



East End Aikikai Newsletter

East End Aikikai's Second Anniversary Seminar



East End Aikikai celebrated its second anniversary with a seminar December 3rd and 4th with David Halprin, 6th Dan, Chief Instructor of Framingham Aikikai. Halprin Sensei was a long time student of Kanai Sensei. East End Aikikai student's were joined by students from Aikido Center of New Castle, Jersey Shore Aikikai, Framingham Aikikai, Aikido of Northern Virginia, Southern Maryland Aikido Center, and Allegheny

Aikikai. The two days of practice featured techniques unique to Kanai Sensei's style of Aikido and more advanced techniques than we have been generally practiced over the past year. The seven hours of fast-paced practice over two days was a good test of conditioning and a taste of where our practice is heading.

The potluck dinner and party on Saturday night was once again

a not-to-miss event. Halprin Sensei enjoyed his visit with us and has indicated his desire to return. Our annual seminar has been a great opportunity for East End Aikikai students to connect to the wider Aikido community.

Thanks to all who helped with cleaning, cooking, housing, registering, and hosting over the course of the seminar. The seminar was a great success.

Free Introductory Class

On Tuesday, January 3rd, East End Aikikai will offer a free introductory class to anyone interested in finding out what it is like to practice Aikido. The class will take place at the normal class time (6:30pm—7:30pm). Students are encouraged to invite anyone they know

who may be interested. An easy way to do this is to add invitations to the event on facebook. (Click on the facebook icon at the bottom of the dojo website.)

Students and guests are encouraged to RSVP ahead of time

to ensure there is space. The best way to do this is to RSVP on the East End Aikikai facebook page. Guests can also RSVP by sending an email from the East End Aikikai website (www.eastendaikido.com, see *Contact Us* page) or by calling the dojo (412-421-3686).

East End Aikikai
1918 Murray Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15217
(412) 421-3686
www.EastEndAikido.com

Upcoming Events:

- > January 3rd:
Free Introductory Class
- > Dojo Closed:
Jan 2nd: New Years
Jan 16th: Martin Luther King Jr.'s Birthday
Feb 20th: Washington's Birthday

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Pictures from Second Anniversary Seminar



Harmony in Aikido Practice

The word “Aikido” means “the way of harmony with the spirit of the Universe”. We seldom, if ever, discuss “harmony” during practice and to an untrained eye, Aikido practice can look like fighting rather than harmony. Where is the “harmony” in Aikido? As I see it, practicing Aikido is practicing harmony on two distinct yet related dimensions. First, we are practicing finding harmony among the various aspects of ourselves: our body, mind,

and spirit. Sometimes our body knows how to execute a certain movement, but fear, anticipation, or performance anxiety gets in our way. Sometimes we have a clear idea in our mind of how we would like to move, but we are unable to coordinate the various parts of our body effectively. Through observing ourselves in Aikido practice we gain insight into the particular ways in which the various aspects of ourselves are “out of alignment” with

each other and gradually we learn to better coordinate these aspects.

The second dimension of harmony in Aikido practice lies in the relationship between nage (“thrower”) and uke (“faller”). Aikido practice places the nage and uke in a pseudo-confrontational situation. This situation is designed to elicit our habitual response to confrontational situations. In doing so, we create a laboratory to study our own responses to such

situations. Two responses to such situations undermine harmony: avoidance and aggression. Examples of avoidance include: not practicing with someone whom you find difficult in some way, giving your partner half-hearted attacks, such as weak or inaccurate strikes, grabbing too loosely, or falling before you are thrown. Aggression usually manifests itself in being overly concerned with and in too

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October Tests

East End Aikikai held kyu tests at the end of October. Two students were promoted to 5th kyu. The 5th kyu test focuses on proper execution of basic techniques. Congratulations to:

5th Kyu

My Gibeaut

Jay Fournier



My Gibeaut



Jay Fournier

Harmony in Aikido Practice: Continued

"Through the laboratory of Aikido practice, we can observe avoidant and aggressive tendencies in ourselves and experiment with different ways of responding to confrontational situations..."

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much of a hurry to throw one's partner. Aikido techniques typically have three parts to them: entering into a position of relative safety and advantage, off-balancing the attacker, and finally throwing the attacker. When people rush to throw before doing a good entry or before off-balancing the attacker, aggressive impulses are often behind it. Aggression contributes to the tendency to rely on physical strength rather than proper form to execute the technique.

Through the laboratory of aikido practice, we can observe avoidant and aggressive tendencies in ourselves and experiment with different ways of respond-

ing to confrontational situations in a safe environment. While there are potential negative consequences in aikido practice, such as physical injury or upsetting your partner, in general, these consequences are minor compared to the consequences that we encounter in our life off the mat with bosses, significant others, etc.

While these two dimensions of harmony are distinct (harmony within ourselves and harmony with others), they are intertwined. Our ability to handle confrontational situations with others is related to our ability to coordinate the various aspects of ourselves, and being in a confrontational situation with

another person often heightens the difficulty we have in finding internal harmony. Unlike other internal practices, such as meditation or yoga, aikido provides an opportunity to observe and experiment with the interaction between these two dimensions of harmony.

Harmony, therefore, is an ideal that we strive for in aikido practice. We observe disharmony within ourselves and between ourselves and others as we practice. Insights from these observations gradually over years of dedicated practice bring us closer to this ideal.

Visit us on the web:
www.EastEndAikido.com

Aikido is a Japanese martial art which utilizes circular movements to redirect the momentum of an attacker. Although Aikido is a martial art founded on techniques of self-defense, its ultimate goal is perfecting the spirit. Through diligent practice, students overcome discord in themselves and learn to remain calm and centered in all situations. Aikido is practiced with a partner, does not require physical strength, and can be practiced by people of all abilities.

East End Aikikai is the only Aikido dojo in the Pittsburgh area affiliated with the United States Aikido Federation. The United States Aikido Federation is the premier Aikido organization in the United States with direct affiliation with Aikido World Headquarters in Tokyo, Japan.

East End Aikikai
1918 Murray Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15217
(412) 421-3686

Pittsburgh's only United
States Aikido Federation dojo.



Class Schedule beginning January 2011:

Monday	Adult Class	6:00pm – 7:00pm
	Weapons Class	7:15pm – 8:15pm
Tuesday	Free Practice	5:30pm – 6:30pm
	Adult Class	6:30pm – 7:30pm
Wednesday	Free Practice	5:30pm – 6:30pm
	Adult Class	6:30pm – 7:30pm
Thursday	Free Practice	5:30pm – 6:30pm
	Adult Class	6:30pm – 7:30pm
Friday	Adult Class	6:00pm – 7:00pm
Saturday	Adult Class	10:30am – 11:30am
	Ne-waza Class	11:45am – 12:45pm

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Phone: 412-421-3686

E-mail: info@eastendaikido.com

Dues:

Adult Membership:	\$75 monthly (unlimited classes)
Young Adult/Student Membership*:	\$60 monthly (unlimited classes)

* To qualify for this rate one must be under the age of 18 or a full-time undergraduate student at an accredited institution. Valid student ID and registrar's receipt must be presented.

