# Two Cranes Aikido Student Handbook

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INTRODUCTION

This handbook is designed to introduce you to the practice of Aikido at Two Cranes Aikido. It provides a discussion of the fundamental philosophy and goals of Aikido training, how to begin training as a student, how to advance, what to expect during a class, dojo etiquette, how to participate in getting (and keeping) the dojo ready for class, training fees, and more.

Aikido is a martial art and spiritual discipline created by Morihei Ueshiba O Sensei (1883 – 1969). The name Aikido consists of three parts: AI means harmony; KI refers to life energy, the essence of all things in nature; DO means a path or way. Thus Aikido, the Art of Peace, can be thought of as the way to harmonize vital energy. Ultimately, it is a way to cultivate profound personal growth through martial arts practice. Aikido is the study of harmony within each person (mind, body and spirit), and ultimately, harmony with the universe. The self defense techniques practiced in Aikido teach us, in an experiential and physical way, the power of harmony which can transcend and eradicate violence.

About O Sensei

The founder of Aikido was born in 1883 in Japan. An exemplary martial artist, he combined his expertise with his spiritual and ethical insights to form modern Aikido. His genius was to discover that applied non-violence is one of the most potent weapons human beings possess. As an experienced warrior, he realized that the true martial art must go beyond concerns of winning and losing; it must be a means of personal transforma-

tion leading to the realization of the harmonious nature of the universe. Until his death in 1969, O Sensei dedicated himself to continual exploration of the Art of Peace.

Aikido Training

Our practice emphasizes physical fluidity and mental acuity rather than effort and strength in resolving the conflicts presented in the techniques. Relaxation under stress is encouraged as well as centering and energy awareness. Focused awareness and full commitment, not physical resistance, are what provide the power behind Aikido’s defensive techniques. Aikido training also fosters calmness and self-confidence so that conflict can be resolved in an assertive and peaceful manner, on and off the mat.

Everyone trains together: old and young, veterans and beginners, flexible and stiff. By practicing with different partners, we learn to shape the technique to fit each situation. We discover how to find resolve in every time we encounter another person. Our practice invites us to build a solid foundation in the art of living mindfully and skillfully.

Aikido teaches that effective self-defense requires responsive (rather than reactive) movement. The method of Aikido encourages intelligent action and cultivates precise movement. The self-defense skills acquired in training provide a broad range of responses to attack and also develop an attitude of protection for both self and aggressor. Aikido assumes that true victory is achieved when conflict is brought to peaceful resolution.

“As an Aikido teacher, I am interested in creative and compassionate leadership. The skills we embody in the martial arts compels us to focus on what truly matters: finding our unwavering courage, touching our capacity for kindness and recognizing the truth that we are all connected.” – Kimberly Richardson Sensei
**Teaching Staff**

Chief Instructor: Kimberly Richardson Sensei

**Kimberly Richardson** MA, LMT began training at Naropa Institute in 1978 and moved to Seattle one year later to study with Mary Heiny Sensei. Determined athleticism, psychotherapy practices and energy awareness skills are key elements of her spirited teaching. Kimberly has studied throughout the United States, Canada, Europe and Japan, most notably with Anno Shihan, Saotome and Ikeda Shihan, Dobson and Read Senseis. She has acted as chief instructor for The Apple Computer Aikido School in Cupertino, CA in 1989 and at Seattle School of Aikido from 1991 to 1995. In the fall of 1995, Kimberly founded Two Cranes Aikido where she teaches the philosophy and practice of Aikido to people of all ages. As an adjunct faculty member at Antioch University for ten years, she taught “Aikido as Martial Art and Spiritual Practice.”

Richardson Sensei’s teaching style supports the individual growth of each student. In addition to teaching Aikido, she practices tai chi and ballroom dancing and includes elements of these art forms in her curriculum at the dojo. Kimberly is a consultant and trainer offering workshops in conflict resolution, effective management styles, and self-defense to corporations and to educational groups.

In 2008 Kimberly organized the non-profit foundation Two Cranes Institute. Our goal is to advance the common good by integrating O Sensei’s practices of compassion and applied non-violence into the larger Seattle community of children, teens and adults, specifically after-school programs.

Kimberly Sensei was promoted to the rank of 6th Dan by Mary Heiny Sensei in 2007.

**David Hurley**, 4th Dan, began his training in 1975 at the age of 16 with Frank Doran Sensei. One of the most experienced members of the dojo, he has studied with Saotome Sensei and was a senior instructor at North Bay Aikido in Santa Cruz, CA, and Chief Instructor of Seattle School of Aikido. He works as Manager of Departmental Computing for the Biology Department at the University of Washington.

**Dan McAbee**, 4th Dan and co-founder of Two Cranes Aikido began his Aikido training in 1990 with Kimberly Richardson. Prior to training in Aikido, Dan practiced Tae Kwon Do for over 10 years. He studies Aikibojitsu with Tom Read Sensei and is a Certified Instructor of the art. He also practices Tai Ji Chen form and push hands. Dan has flown for Alaska Airlines since 1982.

**Anne Yamane**, 5th Dan, started on her Aikido path in 1983 under the instruction of Mary Heiny Sensei. In addition to teaching at Two Cranes for 14 years, she was Co-Chief Instructor for Seattle School of Aikido from 1990-1995. Anne is a senior performing member of Northwest Taiko and teaches taiko classes at the dojo. Professionally, she is a certified orthotist, lecturer and Prosthetics-Orthotics Program Director in the Department of Rehabilitation Medicine at the University of Washington.

**Joey Perlmutter**, 4th Dan, began his Aikido study in 1985 at Bond Street Dojo in New York. Joey trained in Seattle for the past 16 years and has instructed at Two Cranes since we opened our doors in 1995. Joey is the manager of Vios Cafe, a bustling caldron of pressure that enables his Aikido practice to emerge.

**Kristen Allott**, 3rd Dan, started training in Aikido 1992 in Burlington, VT. Inspired by Mary Heiny Sensei’s teaching that her self-critic didn’t need to dominate her internal life, she dedicated herself to the practice. In 1997, Kristen joined Two Cranes Aikido where she trains and teaches teens and adults. Kristen is a naturopathic doctor and licensed acupuncturist who founded Dynamic Paths, which offers biological non-pharmaceutical treatments for mental health concerns.

**Cynthia Wold**, 3rd Dan, began training Aikido in 1996 with Kimberly Richardson. She believes that this practice is a good anchor for sanity. She teaches our adult students. Professionally, she has practiced massage therapy since 1989 and taught at Seattle Massage School for over 13 years. She is also a Certified Pilates Instructor.

**Sara Gerhart Snell**, 3rd Dan, and her three children began training at Two Cranes Aikido in the spring of 1998. Two of her children have since attained the rank of shodan. Sara teaches both adult and children’s classes and acts as the Director of Two Cranes Children’s and Teen Program. Aikido’s graceful and powerful forms along with her own playful nature drive her passion for
working with children of all ages. Sara holds a masters
degree in Music, runs a small garden design business,
and has successfully launched her three children into
the world of college and beyond.

Jim Allbaugh, 2nd Dan, began his training with Joanne
Veneziano Sensei in Seattle, WA. He has over 15 years
of training and came to Two Cranes in 1998, where he
trains and teaches classes for adults. Jim is a certified
rolfer trained in anatomy, physiology, kinesiology and
therapeutic relationships.

Taryn Sass, 2nd Dan, began training in 1996, when she
was obtaining her degree in Earth Sciences from UC
Santa Cruz. After graduating and moving to Seattle,
she joined Two Cranes Aikido and continued her quest
to train and teach teens and adults in a joyful manner.
Taryn is the Director of the Two Cranes Aikido teen
program. As a geologist, she takes pride in being the
earthy one in the dojo and strives to add more fluidity
to her practice.

Jen Stoakes, 2nd Dan, began her formal training in Ai-
kido with Kimberly Richardson in 1998, earning a first
degree black belt in 2005. Due to her father’s Aikido
practice, her philosophical education in Aikido started
at a very young age. As a psychotherapist, Jen blends
Aikido and existential phenomenological psychology
in working with children and adults. In addition to her
private practice, she manages the office at Two Cranes
and acts as Director of our Mini-Cranes Program that
provides instruction for four and five-year-olds.

Jessica Levin, 2nd Dan, took her 10th kyu test at the
age of 7. After years of other activities, she rediscover-
ered Aikido in college, and has been training ever since.
She teaches children’s and adult classes. She also as-
sists us with our special trainings for outside groups
like Aikido for Soccer Girls. She is a lawyer at Gordon
Tilden Thomas & Cordell, LLP. She loves Aikido for a
different reason every day.

Dan Murnan, 2nd Dan, is founder and CEO of Cyber-
golf established in 1995 with clients across 47 state and
five countries. Dan holds a business degree from the
University of San Diego where he captained the golf
team. Dan has been training in Aikido since 1995 and
he credits the philosophy of Aikido to his success in the
competitive internet business world.

Robert Chang, 2nd Dan, began his Aikido training in
2002 at Aikido West with Frank Doran Shihan. In 2004
Robert moved to Seattle and joined Two Cranes Aikido.
Robert has been a student of Kimberly Richardson Sen-
sei since then and received his Nidan in 2009. He is one
of the primary teachers of our Introductory Program.
He also holds a black belt in Taekwando.

Michelle Fokos, 1st Dan, began studying with Kim-
berly Richardson Sensei at Two Cranes Aikido in Janu-
ary 2003. She has been involved with our children’s
program since 2008, assisting with the Mini Cranes and
teaching the 6-8 year olds. She also applies her aikido
in the world as a full time artist and a ropes course fa-
cilitator. She delights in witnessing the joy and growth
of kids both on and off the mat, allowing her to embody
her favorite Rumi quote ~ “Let the beauty we love be
what we do”.

Lynda Jean Matsumoto, 2nd Dan, began training at
Two Cranes Aikido in 1998. Her curiosity about how
aikido can help resolve internal and external conflict
enlivens her training and her intent to be a more skill-
ful person. She is a mom, a cake decorator and a snow
boarding teacher. Lynda teaches our 6-12 year old stu-
dents and finds that they “are teaching her too”.

Gina Lagalbo, 1st Dan began training in 2002 in Madi-
son, WI. and came to Two Cranes in 2003. She teaches
the Introductory classes and inspires our beginning stu-
dents with her dynamic energy. Off the mat Gina is an
OB/Gyn in private practice at Salish Woman’s Health.
Her goal is to translate the energetic connection she sees
during childbirth into the rest of her life through Aikido.

“Aikido is natural movement. If you can walk you can
do Aikido.” ~ Motomichi Anno Sensei
**Our Classes**

We offer a variety of classes seven days a week including Beginning, General, Advanced and Weapons classes, as well as classes for children and teens between the ages of 4 and 18, and special workshops and seminars.

**Introductory Classes**

Two Cranes Aikido offers a comprehensive 8 week Introductory Class series for new students. This class provides a beginning look at the basic principles and practices of Aikido to adults. These formal beginner classes are offered four times a year. Please consult the website for current start dates. Students participating in the beginner series will be invited to attend one, or both classes per week: Tuesdays 6 – 7 p.m and Saturdays 10:00 – 11:00 a.m. When a formal series is not in process, these classes continue to be focus on basic techniques.

Although we recommend attending the formal series for beginners, we recognize that the series may not always fit into a new student’s schedule. We can make arrangements to assist you in beginning your practice. If this is the case, please contact Kimberly Richardson Sensei to discuss options.

Private instruction is available at $100 per hour. Pre-registration for the Introductory Series is encouraged but not required. Students interested in joining the class should come fifteen minutes early on the first day of class to register. Loose, comfortable clothing that allows you to move freely is recommended; a formal training uniform (gi) is not required. Please consult the class schedule insert for the fee for this series.

We ask that anyone interested in Aikido at Two Cranes come in and watch a class in session before they come in for their first class. You do not need to make an appointment in advance.

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**Making the Transition from Beginner to General Student**

Once you have completed the 8 week Introductory series you have a couple of options:

1. You are always welcome to continue your practice as a “beginner,” attending the classes designed to address basic skills classes. You will be asked to pay the same fee as the beginner series listed on the class schedule. The fee covers 8 weeks and begins the date you write the check. Please let us know this is what you have chosen to do by including a note with your dues payment. You do not need to wait for a formal beginner’s series to begin. Often students find it helpful to continue exclusively attending the classes geared toward basic skills for a period of time. We do not consider this a sign of incompetence; rather, we view this as an indicator that a student is consciously working within their safety zone or limits. This is your practice: it is your responsibility to know what is best for you.

2. In general, completing the 8 week beginner’s series enables you to participate in general classes. For some, eight weeks is a relatively short amount of time to learn the basic skills needed for general practice and they elect to attend the Intro series again. Kimberly Sensei monitors all students’ progress and will discuss any concerns with you. The only classes you are ineligible for at this time are the advanced classes.

Your dues are listed on the class schedule enclosed and will be due on or by the 1st of each month. If the beginner series ends mid month, we ask that you pay for 6 weeks of training (1 & 1/2 Monthly dues) plus a one time registration fee. As with all fees, the registration fee is listed on the inserted class and fee schedule.

“Aikido is a dynamic poem of movement.”
~ Mitsugi Saotome Sensei
General Classes
General classes are the main classes for ongoing Aikido practice. Any adult who has practiced Aikido for 8 weeks and has joined the dojo is welcome in these classes. We offer General Classes seven days a week at various times. Please consult the class schedule.

Advanced Classes
Thursday night class (7:00 – 8:00 p.m.) is for brown belt and black belt students. All students are always invited to watch class.

Weapons Classes
Weapons classes focus on individual and paired training techniques primarily with the long and short staff, sword, and knife. These classes are available to all students who have completed an Introductory Series.

Workshops, Intensives and Seminars
We offer special training opportunities with guest and in house instructors. These workshops and seminars provide us with exposure to the teachings of our own and senior Aikido practitioners from all over North America and the world, as well as afford us the time to focus intently on aspects of our training such as weapons, randori and ukemi. Seeing these masterful instructors’ practice and hearing what they have to say enriches our own training experience. Additional fees are requested for workshops to pay the guest instructor and to support the dojo.

Children and Teens Program
Two Cranes Aikido offers classes for children starting from age four. The focus of our youth programs is to introduce the practice of Aikido to young people. This includes the study of the following Aikido principles: cooperation, non-violence, awareness, balance, respect, self-defense, integrity, sincerity, and self-esteem. We offer programs for 4 age groups:

- Ages 4-8: Mini-Cranes
- Ages 6-8: All levels
- Ages 9-12: All levels & advanced
- Ages 12-18: Teens

Each program is lead by an experienced black belt who directs the focus of the classes and closely monitors the training and development of each student. Adult Aikido students often serve as volunteer assistants to the instructors in each class. These are very popular programs that can have waiting lists. If you would like to register your children in a class, please call the dojo, expressing your interest in the program and the ages of your children, and we’ll get back to you.

"The foundation of Aikido is within becoming empty like the sky. From this standpoint, the freedom of harmonious movement is born. Becoming empty means to discard all illusory thinking and mistaken ideas of self." - O Sensei
**Entering the Dojo**

Aikido practice begins when we walk through the door of the dojo. Upon entering the dojo, or “place of the way,” we make a standing bow towards the shomen before we remove our shoes. The shomen is the main wall of the training hall, where the picture of O Sensei hangs, along with his calligraphy and fresh flowers. This bow is a gesture of respect for the art of Aikido and ourselves, rather than a religious observance. We honor traditional Japanese etiquette by removing our shoes and placing them side by side in the shoe rack beside the door or neatly in front of the shoe rack. We are always careful to wear shoes when going outside the dojo building, even for a moment. Again, this is a part of our practice of traditional Japanese ways and a gesture of respect for the dojo (and our efforts to keep the dojo clean!).

**Preparing for Class**

After changing into our training uniforms, or gi, we check to make sure we have removed any jewelry that may cause harm to ourselves or our partners and that we do not have long fingernails or toenails. Next proceed to the training hall and assist in the preparation for class. Before each class we sweep the mat and the bamboo floor as needed. Often this is when students will take the time to perform any misogi duties they have signed up to do for the month. After the mat has been swept you are encouraged to stretch out, practice rolling, train with another student, or take in a moment of quiet.

**Stepping Onto and Off the Mat**

Before stepping on or off the mat please bow respectfully towards the shomen. This is a gesture of respect for the dojo and for our Aikido training. If class has begun before you are able to get to the dojo please wait off the mat at the edge until the instructor acknowledges you and then you can bow in quietly on your own (2 bows in seiza followed by 4 claps and one more bow) and join class. This is a sign of respect to the person teaching as well as a safety precaution. It is critical that you follow this request for your safety as well as for the safety of all students training.

If the class is warming up it is considered poor etiquette to engage in different warm ups than the rest of the class, as it would be if you had been in class from the start. If you have missed the warm ups please take a moment to stretch in the back before joining class.

If you ever have to leave class early please notify the instructor and bow out at the edge of the mat on your own before leaving the mat. The process of bowing in and out of class is the same.

**Beginning of Class**

Class begins with the students seated in a neat row facing the shomen, or front wall. Out of respect for Aikido, our instructor, and ourselves, we sit with an erect posture in seiza (kneeling). You may sit crosslegged if seiza is very uncomfortable or if you have injured knees. If there are more people than will fit in one line, we either make 2 lines or the line is extended along the sides of the mat in a “U” shape so that everyone is in the “front” row.

**Bowing In**

After some moments of sitting quietly, the instructor will move to the center of the dojo and lead us in the opening ritual. We bow 2 times, then clap 4 times, then bow one more time. The instructor will then turn toward the students at which time we offer a mutual bow. During these opening ceremonies, we endeavor to bow and clap in unison, following the lead of our instructor. The form and complexity of this practice has its origins in Shinto spiritual tradition, invoking the elements to ready us for practice.

“True budo is for the purpose of establishing harmony.” ~ O Sensei
Buying a Gi (Training Uniform)
A gi is a traditional, white training uniform. There are many different styles and cloth types. Although welcome, you are not expected to invest in a gi for the first few months of your training. When you feel clear that you plan to continue your training, then it is appropriate to consider the investment. The dojo sells several styles of gi for the convenience of the students. Gis may be purchased elsewhere but they must be white. We recommend buying training uniforms on the slightly large size because they often shrink in the wash. If you would like to buy a gi, please ask a black belt student to help you.

Student Responsibilities
The following section has been designed to address some of the fundamental responsibilities of being a student of Aikido at Two Cranes. The dojo we have is a unique environment, therefore, we have focused this section on some important aspects of what it means to be an active, conscientious student. We encourage all members of the Two Cranes community to enhance their personal practice by engaging in the process of maintaining a respectful and well kept dojo.

Rules of the Dojo

- This dojo follows the traditional rules of proper conduct. Its spirit comes directly from the Founder of Aikido and the succession of his teachings handed down from teacher to student. It is the responsibility of each student to act appropriately and to honor those teachings.
- We invite each student to cooperate in creating a positive atmosphere of harmony and respect.
- Cleaning (misogi practice) is an active prayer of thanksgiving. It is the responsibility of each student in the dojo to assist in keeping it clean.
- You cannot buy technique. The monthly dues provide a place for training and a way in which to show gratitude for the teaching received. It is each student’s responsibility to pay dues on time.

Rules of Training

- It is important to respect the way in which the instructor of the class directs the training. Receive instruction and carry out suggestions for training sincerely.
- It is the moral responsibility of each student never to use Aikido technique to harm another person or as a way to display his or her ego. It is a tool to develop a better society through the character development of the individual.
- There will be no aggressive ego conflicts on the mat. The purpose of Aikido is not to fight and defeat an enemy, but to fight and defeat your own aggressive instincts.
- The strength of Aikido is not in muscular force, but in flexibility, timing, control and compassion. Be aware of your limitations.
- Everyone has different physical abilities and reasons for study. These must be respected. True Aiki is the proper and flexible application of technique appropriate to any changing situation. It is your responsibility to cause no injury to your training partner or yourself.

“Through Aikido, extend all your powers to achieve peaceful harmony with the world.” ~Morihei Ueshiba, O Sensei

Attendance

It is your responsibility to mark your training days on the computer that is located in the community room or back of the dojo. This helps Sensei to have a more accurate understanding of how often you train. It is also a good way for you to quickly note your practice’s schedule.
**Misogi**

“Japanese culture has had at the very foundation of its religious and samurai traditions the concept and practice of misogi or purification. Aikido was born from Budo tradition, and it also includes misogi in the training. Misogi is an attitude that one develops towards one’s practice, as a mode of one’s own shogyu. It is a process which works to uncover and reveal the true spirit in each person. Therefore Aikido’s misogi waza is: how you train.” ~ Mitsugi Saotome Sensei

We train ourselves to develop a spirit of cooperation, open heart and humility. In order to maintain an atmosphere conducive to such effort we must attend to the cleanliness of the dojo itself. The daily attentiveness directed at the dojo compliments training by developing a quiet sensitivity to our surroundings and fosters an attitude where each person, seeing that something needs to be done, simply does it. In this way nothing is left undone, either in the dojo, or in our daily lives.

We organize dojo misogi in this way: some tasks are the long-term responsibility of the chief instructor and teaching staff; other tasks are rotated among the active members of the dojo. There are sign up sheets for a variety of misogi tasks. Please look them over and contribute in whatever way you can.

**Dojo Etiquette**

- In an Aikido dojo, the observation of basic forms of etiquette is integral to the creation of a respectful and attentive atmosphere. The training mat is the heart and soul of the dojo and there are certain procedures, attitudes and rules that pertain to it. Since rigorous physical training takes place on the mat, the possibility for injury to oneself and others is always present. Serious injuries incurred during aikido practice are rare, because correct training rules are stressed. Safety and respect are top priorities in the dojo.
- The most basic etiquette form is the bow. The bow is not a religious formality, it is a sign of respect for the same spirit of universal creative force within us all. Aikido is not a religion, but the education and refinement of the spirit.
- A standing bow is done when entering or leaving the dojo and stepping on and off the mat. The bow is directed toward the shomen.
- The opening and closing ceremony of each Aikido practice consists of two seated bows directed toward the shomen, four claps, one more bow, and then a mutual bow between teacher and students. The form and complexity of this practice has its origins in Shinto spiritual tradition, invoking the elements to ready us for practice.
- The words spoken at the beginning of practice between the students and instructor are, “Onegai shimasu.” Loosely translated it means “I make a request for training”. “Domo arigato gozaimashita” “You have my gratitude” are words spoken at the close of class and when we finish training with each partner. This is a respectful way of saying thank you.
- You are encouraged to arrive sufficiently early to allow for stretching and warming up prior to class. Sitting quietly a few minutes before class is an excellent way to center yourself before training.
- Effort should be made to be on time for class, but if unavoidable circumstances require you to be late, you are still encouraged to come to class. If you arrive late, please be quiet as you enter the dojo and walk to the dressing rooms. Wait until the instructor has acknowledged you before getting on the mat to train. It is customary to perform the formal bow individually before beginning to practice and warm up on the side of the mat on your own. If it is necessary to leave class early, please inform the instructor before class and do an individual bow to close your practice.
- During class when the instructor demonstrates a technique for practice, sit attentively. After the demonstration, bow to the instructor, then to a partner on either side of you and begin to practice.
• During time before and between classes, informal Aikido practice is encouraged. Five minutes of training before and/or after class is very beneficial to your practice.

• Students are encouraged to train with an aware and cooperative attitude. Talking may be kept to a minimum so that you can experience learning through the body. If you understand the movement and are working with someone who does not, you may lead that person through it with a minimum of discussion. Do not attempt to correct or instruct your training partner unless you are authorized to do so.

• Traditionally the instructor is addressed as Sensei in the dojo. However the extent to which this custom is followed depends upon the individual instructor.

• Do not lean against the walls in the mat area.

• Gis (training attire) should be kept clean. Please do not leave or store gis in dressing rooms (with the exception of neatly folded or hung hakama.) Fingernails and toenails should be kept short to avoid cuts and scratches. Feet must be kept clean.

• No jewelry should be worn during practice.

• The use of alcohol and drugs prior to class is prohibited. Students taking prescribed medication that could possibly affect their training and the safety of others are requested to advise the instructor.

• The mat should be swept before class to prepare it for use. It is the students’ responsibility to assist in keeping the dojo clean and a small effort by everyone will make light work of this.

• If blood becomes present on the mat during training, the individual who is the source of the bleeding needs to leave the mat and care for the wound. The partner of the person bleeding will clean the area by spraying the area with hydrogen peroxide solution (available in the first aid area in the hallway to the bathrooms), let it foam, wipe up the foam.

• All levels train together in beginning and general classes. Beginners should not feel shy about asking more advanced students to work with them.

• Students need to be aware of the level of their training ability. It is the student’s responsibility to inform your training partner if your limits are being exceeded.

• If you are injured, you are welcome to train by watching class.

• If you decide to drop out of aikido for any reason, please let us know. We are sincerely interested in making your aikido experience a positive one. It may be that your personal needs can best be fulfilled elsewhere at this time. We will honor your leaving just as we honored your arrival. We would like to understand your experience and to learn from it. By communicating with us, you provide us with valuable feedback and give us the opportunity to improve ourselves.

O Sensei’s vision for aikido was that it develop strong, creative, self-aware individuals, thereby evolving society as a whole. Aikido techniques should never be used for the purpose of harming anyone.

HEALTH

Aikido training involves close contact between the students and the instructional staff. Please help to maintain everyone’s health and stay at home if you are ill. If you become infected with lice, Chickenpox, Hepatitis, or any other ailment in which people at the dojo may have been at risk of exposure, please contact the dojo immediately.

Please attend to your sanitation before getting on the mat. Wash your hands, trim your finger and toenails, and make sure your training clothes are clean. When washing your uniform the use of bleach on occasion is highly recommended. Sharp or long finger and toenails are very dangerous and could scrape or cut others while training. There are nail trimmers in the first aid box in the hallway near the bathrooms.
**First Aid**

There is a first aid box located in the hallway near the bathrooms. Here you will find band-aids, analgesics (aspirin, ibuprofen, arnica), athletic tape, nail trimmers, etc. If you find that you are bleeding at any time you are in the dojo, please immediately clean and cover the wound. It is very important that you also immediately remove any bloodstains from the mats or floors; there is a spray bottle with hydrogen peroxide solutions on the first aid shelf.

If you are injured while training, please inform the instructor immediately. It is not necessary to inform the instructor if you receive a minor injury such as a scratch. There are ice packs in the freezer for immediate first aid use. If you have a condition that may need attention such as Diabetes, Epilepsy or Uncontrolled Asthma it is your responsibility to make the instructing staff aware of it. It is up to you to ensure that what you need is available to you when you need it. This also pertains to all students keeping emergency contact numbers on file up to date.

**Training Fees**

As much as we wish that money was not associated with our training we still have to pay the rent and bills. Your dues do exactly that – they pay the bills. This means that paying your dues on or before the 1st of the month helps us out tremendously and shows a level of respect and consideration of the dojo that is appreciated. Please feel free to write a note to clarify if your payment is in anyway unusual or potentially confusing to the person documenting the transaction. We want to be sure you are credited for all payments properly.

Keep in mind that our bills are here whether or not you are able or choose to be. If you are able to pay your dues while away (for any reason) or sick/injured, it is very much appreciated. Please know that your dues do not go to paying the instructors who generously offer their wisdom to you 7 days a week.

Please consult the insert for accurate dues and fees. If you are having any difficulties paying your dues please consult with Sensei.

Terms associated with Dues and Fees
Dues: this is a regular amount paid monthly in exchange for the opportunity to attend classes.
Registration Fee: This is a one time fee that covers the clerical expenses of setting up a new student.
Insurance Fee: This is a fee that occurs once a year to cover our annual insurance bill. Often, Sensei asks for people to contribute to this voluntarily.

“*When one understands the working of spiral energy and trains oneself in the truth of the spirit, Aiki is created.*” ~ O Sensei

**Visitors**

**Watching Class**

Observers are always welcome during our classes. Please refrain from conversation while watching class, especially when the instructor is demonstrating. If you notice someone unfamiliar on the bench it is appreciated if you greet them and see if you can answer any questions. Typically this should be done by a student who is a brown or black belt. If no brown or black belt students are available, any other student may take the initiative.

**Visitors Who Train**

If the visitor is an Aikido practitioner you have not met before, introduce yourself, show the visitor how to find the dressing rooms, the bathrooms, etc. Make sure the visitor speaks with the instructor, fills out a liability form and pays a mat fee before class begins.

**Liability Forms**

It is especially important that all training visitors fill out a Liability Form before getting on the mat. Ask
them if they have filled out one of our forms in the last year; if they have not, please ask them to fill out a new one. Please place their form on Sensei’s desk. Visitors ONLY need to fill out a liability form – not the card for new students. If they wish to be on our mailing list be sure to get their mailing address.

**Mat Fees**

There is a $15 mat fee for visitors. Mat fees can be paid with cash (please have them put it in an envelope and indicate who paid and what for) or a check made out to Two Cranes Aikido and put it in the dues box on the bookshelf. A weekly rate is available to visitors who wish to train daily during their stay.

“Aikido is the way of nonresistance and is therefore undefeatable from the start.” ~ O Sensei

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**Other Ways To Learn about Aikido**

Many students find it enriches their training to supplement their physical practice by reading. There have been many wonderful books written on Aikido. Below is a selection that will enrich your practice.


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**Aikido Examination Requirements**

**Tests and demonstrations**

Testing is a natural extension of our training. Testing is not a requirement, rather an opportunity to advance one’s training by focusing on a series of techniques and principals that meet and challenge the student’s level. The examination system in Aikido is not structured on competition. Students are invited to practice before or after class to review the test techniques. They will not asked to demonstrate unless Sensei feels they are prepared and have fulfilled the hour requirements for the specified rank.

**Expectations for the Kyu exam:**
• Your understanding of basic technique appropriate to your level.
• Your spontaneous movement and response appropriate for the attack.
• The concentration and awareness you exhibit throughout the demonstration.
• A technique should be demonstrated continuously, until there is a signal to stop.
• Both irimi and tenkan should be used whenever applicable.
• Continuity of movement is important, not speed.
• You will be encouraged to know and respond to the Japanese terms.
• For 4th kyu and above, a week-end training seminar is required for demonstration. For 2nd and 1st kyu, 2 week-end training seminars are required. A Shodan candidate must attend one intensive training camp, or make special arrangements with Sensei. There is a $50 testing fee for each kyu rank.
• Students should look upon testing as their way of giving a gift to the dojo because the process vitalizes teachers and students alike. Any questions regarding testing should be directed at Sensei or senior students. A mock test will be offered to all applicants prior to testing.

“Aintentions set energy into motion. Intent is real. To effectively lead intent, you must establish a rhythm, a tempo prior to physical action. Get your intention clear and give it your complete commitment.”
~ Tom Read Sensei

The black belt testing process

Aikido has a basic structure that encourages us to examine the fundamental principles of the art. Saotome Sensei says it well: “The structure of this training process is the same as a scientific formula. As a formula is an exacting international language that allows scientists to communicate and explore the depths of scientific principle, kihon waza is an international language allowing Aikidoka from all over the world to communicate and explore the basic truths of Aikido. If this basic structure is lost, Aikido is lost.”

• Dan candidates need six months of intensive preparation prior to testing. They should arrange a meeting with Sensei to begin the process. She will decide when your practice demonstrates your readiness to prepare for the next rank.
• Students wishing to engage in the exam process are encouraged to train at least four times a week in class minimum for at least six months prior to testing. Select a black belt instructor willing to help you with any questions you have along the way. He or she will be a guide to help you achieve the standards necessary for a successful test process.
• Schedule a mock exam with Sensei a month before your test date. Be sure your uke and black belt mentor are able to attend this mock exam. At this point you should be very clear on the techniques and all requirements for your test. From this point forward your focus should be on fine-tuning your efforts.
• The candidates will be asked to write a piece that describes the significance that the preparation process has in their everyday training and personal life. This reflection may include what they have desired to know more about through the training process for the exam. The candidates may identify what their strengths and weaknesses are in training.
• The rank of Shodan demonstrates a new beginning commitment in your training. First Degree Black Belt does not mean that the student has attained mastery or is in some sense an expert in the art. In the Japanese martial arts, the first black belt ranks simply mean that a student has trained hard enough to have a solid knowledge of the basics or “Kihon Waza” and is therefore now to be considered a serious beginner.
KYU EXAM REQUIREMENTS

5th kyu (white belt)
Tachi waza (techniques from standing)
• Shomen uchi ikkyo (irimi & tenkan)
• Shomen uchi irimi nage
• Katate dori shiho nage (irimi & tenkan)
• Morote dori kokyu nage
• Aidori kote gaeshi
• Ryote dori tenchi nage
• Kokyu ho

4th Kyu (blue belt)
Includes proficiency of all previous kyu requirements. Where appropriate, techniques should be demonstrated from irimi and tenkan, omote and ura.
Suwari waza (techniques from kneeling)
• Shomen uchi ikkyo
• Kata dori ikkyo, nikkyo, and sankyo
Tachi waza (techniques from standing)
• Shomen uchi ikkyo & nikkyo
• Yokomen uchi shiho nage
• Ai dori irimi nage – two ways
• Katate dori kokyu nage – one forward throw & one backward throw
• Morote dori ikkyo
• Ushiro tekubi dori sankyo
• Tsuki kote gaeshi
• Jiyu waza (freestyle) with one uke
• Kokyu ho

3rd Kyu (blue belt)
Includes proficiency of all previous kyu requirements. Where appropriate, techniques should be demonstrated from irimi and tenkan, omote and ura.
Suwariwaza (techniques from kneeling)
• Shomen uchi irimi nage
• Kata dori ikkyo thru yonkyo
Hanmi handachi
• Katate dori shiho nage
• Ushiro tekubi dori kote gaeshi
Tachiwaza
• Shomen uchi ikkyo thru yonkyo
• Yokomen uchi ikkyo (include entering style)
• Ushiro ryokata dori ikkyo
• Morote dori kokyu nage (two throwing forward, one backwards)
• Tsuki irimi nage
• Katate dori kokyu nage, kaiten nage (uchi & soto)
• Jiyu waza with two ukes
• Kokyu ho
2nd Kyu (brown belt)
Includes proficiency of all previous kyu requirements. Where appropriate, techniques should be demonstrated from irimi and tenkan, omote and ura.

Suwari waza
- Shomenuchi ikkyo thru yonkyo
- Yokomen uchi irimi nage (2 ways, include entering)
- Katadori ikkyo – yonkyo
- Katate dori kote gaeshi

Hanmi Handachi
- Katate dori kaiten nage (uchi & soto)
- Ushiro ryokata dori kokyu nage

Tachi waza
- Shomen uchi irimi nage, kote gaeshi, kaiten nage
- Ryote dori shiho nage
- Katate dori kote gaeshi
- Morote dori ikkyo
- Ushiro ryokata dori ikkyo – sankyo
- Tsuki: 3 variations
- Ai dori koshi nage
- Katate dori koshi nage
- Jiyu waza with two ukes
- Randori with three ukes
- Kokyu ho

1st Kyu (brown belt)
Includes proficiency of all previous kyu requirements. Where appropriate, techniques should be demonstrated from irimi and tenkan, omote and ura.

Suwari waza
- Shomen uchi Irimi nage, Kote gaeshi
  - Katamen uchi Ikkyo – Yonkyo
  - Yokomen uchi Ikkyo – Yonkyo

Hanmi Handachi
- Ushiro hiji dori kote gaeshi
- Ushiro ryokata dori sankyo
- Ushiro tekubi dori shiho nage
- Ushiro kubishime kokyu nage
- Ushiro: 5 variations any ushiro attack

Tachi waza
5 variations: each attack including koshi nage
- Tsuki (including tsuki to face and kaiten nage)
  - Shomen uchi
  - Yokomen uchi
  - Morote dori
  - Ryote dori
  - Kata men uchi irimi nage
  - Tsuki kaiten nage
• Morote dori koshi nage
Tanto waza: attacks from tsuki, shomen, yokomen, slash and from behind
Jiyu waza with three ukes
Randori with three ukes

“Don’t concentrate on technique. Work on opening your heart instead. Aikido is heart to heart transmission.”
~ Motomichi Anno Sensei

**Aikido Terms**

This is a list of terms that you will hear used in the dojo. By studying these definitions you will discover many facets of Aikido philosophy.

The pronunciation of Japanese words tends to be straightforward, in that any word in the language is made up of one or more short syllable sounds called “The fifty Sounds” or Go Ju No On.”

The consonants of Japanese are usually pronounced as those of English. Vowels are pronounced as follows:

A “ah” as the a in father  E “eh”as the e in met  I “ee” as the i in marine  O “oh”as the o in oboe
U “oo”as the u in rule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ai</td>
<td>Harmony, coming together, unification.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ai Hanmi</td>
<td>Partners facing each other in parallel hanmi.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aiki</td>
<td>The blending of two or more energies, perfect integration.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Atemi</td>
<td>Strikes; a blow directed toward an anatomical weak point, used defensively in Aikido.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arigato</td>
<td>Thank you.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bokken</td>
<td>Wooden practice sword.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bo</td>
<td>Long staff.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dojo</td>
<td>Training Hall. The place where the way is revealed. A place for the strengthening and refinement of spirit, mind and body.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gi</td>
<td>Training outfit.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gyaku hanmi</td>
<td>Partners facing each other in opposite hanmi.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hanmi</td>
<td>The relaxed triangular stance of Aikido. It is stable, yet flexible enough to move quickly in any direction. All technique begins, moves and ends in hanmi.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hanmi Handachi</td>
<td>Practice in which one person is kneeling and the other attacks from a standing position.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hara</td>
<td>The lower abdomen. The center of life energy, physically and spiritually. All movement must originate from this point.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Irimi</td>
<td>Entering; entering techniques (omote waza).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jo</td>
<td>Short staff.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kamae</td>
<td>A posture or stance of readiness.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kami</td>
<td>Spirit of the Universe; the divine.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kata</td>
<td>A set of prearranged series of movements.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Katate</td>
<td>One hand (left or right).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Keiko Practice or study. The deeper meaning is to return to the origin.
Ki Spirit; vital force or energy; universal energy.
Kiai The release of spiritual and physical power in the form of a piercing shout originating in the hara.
Kokyu Breath; breath power.
Kumano Ancient district in Wakamaya Prefecture, considered the home of Japanese spirituality.
Kyu Rank below black belt.
Ma ai Distance between uke and nage. The distance of time and space between two forces. Ma = space; ai = harmony. The balanced and proper use of space.
Masakatsu Agatsu “True victory is self victory,” one of the principal tenets of Aikido.
Misogi Purification of mind, body, and spirit. Practices for the purpose of purification. Sweating is misogi; cleaning is misogi; keiko is misogi.
Musubi Opposites are but different images of the same reality. Musubi is the process of unification. It is the movement of the spiral.
Nage A throw; One who throws.
Onegai Shimasu Please.
O Sensei Great teacher- the title used for the Founder of Aikido.
Ryote Both hands.
Samurai Originally comes from the verb meaning to serve. One who has the duty and responsibility to protect society.
Seiza Formal sitting position.
Sensei Teacher, one who gives guidance. Literally-born before.
Senshin A purified heart and spirit; enlightened attitude.
Shiho Four directions.
Shiho ken Live blade. Unified attention.
Shomen The shrine which houses the picture of the founder and the spirit of Aikido.
Shomen uchi Strike or cut to the top of the head.
Shugyo Training (Spiritual, mental, physical ascetic).
Suwari Waza Techniques practiced on the knees.
Tachi Japanese long sword.
Tachi Waza Techniques of sword taking.
Take musu Aiki Enlightened Aikido. Courageous birth.
Tanto Knife.
Tanto dori Techniques of knife taking.
Te Hand.
Tenkan Turning; a turning technique (ura waza).
Uchi To strike
Uke Literally means “receiver”. Generally refers to the person who provides the attack and takes the fall.
Ukemi Techniques of falling. The art of protecting oneself from injury. The first and most important step to developing strong Aikido technique is developing good ukemi.
Ushiro From behind.
Waza Technique.
Zanshin Continuity; unbroken concentration.
**Names of Aikido Attacks**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Japanese</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ai dori</td>
<td>Cross hand grab</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hiji dori</td>
<td>Elbow grab</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kata dori</td>
<td>Shoulder grab</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Katate dori</td>
<td>Single wrist grab</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morote dori</td>
<td>Partner attacks by grabbing one wrist with both hands</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mune Tsuki</td>
<td>Chest or stomach strike</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ryote dori</td>
<td>Partner attacks by grabbing both wrists</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shomen uchi</td>
<td>Top of the head strike</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tsuki</td>
<td>Thrusting strike</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ushiro dori</td>
<td>Rear “bear hug”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ushiro katate dori kubishime</td>
<td>Rear choke with one wrist hold</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ushiro ryo kata dori</td>
<td>Both shoulders grabbed from the rear</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ushiro ryo tekubi dori</td>
<td>Both wrists grabbed from the rear</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yokomenuchi</td>
<td>Strike to the side of the head</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Names of Aikido Techniques**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ikkyo</th>
<th>First teaching</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nikyo</td>
<td>Second teaching, using wrist pressure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sankyo</td>
<td>Third teaching, using wrist pressure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yonkyo</td>
<td>Fourth teaching using nerve pressure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gokyo</td>
<td>Fifth teaching, appropriate for knife attacks.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Irimi nage</td>
<td>Entering throw</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Juji nage</td>
<td>Crossed arm throw</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kaiten nage</td>
<td>Rotary throw</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kokyu ho</td>
<td>Seated technique using ki extension</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kokyu nage</td>
<td>“Breath throw” using timing of body and spirit without applying pressure to partner’s joints.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Koshi nage</td>
<td>Hip throw</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kote gaeshi</td>
<td>Technique using wrist reversal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shiho nage</td>
<td>Four direction throw</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sumi otoshi</td>
<td>Corner drop throw</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tenchi nage</td>
<td>Heaven and earth throw</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>