

## The Seidokan Communicator - Aikido for a modern way of life

### Pushing and Polling

For this issue, we asked the question: 'Pick an Aikido rank (or several) - what does being in that rank mean to you? In layman terms, how would you explain what that rank means about the practitioner?'

#### Steve Morris:

Nikiyu: Congratulations. You are now, officially, the most dangerous person on the mat (That's right even more dangerous than a white belt). You know just enough stuff to hurt people but not nearly as much as you think you do. Don't worry though, by the time you're ready for your next test you'll realize you don't know anything at all and the real learning will begin.

#### Janean Crapo:

The rank I pick is: the rank a student is tossed into a position to instruct a class of their own or just to cover a class the instructor cannot make. That rank can be different depending on the dojo and availability of senior students.

Being in that position means you have a responsibility to try to share what your Sensei has taught you. It does not mean you know and understand everything your sensei has taught but, that you are now in a position to start learning by helping others. It does not mean you have to have the answers to all the questions; it means you have to be willing to work on finding an answer either by discovering it through observation and practice or by seeking a deeper understanding through questioning, studying and observing. It means you have to be open to learning from those very students you are teaching.

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#### Jim Brazell:

I have been sankyu for almost a decade. This plateau corresponds with moving away from my home dojo.

In the meantime, I have studied in other martial arts and styles of aikido. I have a dojo of sorts in my basement with mats and shomen. My motivation to practice usually increases as a camp or seminar approaches. I am working toward a habit of aiki-taiso three times a week.

Lately, it has been possible for me to attend Seidokan seminars in St. Louis MO, and Charleston SC. Eventually, I'll get back to my home dojo; Seiwa in Battle Creek MI.

I had been content to be "sankyu for life," with the possibility of posthumous advancement to shodan. Then a senior instructor asked me, "When was I going to finally test for nikkyu?" I had already tested once, and had not passed. Too

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much talk, muscle, and nerves -and those were my strengths.

But the question indicated that the instructor believed in me enough to ask. So I have begun inching my way toward nikkyu. My motivation is that I am to practice Seidokan Aikido, then my attitude toward my training needs to be "earnest, realistic, and sincere." Those words aren't just slogans, they are also motivational guides.

I want to do my best with what I have. Right now, what I have is sankyu-good, and maybe on the odd-day nikkyu-good. It is my obligation to keep training, to keep attitude sharp and muscles relaxed.

Advancement in rank will happen as I prepare for it.

In aiki, Jim Brazell, Sankyu for right now, Seiwa dojo

#### Leo Barone:

The nine months I spend as a white belt, were for me a time for new beginnings, fulfilling expectations, making new friends, and bettering my physical shape.

I also got a peek at the deep wisdom of Aikido for everyday life. Studying Aikido for me is not just a physical discipline and techniques, but foremost about understanding life – blending in society, caring for others, resolving conflicts, 'opening the door' and more.



In my opinion during the white belt stage, will and motivation are an important part of the learning process, where we open ourselves up to receive – in a 'shodo o-seiso' manner, the will and motivation must be there first to create a positive connection to the Dojo.

In learning a new system, we need to sometimes let go of our expectations, which might sometimes cause hindrances – we always arrive with some expectations, and what we actually learn might be quite different. The physical changes that the body goes through might also make training harder, which also impacts mental aspects of training and might cause inability or unwillingness to continue training.

During my time as a white belt in Seidokan Aikido, I discovered a gradual learning system, which shows consideration and is not pressuring and stressing the student. Through the teaching methods of my teachers – smiling when entering the Dojo, the smile before bowing, well-explained warmup and aiki-taiso, and arts teaching with focus on loving protection of ourselves and others. Bowing with 'domo arigato' at the end of training, with the feeling of caring from the teachers for their students, and the warm and accepting feeling in the dojo from fellow aikidokas, help me continue and enjoy the studying of Aikido well beyond the white belt level.

## On goats and Aikido / Tammy Morgan

Daily part of life on the farm...

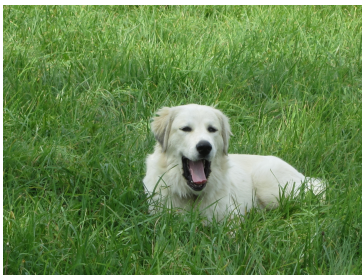
At Seiwa Dojo, in Michigan, as a student gets ready to test, they must complete a test application. One of the questions on the application is "Have you used Aikido outside of the dojo?". Some quickly answer- no- they never got attacked. However, it is the goal of our instructors that everyone answers YES. Not that they got attacked or had to defend themselves, but that the students recognize and apply the principles of aikido.

The four principles to Unify Mind and Body are some that I am going to address that my husband and I do daily on our goat farm. We currently have about 30 goats that we care for and our goal is to continue to grow that herd.



The first one I will address is controlled relaxation. In our barn, we not only have 30 goats, we like to put them in stalls every night. Most of the time, the goats will go into their stalls, but let's face it- they are goats and can be rather stubborn. If I approach them stressed or with too much energy, then they can sense that and just run in the other direction. Earlier this month, one of our grandsons came to the farm, and thought he would help when it came chore time. His seven year old approach had the goats running back into the pasture. He moved too quickly and was not very relaxed. Let's just say that chores took a little longer on that night. The lesson here is that I must be in control but relaxed and approachable. I really do want to blend with them, and redirect them where I want them to go. Hmm-mm sound familiar?

The next ones I will address are to settle down and maintain your one point. I must have my balance and center. If I am outside of range reaching for them or tugging them in at night, they will easily get away from me or become unmovable. We are not the only ones that know how to drop our centers and become unmovable. A little shift of their centers will now allow me to move them again gently into their stalls. All of our goats have horns, so that does make it a little easier, but they really do not like to be tugged on. I find that keeping their head by my center and a light hand by their neck, they will nicely go. Again, it is the lead not the pull that makes it a nicer night in the barn.



The final one I will address is to let ki flow. I have intent and a purpose when it comes to chore time, so my energy is focused on getting them into individual stalls but watching them to ensure they had a healthy day out on the pasture. Ki is in everything. The goats have it, we have it. Our Great White Pyrenees dog has ki too.

Jasmine is only 8 months old, but it is amazing to watch this 80lb dog, glide through our goats, keeping them calm while also keeping a watch on them. She is not a herding dog, but rather livestock guardian. Often her mere presence is all that is needed to keep harm from coming to her goats. I do not think ki is about strength but rather using the ki to complete a purpose.

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In conclusion, really you can not have one principle and call it good. They must all work together and really they are all the same. Goat farming is not for everyone but we love it. Once you feel you are applying the principles, try carrying a bag of grain into the feed area, before they are in their stalls...and be prepared for goat randori.

# Seidokan Aikido Summer Camp 2014



**Hosted by:** Aikido Institute of Mid-America

**Date:** Friday, June 20th - Sunday 22nd 2014

**Location:** Washington University, St. Louis, MO

It's that time again; time to register early for 2014's camp and save some money. Shodo-O-Seisu rates are now open. Hold this rate with a minimum down payment of \$75. Of course higher deposits or paying in full is always welcome.

## Shodo-O-Seisu Rate: \$250

This rate includes training, room and board. It is based on double occupancy and for Seidokan members. Single rooms are an additional \$100 and non-members are an additional \$30.

**Rates will be going up on February 1st 2014 so register early.**

*\*\$75 of down payment is non refundable.*

## Application & Payment Information

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Last) (First) (M.I.)

Gender: M / F

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Apt. #: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_

Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: ( ) \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Dojo: \_\_\_\_\_

Current Rank: \_\_\_\_\_

Name (as it appears on card): \_\_\_\_\_

Address (if different from left): \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Card Type (circle one): M/C | Visa | Amex | Disc

Card Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Expiration: \_\_\_\_\_

Security Code on Back: \_\_\_\_\_

Make Checks Payable to:  
**Summer Camp 2014**

Mail Check and registration to:  
**Seidokan Summer Camp**  
7167 Manchester Rd  
Maplewood, MO 63143



Registration and credit card info can be mailed or emailed to: [stlaikido2014@gmail.com](mailto:stlaikido2014@gmail.com)



## The Art of Winning Without Winning / Steve Morris

If you hang out with martial artists long enough, there is probably one question that seems to come up more than any other.

*"Which style is really the best?"*

I've spent hours, particularly after a few drinks, debating the various advantages of different martial arts. How do Muay Thai kicks compare to Tai Kwon Do? How would Wing Chung defense stand up to a Shotokan punch? It's sort of like comic book fans arguing over who is stronger, Superman or the Hulk. Fun to talk about but no real answers.

However, all that changed with the rise in popularity of Mixed Martial Arts. Suddenly, it was very clear which styles were most useful in a cage match, and Aikido, the art I've studied for almost a decade, was not among them.

All of which begs the question, Why am I wasting my time studying a martial art that isn't "The Best?"

We all want the best: Best car, best house, best relationships. We want to elect the best politicians who have the best ideas and will execute the best policy. We want our children to go to the best schools so they can get the best jobs and live the best lives.



*The question is, "How do we find the best?"*

The answer, almost invariably, is through competition. We turn the choices into combatants, put them in a cage, and have them fight it out. Our legal, political and, in many way, economic systems are predicated on the theory that, that which wins is inherently better than that which loses. In fact, "The Best" is so closely linked to winning as to be almost axiomatic.

However, we rarely stop to ask if this competitive system is really giving us the results we want.

Imagine this cage match:

In one corner, a 300 pound professional football player who has taken five kickboxing classes at the local Y. In the other corner is an 85 pound, 13 year old who has been a dedicated Jujitsu practitioner since he was five years old.

Will their match teach us anything about the relative merits of the martial arts involved, or even about the individual's skill in the practice of those arts? No, because the strength, speed, size and athleticism of the football player will overwhelm any advantage of skill or style the 13 year old might have.

Does that sound like a ridiculous scenario?

Well, try this one.

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Imagine two politicians are running for office. One is a tall handsome, articulate, well financed neophyte who knows nothing whatsoever about economics, foreign relations or public policy. The other, is a short, poorly dressed, ugly woman with a pronounced stutter and a deep, understanding of practical governance.

Is the person you want to see in office the same as the person who would win the election?

Once again, the traits necessary for winning are often very different from the ones we hoped the competition would favor.

To make matters worse, the media, who should be guiding us through the complex issues are, instead, covering the competition as if it were just another sport. Who's up? Who's down? Who made a mistake? Who can win?

"Who can govern?" rarely enters into the conversation.

The idea behind our political system is kind of like a cage match, except instead of a battle of technique it is supposed to be a battle ideas. Unfortunately, rather than bringing us the most qualified people with the best ideas, the crucible of election tends to sensationalize conflict, water down content and polarize the country.

This reality is so deeply woven into our political system that our highly qualified but, in all likelihood, unelectable woman would probably never even bother to run.

Our most important institutions are predicated on the idea that competition brings out the best. The result is a criminal system that favors the rich and penalizes minorities and an economic system that has concentrated the vast majority of our wealth in the hands of a privileged few while millions of others fight their own "cage matches" everyday merely to survive.



You would think that our incredibly competitive marketplace would ensure the healthiest, most durable products in the world, instead we get fast food hamburgers and electronics which are out of date almost before we unwrap them.

The American media system is more than competitive. It's "Dog eat Dog", with producers, networks, publishers and studios fighting tooth and nail for our attention. If winners are "The Best" then the most successful shows, magazines, movies and newscasts must be the most intelligent, well made, informative, dramatic and high quality media in the world, right?

Wrong. The opposite is true because the rules of the competition do not favor quality only eyeballs. The game is to get you to tune in and the easiest way to win is not by appealing to the best in us, but often the worst.

Of course, the biggest, most destructive and most terrifying cage match in the world is war and when it comes to war, the American military is the best of the best. They are the best trained, best supplied, best organized and in, every way, most

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powerful military organization the world has ever seen. So, if they're so great, why have they struggled so much in places like Iraq and Afghanistan?

The answer is: They haven't. By every military measure, the US Armed Forces have performed in an exemplary manner, defeating Saddam Hussein's Republican Guard in a matter of weeks and easily capturing the Taliban strongholds of Kabul and Kandahar..

Unfortunately, our expectations didn't end with winning those wars. We wanted them to win the peace. We expected an organization trained to destroy an enemy to become diplomats and nation builders. We demanded they navigate ancient religious conflicts, rebuild damaged infrastructure, and establish new governments for cultures they didn't understand while surrounded by sectarian violence and the constant threat of terrorism.

The training, equipment and even mindset which makes the American military so formidable in war has worked against them because the skills necessary to succeed, sensitivity, patience, acceptance, restraint cooperation and compromise are non-competitive and as such are fundamentally antithetical to any military mission.

Or, to put it more simply, asking the same organization to conquer a country and save it from itself is almost a contradiction in terms.

Can you imagine a top MMA fighter trying to defeat and provide medical, psychological and economic aid to his opponent at the same time?

Make no mistake, I am not writing this to criticize our armed forces, martial artists, or

anyone else fighting the good fight for what they believe is a good cause. I merely want to examine, more carefully, the premise that competition is the only pathway to success.

Competition can bring out the best in us and often does. However, it can also bring out the worst and the harder we try to win, whether it's selling the most products, beating the other guy in an election or winning a war, the more we tend to lose sight of why we started competing in the first place.

In our families, friendships, workplaces and communities the biggest challenges we face are almost always about working together. There are no awards for the best cooperator and you can't win at sensitivity or flexibility but those are the skills we need everyday to be a good friend, father, sister or citizen. They also help you to lead a happy life.

And it's not just on an individual level. If we are to solve the biggest challenges our planet faces, the environment, energy, poverty and religious, racial and cultural conflict we must find ways, not to compete but to cooperate.

If human society is to survive, the only way to "win" is to stop trying to beat the other guy and start working together for the common good.

All of which, I suppose, brings us back to why I study Aikido.

The truth is, if your goal is to win a no-holds-barred cage match then Aikido isn't for you, because the purpose of Aikido isn't to hurt, but to harmonize, to meet anger with compassion and violence with gentleness. In the end, the goal is not to end conflict by destroying an enemy. The goal is to resolve conflict by the destroying the idea enmity itself.



## My Nidan Exam: a trip from Canada / Mariko Kage

In the summer of 2012, after much moral support, planning and encouragement from all of the senior Seidokan instructors, Mrs. Kobayashi, and Dr. Crapo, I travelled down with my 10 year old son, Kio from Canada to Los Angeles to test for my Nidan promotion. A year before I left L.A. in 1996 I took my Shodan exam. Much has happened during those years, teaching Aikido to children in a remote Indian village; gave birth to four more children; went to college; and finally a move to a small town of Lillooet (population of 2000) in 2008. That year, a month after our move, I started the first Seidokan dojo in Canada. Along the mighty Fraser River, surrounded by mountains and Lakes, Lillooet is where I continue to live with my children today, to run our dojo and our weekly classes. After having given 10 promotions to my adult and youth students over the first four year period, it was time for me to focus on my own promotion, to be challenged and to set my goal for a new level of training. We invited Crotty Sensei to Lillooet in 2009 for a special seminar; myself and our dojo members attended summer camp in 2010 and in 2011. Call me a late bloomer, 2012 was finally my turn.



By 2012, my daughter Kana had settled in Seal Beach, California with her fiancé, and my oldest son Mikoto was stationed in San Diego. I was very fortunate to divide my time between training and family during this trip. For the nine day period, leading up to my test date, Mario had graciously coordinated a series of curriculum (daily dose of techniques)

to help me prepare for my exam. This was particularly valuable as my time to spend with yudansha has been far and too few in between over the years. I had no one of higher rank than myself with whom I could properly train with on a consistent basis. During my stay, I took evening training sessions with the many senior instructors at AIA. I also received very valuable support and advice from Joe Crotty Sensei, as well as from Larry Wadahara Sensei who invited me and my son Kio to his class at California State Long Beach dojo with all of his students. Both Erin and Ron were fantastic coaches on the mat! Kio and I had a wonderful time doing jumonji nage, hanekaeshi moves, a series of tanto dori (including kubishime tantodori) I requested for practice that I needed. Larry carries out his tradition to go out for dinner after training with his students, and we joined and shared this special time to socialize and eat together after training.

During the first week, I enrolled Kio into a week-long, all-day kids soccer camp in Long Beach just 15 minutes away from where we were staying. My daughter Kana spent time with him and kept him company while I focused and trained Aikido. Except for the one evening when Larry picked us up to drive out to his dojo, I made the long commutes from Seal Beach to Glendale for training every night at AIA. During the daytime, I drove out to the coastal beaches and jumped in the ocean a couple of times to refresh.... I also travelled to Downey one morning to spend a few hours with Mrs. Kobayashi over lunch. I always enjoy the interesting rich conversations with her sharing stories, life lessons, about Japan, ideas, comparisons between East and West, etc. Most of all I find great pleasure to speak with her in my native language, Japanese!!

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At AIA, I had inspirational evening classes with Andreas, Mario, Steve and Doug to review kengi, katatori and ryokatatori arts, to mention a few. Cliff Kamida generously spent several sessions after class hours to go over jonage, jotori, jiyuwaza, joken awase, tachitori etc. Steve S. as well met with me after class on Tuesday night to go over kubishime arts. Last two nights of training involved some great practices for randori with Cliff and Andreas. Kio took a couple of kids classes at AIA and I also assisted in a few - what a great bunch of kids! It has been very valuable to observe Michiyo and Keith Larman teaching innovative classes for the children!

It was an enriching 9 days in Los Angeles, to reconnect with everyone from AIA I have known for so long, and to also reconnect with my older children. One weekend, Kana drove Kio out to San Diego to visit with his big brother, Mikoto, who had returned from his deployment (Afghanistan) and was waiting for his new posting in Okinawa in just a couple of weeks. He was recently promoted to captain with the US Marine Corp. We had our last family outing Sunday evening after my exam, before I left on Monday to go back to Canada.



By Saturday, the day before my exam, the muscles in both my forearms (which had already been bothering me for a couple months) had gotten aggravated from the intense daily training. I took a day off and rested. It felt good to take a break from freeway driving I was not so use to anymore. I slept in, and had a chance to review my notes, and rest up for the exam day.

The Nidan exam was much harder than what I imagined. It was as if time stopped altogether. Still, I made the best of it with everything I had in my mind and body. I also felt invigorated drilling one art after another like a marathon Aikido. Tachitori and jo nage arts were the most difficult as they were my weakest (least familiar) arts. My forearms were burning like fire, painful to endure...I know the examining board of instructors were giving me a chance to learn about everything I needed to work on all at once in one big package before I had to fly back to Canada. I was not going to give up or miss this one chance I waited for so long. It was another process and another day in my journey to explore Aikido. For those who do not have to travel a far distance to take an exam, I do not really recommend a nine-day intensive! It took over 6 months for my muscles to heal. Lesson learned; the sacrifice was well worth it. After all, I was not 20 or 30 something anymore!



The reason I could carry on with teaching and training in Canada despite everything is because I appreciate how much I was supported by all the instructors at AIA and Victory dojo during the 90's, a total of 7 years while I had been going through on-going challenges in my life. Aikido classes kept me going; it was a place I felt supported, safe, and healthy: being with everyone who extended so much positive "Ki" in a learning environment that kept me wanting to learn more and more. I always felt renewed after training no matter what kind of day I had. It gave me a sense of

community and a sense of belonging that is one of the basic "human need". Life is a series of giving and receiving. There is a sense of continuity, being part of the "wheel" to pass on the teachings. While Aikido helps me to be connected to my Japanese ancestry in one sense, most importantly it

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connects me to much of what I value universally in my life, for learning and growing. Unfortunately, it has not been possible for me to travel in June for summer camp season due to my work and family duties. I hope I can soon visit and train with everyone. Once again, thank you for all your help with my Nidan exam. Domo Arigato gozaimashita.

Extending best wishes from Canada with gratitude,  
Mariko Kage  
Nidan / Shidoin; Founder / Chief Instructor  
Lillooet Seidokan Aikido  
Lillooet, B.C. Canada

## Seidokan Aikido for Adversity

As an Emergency Response Vehicle (ERV) driver for the American Red Cross, I spent January 10-17, 2014 in West Virginia responding to the chemical spill and handed out roughly 50 pallets of cases of bottled water.

Fortunately, I brought my Seidokan Aikido with me.



How would I blend with my partner during the deployment? Depending on what the team needed, I talked, joked, sang, kept quiet, or prayed – Steep roads, rain, narrow bridges, and wide trucks encourage technique to unify spirit, mind, and body. We also decided that what was said in the ERV, stayed in the ERV.

The principle of oneness with the environment drew ki from the mountains, forests and falling streams. As the week wore on, Creation's beauty and strength

eased many aches to body and soul. I also came to appreciate the strength and isolation of the residents of those mountains.

Each drop-off point engaged fiercely independent persons suddenly in need. Masagatsu Agatsu kept me focused on service, not self. These neighbors also extended ki and practiced circular motion; letting us know who in the area also needed water, even carrying the 25-pound cases to the aged, the sick, and families with young children.

I was glad to serve in the Red Cross, and very glad to have the life lessons of Seidokan Aikido to sustain and encourage me.

Respectfully, Jim Brazell, Sankyu, Seiwa Dojo.

As appeared in "ACResolution" the  
international magazine for dispute resolution  
professionals

## “ATTACKING WITH PEACE: THE RESOLUTION OF CONFLICT”

By Jerome Allan Landau

As a skinny teenager in an all-boys high school in the Bronx, I found life in New York City to be a rather dangerous place. After “limping home” one more time suffering from the embarrassment and pains of a bully’s blows, my father realized that this bullying had to be stopped before any remaining self-confidence might be “lost in battle.” Boxing classes, then studying the martial art of Karate helped me to fight back physically; yet I was still suffering “inside” from a lack of self-confidence, along with a young man’s sense of fear, anger, and imbalance.

Thereafter I discovered “Aikido”, a non-violent martial art that is based on the principles of harmony and the peaceful resolution of conflict. My first Sensei, while I lived in Manhattan, was Yoshimitsu Yamada Aikido, a direct student of Aikido’s Founder, Morihei Ueshiba. After I moved to Arizona my direct Sensei was Shihan Peter Ting, and I was also privileged to study at many conferences with Master Rod Koboyashi.

I came to recognize, and then understand, that Aikido is an art that has no techniques for “attacking another”—all the techniques are defensive. When attacked (physically, verbally, or emotionally), the Aikido practitioner’s resolve is to (1) receive the “attack” if with an “embrace”, even if only as a thought; (2) “get off the line” (stepping aside) so as not to be in front of the attack (even if merely knowing that the emotional assault is not truly aimed at me),

(3) “blending” with the attacker’s energy (and body) in a loving spirit (s/he must have a problem, why should anyone want to attack me?); (4) blending energy (ki, chi) with the energy of their attack so that I can (5) physically, with words and/or merely by the power of my presence and thoughts, guide their mind and body in a physical and/or emotional direction to a “place” where they can no longer hurt me, another or themselves. This “Place” physically might be “the ground”; emotionally could be a state of “calmness”, guiding the “attacker” to a state away from

his/her personal storm to a one of peacefully “letting go”. Often a place where that person feels “I am being heard.”

The study and practice of Aikido helped to release insecurities and fears and awaken a deep and calm inner-self. I slowly recognized that each of us is on this same path.

in our own way and for our own lessons, with the goal of all actually being the same - finding peace and harmony within, and serving to open the space for this to come without. As I progressed on the path of Aikido, I began viewing my shortcomings as important parts of my personal path that could be used as touchstones for me to recognize, embrace and move beyond my perceived and actual limitations.

In practice, two Aikido students will train together to learn/practice a technique; taking turns as to who will be the attacker with the other using a specific (defensive) technique (this could include a throwing techniques or a wrist lock.) The attacker actually “lends his body” to the other, trusting that the defender will treat it with great respect and without ego, and will practice the technique with sensitivity and grace. Injuries in Aikido are very rare because of this respect.

In time, I gleaned an understanding that everyone in *Continued at the top of next page*





life with whom I interacted could be regarded as “lending me their bodies and actions” so that I could learn to “live” the type of life to which I aspired. As I encountered aggressive people in court, in a mediation or my other activities, the aggressor / attacker no longer awakened cellular memories of fear and insecurity from my childhood. I was able to recognize what I did not recognize when I was younger—that bullies also have fears and insecurities, no matter what their age. Surprisingly, this realization in turn manifested a sense of compassion for them; after all, they have to live with themselves and with the results of their bullying actions. After many years of practice, I was awarded the rank of Sandan (third degree Black Belt); this too had become merely another “sign-post” along the continuing path we all traverse.

As one always attracted to the practice of conflict resolution, I find myself constantly drawing on the wisdom of Aikido, which itself is merely another expression of true nature, balance and harmony. In my interactive workshops for conflict resolution professionals, and others, I share basic Aikido principles that can help create a peaceful resolution of conflict. For example, it is important for a mediator to project a sense of calmness and positive thinking, while at the same time being ready for any unexpected action. The mediator must maintain a neutral, non-judgmental and centered position. Try to witness what is happening and listen to both the words and the energies behind the words. Reassure clients that you have “heard” their concerns and show compassion (sensitivity) for their struggle. And most importantly, remember that the following guiding Aikido principal serves throughout all of life: True victory is victory over oneself – mediator / arbitrator – endeavor to “heal thyself” before attempting to heal the conflicts of others; be peaceful within and it will induce peace without.

Jerome Allan Landau, Sandan  
Ting Ki Aikido; Seidokan Aikido

*Jerome is a Professional Mediator, Arbitrator and Group Facilitator, serving parties nationally and internationally. He conducts national and international trainings training programs for other professionals in the field, corporations and other organizations, always integrating the philosophy of Aikido in his programs. A Member of the National Academy of Distinguished Neutrals, the International Mediation Institute, multi-Panel Neutral with the American Arbitration Association, Jerome has twice been invited to present his programs at the United Nations.*

## Instructor Certification and Promotions

Confusion over who can promote to what and when, has existed as long as I can remember. While Kobayashi Sensei was traveling for seminars and teaching the bulk of the classes at our annual Summer Camp; he also did most of the promotions to the black belt (dan or yudansha) level. Depending on where he was and who was present; he might be the sole person conducting the test or he might invite one or more of the ranking students/instructors present to “sit the Board” with him. (What some may not realize is that being on the Board with Sensei was a test in itself; he was watching and evaluating you as much as the people on the mat.)

Some people assumed that when they reached a certain level, they could then promote. There was no consensus on what level (Shodan, Nidan, Sandan) that you needed to be and none about to what level you could promote to. Sensei did authorize some of our yudansha to promote, but not others. Although Sensei had told me I was authorized to promote to Shodan; I always had my students test in front of him, either at one of the regular seminars we would host, at the annual Seidokan Camp or at AIA during a special seminar.

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Sensei was concerned that there were a few people that he didn't specifically authorize to promote; that were. They had just assumed that since they were of a certain rank, they could promote to a certain rank. He didn't want to "hurt" the newly promoted student by denying the promotion but was concerned about people that might not be fully update-to-date (on how we were doing specific techniques) perpetuating old or improper arts. This concern, along with some others, formed the basis of his wanting to institute Instructor Certification.

Below is a simple chart that shows the 5 levels of Instructor Certification and what you may or may not do at each instructor ranking.

Promotions to Yondan and above are made by Kancho. Recommendations for promotion should be submitted by Shihan-Dai and Shihan via e-mail or snail-mail.

Certified Instructor Rank	For Ranks Of:	May Test And Promote To:
Sempai	Any	None
Fukushidoin	Nikyu and up	Shodan and above may promote to Ikkyu
Shidoin	Shodan and up	Sandan and above may promote to Shodan
Shihan-Dai	Yondan and up	May promote to Nidan
Shihan	Godan and up	May promote to Sandan

Please remember that certification of all levels is good for a period of 2 years. To renew at the same level, one must attend at least one Camp or a seminar given by a Shihan or Shihan-Dai during that period. (Yes, they must be a Certified Seidokan instructor.)

I would like to add something else about the testing process: video. As of now we are no longer requiring that Shihan and Shihan-Dai submit video of the tests they sit. If they would like to send us a DVD to view; to see how someone did, we'd be more than happy to watch, but it would be just so we could see, not judge. I would like to see video though of our Shidoin level instructors testing a student for Shodan. There are two reasons for this; I'd like to see who the upcoming students are, the future leaders of our organization, and we may want to offer suggestions to either the test takers or the test givers. Hopefully this gives some clarity to the promotion issue.

In Oneness,  
DrMark  
(Dr. Mark Crapo, Seidokan Aikido Kancho)

### Suggested Media / Oren Shamir

This time I'm recommending a Youtube video the depicts a conflict between a bouncer, who happens to be a five-time kickboxing world champion, and someone he needs to 'bounce'.

Despite initially thinking that a fight will break out, Michael Kuhr manages to diffuse the situation calmly and without resorting to violence.

Watch the video at (clickable): <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yWfetF1jCO4>

# Heat the Dojo

## Gogo no Shugyo

### Training After Realization

#### Part 1

March 22, 2014

10-11:30am, lunch break, 2-4pm

**Fee: \$25**

This seminar is based off the seminar originally offered by Kobayashi Sensei in California in 1993. Since then, Crapo Sensei has taught the seminar twice in Michigan and was invited by Mrs. Kobayashi to teach it in California.

This seminar offers a look at the very foundation of Seidokan Aikido and can be enjoyable and educational to all levels of students. Each student tends to pick up ideas that are practical and applicable to their current level of understanding. This makes this seminar "new" to each student each time they attend.

Taught by Seidokan Kancho: Dr. Mark Crapo

Aikido Institute of Michigan, Seiwa Dojo

551 E. Michigan Ave., Battle Creek, MI 49014

For further information, please call Janean: 269 830-1414 or email: [janeancrapo@gmail.com](mailto:janeancrapo@gmail.com)