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## USA SEIWA KAI NEWSLETTER

**Dedicated to Traditional Goju Ryu Karatedo**  
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### TABLE OF CONTENTS

*In This Issue:*

1. Seiwakai Mexico – By Vassie Naidoo Page 1
2. Lethal Beauty – By Jim Pounds: Page 3
3. Seiwa Kai Humor: Page 5
4. Juhatsu Kyoda – By Mark Cramer: Page 6
5. Musha Shugyo Warriors' Training – By Johnpaul Williams: Page 10
6. Obituary: The Passing of Higashi Fushimi, Jigo: Page 15
7. Spotlight on Great Lakes Seiwa Kai – Sensei Mark Cramer: Page 16

# **Seiwakai Mexico**

## **By Vassie Naidoo, President of Seiwakai USA**

The Seiwakai Seminar in Mexico this past November was a wonderfully organized and well attended event. It is hard to believe that in 2000, Seiwakai Mexico wasn't the organization that it is today. Fourteen years ago, I was invited to teach in Mexico, and I asked my hosts to invite other groups to the seminar. There were a number of different Goju groups and different styles of karatedo at the seminar. They very much enjoyed and appreciated the technical aspect of my teaching, and after that seminar many dojos joined Seiwakai.



Today Seiwakai Mexico has grown to include over 100 dojos all across Mexico. The 2013 annual seminar in Guadalajara Mexico was phenomenal. I was able to get a number of other instructors to attend the seminar including the President of Seiwakai, Fujiwara Hanshi, the Vice President of Seiwakai, Sensei Leo Lipinski, the Vice President of Seiwakai USA Desmond Tuck, the Secretary of Seiwakai USA Sensei Jim Pounds, the Head of Illinois Seiwakai Joe Palmateri, the Head of Great Leaks Seiwakai Sensei Mark Cramer, and the head of New York Seiwakai Kevin Moshke, and the head of Goshukan Seiwakai Canada Sensei Craig Vokey.



In my opinion the 2013 Seiwakai Seminar in Mexico was the best seminar we have had in Mexico. With Fujiwara Sensei being the head instructor, and Sensei Leo Lipinski and myself being assistant instructors we were able to instill the importance of understanding the technical aspects of Gojuryu karate, the importance of understanding the bunkai of each kata, and the application of bunkai in kumite.



I give much thanks to Sensei Madrid and his team as the seminar was well organized; the facilities were spacious enough so that attendees had room to practice the drills, bunkai, and kata. The seminar facility, the hotel, and the party location were closely located making it easy for everyone to attend, and as you can easily see from the photo the Seiwakai party was both fun and entertaining for everyone who attended.

**Mr. Fujiwara and friends at the Seiwakai Mexico Party**

I would like to extend my thanks and appreciation to Seiwakai Mexico for doing a wonderful job in coordinating all aspects of this seminar! I would also like to thank Taka Hamabata Sensei for coming to the seminar and for being a part of the testing panel for the JKF Gojukai, and I would like to congratulate Sensei Mark Cramer for passing his 6th Dan Seiwakai test!

# Lethal Beauty

By Jim Pounds



One of the reasons I was initially attracted to Goju-Ryu karate was its undeniable beauty. There was something about the timing, the flow, the seamless blending of both circular and linear techniques, the hard and soft that intrigued me from the first time I saw Suparempai kata performed by a high-level practitioner at a competition almost thirty years ago. I remember being transfixed.

Several years later I met Teruo Chinen Sensei at the Ozawa Cup Traditional Karate Tournament in Las Vegas and the unbelievable way in which he moved reinforced my desire to switch to Goju-Ryu. I was most impressed

by Chinen's beauty of movement not only in kata, where beauty is often an asset to the performance, but mostly by the fact that this beauty was maintained in his applications of the kata techniques. It was somehow built into the style. Beauty was an intrinsic part of his karate and it in no way diminished the effectiveness of it. If anything, beauty seemed to enhance it. Later I came to understand that this beauty came from a relaxed adherence to the circular/linear nuances that make Goju-Ryu unique, coupled with the freedom of mind (some would call it Zen) of an advanced master practitioner. That combination of relaxation coupled with the flowing power of circular techniques and oblique angles of attack create an exponential synergy of beauty and power. I began to refer to that attribute as lethal beauty and began trying to emulate it in my own karate.

I have to interject that I came to Goju-Ryu from years of Shito-Ryu karate, and we were no slouches in kumite or kata. In fact, it was very effective stuff. One could say that at times it was also beautiful, but there was a subtle difference. We had to work to make it beautiful. That's a very difficult concept to explain. Most karate styles over-emphasize the generation of power, so there is a certain tightening caused by the concept that it is muscles that generate power. To an extent that is true: speed and mass (muscle) do create power, but the two often work against each other in reality. The stronger we try to make a technique by applying more muscle power, the slower it tends to become because we are tighter of body. Einstein proved that increasing mass proportionately increases power, but increasing speed exponentially increases

power. So there is actually a limit to the power we can generate by trying to use muscle power.

With Goju-Ryu the techniques themselves exacerbate the creation of power because to do them correctly, we must be fluid and relaxed when we move, yet instantaneously becoming “hard” at the moment the technique meets the opponent, whether a block or a strike. This inherent power is taught and honed through the practice of Goju-Ryu kata. Watching a Master who has practiced these kata for many years is an example of that lethal beauty. It is as flowing and natural as water flowing around rock while ultimately becoming as hard as rock at the intersection between the two.

I do believe all high-level Goju-Ryu senseis have that lethal beauty, but some certainly more than others. My Sensei, Seiichi Fujiwara, certainly does. But I’ve seen a trend among more than a few western practitioners to perhaps unwittingly make Goju-Ryu more linear in a misguided attempt to make it stronger or “more effective.” There seems to be an idea that using the hips and circular, flowing moves is somehow not as powerful as hard and straight, and that beauty cannot be powerful. I would argue that approach actually goes against the underlying foundation of Goju-Ryu. If that is the approach, it exhibits a disconnect on the part of the instructor, which I often feel is because the instructor either cannot execute the moves as intended or is reverting back to a personal comfort zone, which for Western males, is generally upper body strength and linear muscular power. Yet time and again I have seen my diminutive Senseis move us around as if we have no strength at all because they are using the techniques of Goju-Ryu as intended. They use hips instead of shoulders, circular more than linear, flowing instead of choppy. These techniques rely less on our personal physical strength and are the great equalizers of karate. And, they are beautiful.



I watch Fujiwara Sensei demonstrate fighting techniques against much larger students. He never attempts to directly overpower them. He lets them do that to themselves by trying to be powerful in their attacks. He overcomes them through tai sabaki and deflecting blocks, by opening the door that lets their attacks meet thin air while he stays in and close and relaxed enough to allow his mind the freedom to use the most effective technique to respond. I’m reminded of a Matador playing a bull. And it’s beautiful. Not to mention lethal.

## SEIWA KAI HUMOR



**I wouldn't get so nasty if I were you. My husband is a white belt in Goju Ryu.**

# **JUHATSU KYODA and TO'ON RYU**

**1887 to 1968**

**KARATE'S OBSCURE MASTER and KARATE'S OVERLOOKED STYLE**

**STUDENT of KANRYO HIGAONNA**



**Juhatsu Kyoda**

**許田 重発**

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Juhatsu Kyoda was born on December 5, 1887 and began to study martial arts at an early age. He may have had several teachers prior to becoming a devoted student of Kanryo Higaonna in 1901. Mr. Kyoda was a year older than Mr. Chojun Miyagi and began his training with Mr. Higaonna a year earlier than Mr. Miyagi. [i] Thus he was considered a sempai (senior student) to Chojun Miyagi in both age and time in training with Higaonna sensei. He attended Okinawa Prefecture Teachers' College, became a teacher, and eventually a school principal. Moreover, Mr. Kyoda continued to study under Mr. Kanryo Higaonna until the death of this great teacher in 1916.

From Higaonna sensei, Mr. Kyoda initially received the same training that all of his devoted students received. He spent the first few years training in Shanchin footwork, breathing, applications, kakie (push-hands), and yakusoku kumite (pre-arranged sparring). Mr. Mario McKinna explains: "Once these fundamental training methods had been adequately mastered, Higaonna would teach one or more other additional kata and their respective applications... Furthermore Kyoda, unlike Miyagi, learned the use of Chinese weaponry from Higashionna [Kanryo Higaonna] including the use of the spear and broadsword." [ii] Whereas Mr. Kyoda included all of the empty hand kata that he had learned from Mr. Higaonna in To'on Ryu (the style that he later developed), he included none of these weapons kata.

Additionally, when Mr. Miyagi was serving in the Japanese military, Juhatsu Kyoda learned Sanseiryu kata directly from Higaonna sensei, and over time it became his favorite kata. Since Mr. Miyagi had not learned Sanseiryu directly from Mr. Higaonna, this acquisition of knowledge became a matter of great pride for Juhatsu Kyoda. [iii]

## **KARATE in SCHOOLS**

During the period between the first and second World Wars, Japan embarked on a social program called Kokutai. One aspect of this program was to instill in all citizens a strict sense of discipline and an absolute loyalty to the Japanese Empire. Some researchers have described this aspect of the Kokutai program as the "samuraization" of Japan. This aspect of the national essence program included "dissemination, among the lower levels of the population, of the disciplinary ideals and extreme 'loyalty' code that had exemplified the education of the samurai." [iv]

Mr. Kyoda believed that these qualities could and should be taught to school age children through karate-do. "Kyoda, in his role as an educator, set about popularizing karate-do in accordance to 'kokutai' by establishing several karate-do clubs at the elementary and junior high schools at which he worked prior to World War II." [v] Consequently, like most Okinawans of the time, Mr. Kyoda saw this aspect of Kokutai as a desirable goal and promoted it in the public schools.

Mr. Kyoda was also extremely involved in the program which was designed to systemize and standardize karate-do in both Okinawa and Japan. During this period of Kokutai in 1933, Mr. Kyoda's style of To'on Ryu karate-do was recognized by the Dai Nippon Butoku Kai (Greater Japan Martial Virtues Association). In the following year, he received his Kyoshi certification from the same organization. "Kyoda himself was a strong proponent of the renshi/kyoshi/hanshi system of licensing which was used by the Butoku Kai and was instrumental in promoting it in





**A young Chojun Miyagi (left) and Juhatsu Kyoda (right) training together**

Okinawa and later in mainland Japan. In addition, Kyoda was named the chief director and head instructor in the Naha branch of the Butoku Kai.”[vi]

## **TO’ON RYU** **東恩流**

Mr. Kyoda was an extremely devoted student of Mr. Kanryo Higaonna and named his style after his teacher. To’on Ryu uses the Chinese pronunciation of the kanji characters used to write Mr. Higaonna’s name. In fact, Ryu Ryu Ko referred to Mr. Higaonna “as Ryuchu no To’onna (Higaonna from the Ryukyus).”[vii] Many people dismiss this style as being essentially another branch of Goju Ryu. However, this is an inaccurate simplification of both Goju Ryu and To’on Ryu.

The kata syllabi of the two styles are not identical and the execution of the techniques (kihon) within the kata is different. To’on Ryu includes two kata which are not found in Goju Ryu. They are Jion which Mr. Kyoda learned from Mr. Yabu Kensu[viii], and Neipai which he learned from Wu Xiangui (Go Kenki). Moreover, the manner in which To’on Ryu is practiced differs significantly from Goju Ryu. Eiko Miyazato, who studied under both Juhatsu Kyoda and Chojun Miyagi, tells us that “there were a number of differences between his [Kyoda’s] teaching and Chojun Miyagi’s. I remember in particular that the Sesan [Seisan] kata I learned from the two Sensei were different.”[ix]

Another karate student familiar with both styles has described some of the differences: “To’on Ryu is characterized by swift springing movements and places little emphasis in rooted stances; a characteristic of Goju Ryu. Techniques in To’on Ryu are executed in a more circular and flowing pattern than their Goju counterparts. There is definitely a more distinctive and obvious Chinese flavour to To’on Ryu.”[x] Although both Mr. Miyagi and Mr. Kyoda studied under Mr. Kanryo Higaonna, it appears as if there are salient differences between the karate styles that each man

developed. To dismiss the important differences and focus only on the similarities of the two styles does justice to neither style.

Additionally, both Chojun Miyagi and the senior students of Goju Ryu recognized the knowledge of their style that Mr. Kyoda possessed. During his final years when Mr. Chojun Miyagi was gravely ill and unable to teach to his fullest extent, he would tell his students that if they had any question about the kata of Goju Ryu that they should seek out Kyoda Juhatsu for his input.[xi] Then shortly after the death of Mr. Chojun Miyagi, several senior Goju Ryu students traveled to Japan to ask Mr. Juhatsu Kyoda to become the successor of Mr. Miyagi and take stewardship of Goju Ryu. In the eyes of the senior Goju Ryu students in Okinawa, he was the most logical person to succeed Mr. Miyagi since he was a direct disciple of Mr. Kanryo Higaonna and was one year senior to Mr. Miyagi. After speaking with the senior students from Okinawa, Mr. Kyoda reluctantly agreed to take leadership of Goju Ryu, but upon one condition. He insisted that the name of the style be changed to To'on Goju Ryu to reflect the name of Mr. Kanryo Higaonna. This change was not agreeable to the Goju Ryu officials in Okinawa, and consequently Mr. Kyoda declined to become the successor to Mr. Miyagi.[xii]

Even though Mr. Kyoda possessed tremendous knowledge of karate, one must question why Goju Ryu is well known around the world while To'on Ryu has remained relatively obscure. The answer to this may be that after Mr. Kyoda retired as a school principal, he moved to the island of Kyushu in southern Japan. There he maintained no permanent dojo, but instead taught out of his home in Oita Prefecture. His training methods were extremely demanding, and "modern karateka [karate students] could scarcely imagine learning in such a manner." [xiii] Perhaps it was this lack of a permanent dojo, the absence of a stable body of students, and these severe training methods which caused Mr. Juhatsu Kyoda to become one of karate's most obscure karate masters and To'on Ryu to become karate's most overlooked style.

Nonetheless, Mr. Kyoda was instrumental in introducing karate-do to a large number of Okinawans through the public school system, and was influential in standardizing and systematizing karate-do in both Okinawa and Japan. Additionally, Mr. Kyoda and his knowledge of karate-do held great sway with the other great masters in both Okinawa and Japan. Consequently, Mr. Kyoda must be considered one of karate-do's great masters.

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- [i] McKenna, Mario, *Dragon Times*: Vol. 17 page 9  
[ii] McKenna, Mario, Vol. 17 *Dragon Times*: Vol. 17 page 9  
[iii] Higaonna, Morio: *The History of Karate*: page 43  
[iv] McKenna, Mario, *Dragon Times*: Vol. 17 page 9  
[v] McKenna, Mario, *Dragon Times*: Vol. 17 page 9  
[vi] McKenna, Mario, *Dragon Times*: Vol. 17 page 10  
[vii] Higaonna, Morio: *The History of Karate*: pages 13-14  
[viii] McKenna, Mario, *Dragon Times*: Vol. 17 page 9  
[ix] Higaonna, Morio *The History of Karate*: page 91  
[x] McKenna, Mario, *Dragon Times*: Vol. 17 page 10  
[xi] McKenna, Mario, *Dragon Times*: Vol. 17 page 10  
[xii] Yagi, Meitoku, *Otoko: Meitoku no Jinsei Gekijo*: pages 172-174  
[xiii] McKenna, Mario: *Dragon Times*: Vol.17 page 10

## Musha Shugyo 武者修行 Warriors' Training

By Johnpaul Williams



This section comes as a necessary read for students of Budo who believe they have reached their plateau in training. An example is often the 7th Dan who understands that the failure rate, attempting 8th Dan, is 99%. We fail both ourselves and that which we represent by simply settling for what is and deciding not to continue on. Just because we believe there was no question to receive a passing grade, it is highly important

to try, not only because it is an integral part of our Shugyo but also because of what we symbolize.

Shugyo is the way of training and conducting ourselves. The Kanji for Musha Shugyo 武者修行 translates as "Warrior Training" however such basic translation lacks the deeper meaning the Kanji represent when put together. The purpose of Shugyo is to "build the spirit," strengthening a practitioner's character through hard physical and mental training, going beyond every day Keiko, discovering new limits in the absence of real combat, keeping practitioners ultimately prepared.

Part of Musha Shugyo 武者修行 is a quest or pilgrimage. A warrior, called a Shugyosha, would wander through towns and the countryside practicing and honing his skills without the protection of their family or school. His activities would include training with other schools, dueling, performing bodyguard or mercenary work, and searching for a Daimyo [feudal lord] to serve.

Many Dojo recite the term in their Dojo Kun or Showa 唱和 at the end of each practice session. Depending on which Kanji we use, either 修行 [training] or 修業 [disciplining] for Shugyo, we still arrive at the same deeper meaning, to strive and make ourselves better. In the everyday practice of Shugyo, we study not for the next Dan or rank that comes with testing [Shinsa]. The practice of Shugyo goes beyond such a simply boundary, peeking into the soul or character of



- 2nd translation meaning Karma
- Alternatively translation is Waza or trick.

the student, no matter what their age or Dan grade.

Shugyo 修業 exists as an idiomatic compound expression, composed of two Chinese characters.

- Shu 修 translates as - to govern oneself, conduct oneself well, study, complete [a course]; cultivate; master; order [one's life]; repair.

- Gyo 業 translates as - vocation, occupation, business, trade, profession; industry; undertaking; studies; arts; conduct; act, service; achievement.

translating as - deed, act, work, performance,

With such a range of possible definitions applicable to each character, we must recognize the degree of importance when we study and apply ourselves. Additional characters or Kanji to assist in our understanding include:

- Showa 唱和 - Chanting
- Daimyo 大名 - Powerful territorial lords in pre-modern Japan who ruled most of the country from their vast, hereditary land holdings
- Musha Shugyo 武者修行 - Warrior Training; Knight errantry
- Bunbu Ryoudo 文武両道 - Culture and Martial power
- Kugyo 苦行 - Carrying on while suffering
- Shugyo-sha 修行者 - Practitioner of austerities

The important point to consider here that the only thing separating perceived greatness from the masses is hard work and an unfailing belief in the fact that the goal will be achieved, and that we need not focus upon the glorified achievement of a diploma, Menkyo, title, status or individuals. Far more valuable to those who wish to follow the Masters is to gain an understanding of the means by which they gained their greatness, and this in every case without exception was, is and always will be Shugyo.

**An individual's definition of Shugyo varies from person to person however it's definitive explanation is to continue and push on with non-virtuous reason.**

One example of Shugyo is the Karateka who trained for 35 years yet never participated in Shinsa [grading]. He was obviously the strongest and most senior of his Dojo however he isn't training for a belt or recognition; he is training only to sharpen his mind and body and to become better.

Another example is Gogen Yamaguchi's [Gojukai] Takigyō [waterfall training]. On film it may look easy however trust us as we've done it several times. Standing barefoot on sharp rocks in fast and hard moving water under snow-melt water pounding down on your head at approximately 75 mph [water from a 125' drop] isn't as easy as it looks, and it has nothing to do with Shinsa. It's simply testing your Shugyo. Yamaguchi's students too, continued to major positions in the film, television [Tokyo TV, Japan Publishing Co.] and political arena.

Yet another example is Mas Oyama's Sensei and his mountain snow training. Take a look at internet videos and you may think the man was out of his mind however his 'Karate' students went on to become some of the most successful business leaders [Honda, Sapporo, Meiji] in all of Japan.

Those individuals who would approach karate as a social activity or merely to gain a degree of physical fitness, or as a hobby etc, have either not yet understood the term Shugyo, or have rejected it. Such being the case, it is perhaps unrealistically optimistic for said individuals to progress significantly in their karate development. We should hasten to make the point that no value judgement be made against the motivations or individuals above. Nor should it be suggested that a Dojo benefits by the absence of such personalities. Comprehension of this fundamentally foreign cultural concept requires further guidance or encouragement from those that have acquired an understanding.

Make no doubt that Shugyo is a form of physical manifestation however, it is the connection with the mind telling the body that it is capable of performing beyond what the brain has convinced us is possible which brings us to a state which is indescribable. Yes, I understand that this is philosophical however consider the survival stories relating to out of the body experiences and feats of great strength recorded all over the world and from every generation. Were they too not pushed beyond expected limitations and lived to tell their story?

**What, if any, is the relevance of Shugyo upon the intellectual and spiritual dimensions to our psyche?**

In answering this we may well look to the example set by Judo founder Jigoro Kano. Kano, a lifelong educator, was intimately familiar with the idiom of Bunbu Ryōdō 文武両道 [Culture and Martial Power – Both Ways Together]. This expression highlights the ideal of a harmony between intellect and power, implying that the absence of one precludes the other from existing. Kano provides many examples of this intellectual Shugyo in both quote and deed. For example, live-in students, Uchi Deshi 内弟子, of Kano were required to commit an equal period of time to book study [philosophy, political science, economics and psychology] as was time spent in Judo and physical training. Numerous examples of the Bunbu relationship are revealed readily when we research Jigoro Kano's excellence in their vocational studies. Yamaguchi Gogen Sensei was an Attorney; Jigoro Kano Sensei and Funakoshi were educators. Japan's most famous swordsman Miyamoto Musashi excelled in art and poetry. Surely a pattern begins to make itself apparent.

After working full days, Kano himself was often observed to spend entire nights in study. Kano

said "We must not specialist in some training without thinking what the training is for". The line of thought above is a recognition of the Confucian saying "The true man is not a tool" . It follows then that those Karateka , indeed those Budoka [students of martial arts] who neglect to develop their intellect and capacity for thinking, render themselves little more than mimics, content to regurgitate that which they are told with little understanding and without the ability to question the truth of their lessons. Confining our karate lessons to the dojo is to severely disadvantage our self in life, Kano further urges "Find the applications of judo to your life, and do not just practice judo on the mat".

The term Shugyo implies that there is no designated training time, that a flexible mind is always exercising and comes to recognize opportunities for training in all things, essentially, that life can be regarded as one ceaseless opportunity for further study/practice. Alternatively, that life is a series of opportunities to apply that which is studied/practiced, and are ever present, occurring in all things and that Shugyo is the mechanism by which said opportunities are engaged. Perhaps because this viewpoint constitutes the foundation for the means by which all things are or should be approached, there is validity to the expression that we will come to see the way in all things.

### **The ultimate question, "What is Shugyo?"**

It is frustrating such will raise more questions than it answers. Any attempt to define a single absolute meaning is compounded by its nature and totally subjective. Personally, any definition is incomplete without making a point of expressing great physical, intellectual and spiritual rigor coupled with a resolute sense of perseverance. Indeed, Shugyo should by the very the nature of that which it implies, be highly intimidating to the majority of those that would take the time to consider the significance of it. Moreover, the fact that Shugyo is the verb used to describe the act of studying karate is a clear indicator of the sincerity with which we should approach the Dojo.

Lack and limitation, not only in our karate skills but also in every facet of our lives and personalities, exists only when we allow it to exist. Shugyo may be seen as the opposite, a means by which an individual focuses all the potential of the mind and its associated energies in a positive manner, applying them to the task at hand. Achieving this is accomplished by denying the self-defeating thought energies of failure, doubt, and others, an opportunity to manifest.

Upon consideration, in this sense also, we see the unlimited potential of Shugyo ranging far beyond the Dojo to reveal to us the way by which we might live rewarding, satisfied lives. In other words, a mind fully engaged in Shugyo has neither time nor energy to waste upon failure as it is preoccupied with the business of making progress leading to achievement in turn leading to satisfaction and happiness. Failures no longer exist as failures, as such, but as opportunities for the prepared mind to learn, adjust and continue progress. Lack in any commodity transforms itself into as yet unrealized potential. A mind therefore freed of the burdens of such a mindset is instantly liberated making it at once more receptive, balanced and ultimately happier.

### **Shugyo - The Mind the Body the Spirit**

It may sound holistic however perhaps the best subject for a study upon Shugyo, spiritual Shugyo and the benefits of a life spent in their pursuit is the character of Morihei Ueshiba Sensei.

Ueshiba Sensei was the founder of Aikido, in addition to being a Shaman capable of amazing feats of spiritual strength that bordered upon the supernatural. Ueshiba Sensei has been regarded as "likely the greatest master [of martial arts] ever to appear in Japan or elsewhere": Ueshiba devoted himself equally to studies of the physical, intellectual, and the spiritual. In trying to describe a link between spirituality, Shugyo and martial prowess, we perhaps need look no farther than one of Ueshiba's most repeated lessons, "Aikido is the study of the spirit! The divine has no limits." Due to an inherent sensitivity and complexity of the subject matter, spirituality is perhaps the most difficult aspect of Shugyo to grasp. Many good resources on the subject of Ueshiba and spiritual aspects of the martial arts are readily available and are highly recommended.

Often times, people push their limitations to discover that they are able to endure overall stress to at least double the performance of what they had assumed they were capable. My first experience with expanding limitations was in the summer of the 7th grade. At the time I was living in the childrens shelter for my 5th time. The county teamed up with a local Native American foundation to take pre-teens, having Native American ancestry, on a 6 week excursion to the Lakota Indian Reservation [a branch of the Sioux tribe], of which I had enrolled. This one month stay on the reservation included dually horseback excursions, boxing in dusty dirt rings, hunting, tracking, trapping, survival skills training and nightly chanting for minutes and up to hours in one of the many Lakota Sweat Lodges, if you choose to do so.

On one of the nights in particular, I wanted to listen to the most ancient of stories from the elders. In the sweat lodge, I watched in the dim light and listened to the seniors and elders in the lodge for 6 hours or so. At one point they were checking on me and smiling that I was doing fine. However, I was looking down on them from above. I now know that this was my first out of the body experience. The next night, no one looked for me as I slept a short distance from the lodge and far away from camp alone listening to the stars and the sky. I could hear the stars whispering to me that dawn was coming and in the coming days I would have to return to the city. The wind told me, in plain English, to remember my experience always - Miyakuye Oyasin. This course was a life changing experience inspiring me to this day to never simply give in. My pursuit of Shugyo here was to leave, not with a talisman or an award however, simply with a memory and a story. My perseverance paid off; I - and we are capable of far beyond what may seem possible.

### **What is the ideal manifest state in which Shugyo should be apparent?**

The answer is no more difficult than to commit our entire self to the perfection of everything that we do, all the time. Cynics may suggest that such is impossible, that the innumerable trivialities of daily life preclude such discipline as unwarranted extremity. The counter argument, of course, is that for the rational mind there are no such trivialities, for the rational mind would reveal to us the triviality and we would cease to continue. There is, after all, no point wasting time and energy doing that which is pointless. Needless to say, it is decidedly better to occupy ourself doing something meaningful. The benefits of a life striving for Shugyo is nourishment for the mind, body and soul, and the satisfaction of their constant appetites, so challenge yourself and push your limitations and the glass ceiling that was placed before you.

**Obituary: The Passing of Higashi Fushimi, Jigo  
Member of Japan's Royal Family  
And  
Sosai (Governor) of the Dai Nippon Butoku Kai**



His Royal Highness, Higashi Fushimi, Jigo passed away on January 1st, 2014 at the age 103. He was the brother of Empress Kotaigo, the wife of the deceased Emperor Hirohito. He was the former chief abbot of Shorenin Temple in Kyoto, and he also served as the Governor of the Dai Nippon Butoku Kai for more than six decades.

A sacred funeral service was held January 6 at noon in the Shorenin Temple. Higashi Fushimi, Jiko, his son and current chief abbot of Shorenin Temple, presided over the funeral. Higashi Fushimi, Jiko who is a relative of the Emperor Akihito, will now become the Sosai (Governor) of the Dai Nippon Butoku Kai.

Tesshin Hamada, who is Chair of the DNBK International Division, knew Sosai, Higashi Fushimi, Jigo and described his vision of a better world: "He always had dreamed that the world would become more peaceful and harmonious when people opened their hearts and embraced each other with encompassing love. He believed in true human salvation with his total spirit."



Let us endeavor to bring realization to the vision of this extraordinary individual.



## Spotlight on Great Lakes Seiwa Kai Sensei Mark Cramer

**Great Lakes Seiwa Kai** consists of three dojos in Northwest Ohio and Southeast Michigan – Bedford (MI) Seiwa Kai, Toledo (OH) School for the Arts Seiwa Kai, and Northwest Baptist Church Seiwa Kai which almost straddles the Ohio/Michigan border. Combined, the three dojos have about 100 students.

Great Lakes Seiwa Kai Chief instructor, Mark Cramer, began his karatedo training in 1971 at Kent State University and started his Goju Ryu training in 1974 in Toledo, Ohio. Sensei Cramer began his academic teaching career that same year in Toledo Public Schools and taught history until his retirement in 2010.

**Bedford Seiwa Kai:** During most of the time that Sensei Cramer was teaching for Toledo Schools, he had a very successful karate programs through their intermural sports program. Then in 2003, Sensei Cramer moved the karatedo program to the nearby Bedford Michigan Public Schools Adult and Continuing Education Department. The Bedford Goju Ryu Karatedo program has continued to grow, and it currently has nearly 50 students.

**Toledo School for the Arts Seiwa Kai:** In 2010 after more than 35 years of teaching for TPS, Sensei Cramer retired. Six months later, Sensei Cramer was hired by the Toledo (OH) School for the Arts to teach martial arts as an academic class. Since that time, this program has continued to grow and presently has 47 students. In this program, students can begin studying Goju Ryu in the 8<sup>th</sup> grade and continuing with their studies until they graduate. Additionally, TSA Seiwa Kai students have had the opportunity to experience other Japanese arts such as taiko and koto.

**Northwest Baptist Church Seiwa Kai:** Sensei Keith Williams, a student of Sensei Cramer since 1978, opened up the Northwest Baptist Church Karatedo program in 1994, and he continues to teach in this dojo. This program has about ten students.



**Bedford Seiwa Kai after a grading in June 2013 (Pee Wee classes were not present)**



**Toledo School for the Arts Seiwa Kai (Hour 3 Class)**



**Toledo School for the Arts (Hour 4 Class)**



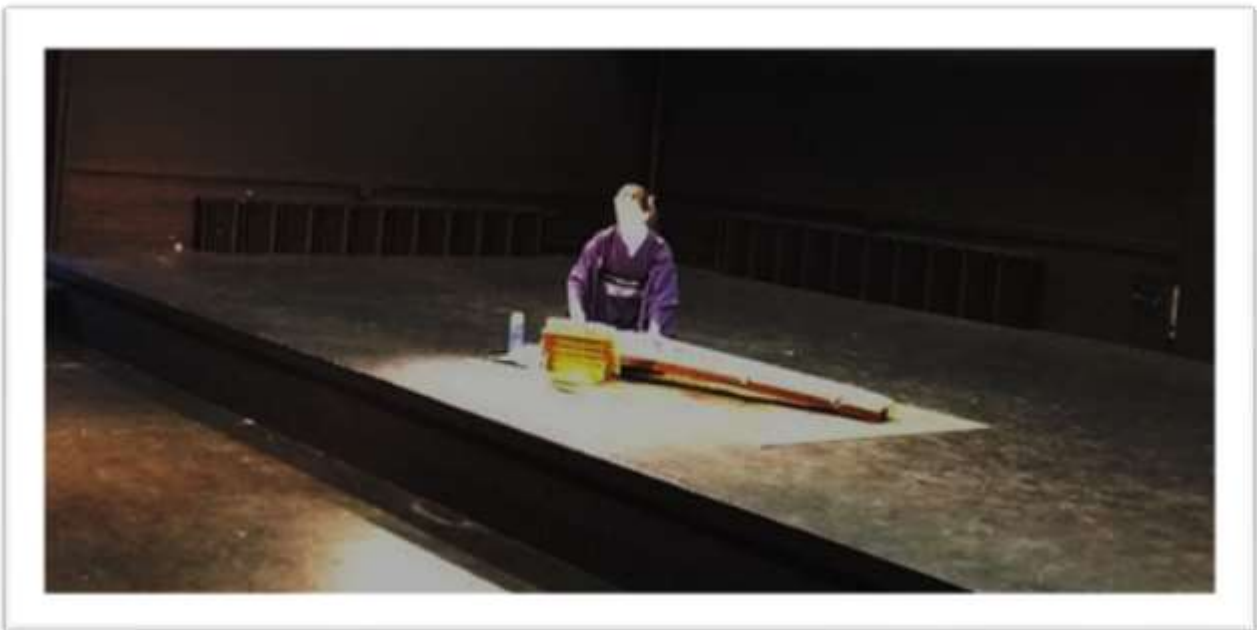
**Toledo School for the Arts 5th hour class**



**Udansha from all three Great Lakes Seiwa Kai dojos with Shiham Naidoo in June 2013**



TSA Seiwa Kai students learning Taiko through an Ohio Arts Council grant



TSA Seiwa Kai students attended a concert of the koto (箏), a traditional Japanese stringed instrument