



Zan Shin

Mind and Body as One; Nage and Uke as One

By John B. Mazza

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In aikido we talk of the mind and body as being one; natural healthcare practitioners have long stressed the relation of mind and body. There are a growing number people, in all facets of life that reference the interaction of mind and body; the mental and physical relationship of one to the other.

How does this concept relate to the practice of Aikido? For one, there is the teacher/student relationship. The teacher, as mind, presents a specific

instruction to the class. The class, as body, assimilates the instruction, Teacher and Student acting as one; exchanging ideas. This exchange is what unites us; it unites the past and the present. The teacher, once student, interacted with his teacher, and so on; a continuum that still is progressing: Each student, becoming a teacher; one mind, becoming a teacher; one body practicing together, sharing a history.

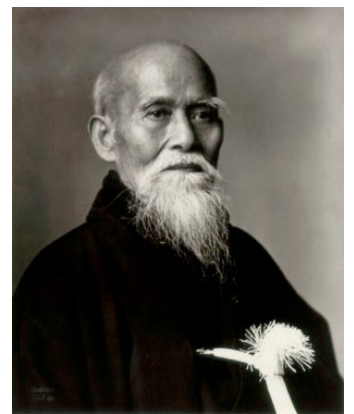
It is that mind/body continuum, the world wide web of the mind;

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Aikido's Harmony with Jujustu

By Brett Margolis

I began aikido this fall, the beginning of my sophomore year here at Northwestern. In addition to aikido, I have been a member of the Paracombatives Jujutsu Club at the university since the start of my freshman year. The two clubs use similar techniques for very different purposes. Aikido, as we know, is a way to achieve harmony through martial techniques. On the other hand, Jujutsu's goal is to protect oneself in a fight using any means necessary, and is more combat oriented. The Paracombatives Jujutsu Club takes techniques from judo, aikido, Muay Thai, boxing, and other martial arts and alters them so they can be used effectively in the variability of everyday life. For example in our version of shihonage, the nage puts the uke in an arm-lock much like a ude garami at waist level before entering beneath the arm.



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Reflections

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By John B. Mazza

What drives us is our commitment; a commitment to those things that we want, desire and believe in. Motivation is the source of our growth. It nurtures us in time of our need; guides us in a time of confusion. And, above all, rewards us for being steadfast to our pledge.

These are trying times. But, as my Teacher would probably say, accept the change. You have no choice. Work with what is and do your best. My Teacher, because of his strong commitment, would take any situation and turn it into an opportunity. This was his challenge; it would motivate him to overcome any adversity, any hardship... They say that weakness is in the heart; fear in the mind.

How can you as an individual motivate yourself, to go to the next level? What can you do to help others go to the next level as an individual, as an organization, as a community, as a society, as a nation, as a human being?

These are changing times for all of us. The challenge is to stay motivated, committed to what we believe in. Success, any success, takes work. For us to succeed we must look to the horizon, to each sunrise with hope, to each sunset with a new dream of what can be; we are but shadows of the past and a dream for the future.

In *This Moment*, we travel the road of destiny interlocked as one. We have come to this point to share this time, to share this hope, and to share

this dream; in doing we become... it is not the struggle that makes us strong but rather the doing.

When you are committed to the *Way* your motivation is the way. The struggle ceases to be. It has no meaning. By looking to the future you can find your way in the moment.

My Teacher's goal, his dream, was to spread Aikido to all people. He shared that dream with many of us, and, in doing so; he continues to share in the moment. He was our link to the past; you are the link to the future.

As each moment passes into the next it builds within us a desire to be; in being we realize that all we have is the doing.



*Toyoda Sensei; Mazz Sensei Uke
Athens, Greece 1992*

Aikido's Harmony with Jujutsu *Continued From Page 1*



*Patterson Sensei demonstrates Sudori on Uke
Jared Lewis at the 2008 Northwestern Martial
Arts Exposition*

For my first few aikido classes, it surprised me how formal classes were. In Paracombatives, when the instructors would demonstrate new techniques to us, we would stand right up close while the instructors talked us through what they were doing. Consequentially, I found it very difficult to observe as our aikido sensei perform the technique and found myself too often having no idea how to even begin the attack as a uke. Not to mention that seiza for more than a minute or two had my ankles screaming out in agony. But as the quarter progressed, I became better and better and observing the techniques. But most noticeably, my footwork improved drastically and my center became more balanced. The emphasis on fluidity carried over to my Jujutsu practices. Now, I move better, strike more powerfully, and learn new techniques faster. That is how aikido has helped my jujutsu, but by improving my concentration and patience, aikido has helped me in all respects of life.

Beohp! WHAP-THUD-WHUNK! Ughhhh. Blink Blink.

By Sean Emerson Gordon-Marvin

That was the sum total of what I registered between initiating my attack and slamming into the ground, my nose gushing blood. After bowing off the mat, I laid down on the locker room benches, both hands clamped to my nose, still blinking and trying to ignore my headache. Initially I was annoyed, but by the time I started my walk back to Willard, I couldn't help but smile at the world.

That's aikido for me - an opportunity to reflect, learn, exercise and decompress all while honing my body and mind. I've wanted to do a martial art ever since my uncle told me about studying Karate in Korea, but I never had time or the opportunity throughout grade school or high school. I've done horseback riding, lacrosse, soccer, track and rock climbing intermittently for years, but none of them remotely compare to aikido. Although the camaraderie is similar, the focus, precision and discipline stand unmatched. While rock climbing let me get ripped mimicking a sloth, and soccer certainly added to my stamina, aikido has added to my focus and discipline, as well as my muscles and reaction time. More importantly, Aikido is slowly cultivating its perspective on life and its inherent, reactionary skill set. At first, I was hesitant about Aikido's disciplined etiquette of bowing and kneeling, but I now see the emphasis on respect, mutual trust and communal learning that result. These elements, which I feel and appreciate in Aikido, are ones I'm attempting to maintain elsewhere, from discussion sections to student group meetings. Similarly, the concept of redirecting others energy while maintaining one's own center and energy, has prompted a new way of viewing challenges. Although I'm still slow to incorporate new techniques, and have to be on my tiptoes with more experienced practitioners, I look forward to every class of Aikido.



Bushido Code

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I HAVE NO PARENTS; I MAKE THE HEAVENS AND THE EARTH MY PARENTS.

I HAVE NO HOME; I MAKE *SEIKA TANDEN* MY HOME.

I HAVE NO DIVINE POWER; I MAKE HONESTY MY DIVINE POWER.

I HAVE NO MEANS; I MAKE *YAWARA* MY MEANS.

I HAVE NO MAGIC POWER; I MAKE MY MIND (*KOKORO*) MY MAGIC POWER.

I HAVE NEITHER LIFE NOR DEATH; I MAKE *A-UM* MY LIFE

I HAVE NO BODY; I MAKE STOICISM (*SHUGYO*) MY BODY.

I HAVE NO EYES; I MAKE THE FLASH OF LIGHTNING MY EYES.

I HAVE NO EARS; I MAKE SENSIBILITY MY EARS.

I HAVE NO LIMBS; I MAKE PROMTITUDE MY LIMBS.

I HAVE NO LAWS; I MAKE SELF-PROTECTION MY LAWS.

I HAVE NO STRATEGY; I MAKE *SAKKATSU JIZAI* (FREE TO KILL AND FREE TO RESTORE TO LIFE) MY STRATEGY.

I HAVE NO DESIGNS; I MAKE *KISAN* (TAKING OPPORTUNITY BY FORELOCK) MY DESIGN.

I HAVE NO MIRACLES; I MAKE RIGHTEOUS LAWS MY MIRACLES.

I HAVE NO PRINCIPLES; I MAKE *RINKIOHEN* (ADAPTABILITY TO ALL CIRCUMSTANCES) MY PRINCIPLES.

I HAVE NO TACTICS; I MAKE *KYOJITSU* (EMPTINESS AND FULLNESS) MY TACTICS.

I HAVE NO TALENT; I MAKE *TOI SOKUMYO* (READY WIT) MY TALENT.

I HAVE NO FRIENDS; I MAKE MY MIND MY FRIEND.

I HAVE NO EMEMY; I MAKE INCAUTIOUSNESS MY EMEMY.

I HAVE NO ARMOUR; I MAKE *JINGI* (BENEVOLENCE AND RIGHTEOUSNESS) MY ARMOUR.

I HAVE NO CASTLE; I MAKE *FUDO SHIN* (IMMOVEABLE MIND) MY CASTLE.

I HAVE NO SWORD; I MAKE *MUSHIN* MY SWORD.

Mind and Body as One; Nage and Uke as One

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branching out from teacher to student to teacher to student. It continues.

There is something greater occurring here at this place called the dojo, or training hall. A certain reverence for those who have proceeded us, some still with us, others yet to come..

The dojo is a place of transition, yet it still cannot be grasped, nor held: A sanctuary where we can come together and share with others the efforts of our becoming; our minds and bodies moving, sweating, agonizing, all focusing on becoming. We force our minds to understand what is being said; demonstrated. Yet are told not to think, just do... mind and body functioning as one; the student and teacher as one.

We come together as one, we practice, as one. They say that *Awase* is a blending of movements. Nage and Uke acting as one; jointing together we give life to the technique. But, in my opinion, that oneness, that joining, starts within. If I am disjointed in my thoughts and my actions, then my movements will be a reflection of the disharmony within. My flexibility to move uninhibited through time and space becomes ridged and awkward. In Randori we *seize chaos* not focusing on any one



attack; not holding on any one attacker. Flowing through each action and reaction, not planning; moving as each new space becomes opened we fill the void. With each movement there is an intense passion that IS a mind and body functioning as one; Nage and Uke moving in unison. The energy of the moment seems to possess both as the sea possesses a ship in a storm.

If, at any moment, we become stuck on any one point, the rhythm of the movement becomes broken, confusion dominates, and we are thrust into the chaos of the moment.

Three Things to Learn

By Duong Nguyen

There are only 3 things to keep in mind when doing Aikido, at least for me that is.

1. I can always learn something new.

No matter how many years I devote to Aikido, there will always be a new and different aspect that I can pick up one day. The black belt or even ranks are not the end goals. It has been and always will be the practice. The exercise, mental and physical, is why I come to practice.

2. I should always show respect to others.

That is common sense for life. In all dojo, there is an etiquette expected, consisting of Japanese phrases and bows. It is not too hard to pick up. The respect shown to sensei is listening attentively and trying my best with the new instruction. To other members, it is to cooperate in our learning.

3. I want to make Aikido a part of my life.

This one thing to learn is most important. The other two things can be for any other disciplines. The reasons people choose to practice Aikido are varied and unique but like all aikidoka I want to continue it. This affirmation that Aikido is for me and committing to it will translate into long term growth as an aikidoka and as a person.

These are just 3 things which I believe any student of Aikido, new and old, should keep in mind.

合氣道

*"Aikido" Calligraphy
By Fumio Toyoda*

Balance in Aikido

By Jared Lewis

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I think balance is among the most important skills aikido develops. Most apparently, aikido builds physical balance. Staying grounded during technique is often key. Another example is during ukemi. Uke must balance the amount of pressure he or she gives nage. Uke must give enough pressure to stay connected during the technique, but not give so much pressure that uke is resisting nage.

Aikido also works with mental balance. Sometimes when working on a technique, Sensei will provide criticism: "don't pause before the turn," "don't raise up for the throw," etc...It is important to take this criticism. However, if I put all of my focus on eliminating the pause, for example, the rest of my technique will suffer. I become too mentally fixated on the one point of weakness and lose consciousness of the technique as a whole. My mental fixation on the weakness will often create tension and isolation in my muscles as I too eagerly try to remedy my flaws. To successfully work on technique requires mental balance. I must be conscious of my weaknesses, but not lose my mind to them. Attention to detail must be balanced with attention to the whole.

Further, while it is important to confront your flaws with an eagerness to solve them, it must be balanced with patience. Bad habits can take a very long time to eliminate. Fluid arms that work through a grounded center take years to develop. Zeal not balanced with patience can create frustration. On the other hand patience not balanced with eagerness creates training that is lazy and unmotivated. I must be eager to improve today but understand that improvement is long term.

Aikido even develops balance of the spirit. To get the most out of training, you must throw your entire self into it and put forward all of your

energy at all times. I think good training often feels unrestrained. But all *kia* (energy) unbalanced by *kata* (form) and control is equally ineffective. Oddly to fully release your energy requires incredible control. Uncontrolled energy is dissipated through muscle tension and sloppy, inefficient movements. The force of the energy is lost. On the other hand, training that obsesses over form at the expense of *kia* becomes lackluster and does not build the spirit.

I find the many different balances aikido requires to be very difficult to achieve and one of aikido's primary challenges. I also appreciate the value of this skill outside of the dojo. Challenges of balance present in learning aikido are present in the learning of many other things. And life requires balance. How can I balance attention to my goals for the long term with attention to where I am in my life right now. For me, the daunting task of balancing my life's time and energy is made more manageable by daily grappling with the same task on aikido's smaller scale.



Patterson Sensei and Moore Sensei Training Together

Moth

By John B. Mazza

Once, a wise sage pondered a moth as it tried to enter the light of understanding. Every night the moth would return. But, to no avail could the moth become one with its own essence. The sage called out to the moth and asked, "Why do you struggle so to pierce the veil of ignorance?" The moth replied, "So that I may be consumed by

eternal bliss." The sage said, "But, surely you will perish if you persist." The moth replied, "Surely, I will perish if I do not." At that moment the sage cried out with great joy for he realized that, he and the moth were one and the same.

I hope that you are able to find your moth.

Sensei's Corner

Over the years the NU Aikido Club, Zanshinkan, has seen many changes; many students have come and gone; several instructors as well. Even I left Zanshinkan, only to return. The one constant through all this transition has been the students. Those few souls who labor to set up the mats prior to class, who organize the demonstrations, manage the newsletter, attend to the needs of beginning students, and plan the club outings and social events that ensure the continuation the Club.

It these individuals that deserve the respect and admiration of their peers, without them there would be no Club. This, I believe, is what is meant when we talk of Shugyo; this act of doing what needs to be done.

I will always been proud to be apart of Zanshinkan, and wish to personally thank all those individuals,



past and present, who have shared in the making of t
his Club.

Looking toward the future and new becomings...

-John B. Mazza

