



ABUNDANT PEACE AIKIDO & T'AI CHI

Connections

Editorial



September is always a hectic time in our martial community, and this year is no exception! There are two aikido seminars taking place, a first that we will host and a second that we will travel to attend; and, a new class of beginner t'ai chi students will take those first steps down their personal path of study and enlightenment. As well,

it is not unusual at this time of year to see an influx of new aikido beginners, taking on a new course of study as their lives transition with the seasons.

This fall also brought to our community another sad transition, with the passing of Brian Mulligan. Brian was a fixture of our t'ai chi program for many years, and was diagnosed with cancer in the spring. He subsequently endured several rounds of chemotherapy treatment. Brian continued coming to class throughout this time and never wavered from his smiling and optimistic attitude. After the last treatment, however, he contracted an infection and passed away shortly thereafter. Brian was a



September 2011

valuable member of our community, always willing to help out and ensure a situation was better than when he found it. Brian's smiling presence will surely be missed.

I hope your summer has been pleasant and positive, and that you each had time to chase the sunshine, at least a little!

-Stuart-

We Remember



Memorial Services

Informal Gathering
Sunday 11 Sep 11
Evening, Further
Details are TBA

Buddhist Ceremony
Saturday 17 Sep 11
@ 2:00 PM
Details are TBA

Aikido Promotions

We congratulate those of us who were promoted in August:

Kids

:Leo M. Jr. 11th Kyu
Julia S. 8th Kyu

Adults

Chad S. 9th Kyu
Vitaly A. 9th Kyu

Congratulations! Fall Course Schedule

Eight Pieces of Brocade Chi Gong
Sunday, October 16th 2:00 to 5:00 PM

This is an ancient form of movement Chi Gong consisting of eight gentle exercises. East to learn and fun to do, it takes only ten minutes to complete the set. It will stimulate the major acupuncture meridians, which will restore a strong flow of qi or energy. Tremendous for dissolving stress, it also increases muscular strength, improves balance, and enhances flexibility.

Inner Art of Relaxation
Sunday, November 6th 2:00 to 5:00 PM

In our modern age, stress is the greatest threat to our health and well being. This easy and enjoyable program will teach you how to effectively reduce the negative effects of the stresses of our daily lives.

Sitting 8 Pieces of Brocade Chi Gong
Sunday, November 27th 2:00 to 5:00 PM

This is a gentle set of eight easy to learn movements, different from the standing set, which will build good health, mental clarity, and increased flow of energy throughout the body. It is very meditative and internally focused; a great way to energize at the start of your day, or to wind down at the end of it.



Announcements

Cyndy Hayashi Sensei will once again conduct a seminar at our Dojo, on the weekend of September 9th and 10th. These are energetic and enjoyable, and are appropriate to aikido students of all ranks.

Friday, 9th September 2011

Registration: 6:00 to 6:30 PM

Keiko: 6:30 to 8:30 PM

Saturday, 10th September 2011

Keiko: 1:30 to 3:30 PM

Keiko: 5:30 to 7:30 PM



Saotome Sensei will present his annual fall seminar on the weekend of 23 to 25 September 2011. Many of us have made this trip before, and it appears we will once again have a large contingent.

Friday, 23rd September 2011

Registration: 6:00 to 6:45 PM

Keiko: 7:00 to 8:30 PM

Saturday, 24th September 2011

Keiko: 10:00 Am to 12:00 Noon

Keiko: 3:00 to 5:00 PM

Potluck: 7:30 to 10:30 PM

Sunday, 25th September 2011

Keiko: 10:00 AM to 12:00 Noon

Keiko: 2:30 to 4:30 PM



Morning keiko has been sporadic, and depends upon who is available. If you are interested, speak with Stuart; efforts will be made to resume our regular routine of "mid-morning" practice in the fall.

Dojo care has also been sporadically managed over the summer; that must be corrected, another priority we will pay greater attention to. In advance of the Hayashi Sensei seminar this coming weekend, we need a few volunteers to meet at the Dojo for 4:00 PM on Friday, 9th September 2011. Please contact Stuart if you are available to assist.

Training Equipment. Remember that our School can obtain for you the training uniforms and weapons you need. These are conveniently delivered to the school at a fair and reasonable price; please communicate your desires to Sensei.

The Fall 2011 T'ai Chi Beginner Course will begin on Saturday, 17th September 2011. If you know of anyone that might be interested, please share this date with them. The beginner class starts at 4:15 PM; students should dress comfortably and arrive early for registration.

O Sensei's Wisdom



"Study how water flows in a valley stream, smoothly and freely between the rocks. Also learn from holy books and wise people. Everything, even mountains, rivers, plants and trees, should be your teacher."

-Ueshiba Morihei, O'Sensei-

Beginning Tai Chi Practice

We get lots of questions about how to cope with your tai chi practice. The first thing to say is that it is a good idea to practice for at least 15 minutes every day. As with many other physical activities practicing frequently is better than having a mammoth 2 hour session all in one go. Here are some of the more frequently asked questions about practicing. But above all relax an enjoy yourself.

What is the best time of day to practice my tai chi?

The best time of the day to practice is when you can fit it in! It also depends on whether you want tai chi to relax and energise you for a good start to the day. Or whether you want tai chi to help you wind down at the end of the day and feel peaceful and calm. If you're one of those people that start to buzz after exercise ask yourself if it will keep you awake! Tai chi exercises are so versatile there's nothing to stop you doing both. If you have arthritis or are stiff you will know when your joints are at their best and you might want to do the tai chi warm up exercises - just to get you going.

What if I can't remember what to do?

It happens to us all. Especially when you are just starting, and its all new. We always recommend that you purchase a copy of our audio CD, as it will help guide you through the basic movements, and refresh your memory as you listen. It is then possible to concentrate on the body kinetics, such as how you move the hands, or how you co-ordinate top and bottom half of the body.

How long will my qigong and tai chi practice take?

Ideally you want to be able to practice your tai chi for 15 minutes a day - in three 5 minute chunks if you absolutely have to - you could work on an individual movement or practice weight shifting or breathing.

Tai chi forms and Qi Gong exercises can be done in a variety of timed sessions. You could do a 5, 10 or 15 minute session. And, its better to give yourself longer on the days that you are learning new things. Its much better to practice a few exercises well than do lots badly. Having said that, sometimes with forms you need to be able to get from one end to the other. A lot will depend on your personality and learning preferences.

If you want to learn tai chi forms in 15 minutes a day you are probably going to have to learn a single move at a time. So you just need to be aware that progress is going to feel slow.

Very simply, beginner students who practice on their own learn the set more quickly, and retain that knowledge more easily, than those who do not, so give yourself a chance to experience that!