



Colorado Springs, CO

Longmont, CO

Hagerstown, MD



The Bulletin



Issue 9

October 2009

Editors Comments

The Bulletin is an open forum for the Students and Instructors of the Center for Aikido and Tang Soo Do Studies to post their personal thoughts and opinions. This is actually a requirement for membership in our school in order to further engage members in the intellectual aspect of their training. This also serves to enlighten the instructors as to what is going on in the students mind. For the most part, these postings will pertain to the individual's personal journey, experiences, or observations in and around their chosen martial arts training.

Please feel free to read, enjoy, and most of all, learn a few things.

Some Upcoming Events

Oct 17th 9:00am –12:00pm

CATS Rank Testing and Status Testing – Promotional rank testing is optional. Status testing is an expected requirement for all students of the Center. Your participation is valuable to all members of the school!

October 23 through 25th

Saotome Sensei's 2009 Halloween Seminar at Boulder Aikikai.

Saotome Sensei is a unique and highly skilled Aikido Sensei you won't want to miss. For more information see the Boulder Aikikai website:

www.boulderaikikai.com

Editors

Sabom Tim Speaks

Sabom Jude Miller

Sensei Ryan Goettsche

Students Thoughts



Rattlesnake

By Cathy Palmer

The picture alone evokes fear, fight or flight response, primitive instinct and emotion. Up close and personal with a rattler, fear takes an exponential effect. At 10:30 p.m., after a great workout, a long drive home, the last thing I expected was to encounter a rattlesnake in my foyer. To both our dismay, the only way out for the snake was through me. Fear is entirely unconscious. Simply put, fear is a series of neural impulses setting off a chemical chain reaction. Your heart races, your breathing speeds up, your muscles energize. Not a time to look down and discover that your only foot protection is a pair of worn sandals. It doesn't help much to think the snake is probably more afraid of you than you of it. Not only does it have the same fight or flight response going on... it's the one backed into a corner and hissing. Studies show that the adrenal cortex releases approximately thirty different hormones to prepare the human body to deal with a threat. I'm sure I experienced every one of them. The thought crossed my mind I didn't want to strike at the snake and miss. Besides, strike with what??? Ready to bolt, I drew a sigh of relief as the rattler dropped his head and slid between the wall and my foot, watching its side winding motion as it made its way around me.

People have the sometimes unfortunate gift of anticipation. Anticipation of a feared event can

provoke the same response as experiencing the actual event. Perceived threats result in anxiety. One of the most universal fears is threat of injury or death. It is only natural for a martial artist to be concerned about safety. Every once in a while it goes beyond concern to fear, especially if the student has suffered an injury. What happens in our brain when we have already suffered a trauma and afraid of re-injury? What happens to the martial artist who hyper-extends and blows his/her hip, the martial artist who takes an unfortunate and damaging fall, the student who accidentally moves the wrong way into a side-kick temporarily collapsing the larynx. Accidents, although rare, can happen to the best of us.

First and foremost, the goal is to be safe. Make sure you are healed before pushing yourself too hard. Take heed of any physical warning signs that might suggest that you may need to be stronger before proceeding. Take care of yourself. But if you have done all that and the fear continues, it is perceived anxiety. If the fear of repeat injury alone is holding you back, give yourself time. Be patient; your mind has to heal from the injury as well as your body. Keep in mind that when you are fully healed, injury is in the past and cannot hurt you today. Don't listen to thoughts like "I'll never be able to do this again" or "I am not good enough". Negative beliefs about your self are for the most part false. Consider the positive alternative. Instead of "I can't" or "I am not..." add to the end of that sentence one simple word – "yet". "I am not able to do something... yet" allows your mind to heal as well as your body. Believe that you are ok just the way you are and you will get better.

Fear in response to a real threat or injury is innate to our survival. It is a normal healthy response. Inaccurate perceived fear is damaging in the long run. Left unchecked, perceived fear can turn pathological and manifest itself as anxiety. Post-traumatic stress can result in severe cases. Know that working through the second type of fear is very doable. Believe that your progress as a martial artist

will continue to get better as you continue to work at it. It is true.

Absence Makes the Heart Grow Fonder

By Stephanie Shuhayda

The evening I injured my leg in class, I was still optimistic; it was pretty numb and the endorphins were strong, so I got home okay. It was the next day before I realized the extent of the damage I had done. Twisting leg injuries weaken the limb like no other. The leg has 3 points of stability from top to bottom. I had injured all three. And it happened in the blink of an eye.

I was unprepared for the strong family opinions that followed. First and foremost, I was being irresponsible. If I couldn't take care of my patients, I would lose them and my income. The Physical Therapist spoke of weak ankles and the prospect of repeated injury, should I choose to continue training. It was pointed out that I don't heal as well or as quickly as I did 10 years ago. And, I had recently had surgery on the other knee for the same kind of injury. What was I trying to prove? Logically, it was hard to argue with all of this. And when Daddy speaks, Daughter listens. So I resigned from the school.

As I healed, the next 4 months were restless & unhappy. There was no compelling reason for me to get on with it. After a couple of weeks I could get around if I was careful, and I began to see patients again. Although I worked on my leg diligently, it took much longer to heal than I thought it would. I was in a depressive state of mind.

My Dad was diagnosed with cancer, my son Justin arrived from NC to live with us and go to college, and my Sister moved in all in a short period of time. My stress level rose uncontrollably. Like a tightly wound bedspring, always in the verge of tears, I was ready to snap. My energy was scattered, with nothing to center me. Without my training, I was infinitely weaker on all levels.

I wasn't sure if Mr. Speaks & Mr. Miller would allow me to return to the school, but they took me back, with their usual good grace. And not once did either of them say, "I told you so." I had very much missed the ritual of our classes and the people I train with. When I come to the dojang, it's my time to step out of that which is my life, into a place where I can center myself and my only responsibility is to listen and learn. I knew the decision was the right one, even if I was being "irresponsible." The conversation with Daddy was not an easy one. I understood he was concerned for my welfare; but we were going to have to agree to disagree.

Our families are our greatest source of joy & love, but they are also our greatest source of pain & sorrow. Life is hard and things happen that you would never imagine. No one gets up in the morning thinking they're going to hear of their Father's terminal illness, that a beloved relative has died, or that they're going to end up in the hospital with a heart attack. These days I wake up wondering what might happen today; I never used to give it a second thought. I need to be strong within myself, so I can be strong for the people in my world. And I need to train to do this. It is that simple.

SYMBOLISM AND ASSOCIATION

By Jim Flemming

When training, I'm always trying to find the circle, always looking for the possible meanings and expressions. Sensei Ryan once remarked that when training where uke is using a Tanto, everything seems to get crisper, more serious. The Tanto we train with is not an actual weapon; it merely symbolizes one. That symbol has power though. We associate it with an actual weapon that can harm us, and that association makes us take it more seriously, unconsciously. If we can associate our body and Ki as tools of our own, I think that would be good.

Kashiwaya Sensei had a lot to say about atemi during his last seminar. He repeated over and over

how the atemi differs depending on what leg you lead with. For example: if you attack same hand / leg, you have balance, if you attack opposite leg / hand, you have power. I can't help but think of this every time we practice tenchi-nage. The symbolism almost overwhelms me sometimes how you start out by settling into the balance of earth while your heaven side climbs, then they meet and power results. All the while, you (Man) orbit, observe, and try your hardest to harmonize with it all.

Being a New Student

By Lilli O'Connell

I am a new student to Tang Soo Do. I have been attending the Colorado Springs school since mid June. It has been somewhat of a hard transition for me as I have 3 years of training in Kempo Karate. The two forms seem to be the exact opposite of each other. I have mixed feelings about this particular form of martial arts and the way in which it is taught.

First the positive: It is always good to keep both my physical and mental health challenged. I appreciate how patient the instructors have been and that they are very careful in preventing me from becoming injured. At 46 years of age this is extremely important to me. The instructors work with me at the level I am at. It is good to be in a school that shows all of the proper etiquette and respect without the costly dues and just being a "belt" mill. I am glad that there isn't a focus on competitions with other martial artists. I appreciate the fact that the instructors are "real" people with jobs and personal lives.

As for the negative: It is the way in which Tang Soo Do is taught. I am used to a more methodical and progressive way in learning. Because of this difference it seems more difficult to retain what I have learned at each class.

For now I will continue to do the best I can and hope that in time it will all become more natural to me.

Reasons for Training at "The Center"

By Sean O'Connell

My wife and I recently moved here to Colorado Springs from New Hampshire. We were looking for a martial arts school that would offer us an opportunity to practice together with the idea of getting a little exercise; some stretching along with the obvious practical byproduct of learning self-defense. While in New Hampshire, we attended a school teaching Kempo Karate and enjoyed the experience.

We recently started attending class at "The Center". Although we would like some exposure to Aikido, we're focusing on Tang Soo Do for now. Frankly, we're not sure if this is the best fit for us. Our experience here has been very different then what we were exposed to with Kempo. Many of the stances, blocks, kicks and punches taught here seem at times to be almost a complete opposite to what we've strived to learn in the past.

The things that attracted us to the school though, motivate us to "stick with it" before making any quick decisions. Mr. Speaks and Mr. Miller have great attitudes and are obviously accomplished Martial Artists. The other students have been welcoming and patient. And from a very practical point of view, the dues are the best we've found. The school doesn't have that false "belt mill" feel you find with so many other schools. We realize that there's more than one way to do things and that it's far too early to make any judgments, so we're going to keep plugging away and see where it leads.

Why I Train

By Spencer Van Horn

Many people never ask themselves why they train, and that's a question all Sensei's of any martial arts ask. I think what people look for sometimes in the arts is a hobby. They don't like to think of it as a way of life to better themselves, which is something we all must try to do. Seeing any martial art as just a hobby isn't truly respecting the art. I started

training because I was having problems with my dad. I wanted to be stronger, not physically stronger, but mentally stronger as well and to just get him off my back. Later on when I became stronger and told my dad to back off and please leave me alone, I thought that I could quit class because I got what I wanted. But I didn't because I wanted to become more involved in this art. I wanted to better myself and to train for as long as possible.

Tang Soo Do: The Beginner

By Justin Buchanan

My name is Justin Buchanan, and I have been involved with the art of Tang Soo Do for about a month. I trained at this particular school last year but had to return to my hometown so I could finish out my four years and receive my diploma. Now that I am a high school graduate things in my life have changed dramatically, but in a good way. I just recently moved to Colorado Springs, and before I even moved I knew I had to find a job and I wanted to start my training in Tang Soo Do. In my opinion, it isn't easy to find a truly legit martial arts school to go and train at. I don't know about everyone else but I know people that have paid a great deal of money per month for training that got them a black belt in two year's time. Some of the training at other schools isn't as extensive and in-depth as it should be.

After finding and training at the school I am at now, the curriculum cannot be compared to that of others, except for a select few schools. At the school I am training at now, it wouldn't be possible for a person to reach first Dan in two years. To me, it seems kind of dumb for someone to think that they are a true black belt after training for two years in the first place, and then try to move on to the more advanced region of the particular art that they are pursuing. Don't get me wrong, some people have a natural, raw talent for martial arts, but training is a life- long process. All of the instructors that I have met that are involved with Tang Soo Do are very good, and have been training all of their lives. I plan to train

for the rest of my life or at least for a good portion of it. My instructors have asked me to write this paper on the subject of why I think I train.

To be completely honest, as of right now I don't really know why I train or why I started training at all except for the most obvious reasons- self defense, and a good physical/mental workout. I don't really think I should know why I train right now. I just started. But I have already learned a few things that I didn't recognize about martial arts before. I have learned that there is more than just a physical side to any martial art that you do. I believe there's a mental side in your training as well as spiritual. For example, proper etiquette is essential to becoming good at Tang Soo Do, or any other art for that matter. You must show respect, and open yourself enough to let someone teach you to train your body and mind to move and think in a different, abnormal way. I have a lot to learn...

Thoughts on Friends Leaving Aikido

By Sam George

When friends are no longer there to practice with you, you find that aikido is an empty place. Whenever this happens I am always surprised by the amount of space that is left. If that space is to the left or right of you when you line up to start or finish practice it is very noticeable. When practice begins and you are told to try what you have just seen, there are fewer people to choose from.

I do not like change, as most people do not. When a fellow Aikidoist leaves for whatever reason we both are left with change. So with this said, I say farewell to my friend Mark; may your journey be in step with O Sensei.

Being New

By Gihan Fellah

Are you satisfied with who you have become or are you looking to improve? Improve your relations with others, your thoughts, your actions, your

spirituality, your oneness with the universe... Each of us needs to take a moment to reflect on our current path in this life and decide if we are headed toward enlightenment or destruction.

My journey has taken me on many adventures, some wonderful, some heart breaking, and all have been life enriching. This current path has taken me to the study of Aikido. It started as a way to support Robyn Sensei in her women's class. As I have continued to participate in the Aikido classes, I am filled with the wonderment of the similarities and differences between Tang Soo Do and Aikido. I am beginning to understand the struggles of someone who trains in two martial arts. Along my path with Tang Soo Do, I have struggled with learning the deeper meanings and hidden truths behind the forms and have often felt like a beginner, not as someone who has trained for 10 plus years. While donning an Aikido gi for the first time and looking down on the white belt tied there, I felt a sense of relief and joy at actually being a beginner and everything that goes with that title. It is humbling to be sure.

This past year has been full of a lot of reflection and growth for me. Now that my children are older and my "clients" more independent than former ones I have cared for, I have had the time to deepen my understanding of life, music, the Arabic language, painting, Aikido, and of course, furthering my study of Tang Soo Do. I hope to someday give back to the arts I choose to study that have enriched me so much over the years.

From One to the Next

By Brent Bloem

This August, I had the pleasure to return home to Michigan and visit my best friend's dojang and a tournament he participated in. At both venues, I witnessed a lot of different martial arts styles because members from Genwukai, competitive Tae Kwon Do, Kung Fu, and Shorin Ryu were present. Witnessing their techniques was enlightening and this allowed me to compare or contrast the above styles to Tangsoology.

To begin, the most different martial art to Tangsoology at Jason's dojang was Genwukai. Genwukai, a "newer" (not my words) Japanese martial art was very powerful and stout looking. What was enjoyable about watching Genwukai was that their practitioners practice with martial intent. They were powerful: no movement was done apathetically. Their power was owed to moving from their centers, fully chambering and extending their strikes, and keeping exceptionally deep front stances that allowed exceptional energy transfer. This later part, their stances, however, was what was also disadvantageous for their art. Their movements were rigid and slow because their body mass was distributed over a large area. In contrast to their stances, Tangsoology's stances would be characterized as narrower and nimbler—especially since Tangsoology employs a mobile backset. None-the-less, matters of mobility aside, were someone to be hit by a Genwukai practitioner, the results would be vicious.

Another martial art at the dojang was competitive Tae Kwon Do. The speed and agility of this art's kicking was enjoyable to see as the practitioner I viewed commonly strung combinations of three to four smooth and quick kicks together. Teemed with this practitioner's honed abilities at timing, he almost always struck at an opportune time and place. But for all of this Tae Kwon Doist's light-footedness and timing, I wondered whether he could generate enough power with his kicks to cripple an opponent in a "real" confrontation. I am inclined to believe that he would not be able to devastate an adversary, at least without some loss of nimbleness and speed. As it was, on seeing him, his hips didn't drive his techniques because he used his leg muscle's fast twitch abilities. And if his hips had driven his techniques, he would have required a greater deal of recovery time to transition from one strike to the next.

Heading away from the practitioners at the dojang, at the tournament there were two notable martial artists. They practiced Kung Fu and Shorin Ryu. The noteworthy Kung Fu student most was a child yellow belt. His large, sweeping circular movements were graceful. But, the dance like aspects of his art were not as impressive as other aspects. The features of his technique that were most impressive were his penetrative head turns and eye gazes, and his technical subtleties. When looking at this child, it was clear he was in the moment and that he was performing in the state of

Instructors Thoughts

An interview with John Sabo Sensei of Aiki-do Jugensoku: A new journey to investigate the present day Aikido Ki-Society

By Sabom Nim/ Sensei Vernon A. Medeiros

A few months ago, May/June 2009, I was having a phone conversation w/Sabo Sensei of Aiki-do Jugensoku; (located in San Diego, California,) about his decision to come visit our Colorado home dojang/dojo. Sabo Sensei wanted a mid July date to visit our Dojo. The four instructors on behalf of the Center for Aikido and Tangsoodo Studies attended a seminar with a local Aikido school and because of what they had learned about Aikido schools in the Denver/ Boulder area were unclear about how to best accommodate Sabo Sensei's request to visit our headquarters for a weeklong intensive seminar in early July.

Apparently the new goal of the Tangsoodo instructors was to postpone Sabo Sensei's seminar till mid August. Even though an August schedule has been successful for our schools events, in my estimation the August 2009 date was not the best solution for Sabo Sensei's seminar.

Holding our Schools Expo during the month of August had been the norm for the past four years. From 2005 - 2007 the Center for Aikido and Tangsoodo Studies held our annual Expo at Benet Hill. In 2008 we relocated our Expo to the US Olympic Training Center. This was our most successful location to date. However by mid June of 2009 the plans and reasons for Sabo Sensei's Expo had shifted.

July has always been a busy month for most Aikido schools in the Denver/Boulder area. Major organizations were holding their annual summer camps. These camps are expensive! Therefore how could our small organization hope to interest anyone in attending Sabo Sensei's seminar? With this question in mind came an idea. Sabo Sensei's roots are in Shin Shin Toitsu, right? The greater Ki-

Zanshin. Even being no less than forty feet from this child, I was compelled to be in awe and reverence of him. He exuded that much power and focus. Of the subtleties of his technique, *every* minutia of movement was purposeful. To put it another way, he knew the purpose for each technique. He wasn't parroting technique, he was living it as if he was privy to the secrets of the art. In this way, his artistry mirrored the attention to detail Tangsoology embeds into its techniques. Seeing his level of polish makes me grateful that my instructors are slave drivers for perfection, for perfectionism can bring greatness.

Equally skillful in ways as above was a Shorin Ryu martial artist. Whereas the Kung Fu practitioner's grace was heightened by grandiose circular movement, the Shorin Ryu black belt's grace derived from linear, austere movements. His setups and conclusions to his techniques were crisp. It was apparent that his school, like ours, valued the philosophy that martial arts should take into account multiple opponents. He hit at the start and end of each technique, delaying just enough to transfer his generated energy into the target. If I could nit-pick and fault him in any way, I would say that his body's tension was his weakness. He used just a little more tension than he needed, as his body tightened during a movement and not just at the factional moments when techniques snap to an end.

Overall, traveling to Michigan broadened my horizons, making me think about how Tangsoology relates to a broader martial arts tradition. While some parts of martial arts are similar, some parts are dissimilar. But, one thing remains the same: all derive from a martial tradition, whether they be Tae Kwon Do, Genwukai, Kung Fu, or Shorin Ryu. The only differences are how these martial arts interpret, emphasis and de-emphasize their traditions.

Society organization was holding a weekend seminar in the Denver/Boulder area during the last weekend of June 2009. I wondered if Sabo Sensei would consider attending this Ki-Society seminar. I suggested to Sabo Sensei that he consider attending this event so that he could examine how Ki-Society has endured or progressed since the early 1970's.

John Sabo Sensei agreed to come to Colorado to attend the Ki-Society Seminar with Kashiwaya Shihan and Pietro Maida Sensei, which was held at the University of Colorado in Boulder. Both Midland Ki-Society and the Rocky Mountain Ki-Society sponsored this event. Some independent schools were allowed to participate. The Center for Aikido and Tangsoodo were present to explore Aikido as passed on by Tohei Koichi Soushu by one of his most senior instructors, Kashiwaya Shihan. Kashiwaya Shihan has been in service to the greater Ki-Society for forty years.

While I personally was not in attendance, I interviewed Sabo Sensei and these are his thoughts as to the current trend of Aikido training within the Mid-land and Rocky Mountain Ki-Society:

Over all, Sabo Sensei enjoyed meeting Kashiwaya Shihan and Maida Sensei. The first training session of the seminar on Friday evening went well. There were numerous lectures/explanations rather than actual physical training during the class. The talks however were necessary because of a strong lack of personal discipline by the mudansha/yudansha in attendance. Sabo Sensei felt that there should have been more passionate training on the Aikido-ka's part so that Kashiwaya Shihan would have been able to share more high quality techniques with everyone in attendance. Kashiwaya Shihan's lectures were necessary even though by Wednesday of that same week, the words were quietly forgotten as noticed by Sabo Sensei. He was the guest instructor at the well-attended class held at the Boulder Ki-Society dojo on Wednesday, July 1st. Sabo Sensei did notice, however, that the Boulder Ki-Society group loved the direct and active training he gave to the group. He wished to further

Kashiwaya's Shihan's message of "meaningful training" and hopes they remember this message as Shihan spoke at length about it. On the whole, Sabo Sensei's observations were that Ki-Society Aikido students do not train in earnest. They fail to rise up and apply the lessons that solid, disciplined training affords. They prefer to avoid serious training by which they would discover the true path to becoming one with the universal. Universal oneness is brought into focus through the totality of the training experience. Disciplined Keiko is what allows us to strive towards this end.

Sabo Sensei's involvement with traditional Ki-Society dates back to 1974 when he first walked into an Aikido dojo in San Diego California. Sabo Sensei had an extensive Kempo background as well as some Judo experience before discovering the martial art of Aikido.

I was at a loss when I heard the depictions of students of the greater Ki-society. Too often today people avoid the truth about what they should be working toward. When I began my training back in 1979, it was rough. So today, I think people just want to look pretty while standing around and discussing aikido principle rather than physically practicing it. I see that time and time again where ever I go. Sabo Sensei has stated that in order to learn and understand aikido, one has to feel aikido by receiving proper technique from both Uke and Nage. People no longer want to receive proper technique or develop their ukemi skills. Training has become sloppy and instruction has become superficial. I don't see anybody developing Ki. The last time I checked, O'Sensei's art as well as Master Tohei's is to become one with the universe. All of O'Sensei's students that are teaching today are supposed to be teaching AI-KI-DO. To teach AI-KI-DO and to learn AI-KI-DO requires dedication, perseverance, self-sacrifice, and sincerity. Stop standing around, Train in earnest. Each Keiko session is a new opportunity to put into practice the art of AI-KI-DO and after each class we take our lessons and apply them to/in our daily lives.

A Guide to Training

By Sabom Nim Mike Parenteau

Some of you may recall a paper I once wrote called, "A Guide to Samdan". To revisit this a little, Sabom gave some of us a paper years ago called, "A Guide to Nidan". The inspiration of what I wrote back then was precipitated from Sabom's initial writing.

I have thought a lot about training in general, and I believe the title should be changed to "A Guide to Training". This is based on what I have experienced over the last few years and reflecting on, more recently, this past year's events, e.g. the seminars I have been able to attend.

I hope some of these things spark questions within us:

Perseverance is the nucleus of Do.

Frustration and resentment lead to waste.

Be thoughtful to beginners in word and deed.

*Unlearn what you **THINK** you know and embrace a new beginning.*

Be thankful the Art you study is yours if you accept it honestly.

Mental exercitation engages the spirit.

Engaging the spirit reinforces training.

Diligent training enables mental exercitation.

A true master is not promoted, but forged through study of his art.

It is not enough to look at the narrow view of simply training. If your training has no meaning, then the Art does not exist.

Dojo Etiquette

By Sensei Ryan Goettsche

Over the past year our school has participated in many seminars and special classes at fellow dojos. The one thing that surprises me is the lack of etiquette we observed. You are judged by your etiquette over your technique every time and that is another example of what we strive to perfect in our chosen arts. There are so many details to proper dojo etiquette and they can be adhered to very strictly or not at all. Here in the United States, there seems to be a disconnect from this because we learn the history of why it is the way it is. We want to

disregard all of the formalities and get right down to what we want...technique.

Sensei Medeiros has always talked about etiquette and how we always need to polish it from the time we enter the dojo to the time we leave and even outside of the dojo. There is the sempai/kohai relationship, which is very important. Kohai should always be the first to bow to sempai and should not rise before sempai rises. They should also always refer to sensei as that "sensei", not "Hey." or just "Good evening." This is one of the many ways kohai show your respect for the years Sempai and Sensei have spent perfecting the art within themselves so that they may share it with Kohai. When a new student comes in to the dojo asking to be taught, that is the responsibility of the school, Sensei, and Sempai, since every student has this relationship with a new student. So the beginner must let go of all of their preconceptions about what it is they asked for and always do their very best to perfect daily everything they are taught.

I remember Sensei Medeiros had our school go to another school and train together. It was a separate art, but an art, which still demands the etiquette. After the class was over, the instructor of that school told Sensei Medeiros that our school has beautiful etiquette and he needed to work on that with his students. So nothing was mentioned of the technique our school demonstrated, what was noticed was the etiquette. Other things to consider with etiquette are how you should always bow when entering and exiting the dojo and also bow before and after getting on the mat. When you bow, you show humility to O'Sensei for dedicating his life to create this art which carries on well after his passing. We, practitioners of the art, have to carry the torch so to speak. If we dismiss all of the things we don't want to do, and take only that which we want, the art will disappear.

If students train sincerely and with an open mind, they will grow in the art, but if there is a personal agenda or desire for just technique, they will fail. The art is always there but the dojo may not be, so

students must train like it's the last day the school will be open. Treat all students as seniors and whenever you bow to somebody, imagine the years they have spent picking themselves up off the mat. When you enter the dojo, recognize its history not just as a building, but as a place that contains the teachings of O'Sensei.

Examine closely every aspect of your practice; recognize excessive ambitious behaviors.

By Sabom Nim Jude Miller

The practice of an Art is a daily endeavor. Practicing one aspect of your Art well for 10 minutes every day is more beneficial than practicing for 8 solid hours once every week. I will use the push-up exercise as an example. If I decided that I wanted to develop myself by practicing this exercise, doing 10 good push-ups a day would be far more beneficial to me than doing 200 once a week. The Art is meant to be practice for an entire lifetime, and daily practice is needed to fully develop your Art over said this lifetime.

The Art also requires the practitioner to pay close attention to not only all aspects of martial training, but to all aspects of one's actions; including the impact of these actions in a social environment. In order to fully examine your practice and recognize behaviors, one must cultivate the ability to self-reflect. Self-reflection, in many ways, is the most difficult aspect of the Art to practice while at the same time it is arguably the most important.

If a practitioner is not able to honestly self-reflect, they cannot "see" every aspect of their practice (or themselves by extension) in a clear sense. If one cannot see the true aspect of their training, one will not be able to see their self and recognize excessive and ambitious behaviors. Self-reflection takes a great amount of patience and proper self-trust to cultivate. Attempting to learn the entire curriculum of an Art in a short amount of time is one example of an overly ambitious behavior. Attempting to forcefully demonstrate techniques is another. A forced technique, whether by yourself or with a

partner, is an ineffective technique. Forceful techniques lead to a "fighting" mentality. While the understanding of concepts and practicing them on a consistent basis related, they are two very different things.

Closely examining every aspect of your practice is a very challenging and mentally exhausting endeavor which sharpens and develops the mind and one's sense of awareness. The mind leads the body, and when the mind is strong the body will soon follow suit. Pay close attention to every aspect of your training, and you will learn to recognize the nature of the existence you live in, in due time.

Tangsoology in San Diego 2009

By Sabom Nim Jude Miller

This past August Sabom Parenteau, Sabom Speaks, and myself all traveled to San Diego to study the history of Tangsoology/Soo Bahk Do. On the morning of Thursday, August 27th, we were invited to train with the Carmel Mountain Ranch Tangsoology group for the 6am class. When we arrived, Master Craig Burke introduced us to Mr. Robert Shein, Mr. Christopher Villasenor, and Master Walker, who would be leading the class. Master Walker was very polite, but very direct in letting us know what his expectations of us were.

Master Walker told us all to warm up on our own, and about 3 minutes later, he lined us up for class. After bowing in, he immediately directed us into sitting stance middle punch. As we performed the technique to his commands, he watched us very intently. Master Walker commented on the importance of hip motion, hand rotation, and the exactness of technique.

Next, Master Walker moved us into marching. He started us off with basics such as low block and inside-outside block from front stance, but soon moved to more advanced techniques such as double jump side kick and turn kick. Again, Master Walker stressed the importance of hip motion.

Master Walker then moved us into combinations. We performed all combinations without kicks. When it was time for combination 4, Master Walker informed the three of us from Colorado that we were doing it “the old way”. He then called Mr. Villasenor out front to show us combination 4 new way without kicks.

After some marching with combinations, Master Walker instructed us to line up with a partner for kicking drills. Kicks we did included spinning heel kick and low-high turn kick. Before going into low-high turn kick, Master Walker asked me to explain how the kick went to the class. I quickly tried to explain the hip transition from a low front kick position into the high turn kick. Master Walker then asked me what the most important part of the kick was. I remember saying “To lead the mind” all too quietly. Master Walker said, that yes, the intent was to sell the low front kick to lead the opponent’s focus.

Master Walker moved us into one-steps after kicking drills. To start, he commanded which one-steps he would like to see. After observing our instructed one-steps and going around making adjustments on us, Master Walker instructed us to make our own one-steps. After I performed a one-step on Sabom Parenteau, Master Walker instructed me to let the techniques come more fluidly, as my last elbow strike seemed to be “an afterthought” in his estimation.

Whenever Master Walker instructed one of us to make an adjustment, he would immediately follow up with feedback. On low-high turn kick, he instructed me to kick closer to the head. After several failed attempts on my part to hold the correct position, his feedback was “better”. During one-steps, Master Walker’s feedback was “good”. Master Walker was very honest with his feedback and instruction, and I found this to be valuable.

After one-steps, Master Walker had us free-match. Free-matching was very brief lasting only 15-20 seconds. Most everyone only free-matched once (I

got the opportunity to free-match twice and apply Master Walker’s feedback).

Master Walker then lined us up in a staggered formation for forms (I was in the back row). Master Walker called out Green 1. Master Lee did not teach in Korean. As a result, the classic forms are referred to differently in the San Diego group. So, when Master Walker called out Green 1, he wanted us to perform Pyong Ahn Cho Dan, and not Green 1 as our school knows it.

When Master Walker called out Green 1, I scrambled in my own head to recall, and quickly remembered Pyong Ahn Cho Dan. We all start the form, and I see Mr. Speaks starting to go into our school’s Green 1. We all finished our forms, and Master Walker asks us all if we want to do that form over again. We all say “yes”, and perform Pyong Ahn Cho Dan correctly this time.

Master Walker then lines us up back in one line and asks the Colorado trio if we knew Side Form 1. Side Form 1 in our school is Naihanchi Cho Dan. All of us reply “yes”. We all start Naihanchi Cho Dan, and then somewhere in the middle, we all crowd together and mess it up. Master Walker lets us finish before staggering the lines again to do Side Form 1 again. This time we all do it correctly.

After performing forms as a class, Master Walker had us all line up along the wall before having us each do a form individually. Master Walker gave us the option of performing a form of our choice. Whenever a person would finish their form, Master Walker would ask that person to critique themselves. I performed Rohai, and my critique was on my hip motion on the inside-outside kicks (the kicks felt off) and my tempo. Master Walker agreed, and also added that I should also focus on being more explosive. He then said “good job!” and off to the side I went.

If memory serves me correct, Sabom Parenteau performed Pyong Ahn Ee Dan, Mr. Villasenor performed Side Form 1 (he performed it very much like Master Lee does in the Tangsoology Vol. 1

DVD...very powerful and precise), Mr. Shein performed Ship Jin (this is an incredibly long and demanding form). I think Sabom Speaks Ship Soo, and I cannot recall what Master Burke performed.

This brought us to the end of the class session, and Master Walker bowed us out. Afterwards, we all talked and exchanged contact info. Master Walker told the Colorado Trio that we were all good black belts, and that we need to keep training realizing that there is always something to work on. Master Burke stated that we were worthy heirs to Master Lee's legacy.

This was only one experience from our San Diego journey. Sabo Sensei took care of us during our stay. He accompanied us to almost every location we went to. Being in Sabo Sensei's presence is always a learning experience, as his experience and insight is like none other. Sabo Sensei helped us film forms by being the director. He came with us to visit Master Lee's grave. Sabo Sensei took us to Master Francis's studio, and the Taoist Sanctuary in La Mesa, which was Master Lee's old studio. He even invited us into his home and made dinner for us. The experience would not have been the same without Sabo Sensei, and I am very thankful for the time he spent with us.

On Wednesday night after we flew in, Sabo Sensei accompanied us to Shimabukuro Hanshi's dojo, where Hanshi graciously allowed us all to train in Jo-jitsu. The Colorado Trio also trained Tangsoodo and Tai Chi with Master Conniry. The Colorado Trio visited the Soo Bahk Do Festival and Championship, and wherein attendance for H.C. Hwang's address to the federation. The Colorado Trio met with Master Burke again to study forms and discuss Master Lee's teachings. This San Diego journey was a wonderful learning experience, as we were able to build relationships with those who still keep Tangsoology and its history alive in Southern California in addition to exploring our roots by visiting the Soo Bahk Do. Thanks to Sabo Sensei and Sabom Medeiros, we were also shown a new path in Aiki-Tang. What I've learned

is that The Center for Aikido and Tangsoodo Studies is a strong school with a long and rich history. The Arts that we study are very valid, and we as practitioners are doing well in keeping the teachings and history alive by sharing it with others. From what I've witnessed and experienced, great things await all branches of the Center for Aikido and Tangsoodo Studies.

The Art of Advancement

Sensei Robyn Gray

We are the only ones who limit our abilities, thoughts, and concepts of ourselves. Nothing and nobody else is to blame-except us. We all want health, wealth, wisdom, peace, love and harmony. So why do we resist being, doing, and having any or all of these? Simple...fear. For me it's fear of criticism, failure and not being good enough. For years I resisted creative expression and I focused on hiding it because of these false thoughts. I don't want to resist or hide anymore. I'm tired and it's gotten me nowhere. I would not have had this revelation if it weren't for a recent trip to Santa Fe. I didn't want to go to Santa Fe. I wanted to go someplace exciting, sporting and fun, but Pat wanted to take me so we could see the art and culture of the area. I'm very glad we went, because strolling through numerous, sometimes endless, museums and galleries I realized that I can be a great artist, I can do great work, and I can have great things. Be-Do-Have, this is not a new concept, I just happen to be a slow learner.

*Be in the here and now, conscious and in the moment, not in the past or the future. Be educated, aware, calm, relaxed and connected. Be honest and at peace with who you truly are for yourself and others. Being Physically Present.

*Do what is right, honest and good. Do the work. Focusing, extending and moving towards what you need and want to do with faith, belief, harmony and love for you and others as well. Doing The Activity.

*Have everything good that you desire. Have freedom, wisdom, knowledge and inspiration. Have ability, travel, relationships or things. Have acceptance for yourself and others. Having The Experience.

We actually have to be present to do the activity to have the experience or the things we want. We

have to change our own negative thoughts and apply ourselves to do these three simple actions so we can evolve, grow and create.

San Diego Quest 2009

By Sabom Nim Tim Speaks

This past August, another great martial arts adventure for three of the instructors of the Center for Aikido and Tang Soo Do Studies took place. Sabom Parenteau, Sabom Miller, his fiancée Katrina, and myself were privileged to spend four days in Sunny San Diego with the one and only John Sabo Sensei of Jugensoku Aikido. This was a special trip intended to follow up on a previous adventure that Sabom Miller and myself took a few years back, and also to share with Sabom Parenteau first hand the experience of a Martial Arts Quest in San Diego. The trip was also special because *this time* Sabo Sensei would be accompanying us on our martial arts adventures. Although we were there on serious business, Sabo Sensei made sure we had some fun-in-the-sun too.

We all arrived on our perspective flights Wednesday, Aug 26th, around high noon. Sabo Sensei was there to gather us up from the airport and make sure we were all fed. Then we hung out with Sabo Sensei, talking about martial arts and our plans for the week. That evening we were all off to train in Jo-Jutsu with Shimabukuro Sensei. I have to admit I was a bit leery about training in a non-DO art, not to mention I'm fairly new at wielding a Jo. They tend to put a little more emphasis on killing so I was wondering if I would get to leave with my head. However Sabom Medeiros had trained with Shimabukuro Sensei before and spoke highly of his Jo-Jutsu. He has never steered us wrong. Besides, *his* instructor, Sabo Sensei, was coming with us so I knew we'd all be safe as we could be swinging sticks and wooden swords at each other's skulls. Worrying about safety often gets in the way of fun and good training anyway.

Indeed it was a lot of fun. Recognizing that some of us were beginners, they started us out with their basic Jo-Waza's while Shimabukuro Sensei looked on. He had taken the time to change from his karate Gi into his Jo-Jutsu Gi and Hakama. We did these Waza with only our shadow for probably 30 minutes until they thought we had the basic idea of how to swing a Jo without clobbering someone or ourselves. We then moved into a very exciting

partner exercise were one partner would be attacking with a Boken and the other defending with the Jo. Shimabukuro Sensei would occasionally step in and offer a correction to this or that person who needed it. I needed it a lot. He also gave a good demonstration on how the Jo gives a slight advantage of distance and reach over the sword and emphasized proper Ma-ai to maximize this advantage. The defender was to move off the line of attack, circle the Jo and bring it down on the attackers Boken to smack it sharply to the ground. Then circle the Jo around again and bring down the business end of the Jo on the attackers forehead. Apparently in Jo-Jutsu, as apposed to Aikido, the semi-sharp edge at the ends of the Jo is used to cut and tear at an attacker's flesh. Very nasty I thought, but a good thing to know. I had previously only thought of the Jo as a blunt force smacking or thrusting weapon. Sabo Sensei had commented later that he enjoyed the class but also noted the difference between the way of Aiki and Jo-Jutsu. Rather than aspiring to preserve an attacker, the primary purpose of their Jo techniques was to kill. Thursday morning came early as we made our way to Frogs Fitness to train with the Tangsoology group at 6:00am. We were told we would be in for a special treat, as Master Walker, one of Grand Master Lee's more senior students, would be giving us a taste of old school Tangsoology training. When we arrived a little before 6:00am we met Master Craig Burke who introduced us to Mr. Robert Shein, and Mr. Christopher Villasenor. Mr. Shein had been training in Tangsoology since 1978 and remembered our instructor Sabom Medeiros from back in 1979. I thought that was pretty impressive, showing his many years of training and a connection to our instructor simultaneously. While we were making introductions, Master Walker showed up and was introduced to us as well by Master Burke. Master Walker spoke with us a few minutes and then shortly before class began, pulled us over and explained that he expected us to follow as he directed without question and not take anything he said too personally. I'm not sure what kind of yahoo's he had run into over the years but I thought this to be a matter of common sense. I said something like, "That's why we're here Sir". With all the introductions going on before class we didn't have much time to properly warm up. Too Bad! Once Master Walker started class we were off to the Rodeo. Or was it the races? It was amazing how intense a work out he was able to pack into a

single hour. We began marching with kicking fairly straight away. Kicks, jumping kicks, combo's with kicks; it all went by very fast. We did do Combo's without kicks as well. Combo #4 new way for example was our combo #4 new way without the back-kick at the beginning. I have to admit that one threw me off. Next we were doing kicking drills, one-steps, and then free match. When my turn came, I jumped out to fee-match Mr. Shein and got a very exciting experience from that gentlemen to say the least. He was very good.

Lastly we did some group forms and then we did solo forms. I did Ship-Soo. Mr. Miller did Rohai, which I suspected he would, because we were going through that one with Master Burke last time he and I had visited San Diego in 2007. I also remember that Mr. Villasenor did Naihanchi Chodan, which they call side form one, and Mr. Shein did a form called Sip-Jin that seemed to go on forever.

Unfortunately we didn't have a lot of time to chat about Tangsoology after class, as everyone had to get to work. We said our goodbyes and walked Master Walker to his pickup truck. This was his hunting rig that he was preparing for a hunting trip to Colorado's Western slope with. I was hoping he might just slip on over the Great Continental Divide to Colorado Springs and visit our school, but that didn't seem like it was in the cards. So we said farewell and were off to our next experience.

Thursday evening we were training with Master Conniry, one of Grand Master Lee's first students. I had noticed that it seemed rather warm that day as Master Conniry joked that we could say we trained at his dojang when it was a hundred degrees outside. Thankfully he had some air conditioning weakly pulling down the Dojang temperature to a relatively cool eighty-something. The sweat was pouring like rain regardless. He ran a very traditional Master Lee's Tangsoology class. We did Master Lee's Combo's 1 through 10 nearly the same way that we do them here. We also did techniques; although they do them a bit different were each person does each technique rather than alternating techniques. I have to say I was surprised that he had kept so much of the curriculum seeing how Master Conniry affiliates with the International Tangsoodo Federation. However when I told Master Conniry this, he looked at me and proudly stated that of course he did, he was one of Master Lee's first students. Actually I felt foolish making the statement to him after that.

After the Tang Soo Do training, Master Conniry started his Tai Chi class. He asked if we would like to stay for that and Sabom Parenteau and I accepted. Sabom Miller had injured himself and so sat and watched with Sabo Sensei and Katrina. Master Conniry led us through a series of Chen Style Tai Chi motions that were very different in appearance and feel from Tang Soo Do or Aikido. However when he stopped to explain some of the Ho Sun Sul applications of the motions it seemed that Tai Chi was not so different after all. It is indeed a martial art even though the method of training is quite different. Sabo Sensei commented later that evening that he noticed similarities in the techniques to Aikido.

Friday began with us filming some basic combos and forms in the park at Santa Clara Point. We filmed with our backs to the Sun rising over Mission Bay and downtown San Diego on the other side. This was the place were Master Lee was seen on film performing combos in the Tangsoology video. Sabo Sensei was our Camera Man and Director and kept us all on the mark.

After the morning filming session, we all went to visit Grand Master Lee's grave to pay our respects. For me, it was a time to recognize the great contribution through his hard work he made to the art of Tang Soo Do. We cleaned off Master Lee and his wife Soyan's head stones while having a few moments of silent contemplation. I remember Sabo Sensei remarking how young Master Lee was when he passed, only 47. It is a shame he died so young. I have only been able to know Master Lee through the stories of my instructor Sabom Medeiros, but I am grateful for that. Sabom Medeiros often says we'd all be better Tangsoologists if Master Lee were still here and I believe he's right, as usual. When we returned to San Diego proper from the cemetery it was getting hot, somewhere in the mid to upper 90's I think. Sabo Sensei offered the idea that we all go to the beach for a few hours to cool off, everyone readily agreed. We went to Ocean Beach on the South Side of the Mission Bay inlet. Sabo Sensei and Katrina jumped in to the ocean almost right away while Sabom Parenteau, Sabom Miller and myself walked to the end of Ocean Beach Pier and back. It was about a mile long pier. Then I joined Sensei and Katrina in the ocean and tried not to think about the movie Jaws. Actually the water was fine and I saw no dorsal fins of any kind, the waves gave a pretty good beating though. I felt like I had been back-kicked in the torso a few times

by the time I was done trying to ride waves.

Nevertheless, it was a blast, and one of the highlights of our trip to San Diego.

Next we decided to take Sabom Parenteau by the Taoist Sanctuary were Sabom Medeiros used to train with Master Lee in the old days. There is also some footage of people training in this Dojang in the old Tangsoology video. Just like last time when Mr. Miller and I visited there was no one home. Nevertheless the door was open so we stepped inside to have a look-see. A sign stated that there is an Aikido school training there now and Sabo Sensei thought he probably knew the instructor. We took a few pictures for evidence and moved on to see if we could meet up with Master Francis at his Tang Soo Do School, which wasn't very far away. Unfortunately, no one was home at his Dojang at the posted class time. Mr. Miller and I walked next door to ask a store owner if he had seen Master Francis recently and he said he hadn't seen him in a couple of months but that he often sees his senior students coming and going. Well all Mr. Miller or I could see inside the Dojang was a bunch of trophies. I was disappointed we didn't get to meet Master Francis.

We also took Sabom Parenteau to see Master Kenyon's Soo Back Do School as well as Sensei Bernice Tom's Sunset Cliffs Aikido Dojo that Mr. Miller and I had trained in on our last trip. Both places were closed at the time but it was a bit like taking a San Diego tour of who's were in martial arts today for Sabom Parenteau's benefit, with Sabo Sensei playing the part of our tour guide the entire trip.

Later, Sabo Sensei had a great idea to film some Hyung at Sunset Cliffs so we headed over to the ocean beach area again around 7:00PM. As the Sun began to set the ocean ablaze we began filming our forms. After we all finished our forms we stood and watched, camera still rolling as that big ball of fire sank slowly into the Pacific Ocean. It was spectacular and another one of the major highlights of the trip.

Saturday morning we went to the U. S. Soo Back Do Moo Duk Kwon 2009 National Moo Do Festival and Championship witness first hand the state of Tang Soo Do within that organization, and to explore the roots of Tangsoology. The Championship was a tournament of forms and sparing, something I had never seen first hand before. They had little arena's checker boarded around the convention center floor marked out with

tape were competitors would perform Hyung and collect points awarded by judges for quality of execution. There were also numerous sparing competitions for points and trophies going on. Approximately 300 people were in attendance at this shindig, which I thought was a lot until Kwan Jang Nim H. C. Hwang spoke and mentioned the lower than usual turn out due to "troubled times." I assumed he meant the global economic recession. I have a hard time imagining what a good turn out would be like. Seeing that many Tang Soo Do practitioners in one place was impressive. My major critique would be that out of all those people demonstrating their art of Tang Soo Do I could count on one hand how many appeared to be sincere about the quality of their training.

On our lunch break from the Tournament we met up with Mr. Burke and talked Tangsoology over pizza. Sabom Parenteau at some point suggested that we all find a park nearby, so we all walked a few blocks away to a convenient grassy knoll and began going over the differences and similarities between our forms and combos. I also got to do techniques with Master Burke the way they do them in San Diego. The differences were fun to explore. This sharing of Tangsoology with Master Burke was definitely a major highlight of the trip. Since Master Burke had to get going, we reluctantly said farewell and returned to the Soo Back Do Tournament that was winding down with the Senior Black Belt Sparring and Forms competitions.

Soon after, we left the Soo Back Do Tournament behind in order meet up with Sabo Sensei again. He had been busy preparing a gourmet stir-fry meal for us at his house. We spent our final evening in San Diego with Sensei at his house talking about the week's events, and planning for the future development of the Center for Aikido and Tang Soo Do Studies. As always, Sabo Sensei had good stories to tell, as well as practical advice to give. He asked us each what we thought was the best part of our trip to San Diego to which Sabom Parenteau, Sabom Miller and myself agreed spending time with Master Craig Burke was the major highlight. However Sensei had also said it didn't have to be martial arts related, so to that I would have to say that swimming in the ocean with Sabo Sensei was the coolest. Pardon the pun.