

# IN THE DOJO

## AIKIDO OF SOUTH BROOKLYN NEWSLETTER FEBRUARY 2020

### In This Issue

- Overcome and prevent training ruts by attending seminars here and on the road.
- Social media is the new word-of-mouth. It's time we start talking.

### Social Media

Get Instagram. Follow @aikidoofsouthbrooklyn and @aikidoworldalliance and stay connected to your dojo and your organization. Share your aikido experiences and lead others to the mat.

### Trial Classes

From 2/18-22 (Winter Break) we're offering trial classes for students ages 4-15. For adults, we're offering trial classes every Wednesday in February. Tell your friends to sign up on our website.

### Other Offerings

**Yoga:** Kids' yoga is offered on Wednesdays. Private instruction is available for adults.

**Music Together:** Music classes for ages 0-5 years. For info: [www.trebletimemusic.com](http://www.trebletimemusic.com).



## Seminars

There are many pitfalls along the path of aikido. Perhaps none are quite so treacherous as that of complacency. When practicing in the same place, with the same people, at the same time of day, day upon day and year upon year, it is easy to grow too comfortable. Over time, we learn the nuances of the space, unconsciously avoiding where the mats do not fit squarely together. We know all the teachers' jokes, and zone out, wishing they would write some new material. We know who has a bad wrist, a weak knee, or a wicked nikkyo pin.

Consequently, instead of practicing mindfully and with attention to the details of our technique, we practice by rote, going through the motions, running the risk of convincing ourselves our aikido works when it does not.





## Brave New World

I just returned from the AWA's first Nintai Kosu (Instructor's Course). In addition to training, we spent time discussing dojo management. Many dojo have experienced recent drops in enrollment. There are many explanations, and I believe that one reason is that the aikido community has not kept pace with technology. Although some individual dojo and instructors are very successful on social media, as a community we grew complacent. We continued to rely on word-of-mouth, fliers, and our websites to attract new students. However, social media is the new word-of-mouth. Think about it: if you need a barber, plumber, or soul-level animal communicator, where do you go? Probably to Google or Yelp! or similar social media outlet. And if you do ask a friend for a recommendation, you probably ask all your friends in a single Facebook post. AOSB and the AWA are making great efforts to improve our visibility on social media and you can easily help. Get online and share your unique aikido experiences—they have value to people on and off the mat.

-Josh Paul, chief instructor

One way to break the routine of practice and to avoid the complacency trap is to attend seminars. Seminars offer opportunities to train in a new environment and with new people. With different teachers, there is the opportunity to learn new techniques, and to see and hear familiar techniques explained differently. There is also the sheer volume of time on the mat: 10 or more hours over the course of 3-4 days. It is equivalent to and possibly more than a month's worth of training. Seminars are open to students of all ages and ranks.



At AOSB, we are doubly lucky when it comes to seminar access. The Aikido World Alliance offers seminars year-round throughout the world, and some of the world's most skilled aikido teachers from other lineages frequently visit NYC. It is easy to keep track of seminars, too. Just follow @aikidoworldalliance on Instagram or Facebook, read your dojo's bulletin board, and visit the local dojo websites.

Andrew Sato shihan, 7th dan, and head instructor of the AWA, will be teaching at the events listed below. Members of the AWA Technical Committee will also teach at Spring Camp. Note that attendance for Spring Camp and the June seminar in Atlanta is limited to 50 people. You can register by visiting [aikidoworldalliance.com](http://aikidoworldalliance.com) and downloading and submitting the registration forms.

- February 21-23: Kimeshinkan Dojo, Glendale, AZ
- March 13-15: Hemlock Bluffs Aikido, Cary, NC
- March 20-22: Valley Forge Aikido, Norristown, PA
- April 30-May 1: Spring Camp, Kiku Matsu, Chicago, IL
- June 26-28: Kyushinkan Dojo, Alpharetta, GA

Here in NYC, Aikido in the Schools will host Jan Nevelius shihan at Bond Street Dojo March 18-20.