

My Path to Aikido

Shodan Essay by

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Yellow Springs Aikido

I began training in Aikido in January of 2003. I found out about the dojo that I train in, at Yellow Springs Ohio, by working in a nearby bookmark factory and talking about Steven Seagal with my fellow co-workers. At that time, I had been curious about Aikido because my Dad, as a Kempo/Kung Fu sensei, had tried it a couple times and would use me as uke as I was growing up. I spent eight years learning Kempo and Kung Fu, under his tutelage, but I was always curious about the mysteries of Aikido. Little did I know that Aikido would soon become a serious part of my life and it would even help me get out of a dangerous situation.

Before I joined the dojo in Yellow Springs I was working mediocre jobs and hanging out with my so-called friends who probably weren't the best of people to hang out with. One New Years Eve night my best friend, who had a little too much to drink, began to physically attack me because he thought that I was sleeping with his girlfriend. I wasn't sleeping with his girlfriend and I knew this aggression was more than just angry feelings because he had this rage that I couldn't talk or joke him out of. Anyways, I had to use very simple, basic, yet effective pins that my dad had learned at Aikido and taught me because I didn't want to punch my best friend!

I always have that story in the back of my mind when training and I think it helps me realize the significance of a great martial art whose goal is not to hurt people. Even though training can be hard sometimes, I think the payoffs are greater and I value my path to Shodan and beyond. I would like to thank my Sensei Mike McVey for helping me get past all of my bad habits and teaching me so much. Also, I would like to thank Sensei Pat Hendricks for her awesome DVD's and letting me test in her dojo. I would like to thank my family and my girlfriend for helping me get through being Uchi Deshi. Lastly, I would like to thank all of my friends at Yellow Springs Aikido, for helping me and being unrelenting ukes! Domo Arigoto!

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