

# 氣 Maui Ki-Aikido

Spring 2007

[hawaiiiaikido.org](http://hawaiiiaikido.org)

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Clarence Chinn Sensei teaching HKF seminar, and working with Leilani Pakele Sensei, Hilo Head Instructor.

## Chinn Sensei delights big HKF Spring Seminar

Clarence Chinn Sensei, Nanadan, Chief Instructor of the Southern California Ki Society, delighted the 45 participants of Hawaii Ki Federation's Spring Seminar as he led us for three days with his gentle and humorous wisdom through ways to live fully this moment, the only one we have.

Being aware of *now* and being in full trust of our partners and ourselves, were two of the concepts he returned to over and over as we applied them to deceptively simple-looking arts. The students, who ranged in age from several elder sensei to an orange-belt 10-year-old, were helped by Chinn Sensei to find out where we were trying to move or throw our partners with that seemingly ever-present ego we have that wants to compete and "win." That revealed to us once more, the students were able to "just move yourself," as Chinn Sensei repeated to us, to fully and gently control our partners.

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## Suzuki Sensei receives Okuden Ki rank

by Ilima Loomis

After more than 53 years of training and teaching without an official Ki rank, Ki No Kenkyukai headquarters in Japan awarded Maui Head Instructor Shinichi Suzuki Sensei the rank of Okuden in 2006.

Okuden, which literally means "hidden teachings," represents the highest Ki rank awarded outside of Japan headquarters.

While Suzuki Sensei had never received an official Ki rank, he was told by Koichi Tohei Sensei several years ago not to worry about his ranking because he was already an Okuden. Yet in the years that followed, the rank was never formalized.

When Curtis Sensei mentioned the story to Shinichi Tohei Sensei at 2006 World Camp, he agreed it was time Sensei's rank was officially recognized.

While a test for Okuden has been developed in more recent years, Shinichi Tohei Sensei agreed with his father that Suzuki Sensei could be "grandfathered," and the rank bestowed automatically.

The certificate of Okuden was presented to Suzuki Sensei by Curtis Sensei on behalf of Ki No Kenkyukai and Tohei Sensei at Maui Ki-Aikido's Omiki celebration on Dec. 13, 2006. Suzuki Sensei expressed his gratitude for the recognition, and shared some of his memories and reflections on training with the gathering of students.



Photos by Christopher Barene

# The Spirit of Non-Dissension

by Christopher Curtis Sensei, Hawaii Ki Federation Chief Instructor

In Aikido we sometimes refer to “the spirit of non-dissension.” Suzuki Sensei always said that the essence of the teaching is always a mind of non-dissension. This is a non-fighting mind. This non-dissension, or non-resistance, is very important, particularly when we talk about training in the dojo and then transferring this training into our daily life. The key to a life that is free of suffering is that there is no resistance to what this life brings us, moment by moment.

Often resistance has to do with events or with people. For example, “I don’t like that particular person,” or “I hated that happening,” or “I am afraid of some future occurrence that is bound to be unpleasant,” or then just gossiping about another person, saying something negative about them. This is all resistance to what is. And, strangely perhaps, this is an extended form of self aggrandizement.

At all times the spirit of non-dissension refers to this moment. It is a present practice; never just an idea to discuss. And that is where we get into the most difficulty, because instead of living in the presence, or absolute fundamental essence of the moment, we tend to be living in (paying attention to) the relative form or content of the moment. When someone is sitting in front of us talking, for instance, we tend to identify with their form; their appearance, their sound, the sensual experience. We are exclusively tied into what we can hear, taste, smell, touch, and see, instead of the spatial openness that allows that perceivable form to be. So that is concentrating directly on the object of awareness instead of what is arising in our awareness. That is like saying “OK, I am going to purposely concentrate on my small, needy self, and make sure it is secure, protected, and defended (the surest path to resistance), instead of dwelling in my absolute essence, which is free and infinite.” Pretty crazy, I would say, if you tell me you don’t want to suffer!

Maybe you would like to experiment just to see where you are at in this area. Here are a few examples of some good things to try: For instance, when someone is insulting you, diminishing your value in some way, don’t say anything. Just try this. Just for fun. Don’t say anything at all. Don’t defend yourself. Don’t stick up for yourself. Don’t think to yourself just how wrong they are. Simply listen. And see the

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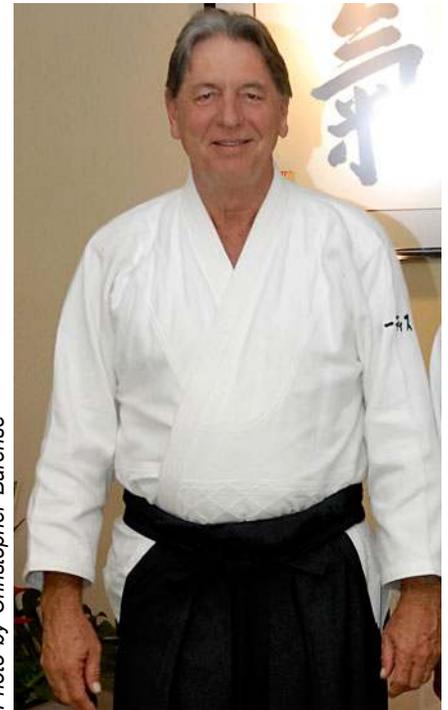


Photo by Christopher Barese

Christopher Curtis Sensei, Chief Instructor, Hawaii Ki Federation

Curtis Sensei’s archived articles and transcripts, as well as archived issues of this newsletter, are available on:

[www.hawaiiiaikido.org](http://www.hawaiiiaikido.org)

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## HAWAII KI FEDERATION 2007 SCHEDULE

| ITEM                                       | LOCATION              | DATE                         |
|--|-----------------------|------------------------------|
| Curtis Sensei Europe Seminars              | Germany/Netherlands   | April 24 - May 7             |
| HKF Board Meeting                          | Gyotaku Restaurant    | June 1, Friday               |
| HKF Summer Camp - Oahu                     | Camp Erdman           | June 1, 2, 3 Fri. Sat. Sun.  |
| National C.I. Seminar                      | Maryland              | June 21, 22, 23, 24          |
| HKF Board Meeting                          | Hilo Dojo             | Aug. 10, Friday.             |
| HKF Instructor Intensive                   | Hilo Dojo             | Aug. 11, 12 Sat., Sun.       |
| Keio Univ. Seminar - Shinichi Tohei Sensei | Shunshinkan Dojo      | Sept. 1, 2, 3 Sat. Sun. Mon. |
| Curtis Sensei Europe Seminars              | Germany/Netherlands   | Oct 2 - 16                   |
| World Camp                                 | Ki no Kenkyukai HQ    | Oct. 23-29, Wed. - Sun.      |
| HKF Board Meeting                          | Kauai                 | Dec. 7, Friday               |
| HKF Winter Seminar                         | Hanapepe Dojo - Kauai | Dec. 7-9, Fri. - Sun.        |

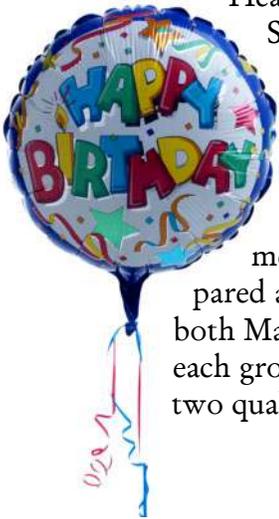


Suzuki Sensei and Mrs. Patsy Suzuki receive lei and congratulations from Leilani Pakele and all those attending Suzuki Sensei's 90<sup>th</sup> birthday potluck at the Shunshinkan Dojo.

## Suzuki Sensei's 90<sup>th</sup> Celebrated!

Shinichi Suzuki Sensei, Maui Ki-Aikido's beloved founder and 50-year Head Instructor, celebrated his 90<sup>th</sup> birthday at a banquet held at the Shunshinkan Dojo on March 24 with the students and instructors assembled for the HKF Spring Seminar.

Suzuki Sensei and his wife Patsy Suzuki were festooned at the party with many lei, and Christopher Curtis Sensei led a rousing Banzai! Suzuki Sensei's Okuden Ki certificate, presented at the New Year, was returned to him after being beautifully framed by Maui members Glen Young and Fincher Sterling. Clayton Naluai Sensei prepared and sang a special song for Suzuki Sensei, who was also honored by both Maui Ki-Aikido and the Hawaii Ki Federation by donations of \$250 from each group to the Shinichi Suzuki Ki-Aikido Youth Award which funds one or two qualified teens for training at World Camp in Japan.



Around the head table, L to R, Takashi Nonaka Sensei, Clayton Naluai Sensei, Tracy Reasoner, Clarence Chinn Sensei, the Suzukis, Karen Yorimoto.



Christopher Curtis Sensei bows to his teacher after words of congratulation.

## Naluai Sensei retires Charles Boyer to lead Lokahi

by Mele Stokesberry

Clayton Naluai Sensei, Rokudan, Hawaii Ki Federation Senior Advisor and for many years Head Instructor of Lokahi Ki-Aikido in Honolulu, has chosen 2007 as the year to retire and turn over his dojo to his successor, Charles Boyer Sensei. The formal turning over of the dojo to Boyer Sensei was done in a ceremony at the Lokahi dojo on March 3, 2007. The retirement of Naluai Sensei and the issuing in of Boyer Sensei was celebrated on April 14 at a banquet during the HKF Instructors' Intensive workshop in Honolulu.

Naluai Sensei started training Aikido with Tohei Sensei in 1958. Of his first encounter with the man who would become his mentor, friend and inspiration, Naluai Sensei said, "When I first saw Tohei Sensei easily throwing people at a demonstration that one of my friends had recommended to me, I thought, 'That fake.' Then Tohei Sensei asked me, 'Can you tumble?' I said 'yes' and next thing I knew I was flying through the air. There was nothing to resist. I was just *going*. I thought, 'How the heck?' " That experience convinced him there was something very, very special to be learned from this man.

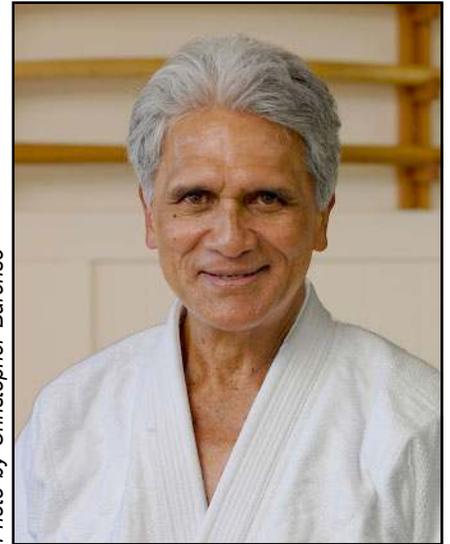
Although he had many other teachers, among them Yamamoto Sensei and Yoshioka Sensei, and he has practiced at dojos all over Oahu and the Mainland, he considers Master Tohei his primary teacher. He trained with him during all of Tohei Sensei's visits to Hawaii. Regarding his deep feeling of mentor-student relationship with Master Tohei, he recounts how once Tohei Sensei was testing him and pushed him over, then tested him a second time, when he was stable. Naluai Sensei asked his teacher, "Sensei, did you test me the same way both times?" Tohei Sensei just gave him "that look that only Tohei Sensei can give" and said, "Don't you *believe*?" Naluai Sensei says that was a turning point for him.

"My experience with Tohei Sensei was life-changing! Everything he taught me I could use in everyday life. If he had been teaching basketball, I would have gone to practice basketball, or anything else, to follow his teachings about Ki and life," states Naluai Sensei.

Naluai Sensei founded the current Lokahi Ki-Aikido dojo with 4 other instructors in the early 1970's. It is located in the Jodo Temple at 1429 Makiki Street in Honolulu. As a Hawaiian man steeped in his culture, Naluai Sensei chose the name "Lokahi" because in Hawaiian it means "Of One Mind."

Of his decision to step down as head instructor, Naluai Sensei recounted how he was on his annual pilgrimage up in the mountains in California in 2005 when he heard a message in his heart that told him it was time to give his dojo over to the next generation. He thought about it for a year and felt the same message on his next retreat the following year, which decided the matter. Currently he is coming to the dojo to watch the classes and help, but he is no longer teaching Ki-Aikido classes. Sensei does, however, continue teaching Ki principles in his business, stress management seminars, for he says that "Ki teachings are my life."

Photo by Christopher Barens



Clayton Naluai Sensei, HKF Senior Advisor

The new Head Instructor, Charles Boyer Sensei, first met Naluai Sensei in 2001 and came to Honolulu to live, and Lokahi to train Aikido, in 2003. He had been a student of David Shaner Sensei, Chief Instructor of the Eastern Ki Federation, who himself started out in Aikido as one of Naluai Sensei's students, so Naluai Sensei says, "He comes from an excellent teacher, excellent 'stock' and full circle." When asked where Naluai Sensei hopes to see the Lokahi Ki-Aikido dojo develop in the future, he said, "I let it go." He gave as a gift to Charles Boyer Sensei a canoe paddle (specifically a *used* paddle) and told him, "It's up to you where you want to steer this dojo now."

Boyer Sensei says, "It's a great honor" to be chosen to lead in Naluai Sensei's place. "What Naluai Sensei has taught me most is about love and protection for all things. I'm beginning to have some understanding of what this means, thanks to Naluai Sensei."



## Ways to help promote Ki-Aikido

The Hawaii Ki Federation is starting an endowment fund to ensure its ability to continue promoting Ki-Aikido on all the islands in Hawaii into the future. Recently \$2,350 in seed money for this endowment was raised on Maui at a dinner hosted at his home by HKF Fund Raising Chairman Jeff Baldwin. An account has been opened and donations can be received.

Also accepting donations is the Maui Ki-Aikido ninety-nine year Endowment Fund, established in 2005 under the leadership of Leil Koch, which is accepting and managing the growth of donations to protect and promote Maui Ki-Aikido through the next few generations and in perpetuity.

Maui Ki-Aikido additionally seeks donations for our general programs and our Shinichi Suzuki Ki-Aikido Youth Award which annually selects our most qualified youth to attend World Camp at Ki no Kenkyukai in Japan.

Donations to any of these funds are tax-deductible and may be sent to Maui Ki-Aikido, P. O. Box 724, Wailuku, HI 96793. We are very grateful for the support of Maui Ki-Aikido's and Hawaii Ki Federation's network of members and friends.



*The Thursday Intermediate and High School Aikido classes with their instructors and Sherri Pell, Aloha Recycling Manager.*

## MKA kids' programs receive recycling prize

Maui Ki-Aikido won second place in the island-wide contest offered in February by Aloha Recycling of Kahului. Our members brought in \$463 worth of HI 5-cent beverage containers, keeping over 9,000 of them out of the landfill. That's was worth a \$50 bonus and a cash prize of \$150, all \$663 of which is designated for our children and youth programs.

Sherri Pell, Redemption Operations Manager for Aloha Recycling, brought the prize check to the dojo during a Thursday teen Aikido class. Pell told the assembled kids that she was very proud of them for representing 25% of all the contest recycling brought in during the contest. "I want you to know you're really helping the environment, because each aluminum can recycled saves the equivalent of one cup of gasoline in resources needed to mine more aluminum."

Pell has announced that there will be further contests this year and next. Maui Ki-Aikido members and supporters, please save those HI 5 containers for our next big push!



*Intermediate and high school MKA students take a break from their very hard work during their car wash to raise money for the Suzuki Sensei Ki-Aikido Youth Award.*

*Non-Dissension . . . continued from page 2*

feeling that comes up in you; possibly the feeling of being diminished. That feeling is this small self being burned. See how you identify with that. My guess is that you will identify with that as a “bad” thing. We don’t like that, do we? But how strange, because it is, in fact, what you have been working for throughout all of these years of training. The “ego,” the self-obsessed part of each of us, being burned away, “purified,” is what you say you want, isn’t it? What a blessing that someone comes along and diminishes you, then. Are those just words you say, or are you serious about this?

We consider our feelings, our ideas, our beliefs, to be personal and very special. When these are challenged, we tend to defend those things. We say we are “sticking up for ourselves.” And we consider this to be a strength, this “sticking up for myself.” But it is ultimately a weakness.

Of course, please look out how you take this, because what we are saying doesn’t mean that you just lie down and let anybody walk all over you. There are times when you have to say “Hold it right there. That’s enough.” Because you may be in physical danger, or you may be in some other situation where what is happening is not appropriate. This must be clear. But at the same time, be careful. Because the ego’s idea of what is appropriate is always that which doesn’t diminish it. So the ego will tell

you it’s time to say, “Back off; hold it right there!” when it should be saying, “Yes, I accept.” And conversely, the ego usually says “Yes, I accept,” when it ought to be saying “No, hold it.”

So that is one thing you can try. Strength in this situation is simply abiding in the present, with no resistance and no collapsing. Just abide.

Now take a look when you receive some praise, or some certificate of rank, for instance. Pay attention to the feeling that arises. Always something will arise. See what that feels like. See if it is adding to your sense of self worth or not. And if it is, then see if you see that as pride, and that maybe you accuse yourself of wrongness. Again, let’s be clear. I am not saying you should be judging this to be right or wrong. I am saying just pay attention; just observe. Because the ego will sometimes watch itself, and say, “That’s right.” Or “That’s wrong.” But that is not what I am referring to. That is the ego justifying itself, building itself up. The ego is the one watching, not the absolute self, not the presence, not the original one. So again, this ego is just a mistaken notion; a case of mistaken identity.

The spirit of non-dissension is a huge subject that is in play at every moment that we are interacting with other people, things, events, or even within our own selves. It is very important in meditation or contemplation that we maintain

a spirit of non-dissension; a spirit of non-resistance. No matter what arises, don’t accept it or reject it. Don’t resist it in any way. Just let it be.

You know, I have this scroll on the wall of my meditation alcove at home that O Sensei wrote for Suzuki Sensei, and Suzuki Sensei presented to me many years ago. This scroll says, “He wins; I win; win every day.” I like to paraphrase that to mean, “Always let the other man win, and then you will be first because you were last.” Sometimes you are so desperate to win that this makes you lose. When you don’t claim the credit, you will be given the credit. When you do claim the credit, it will be taken from you, even if you don’t notice it overtly. The Bible says something like, “Those who have will be given more, and those who have little, even that little will be taken from them.” What does that mean? It means this very thing. If you know you are abundant and don’t need to add to that (meaning you can afford to “lose,” or give up the credit to another), more will be added to you. If you feel you are inadequate, or deficient in some way (and therefore needing to win, to get the credit), then whatever little you have, even that will be squeezed out of you. This is not done by some “other,” some mysterious force. This is just the way it is. If you have plenty and share that selflessly with others, more will come to you. If you see yourself as lacking, and cling to what

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*Non-Dissension . . . continued from page 6*

little you have, then even that will diminish. (And we are not only talking about material things here, folks.) Other people, events in your life will do the job. And if that doesn't seem fair, and in perfect order to you, then ask "Why not?". Take a look and see what arises. What is that feeling of injustice? Is it not a sense of lack? Is it not, in fact, victimhood? And if you live as a victim, is this not what we might call a "losing proposition"?

So these are just some things that you can try for yourself. And you have to sincerely try them. I mean, this is not just a mind game. It is not just some subject for you to think about while you are sitting safely, alone in your meditation. No. This is something for you to try when you are with your friends. And believe me you will have plenty of chances. At least once a day, someone diminishes you in some way. You have actually many chances every day. Whether you are in business, or relationship, or school, or whatever, always something happens. Maybe someone just cuts you off on the road. That can feel diminishing. That is why we have "road rage." Every time that happens, instead of doing something about it, just see what arises within you. Hmm... Maybe that burning is useful.

*Excerpt from upcoming book "Letting Go" by Christopher Curtis Sensei*

## Starting Breathing

*by Ilima Loomis*

Curtis Sensei often talks about the benefits of breathing every morning, yet some of us (myself included!) seem to struggle with making breathing a part of our regular routine. For many, daily breathing might seem like a healthy new diet or exercise – we know it's good for us and we want to do it, so why is it so hard to start?

In an informal survey of daily, regular and beginning breathers on Maui and in some Mainland dojos, we found that students who are just starting a breathing regimen face some common obstacles, and heard some good advice from those who've committed to daily breathing.

Even for regular breathers, life sometimes seems to get in the way. Rocky Mountain Ki Society Student Jon Strauss reports "a new baby, my job, school and chores or meal preparation" are the most common things that get in the way of his otherwise daily morning breathing.

Maui's Warren Gibson, who usually breathes six mornings a week, says "living life spontaneously, being flexible to early morning events/changes to my routine, (and) waking up later than usual after a late night" are the reasons for occasionally missing a day.

Meanwhile, a beginning breather on Maui admits "lack of discipline" and a desire to do other things are the main reasons for not doing sitting every day. The student also reports that even when a regular routine is established, "something comes along to throw it off" like visitors, a trip, or a cold – a problem I have also experienced!

Maui's Prakash Mackay says he breathes several days a week, but acknowledges he's always felt "great resistance" to breathing. "I sit every day, but have always had difficulty breathing," he says.

Students who already breathe daily shared a variety of stories about how they got started. Several stressed the importance of establishing a regular routine.

"I make it a habit," said Richard Buchbinder of the Arizona Aikido Ki Society. "I fit it in after my morning exercise routine, part of my daily practice."

Some found that keeping their schedule flexible was helpful. A Maui student found it easier to breathe at night. "I build it into a part of my day when I'm quieter anyway, or I attach it to a habit that's already established, like no lying down in bed until I've breathed at least 20 minutes."

Some found special strategies that helped them get started. Steve Self of Colorado kept an online blog of his breathing experience for the first six months of his practice, and says it helped to have Maui's Curtis Sensei and Tracy Reasoner available as a "support structure" to keep him motivated.

Another Maui student found that starting gradually was most effective. This student started breathing 15 minutes a day, increased to

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Clarence Chinn Sensei teaches Ki principles during the Spring HKF Seminar, and the participants enjoy applying them to Aikido arts.

Chinn Sensei . . . continued from page 1

Uke and nage are a partnership, Chinn Sensei teaches, and whomever you are training with, respect that person as the best Aikidoist in the world. Then you will learn from working with that person, as well as be able to recognize the unity with your partner that allows you to move together with Ki and not resort to “muscle-ing” him or her. “Don’t abuse your partner,” Sensei repeatedly advised us. He jokingly said, “I’m old and lazy, so I find the minimal way to move. Always find the way where there is no bump, no conflict, struggle, or ‘abuse’.”

As a way of everyday prac-

ticating “living fully in this moment,” Chinn Sensei advocates reading one of the shokushu of Master Koichi Tohei each morning to prepare yourself for the day, taking to heart the message it contains for right living and following the principles of the Universe. Two of the shokushu selected for the seminar were “Reseishin” and “The Mind that Seeks Truth,” both reminding us that our human minds are “directly connected with the mind of the Universe” and that we are capable of seeking the *way* of the Universe and putting it into practice in our lives.

After our question and

answer session, as Chinn Sensei’s workshop came to an end, Curtis Sensei thanked him with gifts from Hawaii Ki Federation and Maui Ki-Aikido and said that, “Chinn Sensei has a great ability to bring students around to a realization that they can then express with their mind and body. We greatly appreciate the excellent teaching of Chinn Sensei.”

Chinn Sensei, who was born and raised in Honolulu, stated that the HKF event was a homecoming for him, as well as the first time he has taught in Hawaii. We all hope it will not be the last but be repeated many times in the future.

Photos by Christopher Barensen



Chinn Sensei throws David Kaneshiro while demonstrating a Jo nage art.

Suzuki Sensei watches with pleasure during the seminar.



## Teacher and student visit by web cam

On April 12, a visit by web camera was arranged between Shinichi Suzuki Sensei at the Shunshinkan Dojo on Maui and his teacher Master Koichi Tohei in Japan. Suzuki Sensei said he was so happy to get to see his teacher again and speak with

him, since both men are no longer traveling. Everyone who gathered on Maui for the event was very happy to see Master Tohei's and Suzuki Sensei's smiles. Thanks to Jeff Baldwin of Maui Ki-Aikido for the Maui web cam equipment and photos.



Our classic photo of the Spring issue is one taken of Master Koichi Tohei and Shinichi Suzuki Sensei when our Maui teacher was training in Japan with his teacher a few decades ago. You will find this photo, entitled "A Lasting Friendship," on page 108 of "50 Years of Aikido in Hawaii, A Book of Days." (See back of this page for order information).

*Breathing . . . continued from page 7*

30 minutes after three months, and by six months was breathing an hour a day.

"Start out slow," the student recommends. "Don't be hard on yourself. Make sure you are enjoying it so you will have a

pleasurable experience."

For some, remembering the positive effects of breathing helped keep up motivation. "It is not always easy, but it starts the day off right," says Steve Self. "This too encourages

consistent practice."

Warren Gibson also says the benefits of breathing were what kept him coming back for more. He says he has a regular stool in a quiet, dark room of his house, set up for his daily breathing. To avoid distractions, he tries to go straight to his spot in the morning, resisting the temptation to pick up the newspaper, exercising or going over his daily "to-do" list before sitting.

"I have a commitment to breathing because I feel great afterwards, both mentally, physically and energetically," he says.

According to Curtis Sensei, one of the most important things for beginners to remember when starting a breathing routine is to make sure they practice correctly. Students sometimes have an incorrect technique and get frustrated, he said.

"We tend to approach breathing with the same sort of approach that we practice in everyday life," he said. "If we are not succeeding, we struggle to make more effort. However, as we all know, effort comes out of and produces tension."

The better approach is to "allow the body to breathe itself," which should feel comfortable and effortless, he said.

"Breathing, correctly executed, feels like a cool spring breeze gently blowing through the mind/body," he said.



**Order Form:**

**Please write in the number of items you are ordering after each price.**

**Ki-Aikido on Maui**, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition, by Christopher Curtis Sensei ..... (non-member) \$15\_\_\_\_\_  
Training manual used by all Hawaii Ki Federation dojos. (HKF member) \$8\_\_\_\_\_

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