

Aiki



News

The Newsletter of the Sri Lanka Aikido Association—Sri Lanka Aikiai

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Friends,

It's July already and the rest of the world is celebrating the onset of Summer.

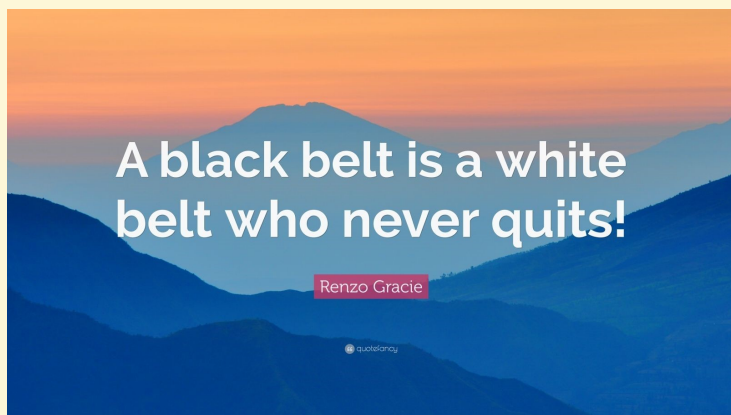
It is a time when you suddenly wake up and realise that half the year has flown and there's nothing much to show for it. Blame the whole covid saga for that.

Anyway, the good news is that practices are continuing at Nugegoda, Wattala and Borella Dojos and the attendance seems to be picking up.

Also Hombu are planning to recommence their Instructional Tours and there is a strong possibility that we will have an Instructor visit and Grading next year. So, do continue regular training and be prepared.

Starting with this issue we are commencing a series on "Bushido - The Way of the Samurai". So if anyone would like to contribute by way of articles, pictures or just comments, they are welcome to send them to me via email (kroonn@yahoo.com) or Whatsapp (0717572041).

Neville Kroon





Teaching Kids the way of Harmony

In a world often filled with conflict and discord, it becomes increasingly important to instill the values of harmony and peaceful coexistence in the next generation. Aikido, a martial art rooted in the principles of blending and redirecting energy, offers a profound teaching that extends beyond physical self-defense. As a sensei of Aikido from the Sri Lankan Aikido Association Aikikai, it is my privilege to guide young students toward understanding the significance of harmony in their lives.



The Essence of Harmony:

Harmony is the state of peaceful balance achieved when individuals come together with mutual respect and understanding. Aikido embodies this concept at its core. Derived from the Japanese words "ai" (meaning harmony) and "ki" (meaning energy), Aikido focuses on redirecting and neutralizing aggression, rather than meeting force with force. By teaching children the art of Aikido, we empower them to approach conflict with empathy, cooperation, and a desire for resolution rather than escalation.

Lessons in Self-Defense:

While Aikido techniques are effective for self-defense, the true essence lies in the harmony it promotes. We emphasize the notion that one's ultimate goal should be to neutralize conflict and restore harmony, rather than inflicting harm. By teaching children Aikido, we equip them with the physical skills necessary to protect themselves, but more importantly, we imbue them with the wisdom to discern when violence can be avoided altogether.



The Power of Blending:

A fundamental principle of Aikido is the art of blending with an at-

tacker's energy. Through techniques such as blending, redirecting, and immobilizing, students learn that there is strength in adaptability and flexibility. This valuable lesson extends beyond the dojo (training hall) and into their everyday lives. By teaching children to adapt and find common ground with others, we empower them to build positive relationships and resolve conflicts amicably.

Cultivating Empathy and Respect:

Aikido encourages practitioners to cultivate empathy and respect for one another. By training alongside different partners, children learn to understand their peers' perspectives, strengths, and weaknesses. They develop the ability to connect and harmonize with individuals from diverse backgrounds, fostering a sense of unity and compassion. This mindset helps to foster a more inclusive and empathetic society, where conflicts can be resolved through understanding rather than confrontation.

The Path to Personal Growth:

Beyond physical techniques, Aikido provides a holistic approach to personal growth. Students are taught to develop discipline, self-control, and perseverance. Through regular practice, they learn to overcome challenges, both physical and mental, and embrace the journey of self-improvement. By cultivating these qualities, children become better equipped to handle life's obstacles, demonstrating resilience, grace, and a commitment to maintaining harmony in all aspects of their lives.

Conclusion:

As a sensei of Aikido from the Sri Lankan Aikido Association Aikikai, I am honored to guide young minds toward the profound teachings of harmony. Through the principles of Aikido, children learn not only self-defense techniques but also the im-

portance of empathy, respect, and peaceful conflict resolution. By imparting these valuable lessons, we can help shape a future generation that embraces harmony and strives for peaceful coexistence, making the world a better place for all.

The enthusiasm and the energy of these kids is amazing. With each and everyone having different styles and approaches to this somewhat complicated martial art, they keep wanting more and catch up very quickly. Keeping them in order is another story as few are very young and have that playfulness in their minds. But as Aikido has strict discipline they do listen to the sensei and the senior Sempai. Starting from laying the Tatami, mopping them, keeping the slippers in line, respecting the dojo when stepping in and out and also respecting the seniors and each other. These little things go a long way as they grow up and will definitely



have an impact on their future lives. Recently we were lucky as we got a box full of Keiko Gi for the kids, bags and other small items specifically sent to us by Zenten Aikido Club in Japan. Sensei Andrew Leitch inspired this with his little aikais.

We thank them for sending these as the kids loved it. We will go from strength to strength and hope these young enthusiasts will continue this beautiful art of harmony!

Ending on a lighter note, as when I tell my old school friends about how difficult it is to control kids, they say it's karma biting back as I have given a hard time to all my teachers and masters during my college days 😊

Sensei Mahesh Manapperuma

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Balancing confidence and openness to new information is key. It's a winning formula for learning, allowing us to embrace our knowledge while staying aware of what we have yet to discover. Being confident enough to embody Aikido principles allows us to own what we know and be aware of how much else there is to learn. In Aikido practice, confidence manifests as strong intent, or ability to initiate the movement, as well as execute the technique and follow through with an appropriate force.

Humility allows us to receive new information, see our openings and adjust our movement. Both attitudes inform each other and rely on being mindful. In other words, being confident allows us to stay humble, and in turn, being humble helps develop confidence.

Many instructors have shared that they initially approached Aikido with aspirations of mastering it within a few years. However, true enlightenment dawned upon them when they recognized the impossibility of such a feat, igniting the journey of genuine learning. As much as lack of humility can prevent progress, lack of confidence can make it equally difficult. Being unsure weakens mental energy, or



principles difficult.

In my experience, for most, confidence comes with years of practice, and the balance unfolds naturally. It is possible though, especially when one mostly teaches or works with familiar partners to forget how to be humble. And sometimes we struggle with confidence, and continue to doubt our ability, even after years of training. Both attitudes tend to slow down the progress.

Being confident when you are smaller or less experienced than your partner is not always easy. It allows us to train with the same attitude no matter who we practice with. Being smaller or weaker can also be an advantage and force us to develop better skills. On the other hand, being bigger and stronger limits self-doubt, and combined with openness to learning can help with progress.

Through participation in regular classes and seminars, whether we train alongside our instructors,

peers, or juniors, we have the opportunity to discover the ideal equilibrium of attitudes. Navigating this process requires keen insight, self-awareness, feedback, and self-correction. Remaining vigilant against the pitfalls of arrogance and insecurity, and how they hinder our learning, can be just as crucial as the physical aspects of practice.

Balancing these attitudes involves applying the Aikido principle of simultaneous yielding and entering. This skill extends beyond Aikido and can be applied to any field of study, serving as a valuable lesson from the Art of Peace that is applicable to daily life. In fact, cultivating a harmonious blend of confidence and humility can be a profound outcome of Aikido training.

I DO
AI KI DO
What DO you DO




Sensei Thilanka Liyanage


Bushido - The way of the Samurai

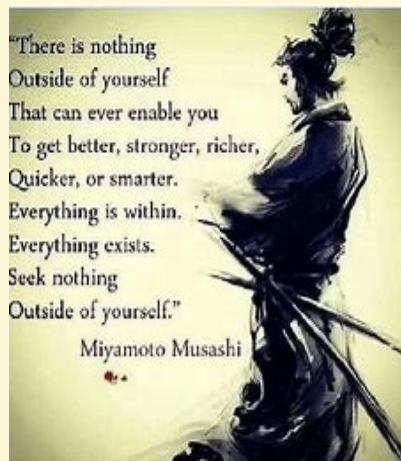
1. "Mastering Life After 30: The Samurai Way"


As men transition into their thirties and beyond, they encounter significant life changes - from career to family dynamics and personal responsibilities. This stage often shifts focus from self-exploration and happiness seeking to establishing a stable career, raising children, and contributing to the community. Concurrently, they must also prioritize health, as it no longer naturally retains its youthful vigor.


To navigate these challenges, men can draw from the tenets of Bushido, the Samurai code. These timeless principles guided Samurai to execute their duties with respect, decisiveness, and bravery:

 **Loyalty:** Akin to Samurai's dedication to their masters, men should foster loyalty to family, friends, and colleagues. It's essential to honor commitments and avoid betraying trust.


 **Courage:** Fearless in the face of danger, Samurai willingly tackled difficulties and challenges. For a man in his thirties, courage involves accepting risks, confronting difficulties, and not fearing failure.



 **Patience:** Trained to be patient, Samurai understood that success takes time. Men in their thirties must cultivate patience, especially when facing difficulties or challenges.

 **Respect:** Samurai respected everyone, recognizing everyone's inherent value. This translates to valuing others' opinions and feel-

ings, without demeaning or belittling anyone.

 **Self-Control:** Samurai controlled their emotions and behavior, not allowing feelings to dictate actions. For men in their thirties, this means not letting negative emotions or failures affect decisions and actions. These virtues are worthy of emulation and practice to navigate life's challenges effectively.

Courtesy: "Samurai Art"

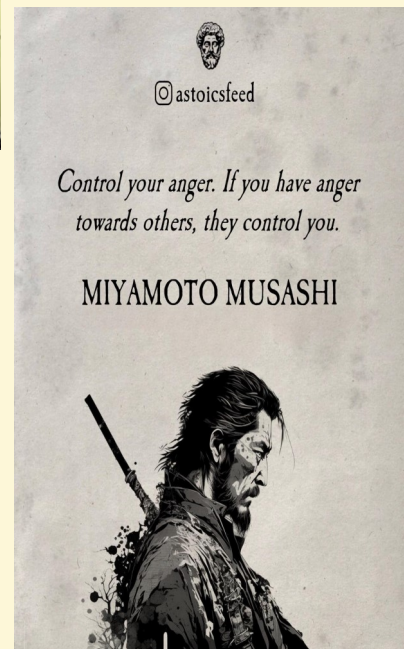
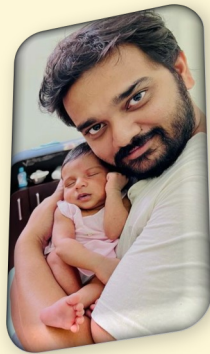


PHOTO CORNER

Congratulations to Michelle and Anithab on welcoming their first child, daughter Miana. A future Aikidoka?



Nugegoda Dojo - Kagami Biraki. New Year 2023



Award of Grading Certificates at Nugegoda Dojo



TANABATA

七夕

Tanabata is a vibrant and enchanting custom celebrated in Japan on July 7th. It is based on the romantic tale of two celestial lovers, Orihime (the weaver princess) and Hikoboshi (the cow-herd).

Tanabata is the festival that centers around the idea of star-crossed lovers who are only allowed to meet once a year on this special day, forming a bridge of magpies across the Milky Way.

During Tanabata, colorful decorations are hung on bamboo branches in homes, streets, and public spaces. These decorations are called "tanzaku" and are strips of paper on which people write their wishes and hopes. The tanzaku are believed to be granted if displayed during the festival.

Celebrations often include parades, music, traditional dances, and street performances. The atmosphere is joyous and lively, with people wearing traditional yukatas and participating in various activities.

Tanabata is not only a time for making wishes but also an occasion to appreciate the beauty of the summer night sky. It represents the importance of love, dreams, and the belief that wishes can come true. The festival brings communities together, fostering a sense of unity among people.



Courtesy: Ms. Anna Suzuki

2nd Secretary Public Relations and Cultural Affairs
Embassy of Japan in Sri Lanka

A BLAST FROM THE PAST



THE PEPILYANA DOJO 1999

Exhibitions & Training Seminars over the years



Shihan Tadashi Kumenoi
with Sensei Indika Maligaspe



Shihan Tadashi Kumenoi with
Sensei Mahesh Mannapperuma



Shihan Makoto Ito with Sensei Indika
Maligaspe



Shihan Hiroyuki Sakurai



Shihan Tomohiro Mori

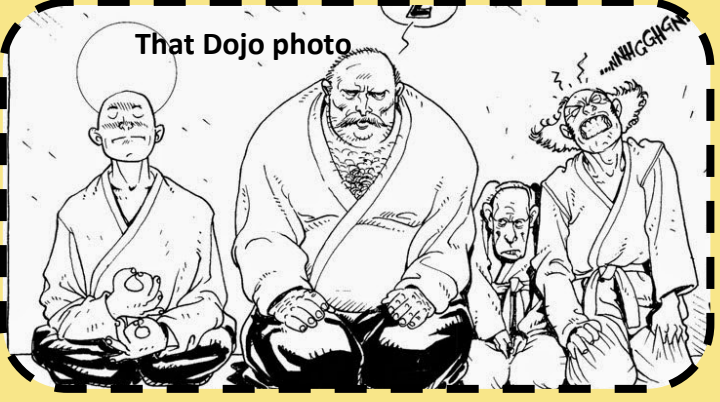
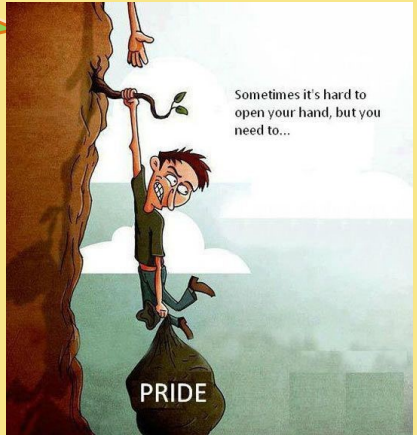
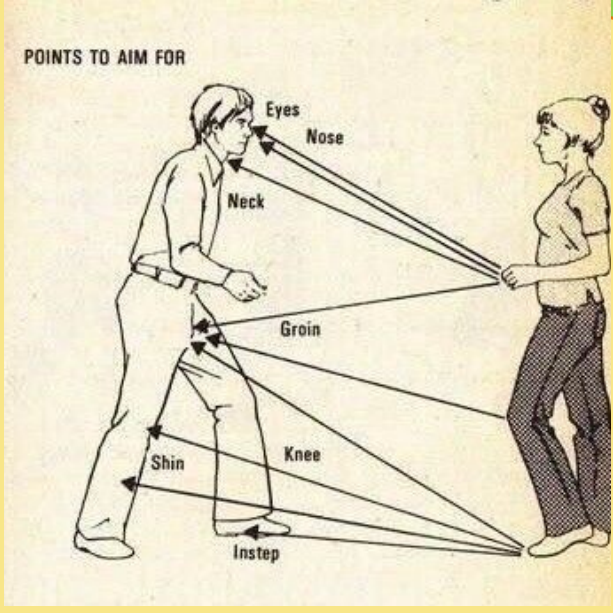


Shihan Hiroshi Fujimaki



Snr. Sensei Ajith Goonetilleke

THE LAST WORD



WHY PEOPLE GIVE UP

 expect fast results	 stop believing in themselves	 get stuck in the past	 dwell on mistakes
 fear the future	 resist change	 give up their power	 believe in their weaknesses
 feel the world owes them something	 fear failure more than desire success	 never visualize what is possible	 feel they have something to lose
 overwork	 assume their problems are unique	 see failure as the signal to turn back	 feel sorry for themselves

SO, DON'T GIVE UP; EVER !

by Anna Vital



Ok! Guys. So that's it for now.

Keep on practicing and we'll see you'all in the next newsletter in October.

Cheers NK.