

Alfred Aikido

Orientation, Rights & Responsibilities

Chief Instructor: Joshua Thomas, 2th Dan.

Student training information available at alfredaikido.com

Registration

1. Read and sign the registration/waiver form. You must acknowledge that you read this form and agree to the Rights and Responsibilities of training in the dojo.
2. At this time, there are no dues to practice. Nobody affiliated with this club gets paid.
3. You must be covered by health insurance to practice.

Your Rights as an Aikido Student

- **Safety is the primary concern, at all times.** While injuries are sometimes unavoidable, you have the right to expect that everyone is trying to minimize injuries on the mat.
- You may sit out any technique if you feel unable to do it safely due to pain, injury, fatigue or any other reason for distress.
- You may ask your partner to practice slowly/more slowly, with minimal/less force, or to omit a portion of the technique. For example: do the standing portion but not the throw, or the take-down but not the pin, or omit the pin on one side. Try to make requests before starting the technique as it may be difficult for your partner to change during the technique, but any time is better than not at all.
- Stay within your safe limits when falling and rolling, both during rolling practice during class. The instructor may encourage you to try a more challenging type of fall or roll. If you do not feel comfortable doing it, tell the instructor. There may be alternatives, or you may sit out that activity.
- You have the right to be treated with respect at all times, independent of race, gender identity, sexual orientation, etc. Feel free to tell others if you have gender pronoun preferences.
- If any aspect of training is emotional distressing, please try to let the instructor or one of the senior student know, either immediately or at some later time. We want everyone to feel comfortable training here.
- Aikido is a contact martial art that involves attacking/grabbing others, being attacked, and talking about attacks. These elements cannot be eliminated from Aikido. If you feel this may trigger you in some way, seriously consider whether Aikido is a good match for you.

Your Responsibilities as an Aikido Student

- **Safety is the primary concern, at all times.** If your practice partner, a senior student, or the Instructor asks you to practice more slowly, more carefully, or with less force, you should comply. Students who do not train safely may be told to leave class.
- You should train within your safe limits. Only you know what those limits are, so communicate with the instructor and practice partners so we can all respect your safe limits.
- You are responsible for yourself, your partner, and others you may interact with during class. In general, senior students have more responsibility because they have more skill, but everyone shares responsibility.
- If you have a pre-existing injury, medical condition or other issue that requires special care, inform the teacher before class. You may wish mark injuries with duct tape so your practice partners are aware and can be particularly careful. Your senior students or the instructor may be able to offer suggestions regarding how to protect injuries.
- Although we make every effort to prevent injuries, if you think you may have gotten hurt during practice, inform the teacher as soon as possible. Take care of minor injuries, so that they do not become more severe.
- It is important that you learn to fall and roll safely. Your sempei (senior students) can show you how, and can offer feedback. However, it is your responsibility to practice diligently until you can fall and roll safely. Formal

classes do not always have time to address each student's individual needs; there is usually a designated time before class for one-on-one help learning rolls; you may also ask for help before/after class or during break. Don't do any falls or rolls you don't feel you can do safely.

- Keep your fingernails and toenails short to avoid scratching yourself or others.
- Do not wear any jewelry on the mat; if a piece of jewelry cannot be removed, cover it with sports tape or a band-aid. This is for your safety and the safety of your practice partners.
- "Blood stays on the inside." If you are scratched or begin to bleed during class, please leave the mat and cover your wound. If you have left blood on the mat, please clean it up. There is peroxide available for cleaning.
- Part of Aikido is being aware of your surroundings, including other people training around you. Try to avoid collisions or landing on top of another person.
- If you have trained in another martial art, remember that you are now training in Aikido. Do not use any other martial arts techniques during Aikido class; it can be dangerous.
- Recklessness or rough-housing on the mat is dangerous and will not be tolerated.
- To make progress in Aikido, students need to train regularly. Instructors and senior students put a great deal of energy into helping beginners. In return, beginners should show respect for this effort by training regularly. Students may attend only mat or only weapons classes.
- Please make every effort to arrive in time for the beginning of warm ups. While it is sometimes unavoidable for people coming directly from class or work to arrive on time, it is disrespectful to arrive late simply because you didn't make an effort to be on time.
- Having access to the dojo is a privilege, not a right. Contribute to maintaining the dojo by cleaning or doing other dojo maintenance or support tasks. Think of averaging 5 minutes per class to maintain the dojo; this does not need to be every class, but could be 10 minutes once a week. There is a list.

General Guidelines

- We practice techniques in sets of 4. The more junior student usually attacks first. This allows the junior student to see and feel the technique and to expedite practice. Students of equal experience can alternate.
- Keep talking to a minimum on the mat. While our dojo is rather casual, beginning students need to focus on what they are doing and should not chat during class.
- Martial arts are traditionally learned through observation. Watch demonstrations carefully; if you are training with someone more experienced than you, observe how your partner does the technique. While you can ask questions, try to keep talking to a minimum.
- Focus on the technique being taught and minimize digressions into "But what if I did this instead?" questions during class. While "what if" can sometimes be educational, it may also disrupt learning.
- Senior students are 'sempei' and junior students 'kohei'. Kohei should be respectful towards their sempei, and vice versa. Martial arts are not a forum for negotiation.
- If an odd number of students are training, there will be one group of 3. The person waiting to work in should sit in a safe location at the edge of the mat; this person attacks first when they rotate in.
- If you want to watch the Instructor as he or she assists you and your partner or another practice pair, sit in seiza (kneeling) in a place out of the way of others who continue to practice.

If you have questions, feel free to contact Joshua Thomas at info@alfredaikido.com