

## Featured Senior Instructor, February 2017



### **Glen Kimoto**

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Division 2

### **My Most Memorable Aikido Experience**

As one of the sons of a Judoka, I grew up with the romance of martial arts. My brother Ted and I took up Judo the summer after I graduated from high school in Watsonville. We were avid and diligent students. After several years of practice Ted went off to college and I continued to work on the farm and attend community college. Later Ted joined the Army and on his second tour of duty was sent to Japan. One of his goals was to continue his study of martial arts. Upon his discharge he returned to a joyous reunion with the family.

When asked what he done with the martial arts he said he studied AIKIDO. (In fact he had returned with his Shodan.) I had never heard of it before in 1963. So he showed me “unbendable arm” and “kokyuho”. We even arm-wrestled. I was utterly unable to move him. I was quite impressed and mystified.

I was studying karate kempo at that time so my perspective was singularly physical. In response to my, “This is a martial art, right?” he said, “Yes”. He seemed a little open as he invited me to strike him. I struck with a polite lunge punch and to my surprise he slipped my punch and whispered in my ear, “No, strike harder”. Then I came in rather well (I thought) and he whispered in my ear again. I was now a little embarrassed and came in with my best movement. The next part was so surprising that I saw it in slow-motion like an auto wreck. He engaged my punch very softly, spun me in the air and

threw me against the wall. The room whirled while he receded and when I stopped, I was sitting against the wall with my fist against my chest. I sprang up and punched on the other side with the same result. It became apparent to me that he was cross blocking and spinning and throwing me. In a moment of even greater poor judgment I thought I would grab his left wrist and punch over the top with my right hand. My intention was to impress him with my best strike. Having never heard of Aidori Nikyo, the moment I engaged, I had my most Memorable Aikido Moment. I suddenly found myself crumpled on the floor enveloped in waves of the greatest ever pain I had ever felt.

He had my undivided attention. I wanted to learn this mysterious, powerful Art. It wasn't until 1969 that I saw a little sign on the door of 31 Flavors Ice Cream advertising an evening AIKIDO class at a local junior high school. At this point, I was committed to learning this enigmatic, physical art. The most important Non-physical lessons were to be learned much later, when I was ready.