

Right to the end of his life, Morihei refined and improved his techniques, never losing his dedication to hard training. In the early spring of 1969, Morihei fell ill, and told Kisshomaru that "God is calling me . . ." Hospitalized, Morihei's condition was diagnosed as cancer of the liver. (All through his life Morihei had had frequent liver and stomach trouble. He blamed it on a salt-water drinking contest he had with a Japanese practitioner who was pestering Onisaburo or one of the Omoto-kyo believers to take the challenge. A more likely cause was excessively hard training.) He was returned home at his request to be near his *dojo*. Even though he was no longer able to physically conduct the practice, he could tell exactly what was going on by listening to the sounds in the *dojo*. Those with him said he was never stronger — his body had wasted away to almost nothing, but he was so heavy ten of his most powerful disciples were unable to lift him.

On April 15, Morihei's condition became critical; as his many disciples and friends made their final calls, he gave his last instructions: "Aikido is for the entire world. Train not for selfish reasons, but for all people everywhere." Early on the morning of April 26, the eighty-six-year-old Morihei took his son's hand, smiled, said "Take care of things," and died. Two months later to the day, Hatsu, his wife of sixty-seven years, followed him.

Morihei's ashes were buried in the family temple in Tanabe, and parts of his hair were enshrined in Ayabe, in the Aiki Shrine, and in the Kumano Juki Dojo (headed by Hikitsuchi Michio). Every year a memorial service is held on April 29 at the Aiki Shrine in Iwama.

R.S. Hehler:  
Aikido and the  
new warrior

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Morihei Ueshiba

## Excerpts from the Writings and Transcribed Lectures of the Founder, Morihei Ueshiba

Aiki is the activity of being taught by God about the echoes of the soul (*tamashii*) of the Universal Design (*shikumi*). Putting Aiki into action by means of the echoes of the totality of the Universal Soul, we must constantly bring forth power that is without limits. The structure of the echo of the soul of the universe possesses a power capable of resolving all things, regardless of their nature. The echo of the soul or spirit of the Universal Design (*shikumi*) is the *kotodama*. "Suuu-Uuuu-Yuuu-Mu." This is the one for Honos Wake Island (which is a symbolic term for this earth). The echo of the soul of the Universal Structure learns from the entire universe and rescues all to a unity with the center of the cosmos. Nothing less than becoming one with the universe will suffice. Then you can progress in concert with the universe. In this way, you go about the job of correctly constructing this Universal Design within your own body. By means of this echoing of the soul of the Universal Structure, you absorb the many things into your individual self and blend with them. As an extension of this, you become reconciled with the spirit/mind of the people of the whole world. This is nothing less than the act of blending in harmony and unity. Of course, it goes without saying that things like wars, conflicts and arguments are wrong. Blend in harmony and unity. This is "Aiki". A person who attempts to bind the world together in peace and unity is called the True Person and Aiki is the way of cultivating such genuine people. Inasmuch as it is this, the fostering of com-

in  
revelation

mon sense, physical health, virtue, wisdom and ki all become very important. Naturally, of its own accord, the spirit/mind of the self will be rectified and a genuine self will be constructed. In short, Aikido is a method of misogi (ritual purification). Through the technique of misogi you should continually forge the Great Spirit of Love and Protection toward all things while protecting the logical sequence of the multitudes of gods and all creation. Thus, you can finally accomplish your own mission. The reason or logic of all creation and the gods are laws which accurately reveal the formations of the precious workings of the beautiful, ongoing universe. All this originates from the Single-Source. Therefore, you should observe carefully the genuine images of the totality of creation and of the multitude of godly beings, and store away these observations in your abdomen. These will become your personal foundation from which there will bloom enlightenment. So, too, you must continue in your Aikido *shugyō* (austere training) ever more diligently. In doing so, you should not be negligent in devoting yourself to training and to attempting to improve. At the same time you must constantly reflect on what you have done. As a result, you will have developed and attained a balanced body that is one with your mind. At that point it becomes important for people who train in Aikido to reintegrate the logic and reason of the gods and all creation into budo. This is what I mean by observing the true images that result from the logical, sequential unfolding of creation and the gods. By observing true phenomena it is possible to construct Aikido techniques through the medium of the Principle of Aiki. This you must do while paying attention to even the most subtle changes in the universe. Without a knowledge of these true images, you will never achieve oneness with the Truth of the Universal no matter what else you may do. Lacking oneness, you will likewise be unable to fully manifest in this world the mission of your life as a human being. To attain this in actual fact it is important that you "aiki" with the Truth of the Universal. Spring, summer, autumn and winter, we see the fluctuations of the seasons in the true image of the universe. Similarly, we see in human beings the flow of emotions between happiness, sadness, anger and

pleasure. Despite such ups and downs you must minute by minute seek oneness with the volition of the universe. For people who discipline themselves through Aikido, it is all important to delve deeply into the workings of the Single-Origin and to respectfully measure up to the truth of the Universal. All this means that one must be able to deal with any and all situations in the Great Spirit of Loving Protection toward all things. To be able to do so is to complete one of the tasks of the Aikido practitioner, the result of which is the building of a world where the lives of all are a pleasure. As I have so often said, 'The beautiful form of the Heavens and the Earth which the Lord has made has become as a single family.' We must construct a truly beautiful, truly splendid world. We learn of an infinite power when the gods reveal the echo of the soul of the Universal Design, a power which possesses the strength to bind together and unify this world in peace and harmony.

Aiki is the training and perfecting of the *Yamato damashii* (Japanese Spirit) in this world. In saying this I am speaking to you all as a member of the Japanese family and as a member of the world human family as well. From now on the whole world must proceed in unified accord. Here today, we see the nation of Japan waver and hesitate in this task. The country is greatly upset. We must extricate ourselves from this situation as soon as possible and in a friendly manner, like a single family, proceed toward harmony and unity based on a spiritual bond (*musubi*). As Japanese, we must start afresh in this task here, from Japan. First one must cultivate this thing we call the self, next we must put our own homes and families in order. Then comes our own nation and finally we must reach an accord with the Universe. Reality, Images and the Gods — we must reconcile all the Three Worlds, and protect them. This is the mission of Aikido.

In our country, the so-called Three Imperial Regalia (*Sanshu no Jingi*) appear in our old mythology where we hear of the Sacred Sword, Mirror and Curved Jewel. But the stories are not speaking of a physical sword or mirror. Rather these symbols are a hidden way of speaking about the jewels of the spirit which are

indispensable for every person — wisdom, benevolent virtue and courage. Aikido teaches that we must sequester the forms of the ancient regalia (godly objects) inside our abdomens and then perform austere training. By looking closely at history, from the Age of the Gods onwards, one must come to a realization of this Path by one's own efforts. This act of realization is an internal thing. You scrutinize thoroughly your inner abdomen asking from where this thing called the Self arose, and just how you should deal with things and events. To know yourself well is each person's heaven-sent mission in life. Then, should we some time look back over our lives, at our pasts, I can imagine no happier sight than to see that all of us have trained joyfully.

The bright world of this life is the apparition of the total virtue of the operations of the God of the Single-Origin. We, too, are part of all this. We are part of this functioning in the world. This history and this thread of life are continuous and without gaps. It has been made from the ancient past straight through to the ultimate future. All these things you must contemplate. "To know thyself" well is of utmost importance.

The Aikido which I am now doing is a Path that builds people, a Way of forging and tempering the body and spirit. It is not a way that injures others, nor is it one that wields against them the evil sword of death. I humbly ask that you, too, give deep thought to these considerations.

The training in Aiki concerns itself most with the practicing of ki-gata (ki-"forms") and the method of perfecting them. The most important element in true ki-gata is the quality called shinken-shobu (lit: 'a fight to the finish with real swords' and implies a certain seriousness of attitude in training). In budo there is no so-called "shiai" or competitive matches of the type seen in sports. If we were to have matches they would become life and death situations. Nonetheless, the vain striving after victory and defeat is a big problem since in point of fact, destruction, injury, and murder are major crimes against human life. Balancing the budo which has come down to us from the ancient days of our country there has stood the Buddhist commandments of 'Thou shall not kill' and

'Thou shall not destroy.' The true budo of our country is a road of great reconciliation and pacification. It is misogi, ritual purification, of the spirit/mind and the body. In instituting on earth the rules of heaven and the purport of humanity, the first commandment of bu (martial concerns) is to put the self in proper order and to protect all things. On the contrary, though, in these times we often find that those responsible for teaching bu have often descended to passing on not the true budo of ancient Japan but a later, militaristic budo of the medieval period. This is deplorable and causes me sadness.

Aikido is a budo of harmony and accord. That is to say it is a form which manifests the Single-Soul, the Four Spirits, the Three Origins and the Eight Powers, it is the life of Universal Governance. That rule is here in the palm of this hand. In the body and soul of each of you, in your families, as well, there is a Takaamahara (capital or center of command of the universe). This reason or principle is inside each of us. We have the responsibility to see it put into effect and defend it across the Three Worlds of Reality, Appearances and the Gods.

The true Japanese budo must be the spirit of harmony and loving protection of all creation. The meaning of this accord is that you help each and every person complete and fulfill their personal heaven-sent mission in life and thus you reach your own perfection.

The "michi" or Path means to become one with the great and holy spirit of god and never to separate from it, exactly like the blood that circulates within the body. It means to put this great and honored spirit into action. Should it digress from the great and honored spirit of God even slightly, it is not the 'michi', not the 'Way'.

Do not look at your opponent's eyes. Your spirit/mind will be drawn in. Do not look at his sword. You will be distracted ("Your ki will be grabbed away"). Do not look at your opponent. You will be taken in by his ki. True bu is the training of a kind of gravitation (lit.: pulling power) that is able to absorb the opponent's whole

being. Thus, I simply stand here like this and I am ready.

In Ueshiba's Aikido, there are no enemies. The mistake is to begin to think that budo means to have an opponent or enemy; someone you want to be stronger than, someone you want to throw down. In true budo there is no enemy or opponent. True Budo is to become one with the universe. It is to reduce everything to unity with the center of the universe or, it is to return to the unity of the self with the universe. In Aikido we do not train to become powerful or to throw down some opponent. Rather we train in hopes of being of some use, however small our role may be, in the task of bringing peace to mankind around the world. In this hope we become one with the Universal. It is necessary to have a heart that strives to achieve this unification of the self and the universe.

Although some may ask if the Aiki of my budo comes from religion, it is not so. The True Budo shines forth and illuminates religion. It is a guide which leads incomplete religion to perfection.

In my own case whatever may happen, no matter what becomes of me, it matters not. There is no attachment, neither to life nor to death. I just leave it all in the hands of God. This applies not only when one takes up the sword and stands ready, but in all situations and at all times, abstain from attachments to life or to death. One must have a spirit of entrusting all to God.

In True Budo there is no enemy. True Budo is the work of love. It is not fighting and killing. Rather it gives life and fosters all things; it is the task of generation and perfection. In love, the protection of all is uppermost, and without love nothing can be. Indeed the "Way" of Aiki is a manifestation of love.

All the works of man are the subtle functions of the kotodama (spirit-of-the-word). If a person really looks deeply into the self he will understand by means of auditory echoes. More than anything else, Aikido comes to life in the echo of auditory sensations. Though on this earth, ceaselessly reach for the heavens; aim for the sky! One must progress in concert with the echo. The echo, and everything else are wholly contained in the self.

In a certain sense Aiki means to replace the sword with one's own living or breathing sincerity, and grasping it, to banish all

evils. In the end, it is to change the world of physical soul into the world of the spiritual soul. This is the task before Aikido. The physical soul is below, while the spiritual soul is above and it becomes the surface or exterior. What is more, Aikido makes a fine flower of the soul bloom in this life and world, and brings forth the fruits or truth essence, or the sincerity of the spirit. Aikido becomes the main force of governance, and an art which offers up service to the Supreme Sincerity which is the Ultimate Good and the Ultimate Love of this world.

Without Bu, a nation perishes. Indeed Bu is the life, the soul, that protects love. It is the root of science.

For people who are resolved to do austere training through Aikido the task before them is to open the eyes of the spirit. By means of Aiki, they must listen to the Supreme Sincerity of God and cause it to become an active reality. They must master the feeling of the *misogi* of this great Aiki, put it into practice and move along with the Great Universe in a way that does not disrupt its course. They must joyfully engage in the tempering of the soul. Therefore, I would like to see people with heart listen to the voice of Aiki. It is not to correct others but to rectify one's self. This is Aiki. This is the mission of Aiki. And this must become the individual mission for each of us as well.



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Morihei Ueshiba

## “Accord with the Totality of the Universe”

The road to reconstruction for the physically weak people of today lies in Aikido. This is a great truth handed down from the (Universe of) Heaven and Earth. Aikido is the *budo* (martial art) which opens the road to harmony; it is that which is at the root of the great spirit of reunification of all manifest creation.

The Great Universe embodies all the forces and powers (lit., “the one soul, the 4 spirits, the 3 origins and the 8 powers”) and from them have come the origins of the human life force. The universe and mankind are as a single body. However, while man is unable to accomplish this union is his unhappy condition. When a person stands before a shrine and prays his silent prayers it is for no other purpose than to unify himself with the godhead.

*The beautiful form of the Universe of  
Heaven and Earth*

*Has become one family made by the Lord.*

This world and all of Mother Nature’s greatness are but one. In this unity there is nothing that defines an enemy, nor does it distinguish a friend. We must hope for peaceful and pleasant surroundings where fighting has been forgotten.

The universe itself, all that is manifested in Mother Nature, can be called “a Crystalization of the Wisdom” or the “United Body of Love”.

Mankind’s role is to fulfill his heaven-sent purpose through

Morihei Ueshiba

a sincere heart that is in harmony with all creation and loves all things. By so doing he fills his days with happiness, and such a life would help those who are weak of body.

30 years ago I was extremely weak of body. At that time I secretly harbored a dream. In this dream I wanted to be the strongest man in all of Japan — no, more than that, in the entire world! I decided I would become the possessor of a martial power unequalled by anyone. With this dream before me I trained severely. One day a navy man confronted me, a person said to be a 7th-dan-holder in Kendo. Strangely, as I faced him I felt as if my body were surrounded by a shining brightness and I easily secured victory.

After that, however, a conceited feeling was born inside of me, and while walking through a garden I thought that innumerable golden threads came down to me from the universe. Then, a golden light whelmed up from the earth and engulfed me. Eventually I attained a feeling that my body was turned into a body of gold that expanded to universal proportions. Here I felt that the God(s) were chastising me for my ever-growing conceit and I cried tears of gratitude.

In the past, there have been a number of superlative masters of martial arts but we should never forget the great number of them who disappeared on the battlefield of this martial world simply for lack of enough training in the true spirit of *budo*, in sincere love, and in the battle against the self.

Thus, by imbibing the principle of the Universal, and receiving the *ki* of the Heaven and Earth, when I unified this entire human body, I realized the subtle depth of Aikido that manifests such great power, and attained the principle of oneness with the Universe.

Even so, as I travelled down this path I found human interaction had become more and more of a hindrance so I moved up to Tokyo and now I have retreated to (a farm in) Iwama, in Ibaraki Prefecture. It seems that by lessening my interaction with human beings I am much more able to acutely intuit the principle of oneness with the Universe.

To put it briefly, the problem with the weak-bodied people of today is that they are unable to survive in a world of absolute accord and absolute non-desire. So here I would like to introduce my daily regime because I think it can be a great help to the physically weak.

In the early morning hours, before dawn, at 4:00 I am out of bed, and immediately perform a *misogi* (purification ritual) by wiping off my entire body with icy water. Then I go outside barefoot, and pray to the eastern sky. Tying my *ki* together with that of the universe, I greet and commune with all creation. This is when I become one with the Universe and imbibe and inhale the holy teachings of Heaven and Earth. My form, standing in front of the shrine (of the Universe) is in a state of harmony with the Heavens and the Earth.

Next I pray to the 4 directions and lift my eyes to the shrine of the eight gods in the Imperial Palace wishing His Imperial Majesty, the Emperor, long life (*banzai*). So doing we placate all the gods and pray for their pacification.

There is also the method of vocalization known as *Aikido Kotodama*. The intoning of the 75 sounds forms words of purification for the universe.

*Heavenly Father, by creating the 75 utterances  
You deign to teach the Way of Aiki.*

In this state a person becomes one with the plants and trees and there is no discrimination of any sort. Here lies the opportunity for feeling the greatest happiness possible in life. A joy to which nothing can be compared.

Next I stand before the household shrine. After a short time I perform prayers before the nearby Aiki Shrine which honors *Hayatakenushi No O Mikoto, Sarutahiko No O kami* and various others of the gods. Recently the number of those coming to pay their respects at this shrine has grown ever larger. I'm sure that many readers may be interested in joining their numbers. (The shrine is located in Iwama town, Ibaraki Prefecture, and can be reached by taking the Joban Line from Tokyo to Iwama. It is only

a 7 or 8 minute walk from the station.)

In summary, weak people are the result of not knowing the truth of the unity of mankind with the Heavens and the Earth. By realizing the principle of unification with the Universal (*tenchi*) and making it active in your daily life, human beings become capable of sending forth the "holy technique of the gods".

(From "Ningen no Shinri", September 1958, courtesy of Sadateru Arikawa Sensei)

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onderwijs van Hemelen Aard