

## Featured Dojo-cho, June 2010



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I started Aikido in 1993. The first years I trained under Roland Spitzbarth Sensei in Zürich until I made my shodan. He taught in the Iwama Ryu tradition and I also visited seminars with Morihiro Saito Sensei. After this period I somehow became an Aiki-Nomad and visited different Teachers. Just to list some of them; Christian Tissier, Jean Michel Merit, Lewis Bernaldo de Quiros, Miles Kessler, Severin Corpateaux, Jan Nivelius and others. Since 2005 I have been really inspired by Patrick Cassidy Sensei and his teachings. In May 2009 I received my Sandan from him.

Our Dojo of Aikido Unlimited is in Uster, Switzerland (a small village next to Zürich). We started in 1999. My former teacher, Roland Spitzbarth Sensei, started to teach one evening class in the Judo-Dojo in Uster. One year later I took over the class and extended the program up to 4 classes per week. The amount of members was always something between 10 and 20 people. In the year 2008 I started to think about expanding the amount of members. But I realized that this would not work in the Judo-Dojo and looked around for my own location. Together with my wife, Julia Geissberger, I found this great place where we have a 117 square meter mat space, space for Uchideshis, and an apartment

upstairs. The first training in our new dojo was on May 1, 2009. We are a full-time dojo and offer classes from Monday to Saturday for kids and adults, and three early morning weapons classes. We also offer yoga, and I run a practice for bodywork with the Trager Approach.

The dojo continues to grow slowly step by step. Altogether, after a year, we have more than 50 members, including kids, adults and yogis. From the beginning, a young woman stays as a long-term Uchideshi with us and we also have had a few short-term Uchideshis for several weeks at a time.

***My most memorable Aikido experience, to date:***

There were several important moments in my Aikido career, like this story with Robert Nadeau Shihan. He taught a seminar in Uster Switzerland and was demonstrating a technique with me. I do not remember exactly what kind of technique it was, I just remember there was an opening in there I wanted to enter, probably out of ambition.

After that, I found myself on the ground and I really did not know what happened. It did not feel violent to me; it just felt powerful and happened very naturally.

But the most memorable experience ever is the fact that I opened myself to the spiritual dimensions of the Art of Aikido. This started to happen when I met Patrick Cassidy Sensei. To realize that there is a whole universe behind the Form, felt like rebirth to me. Until then I was just interested in the Form. I could not actually ever say why I am doing Aikido. Though, after my first contact with Aikido, which was more accidental, I said "this is it, this is what I want to do for the rest of my life". The opening was not suddenly, it was a step by step and still ongoing process. Today I really can say, it is this depth, stillness and the not obvious what inspires me in Aikido.