



# Mana

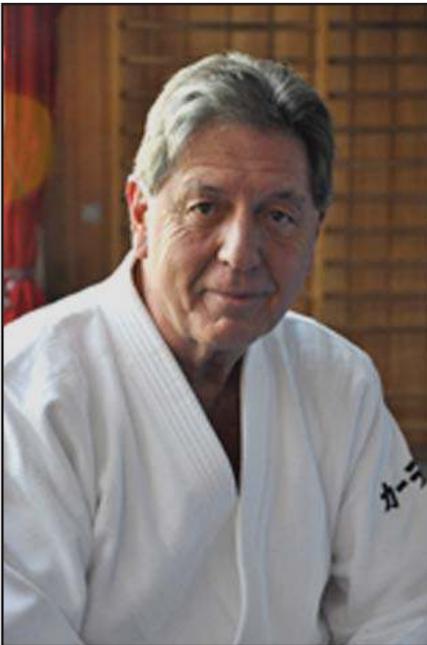
The newsletter of **Hawai'i Ki Federation**

Spring 2015

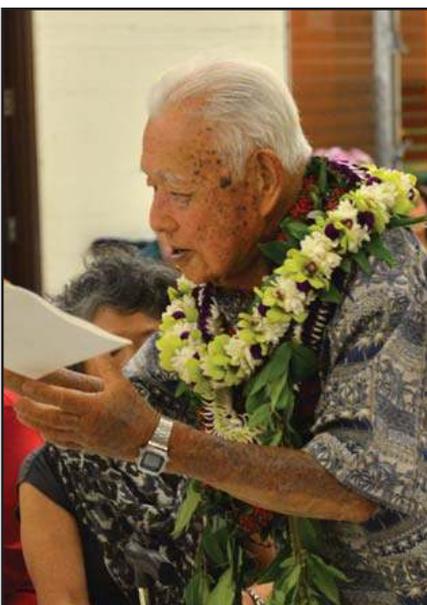
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Page 1



*Christopher Curtis, Chief Instructor, Hawai'i Ki Federation*



*HKF Senior Advisor Takashi Nonaka Sensei of Hilo Shin Shin Toitsu Aikido*

## Chief Instructor's Message

*by Christopher Curtis - Chief Instructor HKF*

Welcome to the spring edition of the HKF Newsletter, MANA. As most of you already know, Shinichi Tohei Sensei (Kaicho), the President of Ki Society, writes a weblog every several weeks discussing important aspects of the teachings of Koichi Tohei Sensei, and posts it on line (URL below). I hope that you are all aware of this, and are looking at this weblog regularly for these lessons so important to us all.

In a recent weblog, Kaicho described the way he views the responsibilities of any Instructor in the Ki Society:

“The most important thing we ask from our Instructors is not based on what Dan they have obtained or how much teaching experience they have, but that only those who continue learning and training can be authorized to continue teaching.

“Of course having knowledge of Aikido techniques is important, but personality and communication skills are also important qualities Instructors must have when teaching and leading classes in Dojos.

“This is why in Shinshin Toitsu Aikido Kai we believe that Instructor Seminars are very important for Instructors and this is also when I have a chance to directly communicate and teach Instructors around Japan [and of course from other countries throughout the world].”

This reminder may very well seem obvious and even unnecessary to most of us. However, there are always some among us who tend to lean

*continues on page 2*

## Spring seminar explores “objectless attention” Nonaka Sensei honored for 9th Dan promotion

*By Ilima Loomis - Maui Ki-Aikido*

“Objectless attention” was the theme of Hawai'i Ki Federation's annual Shugyo Tassei Kigan Shiki seminar held Feb. 20-22 at Lokahi Ki Society's dojo in Honolulu. Teachings led by Curtis Sensei were aimed at helping students experience what it feels like to be open and aware without becoming fixated on one particular point of interest or conflict.

Student Fincher Sterling says the seminar's theme was “a study which required all who attended to reach for what is the most difficult to resource, that being beginner's mind. After years of training to get better at ‘form,’

*Continues on page 2*

*Chief Instructor's Message . . . continued from page 1*

a bit too heavily on their own previous training, sometimes techniques and forms learned many years ago, and are perhaps unaware that this teaching is a living, changing, dynamic that needs constant refreshing. Teaching Aikido is not just a matter of transmitting some forms or even philosophy gleaned from our own history.

When teaching, an Aikido instructor is demonstrating the experience of mind/body unification itself, and for those of us who have been doing this for many years, we must admit that anything having to do with the human mind can be a very tricky business. We may be certain that we are experiencing and exhibiting one thing to the students, when in fact something else entirely is being communicated. This kind of self-delusional state might not develop over night, but in an amazingly short period of time any of us can begin to stray off into depending on some kind of misunderstanding that can and will lead others, who trust us, astray. This is why we all need constant support and “checking” by our own teacher, regularly and often.

I was extremely grateful to see the tremendous turnout for our Hawai'i Ki Federation Shugyo Tassei Kigan Shikki seminar recently. We have another HKF seminar coming up in June on Maui, as you know, and I hope to see not only everyone that attended this last one, but hopefully some others. Anyone who has accepted the responsibility of teaching a class of any kind in any dojo that is a part of our organization, as well as anyone who may be contemplating such a responsibility in the future, should be making every effort to attend each and every seminar offered.

With that in mind, let me also encourage everyone to consider attending the HKF/Western Europe Camp at Ki Society Headquarters in Japan, scheduled for Monday August 31, through Thursday, Sept. 3, this coming fall, 2015. We no longer are holding the usual World Camps at Headquarters, as we have for so many years. Beginning this year, we are going to focus on smaller seminars with specific groups of people, so that the teaching can be even more personal and meaningful for each person attending. The HQ Seminar this September will be taught by Shinichi Tohei Sensei, and will be for all members of HKF, as well as members of the Ki Society Dojos in Holland, Germany, and Spain where I go to teach each year. I would love nothing more than for all of you to meet each other and train together on this occasion. Next year, in 2016, we will be hosting the Keio University Ki-Aikido Club once again, in September, so we won't have a HKF seminar in Japan next year. Therefore please consider taking advantage of this opportunity to attend the important event.

Thank you so much for your continues enthusiasm for these wonderful training opportunities. ☺

<http://www.shinichitohei.com/english/> is the web address for Shinichi Tohei Sensei's blog.

*Spring Seminar . . . continued from page 1*

we were asked to give up that futile pursuit and start anew in earnest towards that which Curtis Sensei is continually teaching us is foundational to Ki-Aikido, ‘connection’.”

Also at the seminar, Curtis Sensei introduced the concept of “illumination in surfeit,” which he explained as a kind of tipping point, where the accumulated weight of the student's experiences reaches a critical mass, leading to realization.

*Continues on page 3*



*Curtis Sensei and students at the Shugyo Tassei Kigan Shiki Spring HKF Seminar, Lokahi Ki Aikido Dojo, Honolulu*

*Spring Seminar . . . continued from page 2*

This surfeit concept resonated for student Cora Godinez, who said that for her, it meant “becoming sick through having too much of any one thing.”

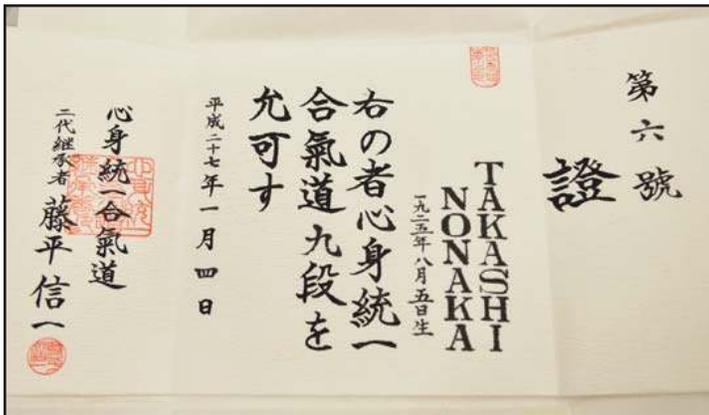
“An example that was used is that ‘I just can’t eat another French fry. Enough is enough. I am sick of French fries,’” she recalls. “And more each day, I find that I am sick of not connecting with people. Enough is enough. I want more connection, which begins with my own mindfulness and practice of keeping my attention in this moment.”

The seminar was also a continuation of Curtis Sensei’s exploration of the concept of shugyo -- which he describes as the practice of being fully present in every moment -- and how shugyo differs from keiko, or the practice of learning correct form.

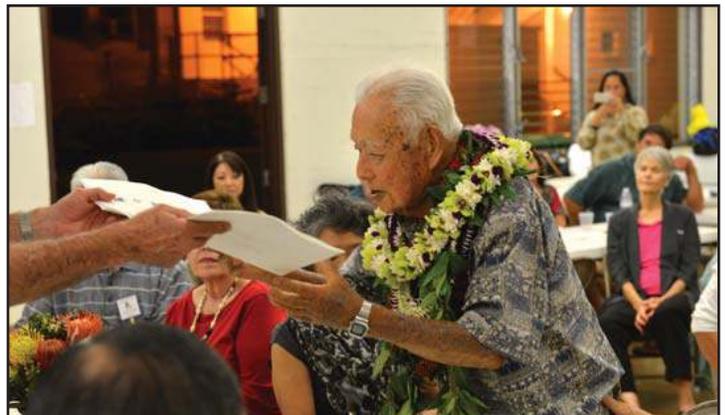
“Someone asked during the discussion, ‘Sensei, doesn’t repetitious practice become shugyo?’” recalls student John Hara. “My interpretation of Sensei’s reply was that keiko practice without attention is not shugyo. I can’t help but think, attention, practice, attention, practice, kakudaiho, shuchuho, half, half, half, half... breathe in, breathe out, wax on, wax off, focus and focus. It’s something I took away from the seminar and since have added it in my daily life.”

## Takashi Nonaka receives 9th Dan

One major highlight of the weekend was a banquet at Lokahi dojo to honor Takashi Nonaka Sensei on the occasion of his promotion to 9th Dan. Four generations of the Nonaka family were present to recognize the achievement. Maui’s Lynn Curtis Sensei describes the celebration as a “chicken skin” moment.



*Nonaka Sensei's 9th Dan certificate*



*Takashi Nonaka Sensei receives 9th Dan Certificate from Curtis Sensei at the Shugyo Tassei Kigan Shiki Seminar in Honolulu.*

“It was meaningful for me because of Nonaka Sensei’s commitment, contributions and teaching, and because he was a good friend of Suzuki Sensei’s,” she notes.

“At the banquet I felt privileged just to hold his 9th Dan certificate. As I clutched it I realized that this is something that I am not going to experience again.”

Watching Nonaka Sensei’s toddler-aged grandchildren play on the dojo mats during the formal program of the banquet was a moment full of humor and significance for Lynn Sensei.

“They were oblivious to the significance of the occasion -- as they should be,” she says. “At one point the little boy had the ken and the jo from the Shomen, one under each arm, and was dragging them across the mats. I was shocked for a moment and then realized the perfection of that picture. Here was a great Sensei being honored by students and family, and his great-grandson was looking like he was going to carry on the family tradition.” ☺

# Hawai'i Ki Federation news from dojos around the Islands

## Hilo Dojo Celebrates New Year and Nonaka Sensei's Promotion

Hilo Shin Shin Toitsu Aikido rang in the New Year at its annual Kagami Biraki ceremony on Sunday, January 4, 2015 at the Waiakea Recreation Center. Head Instructor Leilani Pakele Sensei presented promotion certificates to numerous students. A special announcement was made that Senior Instructor Takashi Nonaka Sensei has been promoted to the rank of 9th Dan, the only living person outside of Japan to currently hold this rank in the Ki Society.

Members took part in Aikido demonstrations and Sokushin No Gyo. Following the ceremony, members and families were treated to traditional zenzai a dish consisting of warm azuki beans and mochi. A beautiful shomen display was arranged by Edward Take-moto.

On Saturday, February 21, 2015 several Hilo members attended the Hawai'i Ki Federation (HKF) banquet for Nonaka Sensei as part of the Shu-gyo Tassei Kigan Shiki at the Lokahi



*Sokushin no Gyo in Hilo during Kagami Biraki*

Dojo. Many members of the Nonaka family and the HKF family also joined the festivities. The 9th Dan promotion certificate from Headquarters and a congratulatory certificate from the Mayor of the County of Hawai'i were presented to Nonaka Sensei that evening. Speeches and presentations were made by HKF Chief Instructor Christopher Curtis, HKF Senior Advisor Clayton Naluai, Mililani Dojo Head Instructor Eric Nonaka, Lokahi Dojo Head Instructor Charles Boyer, Hilo Dojo Head Instructor Leilani Pakele, and Hilo club president David Kaneshiro. Naluai Sensei performed a beautifully heartfelt song and Eric Sensei led a rousing banzai. A big Mahalo goes to the Lokahi members for their excellent hospitality!

On Saturday, February 28, 2015, Hilo Shin Shin Toitsu held its annual Shinnen Enkai New Year Party. A plaque from the Hawai'i State Senate was presented to Nonaka Sensei to commemorate his promotion to 9th Dan. Nonaka Sensei thanked the members and his lovely wife for the support throughout the years.

In his 60th year of Aikido training, Nonaka Sensei continues to teach Sunday mornings and at other special classes. Hilo Dojo is proud and blessed to have Nonaka Sensei guiding us! Best wishes to all for a wonderful 2015! ☺



*Nonaka Sensei with Children's Class Students*



*Hilo Revelers at HKF Banquet*

## HKF 2015 upcoming seminars

Christopher Curtis Sensei will teach the 2015 Summer Seminar for all of Hawai'i Ki Federation at the Shunshinkan Dojo of Maui Ki-Aikido on June 26 through 28, 2015. Registration is available online at mauiaikido.com.

HKF students on O'ahu will have a summer workshop at Lokahi Dojo with Curtis Sensei on July 10-11; those on Hawai'i Island in Hilo, July 24-25; and those on Kaua'i at Hanapepe, August 7-8. No registration is necessary in order to attend the summer workshops for students on each of those islands.

All Hawai'i Ki Federation students are encouraged to attend the Hawai'i Ki Federation Japan Headquarters Training Camp August 31 through Sept. 4. Shinichi Tohei Sensei is offering the 4 days of training to our federation as well as to all the Western Europe students that Curtis Sensei has been visiting and teaching from the Holland, Germany and Spain Ki societies. The opportunity to practice under Tohei Sensei as well as for the HKF and Western Europe students to train together and get to know one another will make this a very memorable seminar.

All info and forms for the Japan Training Camp are on our website, [www.mauiaikido.com](http://www.mauiaikido.com), and Curtis Sensei has emailed the application form and schedule to all HKF members and to Western Europe chief instructors. ☺



All the attendees at the Spring HKF seminar Feb. 20 - 22, Lokahi Ki Aikido Dojo



Christopher Curtis Sensei and Lynn Curtis at the annual commemoration of Shinichi Suzuki Sensei's birthday, March 22.



Tracy Reasoner, Curtis Sensei, Leil Koch, participants in the annual Maui Police Dept. Troy Barboza Torch Run, a Special Olympics fundraiser.

## Meet Celine Boyer of Lokahi Ki Aikido

Celine Ho Boyer is a Nidan student and instructor of a children's class at the Lokahi Dojo in Honolulu, Hawai'i. She is from Hong Kong originally but came to live in Hawai'i 25 years ago to attend school and has lived on the mainland and in Hawai'i ever since.

The Hawai'i Ki Federation is lucky to have "snagged" this lovely lady, and we were helped by Love. Or was she the motivation for our "snagging" Charles Boyer who is now our HKF President, as well as Lokahi Dojo Head Instructor. Read on to find out more!

*Mana:* When and where did you start training Aikido? How did you hear about it? Was that at the same time that you met your husband? Was he the catalyst that got you into Aikido?

*Celine Boyer:* I started Aikido training at the end of 2002. There was a seminar in the summer that year at the Ala Moana Hotel where Shinichi Tohei Sensei came to teach. A friend of mine just started training, and she invited me to go to the first day of a public seminar. I did not have much idea of what Aikido was; I was only told that it was related to Ki. That was when I met my husband, Charles Boyer Sensei. He was showing my friend a few things for new people. When I first met him, there was a special connection with him. My girl friend invited Charles and me to go salsa dancing during the seminar weekend. I started training afterwards, mainly because of my friend, but she quit not long after. I do believe that Charles was the catalyst for why I continued to train.

*Mana:* Charles wasn't even training here in Hawai'i at that time, no?

*CB:* No, he came to assist his teacher, David Shaner Sensei, who brought 3 students from the South Carolina dojo at that time. Then they went over to Maui to help Suzuki Sensei teach the police recruit class. Charles moved to Hawai'i the next year, and I think I was a certain influence on him to move here.

*Mana:* Who were your teachers along the way, and did you train anywhere else besides HKF/Lokahi?

*CB:* Along the way, Clayton Naluai Sensei was my teacher before my husband became the head instructor of Lokahi, which has been the only place that I have trained in HKF. Naluai Sensei is a man of wisdom with a very deep understanding of Aikido and lots of patience. He's a good teacher.

*Continues on page 7*



*Celine Boyer Sensei participates with some of her students at a demonstration at Kahala Mall in Honolulu.*

Meet Celine Boyer . . . continued from page 6

*Mana:* What classes do you teach now? Tell us a little about your students and your experience of teaching Aikido.

*CB:* I teach the Saturday morning children's class. Class size is relatively small. They come and go. Their ages were from 5 to 12 at one point, but a couple of my older students just started to join the adult class a few months ago after training for about 5 or 6 years. I've watched them growing up. Currently, the students are pretty young.

Teaching children requires patience and spontaneity. Sometimes, I have planned to teach something, but then I see an unexpected outcome. They might not understand well or appear to be distracted and bored. I have to adjust, may need to add an activity to keep them moving or a game to occupy their energy. It's not always easy!

Over the years, I feel that teaching helps me develop more confidence in practicing Aikido. It is sometimes through teaching step by step that I get in touch more in understanding the principles and techniques. At the same time, I'm also very conscious about not getting into that teaching mode when training with my peers, especially more junior students. That responsibility should always belong to the instructor of the class.

*Mana:* How do you balance being away flying so much with your teaching duties? (Celine is a flight attendant on UAL flying the route from Newark NJ to Asia.)

*CB:* I spend half of the month traveling and working long-haul flights. It is very physically demanding what I do. Occasionally, I have to teach the day after I come home while I still experience jet lag and fatigue. Feeling the responsibility to introduce Ki principles to keiki (children) and hopefully laying a foundation of calmness in their lives is my motivation to teach. I share teaching duties with Harry Daguman Sensei, and thanks to him, he is very flexible and accommodative to work with my schedule. Overall, it has been working out well with some advance coordination each month.

*Mana:* What are some hobbies, passions, pastimes that you enjoy, outside of the dojo?

*CB:* My hobbies and passions outside Aikido include playing tennis and walking as exercise. Charles and I have been playing tennis regularly a couple of times a week on my days off. It is a good sprinting exercise. It's fun and feels good to be running around in the court. Also, cooking and drinking wine is what I like to do at home. Food and wine go together, and I feel relaxed and enjoy the process of cooking leading to a healthy, delicious meal. I studied nutrition in college. Taking care of our bodies through a good balanced diet has always been part of my life.

*Mana:* What else would you like to tell us about your life as an Aikido student and teacher?

*CB:* As an Aikido student, there have been ups and downs through the years though I'm still very junior in the Aikido world. Different aspects contribute to this, eg. injuries, experiences and expectations with the teacher, and personal reasons, etc. I believe it is a rather normal process in any kind of training. I realize that I went through the stage from being told to do things early on in training to having curiosity of why I do it and what it is about in recent years. I am getting in touch more with myself about my own thoughts and feelings. Aikido also helps me discover that I could actually perform under pressure and stress with the energy going into the positive way.

*Mana:* Thank you, Celine, for a delightful interview! ☺



## Amazon Smile

Amazon now offers donations through their Smile program. They make a donation of 1/2 cent for every dollar you spend on Amazon. To sign up for Amazon Smile and support Maui Ki-Aikido with your Amazon purchases, please go here: <http://smile.amazon.com/about>

# Maui Ki-Aikido's 2015 Special Workshops opened to public

Learning some basic self-defense awareness and moves was the topic of a February 28 Maui Ki-Aikido public workshop taught by 5th dan Tracy Reasoner. It was the first of a new series of 2-hour classes open to the public that Maui is experimenting with several times this year. The purpose of the program is to broaden community knowledge of the teachings that we are offering and to help new students find us.

On April 18, An Introduction to Meditation was the second public workshop offered. Maui Head Instructor and HKF Chief Instructor Christopher Curtis Sensei explained the basics of what meditation is and of some common misconceptions, distractions and expectations that keep us from paying attention and being present. He provided step-by-step instruction for several different types of meditation practice done in Aikido and led the participants through several short meditation sessions, followed by answering questions posed by the public participants and dojo members attending.



Members and public gathered for the April 18 Meditation Workshop.

The third scheduled Special Workshop will be on Saturday, June 20, from 10am to noon on the subject of Kiatsuho, or pressing with Ki, taught by 6th dan Joni Jackson. Jackson, an instructor at Maui Ki-Aikido, studied Kiatsu with Tohei Sensei in Japan for four years at the Kiatsu Gakuin, serving as an intern during two of those years. She states, "I worked on Koichi Tohei Sensei for most of that time. He taught me everything I know about Kiatsu. I feel very, very privileged to have been given such an incredible opportunity to have known and worked with Koichi Tohei Sensei."

The Self Defense Workshop will be repeated on August 8. The public is welcome to attend these workshops for a small fee, and all members may attend free of charge. ♪



Maui Ki-Aikido teachers and students work with members of the public who came to participate in the Self-Defense Workshop Feb. 28.



## Why we support the Maui Ki-Aikido Endowment Fund

Aikido on Maui begins and ends with the premise that mind and body are one. Aikido training is a process of realizing not only the unification of mind and body, but also the innate sameness and ultimate union with all that surrounds us. Maui Ki Aikido's mission for over 50 years has been to provide this kind of opportunity to the community of Maui.

At the core of this mission is the need to ensure that future leaders and instructors of Maui Ki Aikido are supported and cultivated in order to perpetuate the training of mind and body unification for generations to come. How do we accomplish that, you may ask. The answer to that is twofold. First, we cultivate a dedicated cadre of instructors who volunteer their time to teach each of their students every week. Second, we create a "trust" or "endowment fund" to provide financial support that insures on-going instructor training.

The Maui Ki-Aikido Board of Directors created the Maui Ki-Aikido Endowment Fund to enable that training as soon as the financial fundraising goal for the Endowment Fund is met. We are within reach of that goal – which has been a major heavy lift. However, that just brings us up to the starting line. Now is the time to participate financially. Your contribution will ensure Maui Ki-Aikido's mission will be honored.

Aikido training is learning about ourselves and learning to live with fuller potential and integrity. It is training to lead a positive and successful life. Please participate by donating today to ensure training tomorrow.

Checks made out to Maui Ki-Aikido may be sent to P. O. Box 724, Wailuku, HI 96793. Please note "Endowment Fund" on the memo line. Thank you.

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## Dear Reader, Please assist us in reaching you better

Hawai'i Ki Federation's semi-annual MANA newsletter is now published both in print form and sent out by email. In addition, each new issue and an archive of all back issues are available on our website, mauiaikido.com .

To better use our valued donations and dues income, we would like to make sure our extensive mailing list is made up of those who really want to receive our newsletter. Therefore, dear reader, we are asking you to please do one of two things; if you would like to continue reading our newsletter, please either send your email address to us at [mauiki-aikido@earthlink.net](mailto:mauiki-aikido@earthlink.net) so that we may email each issue to you as a pdf file, in color. Or, if you've not done so already, fill out, clip and mail us the following form to verify that you are still interested in receiving a print copy by postal mail. Donations to cover printing and postage are appreciated.

We are pleased to continue printing and mailing to all those interested. Thank you very much.

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## Japanese Swords shown and demonstrated at Maui Ki-Aikido



Robert Montgomery Sensei, Maui Iaijutsu Instructor of the 21st Grandmaster Sekiguchi's school, gave a fascinating guest lecture at Maui Ki-Aikido on March 28, showing us many very fine swords from his valuable collection and giving the history of the development of different types and uses of the Japanese sword over hundreds of years. He was assisted by his student Layke Yamauchi who is also a Maui Ki-Aikido yudansha student.



### Spreading the Word

If you received this newsletter from a friend and wish to subscribe, please send an email to:

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Please see our web sites: [mauiaikido.com](http://mauiaikido.com) and [curtissensei.com](http://curtissensei.com)

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**Ki-Aikido on Maui**, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition, by Christopher Curtis Sensei (non-members) \$12\_\_\_\_  
The training manual used by all Hawai'i Ki Federation dojos. (HKF member) \$8\_\_\_\_

**50 Years of Aikido in Hawai'i, A Book of Days** ..... **Reduced!** \$10\_\_\_\_  
Perpetual keepsake calendar with historic photos that chronicle the birth, evolution and development of Aikido, including rare photos of the founders.

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Christopher Curtis Sensei performs the 8 Bokken Suburi, 10 repetitive bokken cutting (HKF members) \$20\_\_\_\_  
exercises, Kengi 1 and 2, and Jogi 1 and 2, developed by both Soshu Koichi Tohei and Shinichi Suzuki Sensei over the past 50 years.

**Norito CD**, as read by Christopher Curtis Sensei.....\$25\_\_\_\_

**Shokushu (Ki Sayings) CD**, as read by Clayton Naluai Sensei.....\$25\_\_\_\_

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Purchase and download *Letting Go*, and *Ki-Aikido on Maui* for \$9.99 each in the following formats: Kindle (Amazon); Lulu (Viewable on any device from Lulu); iBook (iTunes Store); and Nook (Barnes & Noble).

**Letting Go: Talks on Aikido** is a collection of insightful, concise essays adapted from talks given by Christopher Curtis, 8th Dan, the Chief Instructor of the Hawaii Ki Federation and Head Instructor of Maui Ki-Aikido in Wailuku, Maui. A wide range of topics is covered, from the basic principles and techniques of Ki-Aikido to the practical ways that Ki-Aikido can be applied to living a more centered, productive, and mindful life.

The *Letting Go* book is a useful companion to related Letting Go lectures, podcasts and discussions available on Curtis Sensei's blog, found at [curtissensei.com](http://curtissensei.com).



*Takashi Nonaka Sensei, 9th Dan recipient (see pages 3-4) flanked by son Eric Nonaka Sensei (Mililani Ki Aikido), Curtis Sensei and Mrs. Nonaka.*



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The newsletter of **Hawai'i Ki Federation**