

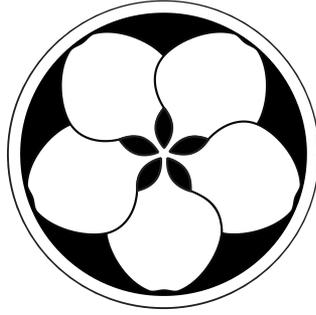


# ZENSHINKAN

CENTER FOR JAPANESE  
MARTIAL, SPIRITUAL, AND  
CULTURAL ARTS

合氣道

Student Handbook



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### For more information On:

- Our Lineage
- Test Requirements, Information and Applications
- Programs, Class Schedules and Upcoming Events
- Weapons Forms
- Techniques
- Zen Training

Our website is a rich resource for our dojo's current activities as well as our history.

We also welcome and encourage your contributions to the dojo community by sharing your thoughts, insights and ideas.

[www.zenshinkan.com](http://www.zenshinkan.com)

## The Way of Transformation

The man who, being really on the Way, falls upon hard times in the world will not, as a consequence, turn to that friend who offers him refuge and comfort and encourages his old self to survive. Rather, he will seek out someone who will faithfully and inexorably help him to risk himself, so that he may endure the suffering and pass courageously through it, thus making of it a "raft that leads to the far shore." Only to the extent that man exposes himself over and over again to annihilation, can that which is indestructible arise within him. In this lies the dignity of daring. Thus, the aim of practice is not to develop an attitude which allows a man to acquire a state of harmony and peace wherein nothing can ever trouble him. On the contrary, practice should teach him to let himself be assaulted, perturbed, moved, insulted, broken and battered--that is to say, it should enable him to dare to let go his futile hankering after harmony, surcease from pain, and a comfortable life in order that he may discover, in doing battles with the forces that oppose him, that which awaits him beyond the world of opposites. The first necessity is that we should have the courage to face life, and to encounter all that is most perilous in the world. When this is possible, meditation itself becomes the means by which we accept and welcome the demons which arise from the unconscious--a process very different from the practice of concentration on some object as a protection against such forces. Only if we venture repeatedly through zones of annihilation can our contact with the Divine Being, which is beyond annihilation, become firm and stable. The more a man learns whole-heartedly to confront the world that threatens him with isolation, the more are the depths of the Ground of Being revealed and the possibilities of new life and Becoming opened.

- From the book *The Way of Transformation* by *Karlfried Graf von Durkheim*



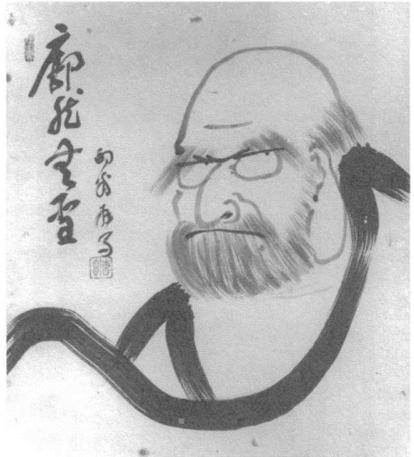
*Kokoro – "heart/mind/spirit" by Hosakawa Roshi*

## Welcome to Zenshinkan Dojo

From ancient times, people sensed there was something beyond that which is commonly perceived. This sense may have led them to seek ways to help pierce through their "veil of delusion", to finally see things as they authentically were. In western Judaic/Christian practice, this is sometimes referred to as seeking "grace", one's "inner light", or "soul". These do not necessarily mean the same thing to everyone. Ascetic practices, such as meditation, prayer, chanting, contemplation, martial arts, physical postures (hatha yoga), and, in fact, all activities (karma yoga) performed under the guidance of a Teacher, support us, and pierce through the dualism of right and wrong, you and I, good and bad, and yin and yang, to realize our true selves, the authentic nature of reality

*Zen without the realization of the body is nothing but empty discussion.  
Martial ways without the realization of the mind is merely clever behavior.*

The tradition of combining several training practices, including fighting-like exercises, flowered at the Shaolin Temple in China where Bodhidharma introduced Buddhism in 520 A.D. Five generations later, Chan (Zen) Buddhism emerged as a distinctive school from the melding of Mahayana metaphysics with Taoist pragmatism. Physical exercise of various types and forms were practiced by the priests, monks, and disciples. This complemented their formal sitting meditation practice and daily work and study activities. This training was in the context of personal development—to develop the mind, body, and spirit. Many of these exercises were done as calisthenics, sometimes with a partner. This practice contributed to the evolution of Chinese boxing instructors, and other martial arts enthusiasts could often be found teaching at monasteries where they lived as monks or priests.



*Painting of Bodhidharma by  
Omori Sogen Rotaishi*

Zazen, (literally: "sitting Zen"), formal meditation, is the foundation of our training at Zenshinkan Dojo. Training in martial arts and cultural arts, service, and deep inner inquiry, all under the guidance of a Teacher or Teacher(s), complete the curricula for discovering the true nature of the person on the path or following the Tao (Way).

Budo training at Zenshinkan Dojo is offered concurrently with Zazen. This is the program offered and what students are encouraged to follow.

Aikido is a modern Japanese martial art that teaches non-contention in dealing with aggression. It is the Budo that we practice. Aikido includes throwing, grappling, pins, and locks. Its roots include fencing (kenjitsu), wrestling (jujitsu), and staff practice (jojitsu).

The deeply religious founder of Aikido, Morihei Ueshiba, a master of sword, staff, and jujitsu, said that the purpose of studying Budo was to foster better relationships with others and to improve ourselves, to ultimately discover our true nature. He reaffirmed a centuries-old teaching and practice, which was that traditional training in martial ways supports character development and greater compassion for all sentient beings in the world in which we live. In Western traditions, that discovery realized its highest expression in the Arthurian legends.

Aikido is practiced in the dojo (training hall) under strict supervision. All moves and, in fact, everything that is done in the dojo, are by the Instructor's permission or direction. The

Instructor is addressed as "Sensei" (pronounced: sen-say), Japanese for "teacher". Once a Teacher is addressed as Sensei, he/she is always addressed in this manner, in any circumstance, in and out of the dojo.

There are countless rituals and procedures, which have a long history. Many of these have to do with politeness, and others with safety. There is no reason why anyone should not want to be polite or safe, yet every day people are impolite and unsafe. The zendo (place of Zen training) is managed in a manner to support people in their development. Students are treated as though they are uchideshi (live-in students). A feeling of quiet, intense reverence and purpose should pervade.

*Live gently, in harmony with the Universe.*

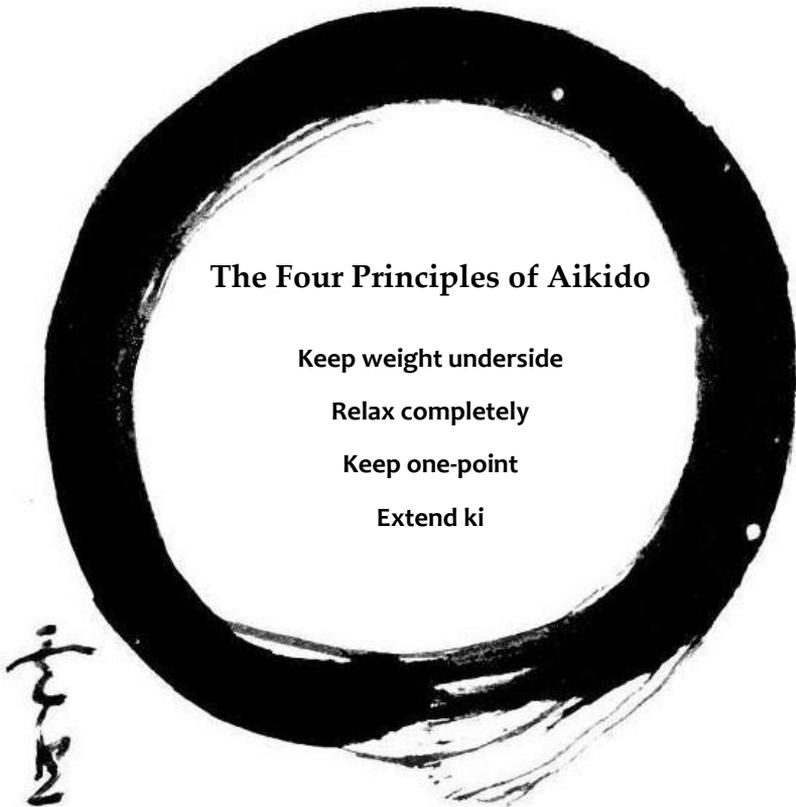
All Aikido practice is open to observation. Observers must be silent. If observation is supportive of your child's training, please observe. It is good to let the child be responsible for his/her training by waiting for him/her outside.

Finances: Fees or donations do not cover the cost of training. Traditionally, students of the Ways made donations of money and service to their Teacher to help him/her and their dojo to be maintained, and this tradition continues here. Students from other dojo, observers, and attendees of courses make a donation to support the instruction and physical location. Participating members make this monetary donation in the form of regular monthly tuition. Often, physical labor is part of all people's training and is an integral part of the activities of the dojo. The correct form is to look for what needs doing and seek, from a sempai (senior student), permission to do it. Then volunteer to do it! It is impolite to be asked to make a contribution.

*Sincere (authentic) compassion arises from the deepest inquiry into the nature of life and death.*

## Rules During Practice, Composed by the Founder

1. One blow in Aikido is capable of killing an opponent. In practice, obey your instructor, and do not make the practice period a time for needless testing of strength.
2. Aikido is an art in which one man learns to face many opponents simultaneously. It therefore requires that you polish and perfect your execution of each movement so that you can take on not only the one directly before you but also those approaching from every direction.
3. Practice at all times with a feeling of pleasurable exhilaration.
4. The teachings of your instructor constitute only a small fraction of what you will learn. Your mastery of each movement will depend almost completely on individual, earnest practice.
5. Daily practice begins with light movements of the body, gradually increasing in intensity and strength; but there must be no over-exertion. That is why even an elderly man may continue to practice with pleasure without bodily harm, and will attain the goal of his training.
6. The purpose of Aikido is to train both body and mind and make a man sincere. All Aikido arts are secret in nature and are not to be revealed publicly, nor taught to rogues who will use them for evil purposes.



## Shugyo Policy

Zenshinkan Dojo offers a program of Aikido, Zen and cultural arts to people who are sincerely interested in shugyo (personal training). Members of Zenshinkan Dojo agree to abide by the program of study and do their best to support and live by it.

Zenshinkan Dojo is affiliated with Tendokan Aikido International, an international Aikido organization based in Sofia, Bulgaria under the direction of Ed Germanov Sensei (Godan – 5th Degree Black Belt, Aikikai). Tendokan Aikido International has member dojo throughout the United States, Europe and the Middle-East and is organized to perpetuate the teachings and style of Aikido of the late Fumio Toyoda Shihan.

Zenshinkan Dojo is officially incorporated as Zen Training Center, Inc., and is operated by an elected board of directors. The Chief Instructor of Zenshinkan Dojo is Bob Caron Sensei (Yondan - 4th Degree Black Belt, Aikikai). The Chief Instructor is responsible for the supervision, coordination, and implementation of all Aikido instruction. The Chief Instructor is accountable to the Zen Training Center, Inc., board of directors. The Assistant Chief Instructor and other assistant instructors are accountable to the Chief Instructor as well as to the board of directors.

Aikido and Ki testing is an integral part of one's Aikido training. Students take examinations at times when the minimal requirements are met and the Chief Instructor deems the student is prepared.

All people interested in Aikido are welcome. The Aikido style taught was exemplified by Fumio Toyoda Shihan and his style of Aikido forms the basic structure for Zenshinkan Dojo test requirements.

All people interested in Zen are welcome. Zen instruction at Zenshinkan Dojo is guided by Ginny Whitelaw Roshi and follows the teaching of the Chozen-ji sect of the Rinzai line of Zen Buddhism.

When seminars are taught by Germanov Sensei, Whitelaw Roshi or other Zenshinkan instructors in the New England area, Zenshinkan Dojo deshi attend. Seminars that are hosted by Zenshinkan Dojo are attended by our students.

**Membership dues, which are essential to the survival of the dojo and enable a person to train, are due before the first of the month. A \$10 late fee applies to dues paid on or after the 1st. All students are encouraged to participate in our automated tuition payment program to avoid late fees, support the dojo in attending to its obligations and unburden our directors from the administrative task of collecting numerous individual payments.**

A person becomes a member of Zenshinkan Dojo by paying a registration fee, one month dues, and obtaining a gi (training uniform). Membership is terminated after three consecutive months where the person does not pay dues and/or after the student has a conversation with either the Chief Instructor or Assistant Chief Instructor indicating that he/she will be leaving the dojo.

**Members should consult an Assistant Instructor or the Chief Instructor prior to making a purchase of training equipment or uniforms.**

Numerous questions and uncertainties arise in the due course of training. The proper method of addressing those questions is to ask a senior student in the dojo and if that senior student is unable to address the question they will ask a more senior student or instructor for assistance. You are welcome to request a conversation with the Caron Sensei and can contact him via email or approach him at the dojo to set up a time to talk. If the question is one that can be addressed by a senior student or assistant instructor it is appropriate to use those resources to obtain the answer for your question.

## Basic Dojo Etiquette

### WHEN YOU ENTER THE DOJO:

- Take off your hat and shoes prior to entering the dojo.
- Place your shoes neatly on the shoe rack.
- Complete a formal, standing bow toward the kamiza before entering the mat area.

### DRESSING ROOM:

- Walk toward the dressing room (women on right, men on left).
- When you reach the edge of the mat near the dressing room, complete a formal, standing bow toward the kamiza.
- Knock before entering the dressing room and/or ask permission to enter if someone is already in there. *Note: children and adults should NOT change at the same time.*
- Before leaving the dressing room, put your belongings in your bag and hang your coat neatly. Make sure the light is shut off and the curtain is closed.
- After changing, when you again step onto the mat, complete a formal, standing bow toward the kamiza.

### APPEARANCE:

- Wear a clean, well-maintained gi.
- Keep toe- and fingernails clipped and clean.
- Maintain good hygiene, making sure hands and feet are clean and body odors are controlled.
- All jewelry and adornments (even those of a religious nature) are to be removed prior to training.
- Hair should be neatly arranged.
- Makeup and nail polish should be removed, because they smear on other people's gis and on the mat.

### SITTING SEIZA:

- Kneel so that you are sitting on your heels and your left big toe overlaps your right big toe.
- Your knees should be approximately 2 to 3 fist-widths apart, in order to form a stable base.
- Your hands should be placed at the top of your thighs.
- Your posture should be erect and shoulders relaxed.
- If seiza is difficult for you, during demonstrations or teisho (lecture) you may complete a seated bow and sit cross-legged instead.
- When to sit seiza: in line at the beginning and end of class, when Sensei is demonstrating, when Sensei is addressing you and/or your partner on the mat, as soon as Sensei claps his hands to indicate that students should line up.

**BOWING:**

- At the beginning and end of class, line up in rank order, sitting in seiza. The senior student should be on the jo seki (the right hand side when facing the kamiza).
- When Sensei faces the kamiza and bows, the class bows as well. The senior student will say, “Shomen ni rei.”
- When Sensei faces the class to bow at the beginning and end of class, the class bows as well. The senior student will say, “Sensei ni rei.” The class will respond at the beginning of class by saying, “Onegai shimasu,” and at the end of class by saying “Domo arigato gozaimashita, Sensei.”
- When Sensei demonstrates, if he calls on you to take ukemi, complete a formal seated bow, say “Hai, Sensei!” and scurry into position. When he has finished demonstrating with you, complete a formal seated bow and go back to the line or find a partner (as is appropriate).
- When you find a partner with whom to practice, bow from standing and say, “Onegai shimasu.” When Sensei claps for the class to line up again, bow once again and say, “arigato gozaimasu” or “thank you”. *Note: you do not need to bow each time you switch roles as uke and nage. If you are working in a group, bow to the next in line once you have completed your turn.*
- When practicing, if Sensei comes to address you, your partner, or your group, sit in seiza. When he is finished, bow and say, “Thank you, Sensei.” (or “arigato gozaimasu, Sensei.”)

**WHAT IF...****...I’m late?**

Enter the space as previously described above. Cross the mat quietly, change quickly, and sit at the back of the mat in seiza until Sensei invites you onto the mat. When he does, bow from a seated position and join the class.

**...I need to leave the mat during class?**

Bow to your partner and excuse yourself. Approach Sensei and request permission to leave the mat. Indicate whether you are ill or injured so that Sensei can help you appropriately. Return as quickly as you can and wait in seiza at the back of the mat until invited back onto the mat by Sensei.

**...I can’t take off my wedding ring, piercing, etc.?**

Tape it. If it is an ongoing issue, purchase some sports tape from your local drug store. If not, there is tape available in the medical kit. This is necessary for your safety and that of your fellow students.

**...my gi comes open and/or my belt undone during class?**

Bow to your partner, turn to face the wall (away from shomen!), and straighten your garments. Once you are ready, bow to your partner and resume practice.

**...I decide to stop training for some reason?**

Speak with Sensei regarding your decision/situation. Your teacher exists to support you and it is appropriate to inform him/her of your decisions. He/she may also ask for your feedback and future plans regarding your training. If you are relocating and plan to continue training, it is appropriate to ask Sensei to write you a letter of introduction to your new dojo.

***DURING PRACTICE:***

- Be observant and attentive to detail. Follow the example of your teacher and seniors.
- Practice without talking.
- It is appropriate for a senior to assist a junior, but never for a junior to correct or advise his/her senior.
- Be intentful and respectful at all times. Train safely and with intensity and you will reap a great deal from your training.

***SAMU (SERVICE):***

- Samu should be done without your teacher or seniors having to ask you.
- Cleaning the dojo is part of your involvement and membership in the dojo and we take great pride in the cleanliness and presentation of our dojo.
- If your senior is cleaning or in some way helping Sensei, offer to assist as well or find some other cleaning or service to be done.
- Before or after class, make a point to help in some way (vacuum, dust, take out the trash, etc.). It is also a demonstration of great commitment to spend additional time cleaning and bettering the dojo space outside of class time. Ask Sensei or a senior how and when you can help.
- Volunteer to help satisfy the needs of the dojo. If there is a construction project, give of your time, expertise, or materials. If there is a seminar, sign up to work the desk, set up, clean up, transport materials or people, house out-of-town guests, etc. Notice when the dojo is running low on things like trash bags, vacuum bags, medical supplies, and paper cups; fill the needs as you are able.
- If you have a particular trade or talent, it is appropriate to volunteer your time and skill for the good of the dojo. You may ask Sensei or a senior member about how you can contribute.
- If a guest instructor is coming to the dojo, it is appropriate to come to the dojo one hour prior to the start of the class or seminar in order to ensure that the dojo is thoroughly cleaned for our guests.
- Do what needs to be done, not for recognition but because it is needed.

***INTERACTING WITH YOUR JUNIORS, SENIORS, AND TEACHERS...*****Relationship with your teacher:**

- Be observant and follow the example of your teacher.
- Any Dojo-cho of any dojo should be referred to as Sensei at all times. This is a simple form of respect for your teacher's position and gratitude for the efforts he/she has put forth.
- Dual relationships are not appropriate with your teacher. Although your interactions with your teacher may be friendly or fun, coarse or directive, scolding or guiding, all interactions with your teacher come from the point of view that this person is your teacher and there is always something to be learned within the interaction. Transferring other relationships such as parental roles, friendship roles, sibling roles and the like onto the student/teacher relationship are not appropriate.

- Strive to develop a student-teacher relationship with your teacher. This relationship will facilitate and enable your development in the art and fuel your training so long as the relationship is nurtured.
- Your Teacher is a guide for you both within and outside of the dojo. Utilize that guide fully and appropriately as your teacher exists to support you, as you exist to support your teacher.
- Your attitude toward your teacher should be one of respect and gratitude. Be mindful of your interactions with your teacher, and always strive to maintain a proper relationship.
- If you wonder how to best interact with your teacher, simply watch him/her as they interact as a student with their teacher and/or seniors.

#### **Relationship with your seniors:**

- Your seniors are to be treated with respect and gratitude at all times, on and off the Aikido mat.
- Correcting your senior is not appropriate. Sensei and/or other seniors will correct any mistakes that your seniors make, your responsibility is to follow your seniors and use Sensei as your ultimate guide.
- When your seniors are instructing a class, it is appropriate to address them as Sensei while on the mat for that class. They are acting with the authority of Sensei for that given class. When off the mat, it is appropriate to call your seniors by their first name.
- If you have a basic question or concern regarding the dojo, it is appropriate to raise it first with a senior student. That person will either address your concern him/herself or will bring it to the attention of Sensei.
- Your seniors are your immediate examples of how to behave in and out of the dojo and how to learn the art that you are practicing.

#### **Relationship with your juniors:**

- Always behave as though others see you as an example.
- Be eager to train with your juniors.
- Always be respectful toward your juniors and be grateful that they have come to the dojo to support you, your teacher and the art that we practice.
- Your juniors represent an ideal opportunity for you to practice compassion, patience and leadership. In this regard, your juniors are as valuable to your training as your seniors.
- Do not allow your juniors to develop poor habits; you are responsible for their training and must lead them to the best of your ability. Correct your juniors with empathy and authority.
- The only way you can repay your teacher and those who help you along the way is by sharing with others that which you have learned. (Setsudo: to pass on the Way of the Universe)

#### ***MONTHLY DUES:***

- Your dues allow the dojo to survive. They support the physical facilities of the dojo, the training that occurs within the dojo and the business operations that are necessary for the dojo to run appropriately.

- Your dues do NOT pay for classes. What you are learning has been passed on from the founder to you through a direct series of students and teachers; no amount of money could adequately pay for the years of personal commitment and practice that make your current training possible.
- Pay your dues on time. By doing so, you demonstrate your gratitude and commitment, as well as respect for your dojo, your teacher, and the art itself.
- If you are unable to pay your dues on time, speak with Sensei regarding your situation and inform him of when you will be able pay your dues. Your forthrightness will be appreciated and a plan for training and paying dues can be achieved.

*WHEN YOU LEAVE THE DOJO:*

- Take all your belongings with you.
- Complete a formal, standing bow.
- Take your training with you into everyday life and you will see the true benefits of your time spend inside the dojo.



## Helpful Words and Phrases

### Pronunciation:

<u>Japanese</u>	<u>Pronounced</u>
a	Ah
e	Say
i	See
o	Oh
u	Too
ai	Eye

### Counting to 10:

<u>Japanese</u>	<u>Pronounced</u>	<u>English</u>
ichi	eech	one
ni	nee	two
san	sahn	three
shi	shee	four
go	goh	five
roku	rohk	six
shichi	sheech	seven
hachi	hahch	eight
ku	coo	nine
ju	joo	ten

### Basic Terminology:

#### *AIKIDO*

Ai	Harmony, unity, confluence, to join or become one with
Ki	Spirit, Energy, essence of life, life force, universal creative energy.
Do	The way or path.
Aikido	The way of Harmony, Blending Energy and Spirit with a way to conduct one's life.
Aikidoka	One who practices Aikido.

#### *WHEN BOWING*

Onegai shimasu  
(*Oh-neigh-guy-she-mahss*)

I make a request  
(*spoken when bowing in at the beginning of class and when one wishes to practice with a fellow student or teacher*).

Arigato gozaimasu  
(*Ah-ree-gah-toe go-zah-ee-mahss*)

Thank you

Domo arigato gozaimashita, Sensei  
(*Doe-moe ah-ree-ga-toe go-zah-ee-mah-she-ta, Sen-say*)

Thank you very much for what you have done,  
Sensei  
(*spoken by students at the end of Aikido class*).

#### *WHO'S WHO*

O'Sensei	Morihei Ueshiba, the Founder of Aikido
Sensei	Teacher, "One who was born before"
Sempai	Senior Student
Kohai	Junior Student
Uke	One who attacks
Nage	One who executes technique

#### *DIRECTIONS*

Shomen	Front of Dojo
Butsadan	Shrine of the Buddha, located on the kamiza
Kamiza	Shrine area of the dojo, where calligraphy and picture of the founder are hung
Shimoza	Back of the dojo
Joseki	Senior side of the dojo

Shimoseki	Junior side of the dojo
Migi	Right
Hidari	Left
Omote	Front
Ura	Behind

#### *ATTACKS (SHOULDER)*

Katatori	Shoulder grasp
Ryokatatori	Two hand shoulder grasp
Ushiro katatori	Two hand shoulder grasp from behind

#### *ATTACKS (WRIST)*

Katatetori	Wrist grab
Katatekosatori	Cross-hand wrist grab
Katateriyotetori	Two hands grasping one wrist
Morotetori	Two hands grasping one wrist
Ryotetori	Two hands grasping both wrists
Ushiro tekubitori	Two hand wrist grasp from behind

#### *OTHER GRASPING ATTACKS*

Munetori	One hand grasping the lapel (front center of gi)
Ushiro hijitori	Two hand elbow grasp from behind

#### *STRIKING*

Munetsuki	Punch
Shomenuchi	Strike to top of head
Yokomenuchi	Side strike to head

#### *COMBINATIONS*

Kata ganmenuchi	Grasp shoulder with one hand and punch to the face with the other
Kata menuchi	Grasp shoulder with one hand and strike shomen or yokomen

#### *KICKING*

Maegiri	Front thrusting kick
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#### *THE FIVE ARTS OF AIKIDO*

Kokyunage	Breath/ Timing Throw
Iriminage	Entering Throw
Shihonage	Four Directions/ Arm Lock Throw
Kaitenage	Rotary Throw
Osae Waza	Pinning Techniques: Ikkyo, Nikyo, Sankyo, Yonkyo, Gokyo, Rokyō, Kotegaeshi

#### *UKEMI*

Ukemi	The art of catching the body
Mae ukemi	Forward roll
Ushiro ukemi	Backward roll
Yoko ukemi	Side fall
Breakfall	Fall in which the impact is absorbed by a whole side of one's body as it lands as one piece

#### *Terms Regarding technique and body position:*

Taijitsu	Empty handed techniques
Tai Sabaki	Body movement e.g. irimi, tenkan

Seiza	Sitting; a position where one sits with legs folded under (kneeling in such a way as to create a triangular base), but not cross legged
Hanmi	Half body stance, most stable body position
Shikko	Knee-walking
Suwariwaza	Technique in which both uke and nage move from shikko
Hanmi hantachi waza	Technique in which nage moves from shikko and uke moves from standing
Tachi waza	Standing technique
Jiyu waza	Free technique (as in freestyle)
Henka waza	Changing technique
Oyo waza	Applied technique
Randori	"Seizing chaos" used to describe technique against multiple attacks

#### *PRINCIPLES OF TRAINING*

Ma ai	The distance of time and space between uke and nage
Atemi	To Strike or hit, an intentional strike used to "move" an opponent's spirit or body
Awase	Meeting or coming together, blending
Zanshin	"Remaining mind"; a continued extension of concentration, energy and awareness at the conclusion of a technique
Shugyo	Austere training, the day to day struggle of life

#### *WEAPONS TRAINING*

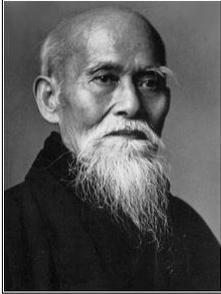
Bokken	A wooden sword used in practice
Bokken dori	Sword taking technique; also called tachitori
Kumitachi	Sword v. sword paired practice
Jo	A short wooden staff
Jo dori	Jo taking technique
Jo nage	Throwing with jo
Kumijo	Jo vs. jo paired practice
Tanto	Knife
Tanto dori	Knife taking techniques

#### *OTHER COMMONLY REFERENCED WORDS*

Hara	The lower abdomen or belly, the physical center of your body
Tanden	The "one point", the center of the body's gravity and source of spiritual power located two inches below the navel in the center of the hara
Hajime	Begin
Yame	Stop
Zori	Sandals

## A History of Aikido

### Aikido Founder Morihei Ueshiba



Aikido, a traditional Japanese martial art, was developed in the early part of this century by Morihei Ueshiba (1883-1969), now known as O-Sensei (venerable teacher). Morihei Ueshiba O-Sensei, the Aikido Kaiso (founder), was born in 1883 in Tanabe, a coastal town in southern Japan. From the time of his youth, he studied various martial arts, eventually including sumo, swordsmanship, spear technique, staff technique, and various styles of jujutsu, particularly the Yagyu and Daito styles

From youth, Ueshiba also appears to have been a deeply sensitive and spiritual person. Eventually influenced by the charismatic spiritual leader and artist Onisaburo Deguchi, he came to view his martial training as a means of personal purification and spiritual training.

The time of O-Sensei's life saw Japan involved in some of the most violent conflicts of the 20th century, culminating in the Pacific war. However, it was during this time that he founded Aikido and declared it to be a way of joining the peoples of the world together in peace. In this way, Aikido is truly Budo - a martial Way - rather than simply a bujutsu (martial technique) or bugei (martial art). When martial training is undertaken not simply as a means to conquer others, but as a means to refine and perfect the self, this can be said to be Budo. The famous motto of O-Sensei, "Masakatsu Agatsu", contains the essence of the spirit of Aikido: "True victory is victory over the self."

The Kaiso's incredible technical expertise and charisma brought him tremendous support from high-ranking military officers, government personnel, and the Imperial family during his life. Following his death in 1969, he was posthumously awarded an Imperial medal for his unique contributions. However, recognitions and honors aside, it was the universality of his insights, and his vision of the martial Way being open to all sincere persons internationally, which have led to the phenomenal growth of Aikido. The noblest philosophies and intentions of the samurai have become a part of world culture, and give spiritual sustenance to millions of persons of all cultures; this is largely due to the groundbreaking influence of Morihei Ueshiba O-Sensei.

### Late Aikido Doshu Kisshomaru Ueshiba



Kisshomaru Ueshiba, Nidai Doshu (the second "master of the Way" of Aikido), son of Morihei Ueshiba, was born in 1922. From early youth, he trained under the guidance of his father. During the confusion of the wartime period, when allied fire-bombings reduced much of Tokyo to ruins, it was he who remained in the city and preserved the original dojo building. Following the war, as Aikido entered its golden age and began to attract public attention, he was instrumental in leading and organizing what would become the Zaidan Hojin Aikikai - the government-recognized, not-for-profit organization which exists today as the center of world Aikido. Upon the death of O-Sensei in 1969, Kisshomaru Ueshiba was named the second Doshu of Aikido.

From that time on, Doshu quietly went about the business of spreading Aikido internationally. The tremendous expansion of the art, and the now millions of practitioners, can largely be called his creation. It was he who coordinated the sending of Japanese Shihan overseas, thereby founding and developing the seeds of large organizations in other nations. He also maintained the strong support of government officials and businessmen in Japan, and built new support of this kind internationally. His many publications of Aikido technique and

philosophy have further spread Aikido's influence. The high educational and professional standards of Aikido, and the respect it has gained, are a result of these efforts.

In 1999 Kisshomaru Ueshiba died in Tokyo, having successfully transformed the vision of his father into an international movement.

### **Aikido Doshu Moriteru Ueshiba**



Moriteru Ueshiba, son of Kisshomaru Ueshiba, was named the Sandai (third) Doshu shortly after his father's death; before that time, he had served as the Aikikai Hombu Dojo-cho (headquarters dojo director). Now taking over the leadership of the Aikikai organization, Doshu brings to his position an already full life of training and instruction. The Aikido world has high expectations that, under his leadership, Aikido will continue to grow and expand in fulfillment of O-Sensei's dream.

### **Aikido Shihan Fumio Toyoda**



Fumio Toyoda Shihan was uchideshi under the late Doshu Kisshomaru Ueshiba, and trained also under Koichi Tohei Sensei, the former Chief Instructor at Hombu Dojo. As a professional instructor at Aikido World Headquarters, Toyoda Shihan had the opportunity to train and travel across Japan, eventually establishing himself in the United States. Committed to spreading the direct lineage of Ueshiba Aikido, Toyoda Shihan was actively engaged in developing the next generation of shihan-level instructors through his uchideshi training program, national instructor seminars, and other events. Quality, professional Aikido instruction is the key to the future survival and growth of Aikido; this effort became the hallmark of Toyoda Shihan's organizational activities. Toyoda Shihan's students are now taking the leadership roles for which they were trained and are committed to passing on Ueshiba Aikido to the next generation of instructors and students. In this way, the lineage of Aikido will continue strongly into the coming generations.

**Zen Training**  
CHOZEN-JI  
INTERNATIONAL ZEN

*A teaching not dependent on letters and scriptures,  
Directly realize your True Nature, become a Buddha.*

*-Bodhidharma*

A person comes to Zen when he seriously reflects over questions like: What is human being? What is the meaning of life? Who am I? Ordinarily when one enjoys peace and good health, one does not feel any need for self-reflection and complacently identifies with his limited personality and body. But at some point the contradictions and transience of human life will cause a person to despair. He may then seek his True Self. The True Self is absolutely free human nature which transcends all dualistic categories such as mind and body, rich and poor, life and death.

A person might also come to Zen to develop strength and courage. The cultivation of the power of concentration means to cultivate the power which makes one the master of any situation. When a person is empty and plunges deeply into the surrounding world, all oppositions cease; the self and the world become One. Then one's actions are filled with extraordinary power. Daito Kokushi, a great Japanese Rinzai Master, lived among beggars to refine himself by living under the worst possible conditions. Once a degraded samurai came to test a new sword on a beggar. Daito told the others to hide and sat in meditation. The samurai approached Daito, drew his sword, and said, "Get ready. My sword is going to cut you in two." Daito did not move. An awe came over the samurai who hesitated and beat a retreat. Another master was able to make a temple bell peal from nine feet away with the power of his exhalation.

Admirable as they may be, philosophical or psychological insight and personal power are not the true aim of Zen. In the *Zazengi* is written:

*The Bodhisattva who wants to attain transcendental intuition should first of all entertain a great compassionate heart, take the Four Vows for the salvation of the world, experience samadhi (a state of concentration in which there is no subject and no object) profoundly, save other people at any cost, and refrain from wishing for self-liberation alone.*

*It is the aim of zazen to awaken one to his True Self by bringing him in touch with boundless life and the absoluteness of being. If once a person touches the Absolute and returns to his originally True Self, he is instantaneously liberated from the illusory perception caused by self-centered desires and delusions.*

*Since ancient times very few people have had an insight into the fact that Dharma is none other than zazen. This means that zazen is not the means of attaining any other purpose than zazen. Zazen is not the way of learning Zen, but zazen is something that makes one sit in zazen.*

*-Omori Sogen*

To sit in zazen well, posture, breath, and awareness must be realized as one. When they are harmonized, the self is naturally concentrated at the *tanden* (the vital center below the navel). Then *kiiai* (spiritual power or life energy) will radiate throughout the body and the surroundings. Without this vitality, zazen is inert.

When Yamaoka Tesshu, a great lay disciple, swordsman, calligrapher, and statesman of the Meiji Era, sat in zazen in his youth, the rats which ran wildly in his house would suddenly disappear. Tesshu sat as though he were armed with a sword engaged in a life and death encounter. The dignity and power he exuded drove the rats away. In his later years, however, the rats played along his shoulders and arms while he copied the Buddhist sutras. People who

came to visit him left uplifted and freed of distress; the power of Tesshu's *kiai* gave them fearlessness.

It goes without saying that the authentic way of *zazen* consists in sitting in alert stillness and that one should sit hard and a great deal. But the essence of *zazen* is not a fixed form, but inwardly to see the immovability of the True Self and outwardly to be free from the notion of form. If a person grasps this point firmly, whatever one does is *zazen*. When reading, one only reads; when eating, one only eats; when walking, one only walks.

*He sees through delusions like looking through the spinning blades of a propellor.*

*-Tanouye Tenshin*

*Mushin* (No-mind or Absolute Mind) is life in its absolute form, an expression of its natural harmony, and a mark of a life which has achieved perfection. It is the most dynamic and creative state of being which is nevertheless experienced as a profound tranquility. One fully experiences things as they are without being spun around by them and naturally acts according to the Way. Yamaoka Tesshu said:

*When two swordpoints are crossed, there is no need to ward off. The best move is to return to the origin like the lotus flower blooming in the fire. Then the energy of heaven-soaring spirits springs spontaneously from the Original Nature.*

Sitting in *zazen* provides the easiest conditions for experiencing *mushin*. To abide in this state amidst the clamor of the world is infinitely more difficult. For this, *shugyo* (the deepest possible spiritual training) is necessary. *Shugyo* is like taking a lump of raw iron ore, throwing it in fire and water, and pounding it, over and over again until a flawless sword is made. A fencing master once trained a student by hitting him at every opportunity. After some years the student learned to keep alert and dodge the blows successfully. But the master still was not satisfied. One day when the master was cooking, the student tried to hit him over the head from behind. Without intention the master blocked the blow with the cover of a pot and opened his student's mind to the working aspect of *mushin*.

One undergoes *shugyo* not to gain anything but to lose the attachments accumulated since birth. Losing day by day, one attains a greater degree of maturity. One can see unity in opposition and can expect and not expect all at the same time. Ultimately when all that is not real falls away, a person lives and dies as one with the life of the Universe.

*All ways are One in the end.*

*- Miyamoto Musashi*

Training at Chozen-ji blends Rinzai practices with the martial and cultural Ways of Japan. By the endless practice of formal technique, the Ways refine sensitivity and dexterity within a limited field until natural principle is grasped. Techniques vary, but the deepest principle is the same in all Ways. Miyamoto Musashi who was peerless in swordsmanship and brilliant in painting, calligraphy, sculpture, and metalwork, best represents this truth. That all Ways are One in the end has great significance given the fragmentation of roles and functions in modern society. If practiced not only to gain immediate results but to perfect human being, any activity can become a Way and lead to harmony in both the person and society.

At the highest level of mastery in any Way, a student enters the world of Zen. Conversely by training in Zen, a student may attain the highest level of mastery in his Way. The Ways teach a person to enter Zen through the body. For instance, there is the principle of *Shin Ki Roku Ichi* which can be translated as the oneness of mind and body, or mind and body made one through breath. When this is grasped, tension and relaxation, calmness and alertness are correctly balanced. One's entire being enters the work which will exhibit graceful power and beauty whether it be a swordcut in fencing, a shot in archery, a character in calligraphy, or a bowl in ceramics.

When one's body works according to natural principle, a person transcends himself as a subject working upon an object and demonstrates Zen in activity. One uses space, time, and energy in a manner which is beyond conscious contrivance and can only be called wondrous. For the Zen Master life itself is his art, and everything he does from routine activities to moral decisions shines with this wondrous quality.

*Zen is a psychophysical discipline to transcend life and death. Besides what Miyamoto Musashi called Iwo no Mi (going through life like a huge boulder) and Yagyū Tajima called Marubashi no Michi (according to the myriad changes of life), there is nothing else. Zen without the realization of the body is nothing but empty discussion. Martial Ways without the realization of the Mind is nothing but beastly fighting. Trainees, let us diligently strive! The Rinzai Headquarters in Japan, open your eyes and let us bring Zen into the wide world.*

**- Chozen-ji Canon**

Chozen-ji was established in Hawaii by Omori Sogen Rotaishi who is the direct Dharma successor of the Tenryū-ji Line of Rinzai Zen. He is also the successor of Yamaoka Tesshū's Taishi School of Calligraphy and a master of the Jikishinkage School of Fencing. Omori Rotaishi was succeeded by Tanouye Tenshin Rotaishi and Hosokawa Dogen Roshi

***Text: Tanouye Tenshin Roshi, Mike Sayama***

