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I learned about Aikido in 1972 when a karate student of mine told me about a 4th Dan Aikido teacher at the YWCA in Madison, Wisconsin. I knew very little about Aikido and so I went to observe. I watched the class and when it ended the instructor, Clyde Takeguchi Sensei (currently chief instructor, Capitol Aikikai, Bethesda, MD) approached me and asked what I thought. To be honest, my impression was that his students were not attacking him in a strong manner. I responded by saying that it was interesting. Next thing I knew, he asked if I would like to attack him. He knew I taught karate because my student was present. Well, I jumped at the chance and walked onto the mat. I tried 3 different attacks and each time Clyde easily handled the defense. And although I was not severely injured, I did suffer a bruised ego. Clyde was very kind as he broke into a broad grin and patted me on the back. This was the beginning of a life long friendship. It intrigued me to experience conflict resolution whereby conflict is resolved without anyone being hurt. This was my initiation into the Art of Aikido. I continued studying throughout my college days and later was uchi deshi for Takeguchi Sensei for 3 years. I moved from the East Coast to Oregon in 1979 and met Doran Sensei. I became a student of Doran Sensei at that time and have been a student of Doran Sensei and a member of Division 2 ever since. Later in my aikido career I studied with Saito Sensei in Iwama, Japan. Takeguchi Sensei, Doran Sensei, Saito Sensei and Ikeda Sensei have influenced my Aikido throughout the years.

I started teaching at the Ashland YMCA when I arrived in Oregon. In 1994 I opened Aikido of Ashland. At our grand opening in March of 1995, Doran Sensei and Takeguchi Sensei met for the first time. Approximately 45 adults and 60 children comprise the dojo. Classes are held 7 days a week. I am fortunate to have wonderful depth in my teaching staff. I think the students enjoy the variety of interpretation of the Art of Peace.

MY MOST MEMORABLE AIKIDO EXPERIENCE

I was leaving for Japan in 1980 to be uchi deshi for Saito Sensei and of course was fearful of the unknown. I had met Saito Sensei for the first time only three weeks before my scheduled departure. He was worshipped by everyone and here I was, an Aikidoist from Oregon, with no experience with people of such fame.

Traveling to the airport, I was part of Saito Sensei's large group which included Bruce Klickstein and some of Saito Sensei's other high ranking deshi. I remember thinking "Am I doing the right thing?" Doran Sensei came to the airport to see us off and took me aside. At that point in time, I felt so alone and unsure of myself. His words of encouragement were so heartfelt. He helped me regain my center and to calm my self-doubts. He has continued to provide me with guidance through the years, and I feel very honored and fortunate to be one of his students.

Another memorable moment in my Aikido history was having both my teachers, Clyde Takeguchi Sensei and Frank Doran Sensei, meet for the first time at the Grand Opening of Aikido of Ashland. They had heard about each other through me but being on opposite sides of the US, and having different political affiliations, their paths had never crossed. Two of the most influential people in my personal life and Aikido career were soon to become friends.