

## **AN APPRECIATION OF AIKIDO: A Martial Art, Way to Be and Chosen Path in Life.**

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**Where do I begin?** Pre-35 years old, I came to hear of Aikido and occasionally unwittingly being a uke. I could not comprehend the meaning of unbendable arm and being relaxed. I could only feel frustration and helplessness when my bull strength could not over this relax loving flow of “qi”. The aftermath of a heart breaking incident resulted in jealousy propelling my quest for Aikido at the age of 35 years old, equipped with a developing slip disc back condition.

Despite an unorthodox reason propelling my quest for Aikido, the continuity of Aikido practice has a lot to do with Aikido itself.

**What is Aikido?** Theoretically, Aikido is a holistic practice, combining physical techniques with mental and spiritual discipline. Aikido techniques embodied the principle of non-resistance wherein the defender moves in complete harmony with the attacker, bringing a conflict to a peaceful conclusion for both. Relaxation and serenity of mind coupled with physical strength aids in the good execution of techniques. Aikido’s fundamental principle of love, peace and harmony will help each other lend our bodies for training. Practitioners of Aikido, training based on the true spirit of Aikido will benefit oneself in health, mind and soul. The teaching of Aikido promises practitioner benefits in this lifelong learning development path. It also promises to be an art suitable for young and old.

### **Aikido to me.**

The above theories are indeed true. To an untrained mind, a matured student with no martial art background, cannot visualise three dimensions, played sports competitively only to win and have to be ever ready to face crocodiles at home, it is extremely difficult to comprehend relaxation and power.

An old and yet familiar attraction to the teaching of Buddha at the age of 14, was rekindled in me through my reading of the teaching of Aikido at the age of 35. The principles of love, peace and harmony are aligned to the teaching of the Buddha. I felt at last, I have found an active way of expression through this learning. My beliefs in this goodness generation for self-development is further deepen after a 10-day Vipassana Meditation course at the beginning of this year. An additional element of goodwill generation is introduced to my mind. Having the pleasure to be uke to Shihans at this years’ seminar in Thailand opened me up to another new dimension. At a high level of Aikido practice, nage is in complete loving connection with uke, allowing uke to hold on to nage. The energy flowed from the Shihans encapsulate such sweetness of candy candy candy candy flow of “qi” where as a uke I am laterally captivated with no choice but to follow after the Shihans. I am like a little kitten chasing after the end of a string held so gently by the Shihans. I was also being allowed to take ukemi gently and at no risk of being injured. These mind changing experiences have led me to change the way I like to practice. I would like to give myself a decent chance to practice as per the theories and principles of Aikido in training and life. Enable self-generation of relaxation and be happy.