



**Northern Virginia Ki Aikido (NVKA) / Virginia Ki Society (VKS)
Newsletter for April, 2021**

www.novakiaikido.org

This Week's Topics

- I. Dojo calendar (incl. upcoming events)
 - II. Clarity: Unification of mind and body (short essay)
 - III. Upcoming events
 - IV. Weekly Shokushu: Unification of mind and body
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Dojo Calendar

Current Classes (Adult)

- Wednesday, 7:00 pm - 8:30 pm
- Saturday, 11:00 am - 1:00 pm

We hope to add a Monday night adult class if enough people return to the dojo for in-person practice. There are no children's classes at this time.

Upcoming Events

- EKF Zoom Training: Saturday, April 10 (8:00 am - 9:00 am EST)
 - 2021 Miles Kessler Sensei USA Seminar at Aikido in Fredericksburg: Saturday, September 4 (9:00 am - 4:00 pm EST) and Sunday, September 5 (9:00 am - 1:00 pm EST)
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Clarity

Unification of mind and body

This week's shokushu continues the theme Matthew Attarian Sensei taught in the most recent EKF Zoom training. It's easy to think of mind and body as two separate things that we somehow bring together into a "bodymind" through our Ki Aikido training. But, bodymind is more fundamental. In any experience, there may be body aspects and mind aspects that we can separate and treat individually as we consider the experience. But, bodymind means in any experience there is no body aspect without mind, and there is no mind aspect without body. This is the natural state of being and how we are wired. We do not "do" anything to bring mind and body aspects together within ourselves

because this unity already exists and will always be the nature of our experience. This is what Attarian Sensei called Shinshin Ichinyo.

A practical application to which Attarian Sensei alluded is posture. If we are weight-upperside in our posture (body aspect), then we will be weight-upperside in our thinking or attention (mind aspect), even if we are not aware of it. Likewise, if we have a million thoughts going every which way, then there will be a physical manifestation of this in our bodies.

However, we have all experienced the flexibility of our minds to be somewhere other than where we are or what we are doing (to paraphrase Yoda from "The Empire Strikes Back"). This nature of mind pertains directly to bodymind awareness. As both Shaner Sensei and Wolf Sensei taught in the January seminar, we can understand bodymind awareness in terms of three levels (1st, 2nd, and 3rd order) that correspond to different qualities of attention, but which is also a function of habituated behavior. Basically, the more ingrained the behavior the more likely we can be to experience 1st order bodymind awareness, depending on where attention is focused (but we can also stay in 2nd or even 3rd order). The quality of awareness is also a function of conditions. Sometimes 3rd order is called for, sometimes 2nd order, etc.

Let's take a habituated activity: washing dishes. Many of us have done this a thousand times. Even so, most of our time may be spent in 3rd order awareness (million thoughts/million focal points of attention), thinking about what else we have to do or how to pay the bills, etc, all while our hands automatically clean whatever is in our hands. But, sometimes we may shift to 2nd order awareness (1 thought/1 focal point of attention), consciously focusing attention on our experience of just the one fork or dish or glass (or water) in our hands.

1st order awareness (neutralized thought/attention) comes when we focus not on what's in our hands or anything else in our periphery, but rather specifically (and unconsciously) on *nothing*. This becomes an awareness of and joining with *everything* in our periphery and with Universal time and space. This can only be known through experience, and is experienced as oneness with the Universe. This is what Attarian Sensei referred to as Shinshin Toitsu.

This is how we can understand mind and body unification. It is the source of empathy and compassion that we carry into daily life and, as Koichi Tohei Sensei said, "is the purpose of our study." Our Ki Aikido training teaches us to experience all three levels of bodymind awareness and harness the power of its underlying reality.

Next month, we will clarify what it means to "relax completely," as it directly relates to bodymind.

EKF Zoom Training

Email from Rich Fryling Sensei, Head Instructor, NYKA:

I'm happy to announce that we've scheduled our next online EKF Aikido class on **Saturday, April 10th @ 8:00am et.** The class will be taught by EKF instructor **Matthew Attarian Sensei** who is currently studying in Tokyo, Japan.

Below is the Zoom link for the class.

For those who missed our first online class on March 6th, here is a [link](#) to a recording of the class to give you a flavor of the training. We hope this encourages more people to attend. We ask that you keep this link within the EKF family of students.

This class continues with the training focus that Soshu, Koichi Tohei Sensei calls “**Ki no Shurenho**”. This means ways to practice, drill, repeat activities in order to make a habit of unifying mind and body in the dojo as well as ways to practice outside the dojo by repeating again and again unified movements in daily life. As requested by several participants, attached you will find the presentation notes from our second class in which Attarian Sensei explains the difference between *Shinshin Toitsu* and *Shinshin Ichinyo*.

Please feel free to share the below Zoom link with your EKF students. And similar to our previous online classes, we ask that you do not share the link information on social media. This is primarily for security reasons.

As we return to the dojo setting, we will conduct our classes in alignment with the Zoom classes offered in Japan. As a reminder for those planning to participate next Saturday, I’ve attached the **online training protocols**. Please take the time to review these as well as pass them on to your students.

Wishing you plus ki,
Rich

Zoom Details:

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89654118268?pwd=WE9vd1hDTzZtd3RVcTZXa0tJQ1VDQT09>

Meeting ID: 896 5411 8268

Passcode: Shurenho

2021 Miles Kessler Sensei USA Seminar

<https://www.aikidoinfredericksburg.org/>

Join Aikido in Frederickburg for this exploration of "Stillness and Movement in Aikido" with Miles Kessler Sensei. The seminar will celebrate renewed connections post-covid and our shared Aikido and meditation legacies. Non-refundable discounted registration is available through August 7, 2021. \$159 thereafter (if space is still available).

TENTATIVE - if the event is cancelled due to covid-19 you will receive a full refund.

Date: September 4, 2021, Time: 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM

Date: September 5, 2021, Time: 9:00 AM to 1:00 PM

Location:

6155 Hickory Ridge Road
Spotsylvania, VA 22551
(540) 582-9600

Shokushu Reading

Read the "Clarity" essay above for an exploration of this reading.

4. UNIFICATION OF MIND AND BODY

Mind and body were originally one. Do not think that the power you have is only the power you ordinarily use and moan that you have little strength. The power you ordinarily use is like the small, visible segment of an iceberg. When we unify our mind and body and become one with the Universe, we can use the great power that is naturally ours.

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