

*Awase* is the newsletter of the Aikido Institute of Davis, a dojo where the arts of Aikido and Tai Chi are instructed.

Please visit our website at [AikidoDavis.com](http://AikidoDavis.com) for information on membership & class times.



The sumi-e circle is derived from the Sanskrit word *sunyata* and means “emptiness” or “nothingness.” Created by Zen master and calligrapher *Yamada Mumon Roshi*.

**Circles**  
**by Kent Standley**  
San-dan Essay

Circles make up fundamental movement in Aikido. However, circular motion is widely misunderstood. This is true for circular motion of cars, planes as well as the uke and nage in Aikido. To better understand circular motion one first must analyze linear motion and then see the difference between linear and circular motion. This is done easiest through the graphical representation of vectors.

**Scalars and Vectors**

Quantities in mathematics that have only a magnitude and a descriptor [dimension] are scalars. In physics, mass [kilograms], length [meters], time [seconds] are examples of scalars. Quantities in mathematics that have a direction in addition to a magnitude and descriptor are vectors. In physics,



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force, velocity and acceleration are examples of vectors. Sixty miles per hour is a scalar (a speed); sixty miles per hour North is a vector (a velocity). Vectors graphically show a displacement through space. In fact, the word vector means carrier in Latin which somewhat suggests a displacement. Graphical representation of vectors makes descriptions of motion much easier to contemplate.

**Newton’s First Law of Motion – Linear Motion**

In Newton’s own words, “Every body persists in its state of rest or of uniform motion in a straight line unless it is compelled to change that state by forces impressed on it.” Another way of stating the first law is: *If the sum of the forces acting on a body is zero, its acceleration is zero.* Therefore, for an object to move in something other than a straight line (maybe a circle?) requires a force, or more correctly, a net force.

When the velocity of a moving body changes in magnitude, in direction, or both that body has an acceleration. In linear motion, the direction of the velocity vector does not change but its magnitude does. Acceleration can be defined as the rate of change of velocity with time. For circular motion (at a constant speed), the magnitude of the velocity vector does not change; however, the direction is constantly changing. The direction of the acceleration vector always points toward the center of the circle. The magnitude of the acceleration vector is also constant for uniform circular motion. These figures should help visualize this concept.

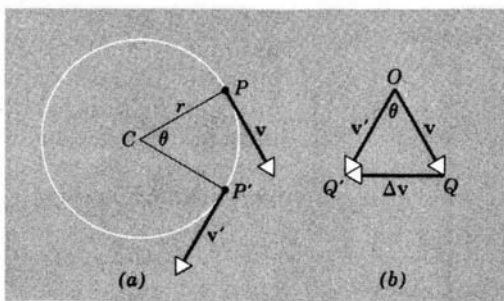


Figure 1.

Figure 1a shows a body in circular motion. At points P and P’ the vectors  $v$  and  $v'$  show the body’s velocity at those respective points. The change in

velocity between P and P’ is  $\Delta v$  (which is also the average acceleration between P and P’ which is shown in Figure 1b).

When we look at the velocity vectors at various points around the circle we see that the velocity vector is always tangent to the circle in the direction of motion; looking at the instantaneous acceleration we see that the acceleration vector  $a$  is always directed radially inward as seen in Figure 2.

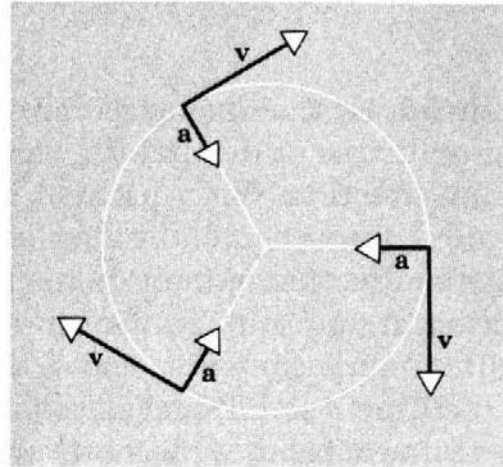


Figure 2

Vector  $a$  is called a radial or centripetal acceleration. Centripetal means center seeking. To initiate circular motion in your uke, you must first accelerate him towards your center (which many readers already knew).

But what about centrifugal force? That is the more common term we hear. It is also what we feel when we travel around a curve in a car. To understand this discrepancy we need to understand reference frames.

**Frames of Reference**

Frames of reference are implied by Newton. For example, it is perfectly valid to say that, “the train is coming into the station” as well as “the station is coming into the train.” Earth is not fixed frame of reference, although in an everyday local sense we think so. She revolves around the sun as well as rotates about her axis. We even use the expression, “the sun rises” though the earth’s rotation is providing that apparent motion of the sun. The train is just as valid of a frame of reference as the station. Uke and nage are also valid frames of reference.

If we are on a train going around a bend, we are in an accelerating frame of reference. As the train progresses around the turn it accelerates toward the center of its turning circle, the passengers and everything else not attached to the train tend to travel in a straight line. We then feel that force to the outside of the turn called centrifugal force, but it is really the train accelerating away from us. Only the centripetal acceleration exists. This is why centrifugal force is called a “fictitious” force.

*Again*, to initiate circular motion in your uke, you must first accelerate him towards your center. Uke will feel the centrifugal force of Nage’s centripetal acceleration. This is a good example of how Physics and Aikido are fundamentally linked by Newton’s Third Law: *To every action, there is an equal and opposite reaction.*

Extending circular motion to its more complex cousins now becomes a little easier. Increase the acceleration in the circular motion and spiral motion will ensue. Change the direction of the acceleration vector and elliptical motion will ensue. These are all small modifications of circular motion. In Aikido, of course, the possibilities are endless.

## **San-dan Essay** **by Marion Donehower**

I’d like to take this moment to thank all my Aikido and Tai Chi teachers and my husband Bruce for his support. They all helped me to unravel the mystery of ki. For me and my contemporaries in the late seventies, the concept of ki and hara was new and exciting and caught our attention right away. A first leap in understanding was when my first Aikido teacher in Germany gave me Koichi Tohei’s book *Ki in Daily Life*. This was something practical I could explore and experience in my Aikido practice.

Tohei had four points of ki development that he crystallized out of his practice.

- Relax
- Breathe
- Keep One Point
- Keep Weight Underside

Since then every couple of years I review those points. For a long time I wondered how weight underside was different from relaxation. Why isn’t it the same? I think Tohei means and intensification of relaxation. A most completely relaxed state occurs when we are in the state between waking and sleeping. We feel how very heavy we get and how gravity pulls us down. Paradoxically we feel light at the same time. Even our mind is relaxed; otherwise we couldn’t go to sleep. We stop thinking in dualistic concepts and start thinking more on an intuitive and dream level. In reaching the goal of body/mind harmony, we have this helpful exercise as first step: Your partner lifts your arms horizontally to your shoulder. If your partner stops holding your arm and your arm falls down, you are relaxed. However if your arm partially moves or falls down, you have tension in your arm or your shoulder. This idea of being totally relaxed as well as all of Tohei’s points of ki development became very important in my practice.

After a complicated collar bone break in an Aikido class in Germany, I started Tai Chi, left Germany, and went around the world to study Tai Chi. I found Master TT Liang in Boston (as well as my husband Bruce). Master Liang had very simple repetitive messages.

- Mind Intent. Put the emphasis on mental activity. We as conscious beings have the choice to decide which way our ki is directed. The premise is: ki always follows your thoughts or mind intent. In everyday life ki is usually diffused, disordered, and unstructured. However, we have the possibility to structure, own it, and direct it. Master Liang said: if you don’t feel your chi sinking into your hara or extending from your fingers tips, or if you don’t feel rooted on earth, it is nevertheless important to start by imagining this condition. Even if you feel nothing at all in the beginning, surely after diligent practice your imagination becomes reality.
- Invest in Loss. Master Liang also said that it is more important to learn how to lose than to learn how to win. If you are out to win, you forgot to move from your hara; you tighten up, and your partner

consequently has an advantage to take over your hara (as in Push Hands). As a psychologist I realized that this statement had meaning not only for Tai Chi but for life in general. We all know that sometimes we grow and learn more about ourselves through losses and defeat than we learn during the fun times.

After years of practicing Tai Chi and applying all the principles received in Tai Chi and Aikido, Bruce and I fell in love with Aikido again. We practiced for many years happily. In the year 2000 I had an Aikido accident with a concussion and was later diagnosed with a benign tumor on the hearing nerve. After brain surgery, when my hearing nerve was cut, I lost my balance and my hearing in the right ear and lost some of the nerve function on the right side of my body. I found myself in a wheel chair, thinking my Aikido days were over. However, slowly I returned to practice Aikido, step by step. And my body memory helped me. All the principles learned so many years ago suddenly became very basic helpers with my recovery. In January 2007 I felt improved enough to join Sensei Hoa's dojo. The clarity and purity of Sensei's Aikido as a model in the dojo helped to push me further into recovery. Not only did I speed up my recovery, but through Sensei Hoa's clarity I am able to see not only the spiral forms of individual techniques but also the spirals continuing invisibly in space. That's when Aikido is really exciting to me and is truly an art form. As the famous Swiss painter Paul Klee wrote: "Art doesn't show the visible but is only concerned with making the invisible visible."

As I work with Sensei Hoa at the dojo in Davis and study more deeply the basic techniques that he presents, I find that this motto of Paul Klee helps me to stay focused on the goal for my Aikido practice and what I would like to achieve in the years ahead.

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**"In our techniques we enter completely into, blend totally with, and control firmly an attack. Strength resides where one's ki is concentrated and stable; confusion and maliciousness arise when one's ki stagnates." -- Osensei**

## Report on the Tahoe Gasshuku May 2008

by Rebecca Garabed

On May 23-26<sup>th</sup> six members of the dojo attended the annual Takemusu Aikido Association gasshuku in Tahoe, California. This year's live-in training included learning new perspectives on old techniques and old perspectives on new techniques, watching Kent Sempai's sandan test, and lots of time to play Aikido with friends from other dojo. We even got to sample some healthy and unusual cuisine made by chefs Toby Hargreaves and Keesha Standley.

The training kicked off on Friday night with an hour each covering two techniques that most students find very challenging: koshinage and yonkyo. Goldsmith Sensei (Aikido in Fredericksburg, Spotsylvania, VA) and Robinson Sensei (Aikido at the Center, Tucson, AZ) helped to make the techniques less onerous by giving their tricks on how the techniques work without a lot of effort. After getting lots of new tips and a few bruises, the Davis crew stayed on the mat to get in some extra warming up for Saturday.

Saturday was indeed a full day with lots of workout for our hips as Newens Sensei taught about "koshi power" and Goto Sensei (Bay Marin Aikido, San Rafael, CA) showed us how to ground ourselves in order to redirect two opponents at once. O'Quin Sensei (Aikido of Silicon Valley, Cupertino, CA) again used quotes from Saito Sensei's book to demonstrate the simple and effective principles that are key to sankyo (and very hard to master).

Just before lunch, we got to see three dan tests/demonstrations; including Kent Sempai's test. It was interesting to see the very different styles from hard and fast to precise and methodical – all from a group of closely related schools. After a quiet celebration at our cabin with all kinds of healthy and yummy food, we finished up with weapons on Sunday.

After going through some pretty familiar kumijo with Peuser Sensei (Aikido Institute, Oakland, CA), Sheldon Sensei (Bryan Park Aikido, Richmond, VA) gave us a different perspective on ki misubi no tachi, including tips gleaned from Akira Kurosawa's films. Sargent Sensei, who was visiting from the Isle of Jersey taught some new kumitachi that he invented by combining all of the hard parts of the other

kumitachi. It was certainly a challenge as was his tough-love style of teaching. After that Baumgartner Sensei took us through his interpretation of some of the traditional kumitachi.

As always, the gasshuku was an exhilarating and tiring experience full of learning experiences for students of all levels.

### NOTE THE DATE

The Annual Tahoe Gasshuku occurs over **Memorial Day Weekend** each year. Mark your calendars for the coming event! It would be fun to get a big group of people together to go to the next event. (Editor)

## Trip to Tucson

by Marion Donehower

Since months I have been looking at the bulletin board in the dojo. The date November 11 in Tucson seemed very far away and not very worrisome. But when I came back from Germany in the beginning of September, the date became more real. And since Tucson included my san-dan test, I got nervous. But on the positive side, the outlook to plan a trip with Bruce was there too, and it seemed to be very appealing. I was curious about the southwest, since I was never in that part of the country. I got excited looking at maps, finding good audio books for the road, talking to people about the southwest. I got even more excited when I learned that Toby was coming to the event. He was staying with us at our motel and coming back in the car with us. Then my best friend called from Seattle (her son lives in Tucson), and she wanted to visit and see my test. So all things fell into place. I felt surrounded by friends and started to feel comfortable.

After two days of driving, coming through the desert, see funny Joshua trees and other desert plants, we came into Tucson and discovered that the gasshuku was in a big square dance hall that had been decorated. Right away it felt good, and after meeting the folks from Tucson, it felt even better. All the people were very inviting, heartfelt, and had

prepared the affair with care and attention. You felt their effort, whether it was in their preparation of the food, snacks, or just conversations. The classes were great too. Everybody – beginners and old timers – learned something, and there was a certain freshness to the classes. It all culminated with jo class outdoors on Sunday. The dojo children were around in great numbers and got nicely integrated into the classes. From the corner of my eyes, I saw them practicing with Sensei Hoa. I think they decided he was a good choice as a partner.

I think my test went fine. I felt clear and centered, and a cup of coffee beforehand from McDonald's certainly helped. I was happy when I was called up. The room got quiet, and I finally could take over the mat and move freely. Everybody had to make room for me! That was great fun already! When it was over, I was sorry. It just seemed to be too short. The senseis were very gracious – even coming afterwards individually to talk to me. I think Tucson offered a relaxed mood that fostered personal connection and new meetings between people. I didn't join the party on Saturday, which looked great. Bruce and I went to dinner with my friend and her son to a wonderful Japanese restaurant, and we celebrated our friendship and aikido and Osensei with sake and miso soup and sushi.

## Women in Aikido

by Hoa Newens, Sensei

A few months ago I answered the Dojo phone and the male caller said that he was interested in Aikido but heard that it is more suited to women and wanted to know whether that was true. I told him that Aikido is useful for everyone but it is also correct to say that it is more suitable for women than other high-impact martial arts. I either confused him or gave him something to think about.

I do not remember the rest of our conversation but here are my thoughts on this subject.

Irrespective of what social norms and science say about the subject, I have observed that, based on my thirty-year teaching experience, men and women approach Aikido differently. It is my belief that, in

order for members of either sex to attain the best that Aikido can offer, each person needs to absorb and express Aikido according to his or her innate abilities.

At the physical level, men tend to express power through their techniques and usually enjoy a hard physical workout. Women use more suppleness in their techniques and often enjoy the interaction with their training partners more than the reward of physical exertion.

At the mental level, most men are attracted to the rigid discipline and code of etiquette of the martial art and most also thrive on some sort of competition, either implicitly against the training partner or quietly against the self, since Aikido does not promote open competition. Women, on the other hand, care more about the quality of their interaction with their training partner, especially in the aspects of trust and commitment.

These are general observations which do not apply to every student of Aikido but which are helpful to note and understand in order to maximize the benefit of training. My views are necessarily derived not from a personal perspective but from the vantage of an experienced teacher of the art. Therefore, it may contain limitations and flaws that I am willing to correct based on new authentic experience or validated observation.

Although I have made the distinction above between the physical and the mental for purpose of clarity, the following discussion will look at the total experience since Aikido is a holistic art that uses the physical to affect the mental and create the spiritual.

I observe that women who thrive in Aikido capitalize on their femininity while paying lip service to the power-based and rigid methods of men.

Here is a closer look at one aspect of this feminine approach. In the *Kihonwaza* practice of the Iwama style of Aikido, a firm grip and solid stance are essential for learning the techniques. The purpose of the firmness is not to build physical strength – although it does – but to elicit the use of focused intent in executing the technique. Male students may misunderstand this purpose and apply power inappropriately. When faced with an *Uke* who squeezes her arm to the degree of blocking any further motion, the woman would calmly tell her *Uke* to back off slightly so that she can proceed with the

technique. In the same situation a male student is more likely to get excited in the struggle to overcome the opposing force. Requesting his *Uke* to downshift would hurt his ego and make him feel inadequate. The misguided male student may then look to power training to enhance his technical performance.

Another physical aspect of femininity is seen in the use of the hips: the female student is more likely to rely less on upper body strength and more on her hips to execute technique. This is certainly a superior characteristic in Aikido training that the male students do not readily acknowledge, especially in the context of the Iwama style of Aikido which requires regular use of arm strength at least in the early stage of training.

During interaction with a training partner the typical male student is more concerned about completing the technique in the most effective manner, through use of speed and power. The female student would pay more attention to certain non-physical qualities of the interaction, such as the level of trust and care. A woman would want to know about her training partner and would note whether her training partner care about her safety or about her emotional state. If she detects a disregard of her welfare the woman may not feel connected to the partner and may decide not to continue the interaction, either bowing out or shunning this training partner in the future.

On the other hand, a male student who acknowledges the natural expression of femininity from his female training partner is likely to get her total engagement and the resulting satisfaction of a deep and meaningful connection throughout the technique.

The female students have a natural need to reach out to other people that is often not recognized by a male teacher. Whereas a male student can join the dojo and train assiduously without much interpersonal relation with his training partners other than the physical action on the mat, a female student wants to know her training partners more intimately as people. Therefore, the women in a dojo are encouraged in their training when there are opportunities to socialize and interact with other dojo members outside of the mat.

From a technical standpoint, female aikidoists are more at ease during *Jyuwaza* and *Randori* training than their male counterparts. Their fluid energy and intuitive expression prefer the uninterrupted and

instinctive flow of these types of practices to the fragmentation and rigidity associated with *Kihonwaza*. We should remember that, in the continuum of training levels, we practice *Kihonwaza* to progress to *Yawarakai waza* and move on to *Kinonagare waza* in which the Ki flows freely. In this regard, if one's Ki is already naturally fluid and un-impeded by the ego-mind, then it would be somewhat counterproductive to put too much emphasis on rigid *Kihonwaza* training. Thus, it may not be beneficial for all women to spend the same amount of time and effort on *Kihonwaza* as the male students.

The above observation should not be construed as a denial of the importance of *Kihon* training. It is part of the training continuum of a time-tested system. Any serious student should learn the complete continuum to be able to teach the art later. What we are saying is that not everyone needs to begin at the same starting point or adopt the same tools in order to reach the ultimate training goal.

I have constantly noted that although there are fewer female students, they tend to stick around longer than the average male students and become more ardent supporter of the art. In other words, once a female student has made up her mind about Aikido as her chosen path, she makes a commitment that is not easily matched by most male students. The modern-day dojo should provide more opportunities for women to make this commitment.

It is my view that the current training framework in many Aikido dojos does not provide sufficient encouragement to the female population. This framework has worked well to promote the growth of Aikido in more structured and traditional societies as in Japan and has produced many excellent proponents of the arts, mostly male. For Aikido to serve the totality of humankind, the establishment as well as individual teachers should shed its gender-biased methods and adopt a more flexible teaching model that, while remaining anchored to the essence of the art, would create an environment in which women can build on their innate strengths and capitalize on their instinctive tendencies in their endeavor to reach *Takemusu Aiki*, the ultimate communion with the universe.

## Thoughts About Growing Bamboo at the New Dojo

by Bruce Donehower

Now that we're in the new dojo, I decided after talking to Sensei to plant some bamboo in containers in the back alley. Sensei mentioned that according to Feng Shui principles the back of a house is an ideal location for bamboo. However, not so easy!!! As some of you know, I have many types of bamboo at my house in Fair Oaks, including three types of clumping timber bamboo that grow to forty feet in height under ideal conditions. I got inspired to plant bamboo at my previous dojo in Fair Oaks where I met another aikido student, Daniel, who knew a lot about bamboo and who had much more bamboo than I have. (Daniel used to drive around town with a shovel and saws-all in his car, and if he saw a homeless bamboo plant that looked inviting, he'd pull over and adopt it!) Daniel educated me in the spirit of bamboo. In this way, he took it on himself to plant a bamboo garden in the courtyard of the old Ice House aikido dojo in Fair Oaks. This courtyard had a bamboo fence to shield the dojo from the intrusive energy of a noisy auto repair establishment right behind. The several types of bamboo in this courtyard made it an inviting oasis. Over time, the courtyard became a social gathering place and watering hole for the dojo. At night during the warm months after practice, the students would gather there to drink beer or other beverages (from the always well-stocked fridge) and talk and share reflections. Sometimes we lingered there until an hour or more went by. This added a lot to the dojo community. It increased ties of friendship and brought in new people who were looking for community. This situation taught me that aikido encompasses more than what occurs on the mat. A dojo benefits from a place to socialize, hang out, b-s, and generally schmooze and make conversation. As bamboo is a very sociable plant, it adds to the ambience and the community. Bamboo provides inviting shade, delightful whispers, and more importantly: inviting vibes. When we got to the new dojo in Davis, I saw that the entry way and the back alley seemed ideally suited for some gardening. Accordingly, I located two wine barrel planters from my yard to the back of the dojo, divided one of the more mature black bamboo plants that I have in my garden, and

transplanted the sections. Alas!! The alleyway behind the dojo is a very severe environment, both in terms of sunlight and ambient energies. The concrete and white-painted warehouse buildings trap and reflect heat, and the poor little bamboo could not endure under these harsh conditions. I will have to try again! Unfortunately, the very sun-tolerant varieties of timber bamboo that I have in my garden are very hard to cut out of the ground, and my only transplantable variety of a tall clumping bamboo (an Alphonse Carr that grows to twenty feet) is not in the mood for moving right now. It told me that it desires a few months in a container before it's ready to think about moving to Davis. So, I will try another black bamboo. Black bamboo is a scrappy runner, which means it wants to strike out and invade. It does well in sunlight if it is established and watered and feeling in a friendly place, so I remain hopeful. If another attempt fails, I will try again. By the way, the second little plant in the back of the dojo is a Golden Goddess bamboo. This low-growing gorgeous clumper seems to be hanging on but is a bit stressed and confused. It ought to do well in sunlight and should eventually bush out to large dimensions and show some chutzpah. Ultimately, the plants will get going, and then their green presence will soften the energy in the back of the dojo and increase the already very sociable currents that flow through the front door. I also want to work on creating a welcoming green area out front – **any volunteers?** I noticed that one big difference between the new dojo and the old dojo is the way the energy flows into the new space. In the old dojo, you had to walk down a long narrow corridor to enter the mat. The front office was small, and no one ever lingered in it or around the front door. Already at the new dojo I have noticed many times that visitors show up, linger, begin conversations, and show interest in what is going on. Because the mat is visible and inviting to the outer world, visitors show up spontaneously and want to watch. Even if they are shy, they can hang back and see what is going on. They can slowly come closer and talk to people easily in the entry way, sit down, and get to feel comfortable with aikido. It is not a threatening entry point. One night someone even walked in through the back door and sat down on the bench to observe a class! I imagine that once the green spirit of bamboo and other plants becomes more dominant, this sort of spontaneous social interaction will increase. More people will

walk through the back door and through the front to check out the friendly vibes – they'll even sneak in through the vents! This is very important in building a dojo community – so let's go green!

**Postscript: Today, Saturday November 29, I noticed the first green sprout emerging from the black bamboo! But since the Grand Opening is near, I decided to put some new plants in the pots and move the old ones to Sensei's house for recovery.**

## Notes from Tucson

by Toby Hargreaves

I'm in Tucson today. It was an interesting flight. I was dozing on and off most of the way, interspersed with reading "Travels With Charley" by John Steinbeck. But as we neared Tucson, I began to look out the window at the fantastic, otherworldly rock landscapes--dark, feminine mountains bulging out of the desert and the patterns of dry creek beds, crawling over the earth like blood dripping down a wall.

The grid like patterns of sprawling suburban Phoenix and Tucson--linear, logical, rational, controlled--stood in stark contrast with the natural landscapes--organic, wild, and crackling with energy. It made me feel sick.

Bruce picked me up at the airport and we drove back to the motel where they were staying, and I joined them in their room, where I am now.

After a meal of Mexican food, I went for a long walk down a bike path running along a dry riverbed, enjoying the clear desert air and the sun sinking down into the mountains. The two classes that evening were taught by Ginny Breeland, and Judith Robinson Sensei--both on the relationship between weapons work and taijutsu. I really like Ginny Breeland Sensei. She's so nice, and her Aikido is really good.

11/8/08

Man what a day. Today was the main day of training and I'm beat. I learned a lot of Aikido though. It's interesting what a personal journey it is. There are some Sensei whose style I don't

particularly jive with, but I still can learn a lot from them.

I got to train with Kim Peuser Sensei today and he didn't go easy on me. He taught me a lesson. He grabbed me in a fierce morote dori and told me to grab Hoa Sensei that way ("How else is he going to improve?" he asked me). During Kim Sensei's class he talked about the 180 degree turn that makes sankyo omote really work.

In Hoa Sensei's class, we worked on spirals and cut down-and-enter techniques like irimi nage. Sensei demonstrated how these techniques are represented in the kumijo as well, and that though the form of the technique may change, the feeling behind it remains the same.

Aikido is so much about spirit, attitude, intent, and awareness. The physical forms are only one small aspect. The feeling you put behind those forms is the real essence of Aikido and what makes the techniques really work. What a mystery! Gotta train more, and things will clarify themselves.

11/9/08

The venue for the Gasshuku is a Square Dance studio. It's very festively and colorfully decorated inside--much more homey and warm than the gym in Tahoe. Sunday morning training began outside in the parking lot with the jo. Pete Breeland taught the first ten jo suburi, then the first two kumijo. I trained with Mike from Tucson. During the suburi, I was next to Sensei and tried to watch him out of the corner of my eye. Bill Witt Shihan was sitting right behind me, observing the class, so I had to be extra careful on ushiro tsuki! Being surrounded like that by great aikidoka and teachers is the best environment for learning. On gedan gaeshi, I bumped my jo on the curb behind me, denting it a little. You have to be aware of your weapon; your mind must be at the tip of it!

Next class was Aviv Sensei, who continued the kumijo, and began linking them together. This kind of practice is good for maintaining unbroken concentration. I trained with George (but it's pronounced a little differently) from Italy, but he lives in Phoenix. A very happy fellow.

## **Body, Mind, & Soul = The Tapestry of Life**

**by Janice Palmer**

This phrase is used by many people, either in their personal life or their professional one, or both. I have often tried to blend this mind set for both my worlds, my personal and professional life arenas, as I call them; but often I have wrestled with the ability to allow my two worlds to co-exist within MY Body, Mind and Soul: My Tapestry.

As a Nurse, it hasn't been more real for me than in Emergency Room environment. I am humbled every day as I continue to learn something new, but I've often wondered -- "Is there something I'm missing? . . . something that would make things more clear?"

For many years I have been longing to take Tai Chi, and I came across Aikido Davis Institute 1 year ago and thought: would I ever have a different shift that would allow me to take this teaching? (I have been on swing shift and night shift for 18 years).

A lot of changes came about and I found myself practically thrown into a regular day shift. There I found a silver lining: a door opened and opened my eyes to Aikido as well.

After only two weeks in Aikido and Tai Chi, I found myself at work in a situation with an elderly patient with Alzheimer's who grabbed my wrist. Without even thinking, I turned my wrist, like Sempai Bruce had showed me, and broke free in split seconds -- not even harming my patient or myself. I was amazed!

They give us training in de-escalation techniques verbally, but nothing really with body movements, which is really essential in those circumstances.

I believe I have just barely tapped the surface of this new world: the art of Aikido and Tai Chi.

The blending of my two worlds coming together is like the tapestry of life . . . now with new threads that will intertwine together with added strength and beauty. I am truly blessed to be among such like minded people and am honored to be a part of it. Thank you.

## Changes in the Dojo by Toby Hargreaves

When I look back on the last several months, I see that the Dojo has gone through a lot of changes. We lost a lot of sempai (Terence, Sean, Aniel, Rebecca) leaving big shoes to fill. I personally have had to step up in responsibility, but others have as well--Justin, Kathleen, Shannon, Brian, Guy, Edo--these people have moved into the center of the Dojo. A big part of the Dojo left to pursue their dreams elsewhere, but like a living organism, the Dojo is regenerating itself.

This makes me think of change and continuity. The Dojo is a spirit that endures, though the members may come and go. Aikido is like this too. Though the Founder (and his teachers), Morihiro Saito, and many other great teachers are gone, Aikido still lives and flows on through our bodies.

As recently as this spring and summer, I felt like an accessory of the Dojo--certainly a part, but not indispensable. I could get away with going 2-3 times a week and not feel missed. Now I feel compelled--or rather, inspired--to go to every class I possibly can. This is partly because I've set my heart on doing the uchideshi program next year and I'm starting to lean toward that role.

The galvanizing moment when the change really hit home was the Dojo relocation. There was an incredible feeling of cooperation and togetherness that was not feigned. We were creating something new together that no one had ever done before (not that no one had built a dojo before, but that no one had ever built *this* Dojo).

And I feel like we are still building it, still creating the non-physical aspects of the Dojo. We built the physical structure that houses the Dojo on that weekend at the end of August, but ever since then we've been filling it in with suburi, kiai, spirals, smiles, sweat, conversations, breath, community, love, new ideas.

On the first day of class in the new Dojo, Sensei said that we had just taken the feeling of the old Dojo and brought it over here. That's true, but it still feels like a young dojo that has only just been reborn--a new chapter in the Dojo's life. We have a lot of growing up to do--individually (speaking for myself) and collectively. We are like pioneers,

exploring uncharted territory. Maybe those who've been in Aikido don't feel like this, but to me, it's all new and fresh. And when things feel like that, my eyes are wide open.

## Moving the Dojo / LABOR DAY, 2008

**On Labor Day weekend, 2008, the Aikido Institute moved from its first location on Second Street to its new location on Cantrill. Many people contributed in many ways to the effort -- thanks to everyone! It was a big job. Special thanks to Ferrell Stofle and Luke Talbot, who headed up the construction and carpentry team.**



**Luke and Crew Take a Break**



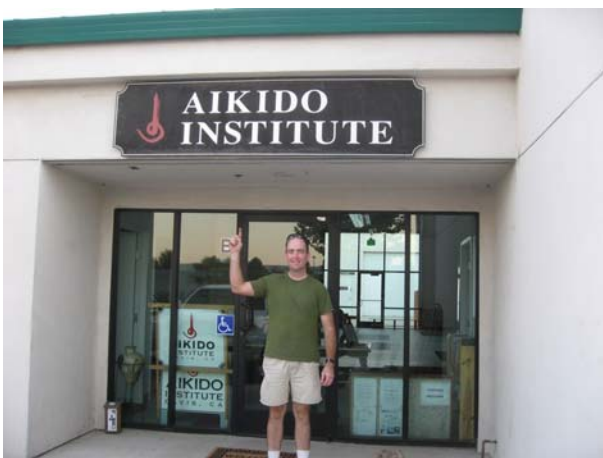
**Heave Ho!**



**Sensei Secures the Mat Supports.**



**Hmmm?? How Does This Puzzle Piece Fit?**



**After Three Days Effort: Ta Da!  
Luke at the new front door.**

**Tucson / November 2008**



**Haiku**

**by Christine Golden**

Pink and white puffs in sky blue,  
the season's first rain.  
I almost didn't notice.

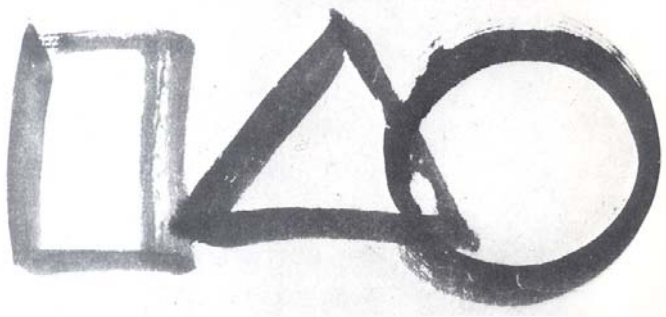
**From the Tao Te Ching / Verse 36**

**By Lao-Tsu**

**Contributed by Allan Holm:**

**"I have some favorite things. This is one. I hope it  
to be yours also."**

That which shrinks  
Must first expand.  
That which fails  
Must first be strong.  
That which is cast down  
Must first be raised.  
Before receiving  
There must be giving.  
This is called perception of the nature of things.  
Soft and weak overcome hard and strong.  
Fish cannot leave deep waters,  
And a country's weapons should not be  
displayed.



**DAN Promotions**

**Spring / Fall 2008**

- |   |                     |
|---|---------------------|
| Kent Standley<br>(May – Tahoe)          | 3 <sup>rd</sup> DAN |
| Marion Donehower<br>(November - Tucson) | 3 <sup>rd</sup> DAN |

**KYU Promotions**

**October 2008**

- |                 |                     |
|-----------------|---------------------|
| Kathleen Holder | 2 <sup>nd</sup> Kyu |
| Justin Azevedo  | 2 <sup>nd</sup> Kyu |
| Edim Kurtovic   | 4 <sup>th</sup> Kyu |
| Guy Michelier   | 5 <sup>th</sup> Kyu |
| Brian Campbell  | 6 <sup>th</sup> Kyu |

**Congratulations to all the candidates!**

**NEW DOJO WEBSITE!  
Aikidodavis.com**

**The dojo has a brand new and beautiful website at Aikidodavis.com! Thanks to Aniel and Sean for their hard work to create this invaluable dojo resource.**

**The Website has a complete and updated schedule of classes and events.**

**Check out the website at AikidoDavis.com to stay current with the latest changes and happenings.**

**GATEWAY TO AIKIDO  
A New Beginners' Class Starts in early January. Watch for the date!**

**GREAT IDEA for the HOLIDAYS! Looking for something to put in that special person's stocking? Now your search is over. The Sensei has released a box edition of the Aikido Curriculum DVDs – this seven-DVD set is an essential item in any aikidoka's library. Copies are available at the dojo.**

**Reminder: Please let Sensei know if and when you will miss classes for an extended period of time. Thanks!**