding update

### Sue Ward, Lead Safeguarding Officer

It has been an incredibly busy few months and I am pleased to announce that the new safeguarding policy has now been approved by the Executive and adopted by the Board.

The Executive decided to take a new "approach" and as a result our revised policy is now more of an over-arching statement of intent and will have a wide range of supporting guidance documents underpinning it.

We hope that this will make the documents and procedures much easier to use, manage and update. So even though it has taken several months to get to this stage, in the long run it should make for a much more streamlined approach.

The guidance documents will be published over the coming months and broadly speaking cover the same material as the old policy. There is just a little more detail and more help for implementation.

The first document to be issued will deal with Recruitment and DBS and should help clubs implement robust processes when they employ or deploy new people.

## Training

Another major piece of work has been the BAB's training plan for those working with Children and Young People. This is now developed to a point where pretty much all we now have to do is start delivering courses and workshops!

The training available is as follows:

### **Basic awareness training (required for CPOs, CWOs and planned for coaches)**

Can be achieved through attending the sports coach UK (scUK) Safeguarding and Protecting Children (SPC) workshop or the BAB course "Safeguarding Children in Aikido". The scUK workshop is delivered around the UK and you can book direct or sometimes through your local Country Sports Partnership or Council Sport Development Team. We will now look to roll out more courses as part of a timetable in consultation with the BAB Coaching Team.

### **Training for Club Welfare Officers (Time to Listen 3-4 hours)**

I have just attended a tutor orientation day which now enables the BAB to deliver this 3-4 hour workshop in house. At present I am the only person able to deliver, but there are openings for other tutors who meet the person specification. If you would be interested in joining the tutor team for this course then please let me know. Clearly it will be all but impossible for me to train all the CWOs in the UK so to make this work we need other suitable people to help

### **Training for CPOs (Time to Listen 1 day)**

This course provides more in depth training for Association CPOs. It has run twice so far and a further course for 2015 is planned. If you have a central venue that we could use (classroom, refreshments etc) then please let me know.

### **Training for coaches**

There are plans in the pipeline (approved in principle by the Board) to require all coaches working with children and young people to have additional qualifications. It is planned to phase this in over quite a long lead time - - with a target date of 2019.

This training will include basic awareness training (see above) and also training in how children and young people learn and develop (physically and mentally).

The latter would be through attending the BAB's existing course called "Coaching Children". I have now been brought onto the BAB's team of tutors and did have plans to deliver this course last month. Despite it being advertised, only one person booked on to it so we had to cancel!

### **On line training**

I have also developed a suite of short narrated presentations that will help support the following areas:

- Recruitment and Induction of new staff and volunteers
- How to administer criminal record checks (DBS)
- How to respond to concerns
- Guidance for parents and children

I will add further presentations in the future so please do let me know if there are areas you feel would benefit from this approach. The presentations will be published on the BAB website in the Autumn.





# Aikido and cardiovascular health

## Mark Hardwick

Diseases of the heart and circulatory system (collectively called cardiovascular diseases) cause around 160,000 deaths in the UK each year, which is more than a quarter of all deaths in the UK. Of these, coronary heart disease is the UK's most prolific fatal disease. It causes heart attacks and thereby kills around one in six men, and one in ten women. A further 40,000 deaths in the UK each year are caused by strokes. A stroke is a cardiovascular disease which prevents the brain from receiving sufficient oxygenated blood (British Heart Foundation 2015). To a large extent cardiovascular diseases are preventable, and aikido can play its part in reducing risk of cardiovascular diseases as it is a form of exercise which promotes good cardiovascular health. The martial arts also generally encourage a healthy, simple lifestyle which means that other risk factors are avoided. This article will assess the role of aikido in avoiding, or at least delaying the onset of cardiovascular diseases.

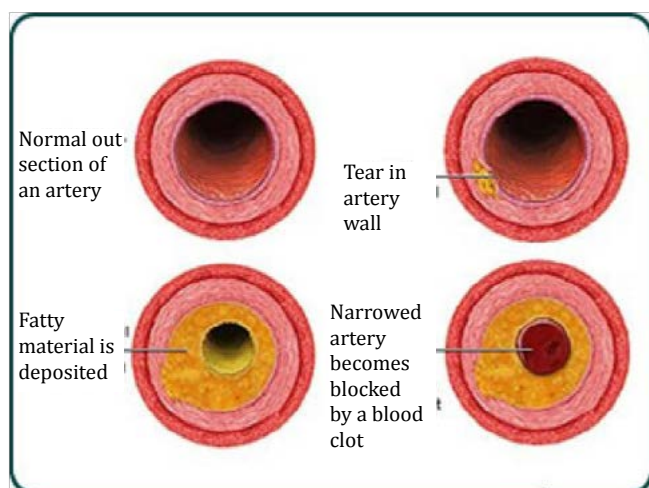
The risk factors for cardiovascular diseases are many, but can be reduced to three categories: genetic factors, environmental factors and lifestyle factors. Some people may have a genetic predisposition to cardiovascular diseases, and others may be vulnerable to environmental factors beyond their control. However this does not mean that cardiovascular disease is a certainty as lifestyle factors are very powerful, and so risk can be reduced by making good lifestyle choices.

Aikido would fall into the lifestyle factors category as it is a form of exercise, and exercise in general is essential for maintaining good cardiovascular health. Aikido has a number of benefits in this respect. Training sessions are usually of about the right duration (1-2 hours) to promote cardiovascular health, and are of a suitable intensity. The nature of aikido training should also bring about a reduction in stress and anxiety, which are also risk factors for cardiovascular diseases, and should promote a more relaxed and confident disposition and ability to cope more easily with some of the demands of modern society.

Other lifestyle factors which affect the likelihood of cardiovascular diseases are well known. Smoking is probably the most significant risk factor and should be avoided totally. Alcohol intake should be kept to a minimum, and it is important to avoid sugar, salt and saturated fat in the diet wherever possible.

Due to the duration and intensity of activity, a good aikido training session will mean that you are exercising within the 'aerobic zone' for much of the time. Exercising in the aerobic zone means that physical work is performed which elevates the heart rate to within specified parameters, and this creates cardiovascular benefits (working out your own aerobic zone is quite easy, please see the formula at the end of the article).

## Coronary heart disease



The heart is a beating muscle, and so it needs its own blood supply in order to function, and this blood is delivered through coronary arteries. When debris such as fatty deposits and unhealthy cholesterol adhere to the internal surfaces of these arteries, they can become partially blocked and the blood supply finds it more difficult to get through. This is coronary heart disease (sometimes called coronary artery disease). Eventually the blockage may build up to such an extent that the blood supply is severely inhibited, and a heart attack occurs.

Exercise such as aikido helps to maintain healthy arteries. It establishes good blood flow ensuring debris is moved along, and it is also thought that exercise reduces unhealthy blood cholesterol whilst at the same time increasing 'good' cholesterol, which protects against heart disease (*Kravitz and Heyward 1994*).

As well as these protective features, aikido will also result in developments to the cardiovascular system. The heart muscle itself will increase in capability and strength. There will be an increased production of red blood cells (which carry oxygen around the body) and also of blood vessels called 'capillaries'. Other associated developments in the lungs and muscles mean the overall effect is that the cardiovascular system is more healthy and much more efficient. Oxygen transport is improved, blood pressure and the resting heart rate are reduced, and the health of the coronary arteries is improved.

## Arrhythmias

Apart from coronary heart disease, there are other diseases which can affect the heart, and it is worth being aware of some of these. 'Arrhythmias' are problems caused by the nervous circuitry which regulates the heartbeat. Sometimes this circuitry goes wrong and the heart beats in an abnormal way. It is possible to carry out some simple checks by taking your pulse. If your heart beats abnormally slowly (bradycardia), or quickly (tachycardia), even if this only occurs occasionally for no obvious reason, it might be worth having a chat with your GP to discuss what the causes might be.

A common arrhythmia is called 'atrial fibrillation', and it is thought that 1 in every 100 people in the UK are affected by it. This is where the heart rhythm is constantly irregular (regardless of the heart rate). For example, there might be two or three regular beats, then a pause, then a couple of quick beats, and the heartbeat continues in this haphazard way. This condition is a risk factor for strokes so it is important to detect it. The condition can be treated, and so if you suspect that you have an irregular heartbeat, a visit to the GP is advised.

## Young people

It is a sad fact that each week in the UK, twelve young people die from undiagnosed heart conditions. As the conditions are undiagnosed, this usually happens suddenly and unexpectedly. Often the defects which cause sudden death cannot be diagnosed by simple checks such as taking the pulse or blood pressure.

There is a wonderful charity called 'Cardiac Risk in the Young'. Dedicated fundraisers work throughout the year to collect enough money to be able to fund free heart screening for young people. Screening events take place throughout the UK and are carried out by a team of cardiac specialists. It is entirely painless and doesn't take very long. Most of the time the young person is simply told that there is nothing to worry about, but in a minority of cases problems with the heart muscle, the nervous supply, or heart valves may be detected. It may then be possible to remedy or manage these defects.

Free screening is available to anyone aged 14-35. To find out where and when screening events take place, and what it involves, and to book a place, please visit the 'Cardiac Risk in the Young' webpage at:

<http://www.c-r-y.org.uk/cardiac-screening/>

The webpage is updated regularly as new events are arranged



## Calculating your aerobic zone:

It is easy to work out whether or not you are training in the aerobic zone. Here is a fairly common method:

Subtract your age from 220 (let's say that you are 20 years old)

$$220 - 20 = 200.$$

Calculate 60% of the resultant figure:

$$60\% \text{ of } 200 = 120.$$

Calculate 80% of the resultant figure:

$$80\% \text{ of } 200 = 160.$$

The aerobic zone for the 20 year old aikidoka is between 120 and 160 heart beats per minute. Therefore, if the heart rate (i.e. pulse rate) is between 120 and 160, the 20 year old aikidoka is training within the aerobic zone, and for the time spent training at this intensity, cardiovascular developments should occur.

---

#### References

British Heart Foundation 2015 Cardiovascular disease statistics factsheet  
<https://www.bhf.org.uk/research/heart-statistics>

Cardiac Risk in the Young  
<http://www.c-r-y.org.uk>

Centers for disease control and prevention 2015  
[http://www.cdc.gov/heartdisease/coronary\\_ad.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/heartdisease/coronary_ad.htm)

Kravitz L. (PhD) & Heyward V. (PhD) 1994 The exercise & cholesterol controversy  
<http://www.unm.edu/~lkravitz/Article%20folder/cholesterol.html>

***Mark Hardwick is a Lecturer in Health Sciences, Kung Fu instructor and Chair of the North Devon Martial Arts Forum***



Photo by Richard Small

Observe:-

Hips engaged.

Eyes engaged.

Body centred.

Joints aligned.

Expanding energy.

Circles and spirals.

Connectedness.

Martial.

Awareness.

Preparedness.

Spirit.

Movement in stillness.

Tachidori by Mark Allcock 2nd dan Aikikai of Wellsprings Aikido, Dorset, at the club's 2014 Taisai (taught by Tony Sargeant Sensei 6th dan Aikiki). [www.wellspringsoftheeast.co.uk](http://www.wellspringsoftheeast.co.uk)





## The origin and purpose of solo practice in aikido (Part 1)

### Guillaume Erard

*To help me add substance to this article, Ellis Amdur, famous author and Shihan in two koryu, Toda-ha Buko-ryu and Araki-ryu, was kind enough allow me to include elements from some of our private conversations about budo. For clarity, his words will always be explicitly presented to differentiate them from my own interpretations.*

### Is there an explicit solo curriculum in aikido?

When referring to the solo training in Aikido, the image that often comes to mind is the practice of suburi. Saito Morihiro Sensei, who considered the practice of weapons as totally integral to that of aikido, essentially based most of his solo training upon the practice of suburi.[3] However, apart from the fact that there is a debate over whether weapons practice (and what particular style) is necessary to the practice of aikido or not, one may wonder if what looks to the untrained eye as back and forth swings of a bokuto really justify by themselves of the appellation “solo practice curriculum”, be they performed several hours per day.



According to Ellis Amdur, most people have a crude vision of suburi, and by extension of lai. Many think that it can be summarized as: “This is how you cut, do that 100 times, and you will become better, because your cut will be good and your endurance better”. [4] Amdur told me that most koryu contained from the beginning some forms of lai, and that they were mostly used as a training for safe handling of weapons, a bit like safety rules that one learns on a shooting range. Many people of course also know about the practical advantage of knowing how to draw one’s weapon at all times in order to defend one’s life. [4]

However, still according to Amdur, there is a whole section of lai which has no connection with the reasons mentioned above and which is more closely related to internal training. The main purpose of this training is to erase interfering actions that hinder the descent of the weapon. [4] Often, people develop power through force, but it results in a slowing down of the blade below its terminal velocity [speed reached by an object when it is in free fall]. The purpose of suburi training is therefore to develop the body so as to let the weapon fall by gravity, while adding a force vector to accelerate its movement. [4] This force vector is created through using muscles and sinew only in ways that are “in line” with the movement one is attempting (imagine a train gliding on a track when a second train slams into it from behind).

With these considerations in mind, the question is obviously to know, in addition suburi practice, where to find this internal force training in aikido.

### The aiki-taiso

Once one puts suburi aside, one is hard pressed to find examples of solo exercises commonly practiced by most aikidoka, even if one goes back as far as the teaching of O Sensei. By solo training, are we really talking about aiki-taiso (ikkyo undo, ame no torifune undo, furitama, etc.), that kind of gymnastic for seniors that is performed at the beginning of some classes?

In fact, the purpose of Aiki-taiso is precisely to develop tacitly the internal aspects of aikido. Ikkyo undo, for example, is not only important in its ascendant phase, but also, and perhaps essentially, in its downswing, because it allows one to apply a powerful impact on the body of uke. Ame no torifune can also be explained in the same way. Olivier Gaurin pointed out to me that the extension of the hands forward is the fundamental phase of the typical triangle atemi of original Aiki (atemi on atemi), and that it is found in many entries of Daito-ryu techniques on tsuki. [5] However, I also think that we should not neglect the return movement, because more than a simple repositioning, it is what generates the most power if practiced correctly. Just as suburi, the force is generated through the loosening of the shoulders.

## *A solo practice from a moral point of view*

For me, martial practice, let alone that of aikido, is fundamentally solitary, because even though it is mostly practiced in pairs, uke is merely a tool allowing us to increase our own understanding. There is no common goal, even though the relational parameters are obviously integral to the practice.[1]

I would say that in its most noble form, the martial art is ideally solitary since subsidiary elements such as the glorification of competitive victory, the ego of ranks, and the fear of others that initially motivated us to learn how to fight should have disappeared at that stage. At this level of understanding, training is done for its own sake, it benefits only oneself, and external considerations disappear. Moreover, the higher the level of mastery, the less there are people with the ability to appreciate it, and therefore, one might find oneself rather lonely once one reaches the mountain's top. But even at the bottom of this mountain, which is position that is much more familiar to me, one is also fundamentally alone when facing the huge body of knowledge that is to be acquired. Whether one does acquire that knowledge or not depends on, and only benefits oneself. On the other hand, when one sees people bragging about high ranks and so-called privileged periods of study with one or several masters, one sometimes realizes that beyond the gleaming track records that they exhibit (nth Dan, shihan, menkyo, etc.), they have not obtained much more substantial than these titles. I discussed it in my article on katageiko,[1] the titles are often ways for teachers to ensure patronage and are often deliberately removed from the truly profound teaching. I have personally witnessed a practitioner being promoted after only one weekend spent with a master and no previous experience in the art. As I feared, the practitioner did not even wait to be back home to start bragging about it to anyone he met and even to correct people on the mat. Ellis Amdur confirmed to me that even during the Edo period, teachers tended to inflate the number diplomas (mokuroku, etc.) and create needless technical complexity in order to create a demand that would never be satisfied.

## *Solo practice through mitori-geiko*

In Japan, mitori-geiko consists in gathering information through observation. When I arrived at the Hombu Dojo, I was surprised to see how many practitioners came to observe classes without practicing. Most of the times, these people were injured and could not practice, but rather than staying at home, they attended one or two lessons each day as spectators. Personally, I initially had a tendency to skip classes when my body did not allow me to train. Now, even when I am hurt, I go to the dojo, because I want to watch my Sensei in order to develop and inform my own practice. I think it touches on one of the most important aspects of learning: observation.

## *Is there a codified solo practice in the origins of aikido?*

We have seen that elements of solitary practice are present in the practice of Aikido, but they are far from being systematized and are often misunderstood. So where do we go from here? As always, when a mystery presents itself to me in aikido, I turn to its ancestor, Daito-ryu Aikijujutsu, to try find historically accurate answers. My own master, Chiba Tsugutaka Sensei, when he tells me about his daily learning at the Daitokan under the guidance of Takeda Tokimune[8] or at the



Kansai Aikido Club with Takuma Hisa,[9] makes little reference to solo practice. According to him, most of his time was spent on the tatami with his teachers or his classmates, as a collective practice within the framework of katageiko.[1] The only mention he makes of solo practice involves suburi and a few finger strengthening exercises. If we look further back in Daito-ryu, Sagawa Yuki Yoshi explains that one of the only solo exercises he saw Takeda Sokaku [teacher of Ueshiba Morihei] do involved striking with his bokuto on a bundle of wood sticks hanging from the ceiling by a rope and exercises to develop his wrists and grip strength.[10]

Even the light of Daito-ryu does not help us see much further, so we must expand our search. Ellis Amdur told me that even in koryu, it was quite rare to find solo practice these days, even though it is hard to know what has been abandoned or lost.[4] Yet, Amdur explains that at least one faction of Yagyu Shinkage-ryu had solo breathing exercises and that other koryu also claim to have solo practices in their systems. Also according to Amdur, aikidoka such as Kobayashi Hirokazu and

Abe Seiseki may have learned exercises to strengthen internal force directly from Ueshiba Morihei. For Abe, the practice resided in the misogi no gyo, exercises of Chinese origin that were incorporated into Shinto (the same ame no torifune undo and furitama that we mentioned earlier). Amdur argues that the most probable hypothesis is that the elements of internal practice were passed on from teacher to student, but without explicit instruction and without any systemic practice. In fact, many breathing methods were naturally acquired through one's association with Shinto and Buddhist rites associated with specific ryu. For example, when chanting, one is modulating one's breathing for hours, and it is bound to have an effect. This work is natural in this context so there is no need to create a specific curriculum for it. To illustrate a little more, it is for the same reason that there are no hip throws in jujutsu, because everyone already knew them via the widespread practice of sumo. Jujutsu therefore focused on weapons, joint manipulations, etc.[4]

We see that even going back in time, our initial question remains largely unanswered. Amdur notes that although many ancient ryu may have had solo exercises, few still practice them or even know they existed.[4] The problem is that under these teaching circumstances, things can deteriorate progressively. The inverse problem is that when one learns intellectually, explicitly, it is done using the wrong part of the brain. Repetition through the kata seeks to develop instant reaction, instinct, and it is very difficult to achieve that if one learns intellectually.[4]

It is obvious however that some great teachers have independently developed more explicit individual exercises such as tanren (strengthening techniques), one of whom was Sagawa Yuki Yoshi,[11] whom I mentioned above. Kuroda Tetsuzan has developed his own set of solo exercises and he told Amdur that the reason was that none of his students was willing to dedicate the amount of time or talent required to practice kata in the way that it was practiced before, where they would have naturally acquired the skills that his solo exercises foster.[4] Incidentally, Amdur said that people sometimes tend to practice several arts when they do not have the discipline to deeply practice their main art and I think it is quite true of aikido. Either due to a lack of guidance or boredom, it is indeed easier to deplore the shortcomings in aikido and turn elsewhere to find easy answers rather than to really get to the bottom of such less rewarding things as daily hours of solo training. At the same time, even though some aikido teachers have derived methods from other budo or Chinese arts, nothing allows us to say that either in the Daito-ryu, or in aikido, a solo practice was ever explicitly present in the official curriculum or history of either of these arts.

## Part Two will be published in the next issue of the Aikido Times

**Editor's Note:** this is an abridged version of Guillaume's article (illustrations above are not from the author). The full articles, along with references [show in square brackets in the above text] and video illustrations, can be read at :

<http://www.guillaumeerard.com/aikido/articles/the-origin-and-purpose-of-solo-practice-in-aikido>

### *About the author*

*Founder of the site in 2007, Guillaume has a passion for Japanese culture and martial arts. After having practiced Judo during childhood, he started studying Aikido in 1996, and Daito-ryu Aiki-jujutsu in 2008. He currently holds the ranks of 4th Dan in Aikido (Aikikai) and 1st Dan in Daito-ryu Aiki-jujutsu (Takumakai). Guillaume is also passionate about science and education and he holds a PhD in Molecular and Cell Biology since 2010. He currently lives in Tokyo and works as a consultant for medical research.*



## Aikido ... martial art ?

### Richard Small 4th Dan TIA Europe0)

It is said, 'We can only ever hear what our understanding allows us to hear.' So how deep goes our understanding?

Is Aikido a martial art? In fact, what is a martial art? Is Aikido an effective self defence against street crime? Are we truly honest when we examine our abilities and when we teach students? Do we examine deeply enough our understanding of the art we follow, or even at all? Do we visit other clubs and styles, moving out of our comfort zone, or do we think we have all the answers we need?

There are those who, though advancing well in Aikido, decide that there is more to learn from somewhere, something, else and they explore Cheng hsin, Systema, tai chi, or other arts, even yoga. What is it that makes them look elsewhere? They usually find what they were seeking and was evidently missing from their Aikido journey. Often those other groups help and support each other better than we do in the Aikido 'community'.

There are also those in the world that criticise us for calling our art 'self defence' and they say what we do is more akin in nature to the tea ceremony. Do they have a point?

Shouldn't we be more resistant to the trend of insularity, even being competitive between styles, organisations and clubs. Then the 'others' become the enemy in an art that seeks harmony. Is this really what O-Sensei sought? Yet we say we follow him and do this in his name?

Profound but so true is an old Chinese saying, 'Seeing is never seeing'.

Couldn't we work together more and help each other promote the art of Aikido.

Aikido offers us:- An exercise system, training in aspects of self defence, developing health defence, improving confidence, body awareness, mind body co-ordination, social and self awareness, balance and power, spiritual advancement and even engagement in a pathway to moving meditation and above all a sense of peace.

"Aikido is not a technique to fight with or defeat the enemy. It is the way to reconcile the world and make human beings one family." (*Morihei Ueshiba, Founder of Aikido*).

Also...

"... comparisons of O-Sensei's swordwork with classical sword schools are completely beside the point as his intention was not to impart battlefield techniques but to show how divine energy channels through the human body, the space around it, and all throughout the Universe."

(*Aikido Journal Newsletter Tuesday, March 17, 2015 Control without trying to control! "The Secrets of O-Sensei's Art Hidden in Plain Sight," by Stanley Pranin*)

Such arts are mechanisms to improve life, yours!

Learning from the experience of your own practice, question in your own mind if what you read and see makes sense to you; for you are the map maker of your own world, you are your own destiny.





## ***Makoto Aikido Summer BBQ and Seminar***

***Saturday 29th August 2015  
10am until finish. Everyone  
welcome.***



***£15 for the day including BBQ  
2 mats one outside one inside.***

***A variety of instructors and styles.***

***Burgers/Hot Dogs/Chicken***

***Soft Drinks***

***Tea and Coffee***

***Any special Dietary needs please bring  
it and we will cook it.***

**West Buckland Village hall,  
Silver street, West Buckland,  
Taunton. TA21 9NA**



**Contact Sensei Vince Lawrence to book.**

Instructors on the day include Sensei Frank Burlingham, Sensei Ray Brown, Sensei Mike Higgins, Sensei Dan Hopkins, Sensei John Creed and Sensei Vince Lawrence. The day starts at 10am and last year finished at 9pm. It was a great day last year, with people coming and going throughout the day. If you are coming please contact me and let me know. I would hate to run out of burgers and hot dogs before you get there. Please email me aikidotaunton@googlemail.com Thank you!

## Kobayashi Aikido Dojos UK

### Summer Seminar



We welcome Hiroaki Kobayashi Sensei back to Cardiff for our annual summer seminar. Hiroaki Sensei has only recently been promoted to 7<sup>th</sup> Dan in the Aikikai's annual Kagamibiraki ceremony at Hombu Dojo, Japan.

Our seminar will run from Friday 14<sup>th</sup> August – Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> August, 2015.

Join in with our International seminar with Hiroaki Sensei. All styles of Aikido and Association members are welcome.

Keep up to date throughout the next few months on

[www.aikidokuk.co.uk](http://www.aikidokuk.co.uk) and via Facebook

[www.facebook.com/AikidoKobayashiDojosUK](https://www.facebook.com/AikidoKobayashiDojosUK)



White Rose Aikikai  
will be hosting an

# International Aikido Seminar

celebrating

Shane Riley Shihan's  
40 years in Aikido

**Saturday, September 19th 2015**

10.00am to 5.00pm, at Whitcliffe Mount Sports Centre,  
Turnsteads Avenue, Cleckheaton, BD19 3AQ

£25.00 for BAB members with proof of current insurance and £30.00 for all others.

There will also be a special class on Friday evening September 18th taken by Riley Shihan which will be open to Yudansha and invited guests. The venue will be Dewsbury Sports Centre, from 8.00pm to 9.30pm. Due to space constraints at this venue pre-booking will be required.

For further information on this event and also the celebratory evening meal to be held on Saturday evening please contact Mark Danford at [mark@whiteroseaikido.com](mailto:mark@whiteroseaikido.com)



## Guest Instructors



Terence Bayliss  
Shihan, UK



Shane Riley  
Shihan, UK



Nick Waites  
Sensei, UK



Frank Burlingham  
Sensei, UK



Babis Keranis  
Sensei, Greece



Alexander Lee  
Sensei, Singapore



Aloyseus Lee  
Sensei, Singapore

See next page for instructor profiles





# Guest Instructors



Terence Bayliss Shihan, 8th Dan, Founder and Principal Instructor of Seijitsu Aikido Ryu. Bayliss Shihan has been involved with Aikido for almost 50 years and has been teaching nationally and internationally for over 40 years. He is an active member of the executive board of the British Aikido Board and is a BAB Coach Tutor.



Shane Riley Shihan, 7th Dan, is the Founder and Principal Instructor of White Rose Aikikai based in Yorkshire, UK. His experiences of the real-world applications of Aikido stem from some of the requirements of his career path as a Police Control and Restraint, and Conflict Management trainer.



Frank Burlingham Sensei, 5th Dan So-Hombu, 6th Dan Institute of Aikido, has over 40 years in Aikido, during which time he has travelled extensively around the world studying and teaching. He is also a British Aikido Board Coach Tutor.



Babis Keranis Sensei, 5th Dan So-Hombu, is President of the Hellenic Aikido Association, Athens, Greece. As the Chief Instructor at the Fukushinkan Dojo he also spends his time organising seminars in order to spread Aikido across Greece and beyond.



Nick Waites Sensei, 6th Dan So-Hombu, has over 40 years experience in Aikido and is the Chief Instructor at the Koteikan dojo in the North of England. He is also the author of several books on Aikido. ([www.aikido-koteikan.co.uk](http://www.aikido-koteikan.co.uk))



Alexander Lee Sensei and Aloyseus Lee Sensei, 3rd Dan So-Hombu, are professional Instructors representing Shinju-Kai Aikido, the largest Aikido organisation in Singapore. They have both recently returned from an intensive training program as uchi-deshi at the Aikikai Hombu Dojo, Shinjuku, Japan.



# Upcoming Events

Wellsprings Aikido are pleased to announce an

## **Aikido Seminar with Lewis Bernaldo de Quiros 6<sup>th</sup> dan Aikikai**



**Saturday October 24<sup>th</sup> 11am - 5pm & Sunday October 25<sup>th</sup> 10am - 4pm**  
(registration from 10.15) (registration from 9.30)

At

**Charlton Down Village Hall**

Hemison Hall, Sherren Avenue, Charlton Down, Dorchester, Dorset DT2 9UA.

More information and booking form available from  
[www.wellspringsoftheeast.co.uk](http://www.wellspringsoftheeast.co.uk)

**Remember to bring your bokken, jo and proof of insurance!**

# Upcoming Events

## Aikido and Aikido weapons workshop— open invitation to all styles and levels.

Raising money for Aiki Extensions and under the auspices of Aiki Peace week.

Methodist Hall, High Street, Bideford, North Devon EX39 2AH

Saturday 26th September 2015: Training starts 2.00 pm, finishes 5.00 pm

Bring Jo, Ken and proof of insurance.

There will be no mats at this venue, so be prepared with suitable footwear.

Free refreshments. Entry to event by donation to charity. Open to public viewing.

All monies go to the charity, no expenses removed.

Teachers are asked to share their understanding of Aikido as a pathway to peace in line with the founder's philosophy.

Instructors volunteered at time of publishing, from all different associations, Pete Blayney 1st Dan (30 years experience) Huw Collingbourne 2nd dan, Richard Small 4th Dan TIA Europe, Mark Allcock 2nd Dan Aikikai, plus representative from Banyu Hatten, and you?

If interested, contact through [www.aikijo.weebly.com](http://www.aikijo.weebly.com) or [www.hartlandaikido.co.uk](http://www.hartlandaikido.co.uk)



Stay in touch  
and get  
involved by  
visiting the  
BAB official  
Facebook page

## Aikido in Hertfordshire

are proud to announce a seminar with



**DANIEL**  
**TOUTAIN** SENSEI  
6<sup>th</sup> Dan Aikikai

Direct student of:

Morihiro **SAITO** Sensei 9<sup>th</sup> Dan Aikikai (1992 - 2002)

Nobuyoshi **TAMURA** Sensei 7<sup>th</sup> Dan (1978 - 1982)

Masamichi **NORO** Sensei 7<sup>th</sup> Dan (1968 - 1978)

Friday **16th October** 18.00 - 21.00 (registration at 17.30)

Saturday **17th October** 10.00 - 16.00 (registration at 09.30)  
in Stevenage, UK



to book, or for more information and videos of Sensei Toutain  
please visit [www.aikido-hertfordshire.co.uk/16oct.html](http://www.aikido-hertfordshire.co.uk/16oct.html)  
or email [16oct@aikido-hertfordshire.co.uk](mailto:16oct@aikido-hertfordshire.co.uk)





**AIKIDO**

RIISING SUN AIKIDO WELCOMES

# Larbi EL AKEL

6<sup>th</sup> dan Aikikai

**6th, 7th & 8th November 2015**

**Friday 6**  
19.00 to 21.00

**Saturday 7**  
10.00 to 15.00

**Sunday 8**  
10.00 to 15.00

**Locations:**

**Friday**

**The Campus  
Highlands Lane  
Weston-Super-Mare  
BS24 7DX**

**Saturday & Sunday  
Hans Price Academy  
Sports Centre  
Marchfields Way,  
Weston-super-Mare,  
Somerset BS23 3QP**

**Fee:**

Friday	£10	£40
Saturday	£25	
Sunday	£25	

**400 m<sup>2</sup>  
of Tatami**

**Enquiries: Phil Benge**

Tel: + 44 (0)7786 513 973 or: [sensei@risingsunaikido.org.uk](mailto:sensei@risingsunaikido.org.uk)

OPEN TO ALL STYLES & ASSOCIATIONS.

PLEASE BRING WEAPONS & PROOF OF INSURANCE.