

AIKIDO YOSHINKAN

INTERNATIONAL

Vol. 5 No. 4

April 1995

INTERNATIONAL YOSHINKAN AIKIDO ASSOCIATION



合氣道養神飯



An Introduction to Yoshinkan Aikido



IYAF International Yoshinkai Aikido Federation Video tapes

YOSHINKAN AIKIDO VIDEO 11 IYAF First Step

34min. U.S. \$ 38 in English

- Yoshinkan History & Introduction
- Sake Gozo Shioda, Demonstration
- Dojocho Yasuhisa Shioda, Demonstration
- Instructors' Demonstration
- IYAF Bylaws
- Introductory Techniques

YOSHINKAN AIKIDO VIDEO 12 IYAF Second Step

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- Yoshinkan History & Introduction
- Sake Gozo Shioda, Demonstration
- Dojocho Yasuhisa Shioda, Demonstration
- Instructors' Demonstration
- IYAF Bylaws
- Yoshinkan Aikido Techniques 1st. Dan to 3rd. Dan

YOSHINKAN AIKIDO VIDEO 1



THE WAY OF AIKIDO TECHNIQUES "LE VRAI ET PURE AIKIDO"

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in English and French

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- Basic Techniques "Techniques de Base"
- Freestyle Techniques "Techniques Libres"
- Demonstration of Gozo Shioda Sensei "Demonstration de Gozo Shioda Sensei"

YOSHINKAN AIKIDO VIDEO 2



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- Basic and Advanced Combination Techniques "Techniques Intermédiaires"
- Fast and Slow Techniques "Techniques à Vitesse Lente et Rapide"
- Knife Techniques "Techniques Couteaux"
- Self-Defence Techniques "Techniques D'auto-Defence"
- Juggling Techniques "Techniques Libres"
- Demonstration of Gozo Shioda Sensei "Demonstration de Gozo Shioda Sensei"



YOSHINKAN AIKIDO VIDEO 8 FIRST INTERNATIONAL EXPOSITION OF YOSHINKAN AIKIDO

— June 23, 1990. Toronto, Ontario, Canada —

89min. U.S. \$ 60 CAN \$ 65 in English

- Basic Set — Canada Team
- Ukemi — Canada Team
- Kimeida Sensei — Canada
- Techniques Set # 1 — Canada Team
- Hilton Sensei — U.S.A.
- Weapon Set — Canada Team
- Yarus Sensei — U.K.
- Mustard Sensei — Canada
- Ando Sensei — Japan
- Techniques Set # 2 — Canada Team

- Rihans Sensei — Israel
- Nakano Sensei — Japan
- Baker Sensei — New Zealand
- Canadian Yondans
- Karasawa Sensei — Canada
- Muguriza Sensei — France
- Women Self Defence — Canada Team
- Nagano Sensei — Germany
- Gozo Shioda — Sake of Aikido Yoshinkan

YOSHINKAN AIKIDO VIDEO 9 SOKE GOZO SHIODA SENSEI'S VISIT TO TORONTO, CANADA

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- Special Practice Session of Yoshinkan Aikido Techniques with Gozo Shioda - June 22 & 23, 1990

YOSHINKAN AIKIDO VIDEO 10 SOKE GOZO SHIODA SENSEI'S VISIT TO WINDSOR, CANADA

46min. U.S. \$ 43 in English

- International Demonstration of Yoshinkan Aikido Techniques
- Special Practice Session of Yoshinkan Aikido Techniques with Gozo Shioda
- Yoshinkan Aikido Black Belt Examinations



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Gozo Shioda.

"*Aikido Yoshinkan International* magazine is
committed to the presentation of true technique and
spirit to those who love Aikido."

Gozo Shioda

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Attention Readers

See Yoshinkan Notice Board—pages 3 and 4—for important information regarding AYI and its revised subscription prices.

MOVING ON

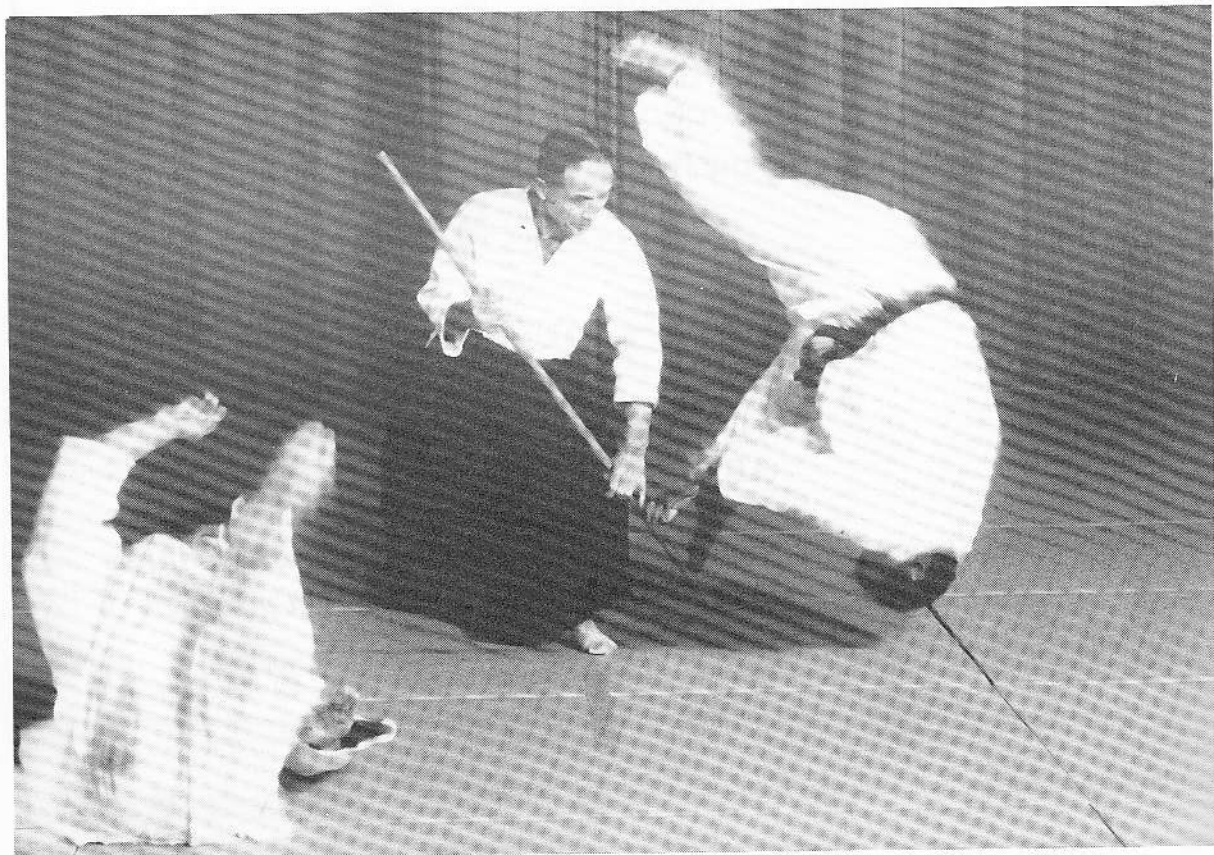
It is five years now since the IYAF was launched under Soke Shioda Sensei's vision of uniting Yoshinkan practitioners worldwide. To accompany the launch of the IYAF, *Aikido Yoshinkan International* began publication as the mouthpiece of the IYAF. Since that time, the IYAF has grown and flourished, spreading Yoshinkan Aikido and Soke Shioda's spirit into new areas—introducing new people to the art.

As with any organization that goes through a period of rapid growth, a time of consolidation must follow. And the IYAF has, indeed, entered such a period, a period when some

changes must take place. Some of the changes involve *AYI*.

Unlike previous issues, the majority of this edition of *AYI*—Vol. 5 No. 4—has been produced by IYAF staff at the honbu dojo. The inside pages may not be so glossy, but we hope that you will appreciate the forthcoming bimonthly production of this magazine, which should ensure fresh, up-to-date news, coupled with the new, lower subscription prices.

For details of the changes, please see Yoshinkan Notice Board.



YOSHINKAN NOTICE BOARD

CONGRATULATIONS

The AYI congratulates Michiharu Mori Sensei and Shuko Sato on their recent marriage. The Moris emigrated to Australia in February and plan to open a dojo on the Gold Coast in Northern Australia.

Those interested in training should contact David Dangerfield at 074-459-997.

SENSHUSEI GRADUATE

The members of the Fourth International Instructors Course had their final grading on February 24, 1995, at the honbu dojo. The test, which lasted 45 minutes per pair, consisted of *kihondosa*, *kihon waza*, *shidoho* (teaching method), *jyū waza* (free style), and *jisensoku waza*. Inoue Shihan was the chief examiner of the test.

Nick Mills was promoted to *nidan* and received his level 5 teaching certificate. Craig Tidswell received his *shodan* and level 6 teaching certificate. Benjamin Forster, Will Howell, Nick Kilislian, Danny Kite, Aga Manhao, Re'em Ratzon, Robert Twigger, and Adam Yanada-Craven received their level 6 teaching certificates.

AYI UNDERGOING CHANGE

The AYI is undergoing change in the following areas:

1. content
2. method of production
3. frequency
4. subscription and costs

Content

Until now we have tried to maintain a section of the magazine for each continent. This seemed a great idea at the time, but we have only a few regular dedicated contributors.

It has become apparent that to voluntarily send in a piece for the magazine is one thing, but to write a piece upon request when you are busy running a dojo can become an onerous chore. From now on, we will include contributions from around the world as special features as and when we receive them.

Yoshinkan news will be conveyed in the Yoshinkan Notice Board section. This section will be for you to publicize events as much as for us to keep you informed, and it will replace the monthly newslet-

ter. In addition to this section, we have included a Letters to the Editor section for your questions, etc.

Aikido Shugyo, Techniques Explanation, and IYAF Registrations will remain.

Method of production

Until now, the magazine has been printed in Hong Kong and distributed directly from there. From now on, only the covers will be produced in Hong Kong; the inside pages will be printed in the honbu dojo, cutting costs and allowing us to print the exact number of magazines needed, more frequently and with more up-to-date news. You may notice a change in the quality of paper and photographic reproduction, but we hope that you will not be disappointed.

Frequency

The more efficient production and the need for regular dissemination of information will allow us to increase publication to six times a year, starting with this issue, April, then June, August, October, December, and February.

Subscription and Costs

As there are now six magazines per year, we have extended the existing subscriptions to allow for this. **Your personal renewal date, under the new system, is shown on a separate note with this magazine.** The date shown is the last issue you are entitled to on your current subscription.

AYI's new subscriptions rates are

Individual subscription: ¥3,000 per person per year

Subscription for group of at least three: ¥2,500 per person per year

Subscription for group of 10 or more: ¥2,000 per person per year

Because of the reduced production costs, we have been able to cut the basic subscription rate and introduce a lower price for people who make a group payment. This is to take into account the ¥1,000 bank charge per cheque that is levied by banks in Japan.

The only foreseeable complication is where existing subscribers wish to pay by group method and their existing subscriptions expire at different times. To get around this, there are two possible options:

1. If you pay by group method before your existing subscription expires, please deduct ¥300 for every issue overlapped.

Example: Your subscription expires with the October 1995 issue, Vol. 6 No. 3, but you wish to pay with a group of seven people from June 1995. In this case, you effectively pay twice for June, August, and October. Therefore, subtract ¥900 from the group subscription of ¥2,500, which leaves ¥1,600 for you to pay.

2. If you pay by group method, but the group wishes to pay after the existing subscription expires, send us a note, and we will continue your subscription. Then add ¥300 for every issue received after the expiry date, i.e., not paid for.

Example: Your subscription expires with the April 1995 issue, but you wish to pay with a group of 10 people from October 1995. You effectively do not pay for the June and August issues; therefore, add ¥600 to the group subscription rate of ¥2,000, which makes a total of ¥2,600.

It's a little complicated, but this is the only way we can save you money and keep the finances straight. The staff of AYI thanks you for your enthusiasm and patience and hopes that you will continue to support the magazine. *

The AYI apologizes for a typeset error in AYI/Vol. 5 No. 2, the Memorial Edition. The captions under the two photos on page 6 should be switched. We apologize for any confusion this may have caused.

The AYI also apologizes for an error in the IYAF registration section of AYI Vol. 5 No. 3. Cicero Oliveira Silva should not have appeared in either

the shodan section or the instructor section. Conversely, Laercio Yazaki, who appears in the instructor section, should also appear in the shodan section.

Takeo Shihan Visits Rome and Munich

Takeo Sensei was invited to Europe by Nagano Sensei of Munich, Germany, for this year's training camps. The camps were held in Rome and Munich between November 10 and 21.

Takeo Sensei arrived with his assistant Mr. Chiya on November 10 and traveled to Rome to the dojo of Ivano Zintu. Mr. Zintu, who has been practicing Aikikai Aikido for over 30 years, started studying Yoshinkan Aikido last year under the guidance of Muguruza Sensei and Nagano Sensei. He has since registered his dojo with the IYAF. The Rome camp was held to further strengthen Italian Yoshinkan.

The Rome seminar was held over the weekend of November 12 and 13, with 60 students present, including Italians, Germans, French, and even some practitioners from Venezuela. The multilingual group complicated the teaching somewhat, with explanations starting in Japanese, being translated into German and French, and then from French to Italian.

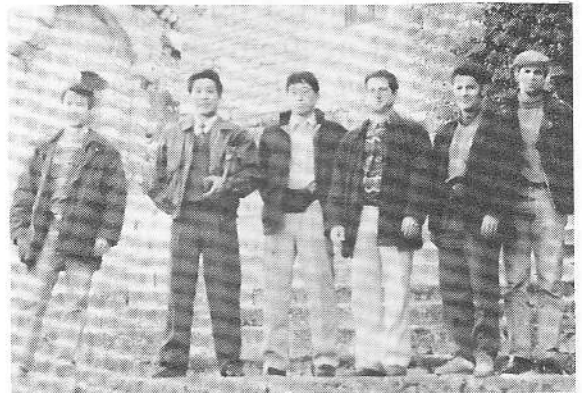
Classes started with Takeo Sensei teaching new aspects about foot positions in *kamae*. From there, he progressed to turning movements and techniques. Takeo Sensei amazed the participants with his fast and dynamic techniques, particularly the speed and accuracy with which he handled the *bokken*. He responded to all the amazed and startled looks with his loud and unique laugh.

The Rome leg of Takeo Sensei's trip was crowned with a demonstration by various Yoshinkan groups, including a mixed French/German group, and by Nagano Sensei, Muguruza Sensei, and finally Takeo Sensei.

After some sightseeing in Italy, Takeo Sensei returned to Munich for seminars on November 18 and 19. David Rubens Sensei from London, England, joined in with three of his students. The Munich seminar's

group of 75 students was split in two, separating senior and junior students. Takeo Sensei switched from group to group, teaching on two different levels of understanding.

Practice started with *kamae* and turning exercises. Then, Takeo sensei explained similarities within the *shihonage* and *nikajo* techniques. After practicing these techniques, Takeo Sensei moved on to *kokyurage* and connected it to the previously studied *shihonage* footwork. A party with sushi and beer closed the final day of seminars in Munich.



Takeo Sensei returned to Tokyo on November 21, leaving an inspired and amazed group in his wake. All those who participated will never forget Takeo Sensei's impressive and powerful aikido. It gave new ideas and motivation to everybody. Hopefully, he will return to Europe for more clinics in the future. I know I will be there when he does.

Stephan Otto.

Interview with Nakano Shihan

Q. Could you tell us about the first time you saw Kancho Sensei?

A. Before meeting Kancho sensei, I saw him at a demonstration when I was a university student, about 19 years ago. That was the first time I saw Kancho Sensei, and I was both astonished and impressed.

At that time, I would see Kancho Sensei once a year at demonstrations and gradings. He was above the clouds, like a god, I thought. Then, after graduating from university, I became an *uchideshi*.

One of the *uchideshi*'s jobs was to look after Kancho Sensei, so naturally I had more opportunity to be with him. I found that he was very charming. For Japanese, studying with a *budo* master is very special. He is like a father, as well as a teacher. You have to learn not only Aikido but also about how he lives his life. Kancho Sensei was broadminded, so I thought that he was a special man—that was my impression when I first joined. That was 15 years ago, in June 1979.

In those days, it was difficult to get the chance to talk directly with Kancho Sensei, but we would have an *uchideshi keiko* (training) and learn directly from him, which was a great honor. We also had a rotating chauffeur system, and I became Kancho Sensei's driver for five years. My du-

ties were to drive Kancho Sensei everywhere, to demonstrations and parties and sometimes to the impromptu demonstrations that he would perform upon request. During these five years, the *uchideshi* would swap chauffeur duties, but I was full time for one or two years.

While driving in the car, we had the opportunity to talk privately, and I think his most charming characteristic was that he was never arrogant. Even though many great men are arrogant, Kancho Sensei was always modest and polite.

However, there were also many times when he was frightening. There were occasions when Kancho Sensei was angry with me, but that was not a bad thing because he was teaching me. He would not get angry with our training or with our techniques, but with our life styles. I was always afraid when he was angry.

IYAF REGISTRATIONS SINCE OCTOBER 1994

REGISTERED DAN RANKINGS

Brazil	
Laercio Yazaki	shodan
Canada	
James Kightly	sandan
Wendy Seward	sandan
Mark Deriy	nidan
Takey Leung	nidan
Steve Ratz	nidan
Robert Ryder	nidan
Sean McDonald	nidan
Karen Orgee	nidan
Raymond Chon	shodan
Peter Cook	shodan
Robert James Crawford	shodan
Michael Hazlett	shodan
Michael Raul Longo	shodan
Donald Troup	shodan
Therea Wright	shodan
France	
Failla Gaspard	sandan
Germany	
Arnaldo Beretta	yondan
Giuseppe Caglia	nidan
Cristina Casella	nidan
Riccardo Pellegrini	nidan
Niccolo Rosilani	nidan
Silvio Tosi	nidan
Tamburini Umberto	nidan
New Zealand	
Ross Endicott Davies	shodan
Alan Golder	shodan
Dick Sisley	shodan
Sydney Young	shodan
U.S.A.	
Julie Cody	sandan
Greg Berg	shodan
Lisa Culbreth	shodan
Matt Delteras	shodan
Mike Mello	shodan
Gary Ohama	shodan

REGISTERED INSTRUCTORS

Canada	
Kevin Berriman	level 6
John Reel	level 6
Dave Stinson	level 6

Israel	
Alon Dagan	level 5

Italy	
Ivano Zintu	level 5

U.S.A.	
Chester Bowman	level 6

REGISTERED DOJOS

Italy	
Daitokan	Certa Tonino
Yoshinkan Firenze	Beretta Arnaldo
Yoshinkan Roma	Ivano Zintu

Malaysia	
Mushinkan Dojo	Sonny Loke Chuon Sun

U.S.A.	
Fudokan	Robert Parker

AIKIDO SHUGYO

EXERCISING THE BODY WHEN WE ARE YOUNG

As a fundamental principle of aikido, we train without using unnecessary strength. Unlike other fighting arts where there are a lot of muscular training exercises, Aikido training does not include these kinds of activities. The question is often asked, Why don't we do muscular training, and if it is done, to what extent should we do it?

When Ueshiba Sensei watched people lifting or pulling heavy weights, he would comment, "what boring exercises" and would often tell us not to do such exercises. But in fact, when I was on my own I used to exercise my body with many kinds of training. I was young and full of energy, and as I was very eager to become strong I did not feel satisfied unless I did all kinds of exercises to tire myself and to treat my body roughly.

Thinking back on it, in challenging my physical limits I was simultaneously building my mental strength. I would do many push-ups: I could easily do 250 a day. Chin-ups, too, when I was in the mood: I could do up to 300 at a time. One-handed chin-ups were easy too. When I was a second-year high school student, I represented the Kanto area in gymnastics. As a young man, I was quite confident in my physical strength and abilities.

It was thanks to this kind of training that I could win at arm wrestling against Masahiko Kimura. At that time, we were both students at Takushoku University and were in the same English class. Arm wrestling was very popular. One of us just had to ask for a try and one of the classroom desks would immediately become the scene of a confrontation.

Mr. Kimura was already the best *judoka* in Japan and was much stronger than average. A kind of Hercules, he could bend a coin between his fingers, crush a Japanese door between his arms, or bend a lead bar. The first time we fought I remember my right hand being locked in Kimura's hand, and I recall expecting some kind of move from him. But as soon as the start signal was given, I pitted all my force against him, before he could use any strength. Surprised, and almost without any resistance, his terrible power unused, Mr. Kimura turned on himself and fell over. He

laughed bitterly, saying, "I lost before I could do anything."

That's how I won in our first encounter, but as my opponent was a particularly strong man it did not go so well each time. The next time, I lost. We tried again many, many times, losing and winning by turn.

AT THE END OF THE ASCETIC TRAINING PROCESS THE STRENGTH IS GONE

There was a time when I was proud of my physical strength. In those days I used only hand power and strength when I executed a technique. Actually, at the Ueshiba dojo there were always about 20 younger students from the Omoto Kyo religion, and we were forever colliding into each other and testing each other using a lot of strength. During the training process, this is fine. Even if we ask young people not to use strength, naturally, they do so. This is the way it is when we are young. To try and restrain it, we lose the purpose of our training.

What is important is to do our best at each stage of our progression. We should push our bodies and minds to their limits, and if we don't keep training until we are satisfied with ourselves then we cannot feel and digest with our bodies what is really vital.

The *kidotai* (riot police) who train at our dojo are a good example. I do not tell them not to use strength. We push them to their limits, and when they are so tired that their legs and hips can hardly support them they do not use strength anymore. Previously, when the dojo was located in Musashi Koganei, every April the railway station staff would look at the handrail of the stairs and say, "it looks as if the police have started their training at the Yoshinkan this year again." The trainees were so exhausted by their training that they had to hold on to the handrail to haul themselves up and down the stairs, thereby keeping the rails clean and polished.

If we do not train hard we cannot realize aikido as a martial art. However, not everybody is able to do or to follow this kind of training, so nowadays in our dojo we have a set form of teaching.

When we are young, we should push our bodies physically. Doing so, we can come to understand more about ourselves, and we can start to achieve mental strength. As we get older, our strength gradually disappears. As this happens, we will be able for the first time to feel and realize the effectiveness of the *kokyuryoku* focus and power, which does not rely on physical strength.

However, this level is only reached through the hard and absolute training done in our younger days. If we had restrained ourselves from the beginning and done easy training over the years, then nothing would have come through.

Ueshiba Sensei told us not to use strength, but in truth he trained very hard when he was young. Towards the end of his life, he had reached the stage where he could perform “god techniques” because of this background. We should not forget this point.

WE SHOULD BUILD BODIES THAT MOVE NATURALLY

What does building one’s body mean for people that follow ascetic training? Let’s look at the kind of body Ueshiba Sensei had.

Even though Sensei’s body was quite large, he did not have big muscles. In pictures, we see him with a rugged body. The reality was a bit different. His body was not hard but was, on the whole, clean and smooth. I often had to wash Sensei’s back in the bath or to massage his body and therefore had many opportunities to actually touch his body. Even today, I remember how flexible and soft he was. When you would press with the fingers for a moment and then release the pressure, the skin would come back to its normal state smoothly—it was that kind of body. When we held his hand, it was a strange feeling. At first, we wouldn’t feel the strength or power, but without realizing what had happened we would feel locked. In other words he was soft, but it was a softness with a terribly powerful kind of strength that could be summoned when necessary.

Because Ueshiba Sensei is the founder of aikido and had this kind of body, we might be led to think that everyone who trains in aikido should have the same kind of constitution. This, however, is not the case.

Ueshiba Sensei used to say that we should be ready and prepared to build our bodies, but in a way that conforms to our structures and constitutions. “That is why, Shioda, if you try to develop a body similar to mine, you won’t be able to move naturally,” he once told me. In other words, Ueshiba Sensei was saying that aikido is one of the highest forms of budo because it is natural, and therefore we should try not to build a body against nature, a body that does not suit us.

Nevertheless, many people misunderstand nature. For example, it is strange when a body ages and becomes stiff to try and force it to do the same kind of exercises that young people do. This only tends to damage the muscles. It is equally strange if we try and build up unnecessary muscles on a small body through weightlifting so that the body becomes tight. Such attempts go against nature. If we persist in going against nature, we may become strong muscularly, but we will not be able to achieve the secret of aikido. As far as aikido is concerned, the ideal design for the body is one that is not a handicap to the kind of activities we do.

Ueshiba Sensei’s revelation that “the natural posture when we walk is budo” applies to this subject. Aikido can be practiced by anybody. People with stiff bodies practice as stiff people; those with fat bodies as fat people. Any situation where we are able to move ourselves naturally is fine.

Conversely, we can say that we should change our bodies to become natural. *Shugyo* (ascetic training) effects this change but calls for continuous effort to achieve it. If we develop our bodies in the best way possible, in ways that accord with our age and with our bodies, then even when we are very old we can still practice aikido.

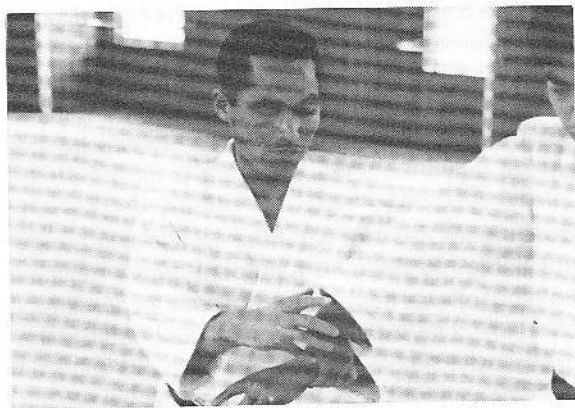
TECHNIQUES EXPLANATION

Hijiate kokyunage ichi (1)

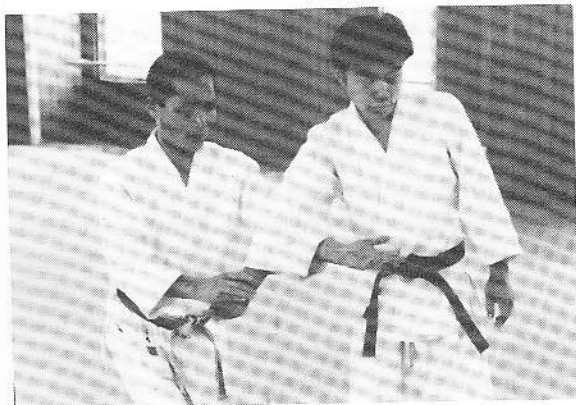
Using this technique to control uke's elbow and shoulder with pressure against the natural movement of uke's elbow, uke can easily be thrown.



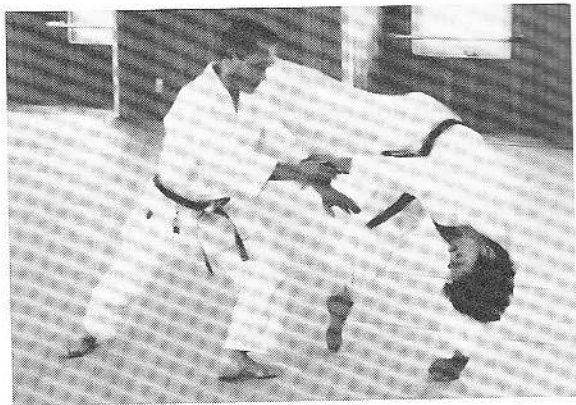
Shite and uke face each other in *migi ai hanmi kamae*. Shite and uke shuffle in together, and uke grasps shite's bottom hand (in this case, the left) and pulls.



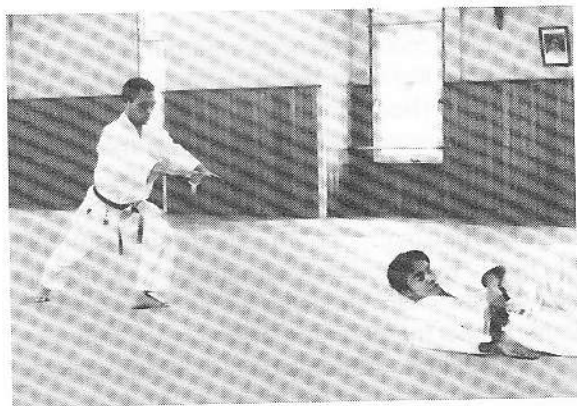
Shite moves diagonally to the right with uke's pull to break uke's balance while twisting his left hand to break uke's grip. Shite's left elbow contacts uke's. The movement is that of *shumatsu dosa ichi*.



With uke's grip broken, shite straightens his left arm, palm up, maintaining elbow contact. Shite's right hand keeps uke's arm extended, with the feeling of being connected to shite's right hip. Shite is strong and balanced, the line of the legs and arms directly in front.



Shite throws uke by stepping diagonally forward with his left foot and rotating his left hand palm down to extend uke's elbow and control uke's shoulder. The movement is diagonally forward and down into the mat using the power of the body and hips and not the arms.



Shite completes the technique by maintaining a strong and balanced *zanshin*, with his arm direction and focus concentrated on uke. Shite's back should be straight, and the back leg should be strong, with the front knee relaxed. There should be one line from shite's head to his back foot. Some care must be taken not to hit uke's elbow too forcefully. Just enough force should be applied to extend uke's elbow, breaking uke's balance and enabling uke to be easily thrown.

THOUGHTS ON TRAINING

By Robert Mustard Shidoin

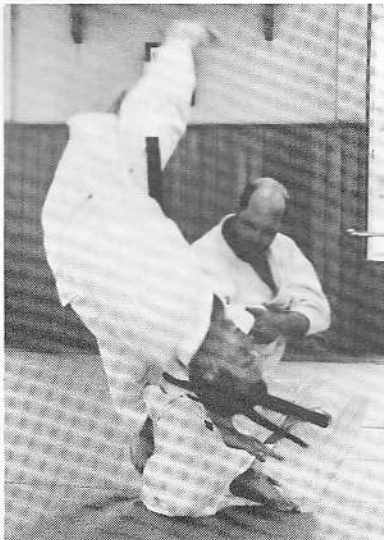
The foundation of Yoshinkan Aikido lies in the understanding of kamae and the basic movements. The basic movements are designed to facilitate the proper implementation of the basic techniques, which, in turn, leads to intermediate-level techniques; advanced techniques; and, finally, waza. The different stages are interesting, as they evolve from and maintain the proper, basic form.

But are these stages different? I think not, and this article—based on my experience in the honbu dojo—will try to reflect this. I will endeavor to show that although *kata*, different levels of technique, and *jiyuwaza* are different, they are essentially the same.

The techniques of Yoshinkan Aikido are practiced in *kata* or prearranged forms, with both partners understanding their respective roles and cooperating to perform the techniques. The basic techniques are performed repeatedly until they become natural and can be done instantly when required in class.

The basic techniques are practiced to understand how to control ourselves, which, in turn, allows us to control uke's

body through correct movement, distancing, and timing, applying the power along lines where uke is weak and shite is strong. Waza are the subtle changes made to the basic tech-



niques to make them more effective on uke.

To understand this difference takes a lot of practice and effort and also a certain amount of frustration. It is also beneficial if you have a teacher who is able to do the technique powerfully and effectively—on anybody.

At this point, I would like to pose a question. If you are six feet tall and you have two ukes, one who is also six feet tall and the other who is five feet tall, would you perform the technique with the same movement? It has been my experience that most people perform exactly the same movement, regardless of the differing sizes of uke. This shouldn't be the case. Shite must alter the technique according to uke's size and ability while maintaining the proper form and distance.

If you continually research and practice the techniques, you will be able to perform the techniques very powerfully on any uke, and you will learn to control and throw them without hurting them. It seems like a paradox, but it is amazing when you actually do it, or have it done to you. When you throw uke powerfully to the tatami and you don't feel anything in your technique and uke is able to continue to train, this is a wonderful feeling. How do we develop this skill? The answer is in constant practice and research.

In the honbu dojo, I am always amazed at how effortless Chida Sensei looks when he does his techniques. It's almost as if he's asleep, but he has thrown me harder while explaining and demonstrating a technique than when other people try to rip my head off!

I now understand that he is able to do this because his lower body is rock solid and

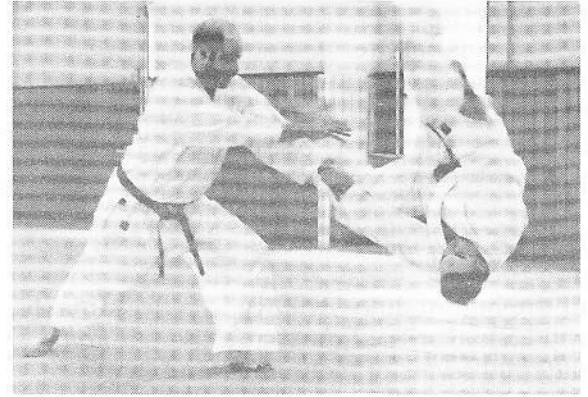
balanced, while his upper body is straight, strong, and relaxed. This allows him to use his whole body power in the movement and enables him to focus all his mental and physical power on one point, usually on uke's weak point, creating an amazingly beautiful and frighteningly powerful technique.

The top Aikido teachers are always emphasizing the difference between strength and power. Strength is the muscle power in a technique that is considered quite weak. Power, on the other hand, is the use of the entire body to execute a movement in conjunction with precise technique. The differences between these two concepts are profound and must be felt to be believed and understood.

To acquire an understanding of these differences requires trust between shite and uke. In practice it is a good idea to sometimes resist each other when performing techniques. This requires that shite control his ego and not be concerned if the techniques don't work. If you practice diligently and don't give up, results will come, and your level will improve. You should try to do the techniques in many ways, with, for example, no power whatsoever, full power, or a mixture of both. Sometimes, you will undoubtedly bang each other around, but if practice is undertaken with improvement and mutual growth in mind, shite and uke won't wind up trying to kill each other. Please keep in mind that the techniques have potential for great damage; appropriate care must always be exercised.

Another way to practice is by only using one hand to perform techniques, or even no hands! When you can do a technique with one hand as strongly and as powerfully as with both, you will notice a remarkable change in your confidence and ability. I have an interesting video where I'm attacking Takeno Sensei with a *tanto*. He defends, using one hand to throw me, while speaking into a microphone that he is holding in his other hand. He makes it look very, very easy, but ability on this level requires lots of practice, and repeated failures.

When you are practicing, it's important to be honest with yourself. Try to understand the weak points in your basic movements and techniques. Only through such reflection will you be able to improve. For teachers and people of advanced rank, this is very hard to do. It requires admitting to yourself that although you are a teacher, more practice and training is needed. It is the only way to improve your level and understanding.



The ultimate goal of Yoshinkan Aikido is to perform techniques the way Kancho Sensei performed them. This requires the lifelong commitment that he showed. Let's hope that one day we can all achieve the understanding and love of Aikido that he had.

I have put down some of my thoughts based on my experiences in the honbu dojo. I fully realize how much further I have yet to go. I hope that all Yoshinkan practitioners will continue to grow individually while promoting the growth of Yoshinkan Aikido.

I welcome any questions or criticisms concerning this article. If the readers of *AYT* are interested in more articles like this one, please let us know.

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