



TAA Newsletter

Summer 2011



UPCOMING EVENTS

August 7, 2011

Berkeley Seminar with Shishida Sensei
Live Oak Community Center
1301 Shattuck Avenue, Berkeley, CA
9:30 am—3:30 pm \$40 clinic fee
Contact Warren Pottebaum for more info
510-847-8658

August 11-14, 2011

9th Int'l Aikido Tournament & Festival
London, 2011
University Brunel Sports Complex
Kingston Lane, Uxbridge, Middlesex
Tournament Organizer: Nicole Anson
Nicole_anson_baa@yahoo.co.uk

Samurai Song

*When I had no roof I made
audacity my roof. When I had
no supper my eyes dined.*

*When I had no eyes I listened.
When I had no ears I thought.
When I had no thought I waited.*

*When I had no father I made
care my father. When I had
no mother I embraced order.*

*When I had no friend I made
quiet my friend. When I had no
enemy I opposed my body.*

*When I had no temple I made
my voice my temple. I have
no priest. My tongue is my choir.*

*When I have no means fortune is
my means. When I have
nothing, death will be my fortune.*

*Need is my tactic, detachment
is my strategy. When I had
no lover I courted my sleep.*

Robert Pinsky

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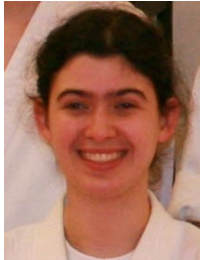
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Moving Up

Dan Rank Promotions

Vassar College Aikido
Sensei Jun Zhao

Emily Moog **Shodan**



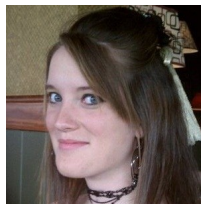
Triangle Aikido Club
Sensei Ed Mink

Matthew Robinson **Shodan**



CSM Aikido
Sensei Wade Current

Jamie Graves **Shodan**



Piqua Aikido— *Sensei Steve Wood*

Shodan
Jon Phillips



Sandan
Quincy Essinger



Kyu Rank Promotions

Vassar College Aikido Club
Sensei Jun Zhao

Peter Dao	5th Kyu
Jacob McEntire	5th Kyu
John Nguyen	5th Kyu
Ethan Rundel	5th Kyu
Kenny Lee	4th Kyu
Sarah Harvey	4th Kyu
Gary Linkevich	4th Kyu
Justin Paradis	4th Kyu
Lee Brett	4th Kyu
Chelsea Anderrson	2nd Kyu
Peter Grauman	1st Kyu

Berkeley Shodokan
Senseis Warren Pottebaum & Ash Morgan

Sharon Paisner 3rd Kyu
John Pearson 4th Kyu

Intel Santa Clara Aikido
Sensei Shane Branch

Steven Chang	Sankyu
Michael Liu	Sankyu
Robert Mayer	Sankyu
Tim Parker	Sankyu
Kate Wang	Sankyu

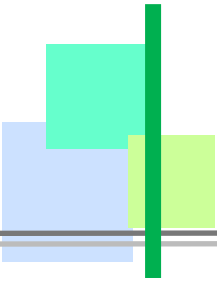
Mansfield YMCA Tomiki Aikido
Senseis Bob King & Scott Calderhead

Matt Hoffman	Rokkyu
Robert Hoffman	Rokkyu
Rod Roose	Yonkyu
Corby Smith	Sankyu
Caleb McKnight	Ikkyu
Gabe Adalem	Ikkyu

New Jersey Shodokan Dojo
Sensei Ari Reinstein

Eric Hood 7th Kyu





The Techniques are Different Yet the Same. The Kyu Dilemma

By Jonathan Phillips

As the years have passed and I have progressed through the kyu ranks, I have noticed newer kyu ranks making the same comments that I have over the years. The one that I hear mentioned quite often is that people are performing the techniques differently. This is true to a degree as no two people do the move identically; however, what they are seeing is the visual side of the move. What they are not feeling is the kuzushi (off balance) that is being demonstrated. What one sees with the eyes and what they can feel with their body are completely different. This is one of the major struggles kyu ranks face as they progress.

As humans, we are very visual people and we do our best to replicate what we believe to be what we have seen with our eyes to our bodies. As such, a new kyu rank will see a technique demonstrated and they try to replicate what they see. However, when observing a technique, the kyu may be focused on what the hands are doing of the instructor and miss what the feet are doing. Or they could be watching the right hand and not see what the left hand is doing. All the while they are almost always not watching what the hips are doing. Why would this be one might ask; because the hands, arms and legs make much larger movements and as a result are easier for the eyes to take in. This can make instruction of techniques hard to communicate to both new and more advanced kyu ranks.

When a new kyu rank starts their study we view their safety on the mat as one of the major aspects of their study. As a result of this they get to tori (person to perform the technique) more than they uke (person that has the technique performed on). This is not to say that a new kyu should not uke; however, until they have demonstrated that they can perform ukemi (break falls) in a consistent manner, this makes their ability to uke more difficult. New kyu ranks need to practice and become proficient in ukemi as soon as possible. This will aid in their study of the art and will help them learn and understand techniques easier.

As kyu's practice and uke more, they start to feel what is happening in the techniques. This will allow them to better "see" the technique with their whole body and not just their eyes. The body knows more about what is going on than their eyes can tell the person. Throughout my studies I have found it more beneficial at time when learning a new technique to uke some before undertaking the role of tori. While being uke I attempt to feel the move, paying close attention to the part that is causing me problems. This seems to help in making a smoother transition when I go back to tori. What I have also found is that this might fix one area and you will find your Sensei will be more than willing to point out another list of areas for you to improve. Thus, the life of a kyu continues as we strive for perfection knowing full well we can never achieve it, but we must persevere and try.

As you progress in your study, one will start to see that though people appear to be doing techniques differently, they are in fact doing the same technique and the kuzushi will be the same and results will be the same. As a kyu, you will at times find more knowledge being uke than being tori. Spend your time and become proficient in your ukemi so that you will be comfortable being uke. There have been times in my study where I have done nothing but uke for other people for months at a time. During this time help tori, give feedback! An uke who says nothing and does nothing but take falls for tori is not helping tori learn and progress. Let tori know when they have performed a technique well; also they need to know when something was not quite right with the technique. As you uke, pay close attention to the techniques that are being performed on you, and when you feel something that works well, attempt to see how you can use this to improve your techniques.

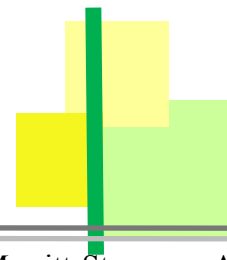
As kyu, you will progress, and we all progress at different rates which make our travel down the road as kyu different. One thing we will all have in common is we will view different people performing the same techniques differently. Even though they may have some visual differences we will find from study both as tori and uke that the techniques will all have the same kuzushi points. Angles of the throw might differ but the path to get to the throw will be the same. Do not let your eyes guide you in your path but let your body "see" the path for you and you will find your techniques will start to have better results. Just remember for everything you do correctly there are at least that many points that you still need to improve, and patience and persistence will be the key to reaching your goal.





A Comparison of Aikido and Kodokan Judo's Goshin Jutsu

By Matthew Robinson



My Aikido instructor, Ed Mink, was a student of Master Merritt Stevens. As a student he was given many different sheets of information from Master Stevens; these sheets provided information on different training drills, including walking drills, and listed different katas. One kata listed on these sheets is the kata that my sensei has asked me to compare to Aikido: Kodokan Judo's Goshin Jutsu. This paper is intended to provide a brief introduction in this comparison and is not intended to be an all-encompassing comparison.

In 1956 the last official kata was added to the Kodokan Judo syllabus. A committee developed this kata, named Goshin Jutsu, with Tomiki Sensei being the foremost member and the driving force behind the development of this kata and the techniques of this kata. As Aikidoka specifically studying Tomiki Sensei's system for Aikido, this Judo kata demonstrates a number of principles and techniques from Aikido. Our Aikido group studies the Goshin Jutsu as it is a link between Aikido and Judo.

The Goshin Jutsu is a self-defense kata developed for a more modern world. Kodokan Judo had the Ki-me No Kata as a self-defense kata. However, this kata contained many techniques that were designed for an older society and with the emergence of Japan into a modern world, a new self-defense kata that fit with a modern society was developed. This is demonstrated via the techniques against a gun and a stick, as opposed to techniques against a sword.

When Tomiki Sensei began studying Aikido under Morihei Ueshiba in 1926, he already had a strong background in Judo, having studied under its founder, Professor Kano. As we know, Tomiki's background in Judo strongly influenced his development of randori in Aikido. Tomiki also saw Aikido and Judo as interconnected, and while he kept Judo and Aikido separate when teaching, there was an area of the two arts that he saw as overlapping.

The Goshin Jutsu is an excellent kata to see the overlap of Judo and Aikido. In this kata there are techniques like Waki Gatame and Kote Gaeshi. There is an abundance of atemi in Goshin Jutsu. Many of the techniques in Goshin Jutsu are similar to techniques in Dai San and certainly use many of the same principles. The 6th and 7th techniques in the Goshin Jutsu involve an attack with a Hadaka Jime (rear naked choke) and the bear hug, respectively. When tori is attacked with a bear hug, tori throws uke with a forward throw similar to Ude Hineri, and when tori is attacked with Hadaka Jime, tori's response is similar to the defense against a bear hug in Dai San. The major difference is that in the Goshin Jutsu, a shoulder is used to break the grip of the hands of uke, whereas in Dai San timing is used to catch uke and then apply kote hineri.

The use of Kote Gaeshi in the Goshin Jutsu is another example of a technique that reflects Tomiki Sensei's use of Aikido in Judo. This is used as both a defense against a lapel grab (#3 of the Goshin Jutsu) and a downward strike with a tanto (#15 of the Goshin Jutsu). In the katas listed in the book Kodokan Judo, these are the only places Kote Gaeshi is shown in katas for Judo. The application in the defense against a lapel grab does involve a hip throw in addition to using the body to apply Kote Gaeshi, however this demonstrates the full body of tori being used against one joint on uke. Often Aikido techniques make use of using the entire body against one of uke's joints. This can be seen in the power that is generated in Aikido techniques like Kote Gaeshi, Kote Hineri, Oshi Taoshi, or Haki Taoshi via tori's hips.

Another example demonstrating the technical similarities between Aikido and the Goshin Jutsu can be seen in Waki Gatame, as a number of techniques in Goshin Jutsu make use of Waki Gatame. Versions of Waki Gatame are used in the first technique of Goshin Jutsu—the fourth technique and the thirteenth technique. The largest difference between Waki Gatame from our Randori No Kata and the application of Waki Gatame in Goshin Jutsu generally involves pressure on the elbow, whereas in the JAA's Randori No Kata no pressure is put on the elbow. While the Goshin Jutsu do make use of Tomiki Sensei's experience in Aikido under Morihei Ueshiba, they tend to do so in a much more jerky manner, sometimes relying more on strength as opposed to strictly kuzushi and timing. In Aikido techniques tend to be much more smooth and rely less on physically overpowering uke, rather placing a larger emphasis on the use of kuzushi.

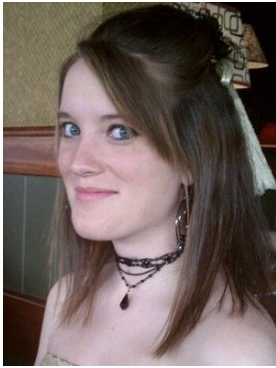
It must be pointed out that kuzushi is not ignored in the Goshin Jutsu. In the first technique the initial kuzushi is the same as the initial kuzushi for the first tachi waza in Dai San. As uke grabs tori, tori steps offline 45 degrees to their rear, causing uke to over-extend and breaking uke's balance. This same initial balance break is used in Dai San for the second technique in the tachi waza section and the second technique of Goshin Jutsu.

The kuzushi used in the 9th technique of the Goshin Jutsu is related to the kuzushi used in Oshi Taoshi. In the Goshin Jutsu uke attacks with an upper cut and tori defends by stepping back and redirecting uke's arm up in a circle bending uke's arm so the wrist is down and the elbow is pointed up in a manner similar to Oshi Taoshi. The elbow is pushed through the ear similar to Oshi Taoshi, however uke is thrown away from tori, using the arm as a lever, and control of the arm is not maintained.

While the first 12 techniques of the Goshin Jutsu are against an unarmed uke, the final 9 techniques in the Goshin Jutsu are against a tanto, a stick, and a gun. Techniques against an uke who is attacking with a tanto that demonstrate the similarities between Aikido and the Kodokan's Goshin Jutsu have already been discussed. The 3rd technique against the stick is similar to one of the techniques against a jo in Dan San, specifically Migi-Sumi-Otoshi. In the Goshin Jutsu tori throws uke to uke's left front corner using the stick uke attacked with when uke tries to remove the stick that tori grasped in defending himself or herself. The throw is similar in Migi-Sumi-Otoshi and the kuzushi is similar. While these techniques are not identical, similar principles are used.

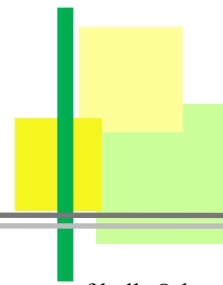
The final set in the Goshin Jutsu is against a gun. The first two techniques involve using takeaways and finger locks/breaks to remove the gun from uke. The 3rd technique against the gun, however, is a variation of Kote Gaeshi. This version of Kote Gaeshi involves keeping control of uke's arm up to the elbow using tori's body. The power in the throw is still generated from the hips, however tori must control the gun along with uke's arm.

Looking at these techniques demonstrates the relationship between Aikido and Judo and how Tomiki Sensei saw these two arts being connected. Tomiki Sensei published a number of papers and books providing a much deeper view into his ideas of Aikido and how it relates to Judo, however the Goshin Jutsu provides us a physical path to explore these links. Additionally, looking at the similarities and differences in techniques and kuzushi helps in the learning process of aikido. It provides a deeper understanding of the complexities involved in Aikido and the importance of kuzushi to applying a technique.



Aikido and Me

By *Jamie Graves*



Everyone has their own idea of fun. Some like to swim or play soccer or softball. Others enjoy more relaxing things like reading, writing, or doing crosswords. I personally enjoy doing the one thing that is the perfect balance between fun and relaxing. That thing is Aikido.

Aikido is a martial art that harmonizes one's body and spirit. It also harmonizes the artist's energy. This particular martial art is not meant to be a violent one, but one of flowing preciseness and beauty. That is why I enjoy this art form. It is relaxing and fun at the same time, all the while being absolutely graceful.

Aikido is a martial art that not very many local people have heard of. When I explain to them what Aikido is, they ask me if it is a violent art. I respond every time with a simple, "No." Then I try to explain to them what Aikido is and how it's done in a non-violent manner. They usually don't understand after that as well. I then tell them to check out a class at whatever location is convenient for them. They either stay, or leave. Aikido is something that they would have to feel, not only watch. It's a beautiful art form that requires a lot of dedication.

Along with what everyone likes to do for fun, everyone has their own outlet to go to when things go wrong. I particularly like to go to my home dojo that of Sensei Current, and work on whatever kata I happen to be working on at the time, or any other random katas that needs worked on. An example of this would be Jo Kata. This kata is one that involves a Jo, or "a weapon of training." I enjoy this kata because it is done with a "weapon" and it needs to be "crisp and clean" to be effective. It is very precise.

This martial art gives me an outlet when I get upset or stressed out. When I'm feeling mad, I can go to the dojo and throw someone around, knowing that I won't actually hurt them. When I'm sad, the dojo is a place for me to find my center, and know that everything will be okay in the end. To me, the dojo is not only a place to practice, but a home away from home. It is a place where I can be myself and not worry about being judged. That feeling is the greatest feeling of freedom ever.

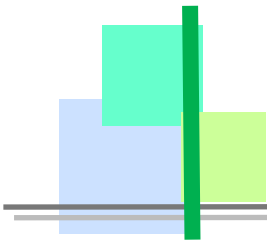
Many of my friends have tried Aikido. A few have stayed for a while, but none have ever stayed as long as I have. They always tell me that they don't understand what I see in this art. Why do I stay? I stay because it is something that I love. I have made many new friends through Aikido that I will never forget, and hopefully never lose contact with. I have also had several encounters with other people who aren't particularly my friends, but have influenced my study of Aikido in some way. I have had the privilege to work with a few Senseis' from over-seas. These Sensei's have also had an impact on the way I study this art. I have learned more about the state that I live in through traveling with fellow Aikidoans.

The main reason that I absolutely love doing Aikido is because I have learned so much about myself through the practice. These are things about me that I didn't know I could do before. I didn't know that I could be so dedicated to something that others would find boring. I didn't know that I could be so good at any form of martial art, seeing as how I'm klutzy. With this martial art, I have done and experienced so many new things that I otherwise never would have without it. Most of all, I have found out that family isn't necessarily biological, but can come in any shape, size, age, or color. Family is a group of people that are drawn together because of a common bond. With this new found knowledge, I have found a second family. It is another place where I belong and fit in.

Now I have a huge bias when it comes to my opinion of the best Sensei. Like many typical students, I believe my Sensei is the best. Whenever we go visit a different club, the Sensei's there always tell me that I have the best Uke around as my Sensei. I couldn't agree more. When I first started, I was afraid of what I was getting myself into. He reassured me that I wouldn't get hurt. Throughout the years, I finally believed what he was telling me. I learned to question what I was told to find out more ways of studying the art. Not only is he my Sensei, he has also become my best friend. Because of him, I have had many fantastic opportunities to travel and learn.

I practice Aikido because it's what makes me different. It has made me who I am today, and who I will become in the future. I joined Aikido when I was a freshman. Now that I am a senior, I am moving away from my home dojo in a few months. I plan to start a club at the college I am attending, and will try to expand the family that I have grown to know and love.

This is how much Aikido means to me. I couldn't give it up if I tried. It has made me a better person, and has made me both mentally and physically stronger. Through Aikido, I have had failures and triumphs. Because of these, I have grown. In the future, Aikido will grow too. As this sport grows I, too, will grow along with it. Aikido is a part of me now and always will be.



Different Approaches —

by Quincy Essinger



In recent months, I have found myself considering exactly how many students have passed through the doors of our Aikido dojo in Piqua, Ohio. For the most part, it's a similar memory situation to any other long-standing social group. People who are still members of the club come to mind first, then those who put in significant time, followed by the brief stay but particularly memorable group, and closing with those people who may have stepped on the mat a handful of times. While trying to gauge this elusive number of people, I began discussing the idea with another member of our club. For the most part, we each remembered the same people. Our task became larger once we started adding the people who practiced Aikido in Piqua before I started attending in 1994.

This conversation [about the number of people I have met due to Aikido] continued as classes continued and another person's name would surface. Even now, I can't quite place an exact figure on the number of people. I believe, in many cases, this is because I don't necessarily remember the person's name, but remember their demeanor on the mat or the particular way in which that individual best learned Aikido. These learning styles varied widely and included: people who could, generally speaking, watch something done a handful of times and grasp enough of the basics to start learning the technique on their own, those who best learned by hearing a teacher speak about the technique and draw physical comparisons, students who mainly progressed through a high volume of repetition, and those who borrowed from each of these approaches.

What makes this situation unique, I think, is the classroom situation of our club in Piqua. While we have approximately a dozen active kyu rank members and several semi-active members, our dojo has almost always been very "top heavy." A large number of long-term dan ranks has allowed our club to remain active while Sensei Wood recovers from a shoulder injury. Therefore, with the great assistance from others in the dojo, I have been one of the primary teachers in the club. This task has been an interesting balancing act. It has required the through-line of regular classes for kyu ranks, including testing and promotions, to continue using Sensei Wood's longstanding concepts. Meanwhile, it has been creating time for others to prepare for shodan and nidan testing. Finally, there was the component of preparing for my own test.

To accomplish these tasks, I thought back to how each student in the dojo learns Aikido and the available teaching skills in the room. For the most part, we continued classes as though Sensei Wood were still conducting them. From time to time, my approach may have varied or included different types of drills, such as non-standard falls and situational awareness drills to prepare students for the "May at the Mojo." Classes would also change night to night based on who was in attendance and how much supervision was required. One of the biggest challenges, however, was not only making sure each person was on track, but also figuring out the scheduling for dan testing practice. When one person is involved in each of three tests, plus often having someone on the sidelines to act as an advisor, there were times in which the most senior kyu rank became the "barrier" between kyu and dan.

In reading recent Aikido publications and comparing those situations to the dojo in Piqua, I believe it is these types of situations which are the intangibles associated with dan rank promotions. I have often overheard other practitioners say, "Your black belt means you are ready to be a student of Aikido; it also means you're a teacher of Aikido." As I apply for my sandan, I know the classroom circumstances in Piqua, including the additional responsibilities, have prepared me for this situation.

TOMIKI AIKIDO OF THE AMERICAS

MEMBERSHIP FORM

Each TAA sensei is responsible for collecting membership dues for his or her club and for remitting said dues to the TAA each year. Individuals not affiliated with a sanctioned TAA club can also use this form to pay for an individual membership.

Annual membership includes the following benefits:

- Four quarterly issues of *The Aikido Times*, the official TAA newsletter.
- Insurance coverage when practicing at your own TAA dojo and when you participate at tournaments and seminars sanctioned by the TAA.
- Discounts on TAA books, DVDs, and merchandise.
- Discounts at all TAA clinics, seminars, and tournaments.

The insurance coverage includes a \$1 million liability benefit and \$2 million aggregate benefit for participants and facilities; a \$25,000 maximum medical expense benefit (\$100 deductible per claim); a \$12,500 accidental death and dismemberment benefit; and a \$25,000 maximum dental coverage benefit. This policy is with a rated insurance company with decades of athletic insurance experience.

THE ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP FEE IS \$20.00 PER PERSON

Please return this form by e-mail to nettles@tomiki.org. Payment can be made by credit card on-line at www.tomiki.org/join.html or by sending a check made out to the "Japan Aikido Association USA" to the address given on the next page. If you are paying for all of the members of your club, then please list the names and e-mail addresses for all the members of your club using the blanks provided on the next page. The name and address to be filled out immediately below this paragraph are for the person making the payment, whether you are a sensei making a payment for your entire club or a non-affiliated individual making a payment for yourself.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Address: _____

E-mail Address: _____

Phone Number: _____ FAX: _____

Information About Your Dojo or Practice Location:

PLEASE MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO:

**Tomiki Aikido of the Americas
5752 S. Kingston Way
Englewood, CO 80111**

Please indicate how many memberships you are paying for:

Number of memberships: _____

Club Membership List

If you are paying for all the members of your club using this application, then please list their names and addresses below. If you have a big club and need more lines, please add them yourself.

Please note: The TAA newsletter is sent out via e-mail as a PDF file to keep expenses down and reduce membership costs. Please put in an e-mail address for all members who have e-mail. If there is no e-mail address available for your member, please print a copy for them.

	NAME	E-mail/Mailing Address
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