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# Welcome

JOIN ME ON SATURDAY  
MAY 2ND, 2020  
10-11 AM PACIFIC

BEGINNING AIKIDO!  
GETTING STARTED,  
STICKING WITH IT,  
& GETTING THE MOST FROM YOUR TRAINING

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A CLASS FOR NEW STUDENTS  
(AND THEIR TEACHERS, TOO)

AIKI FRIENDSHIPS BEYOND BORDERS

LINDA ESKIN

We'll get started on the hour!

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# Beginning Aikido

## Getting Started, Sticking With It, & Getting the Most From Your Training

*A class for new students (and their teachers, too)*

Aiki Friendships Beyond Borders — May 2020

Linda Eskin

GrabMyWrist.com + upcoming books

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# You're in the right place if you are...

- ... thinking about training in Aikido.
- ... just starting out – from a few days, to a few years.
- ... returning to Aikido after some time away.
- ... “stuck” and could use a fresh perspective.
- ... a senior student training with beginners.
- ... beginning to teach classes on your own.
- ... a senior teacher with beginning students.

Ultimately, everyone involved in the art has an interest in beginners being successful.

# Who am I, anyway?

- Started training in 2009, at the age of 46. Current rank: Nidan
- My teacher is Dave Goldberg Sensei, at Aikido of San Diego
- Assisting in the dojo children's programs
- Mentoring, and leading classes at the dojo
- *My 6th kyu exam video has almost 100,000 views on YouTube*
- BA in Psychology
- Decades of experience in Technical Communication
- Many years in User Experience Analysis & Design
- NASM Certified Personal Trainer
- ACE Group Fitness Instructor
- StrongFirst Kettlebell Instructor

# What are we talking about?

Three aspects of training as a beginning Aikido student:

1. Getting started as a new student.
2. Sticking with it when it's frustrating or challenging.
3. Getting the most from your training at any point.

We'll look at these from two perspectives:

- When you are the student.
- When you're a partner, mentor, instructor, sempai, or teacher.

And I'll share a few books I recommend, for further exploration.

- We can learn *about Aikido* from books.
- We learn to *do Aikido* hands-on, from our teachers, in the dojo.

## Being the Newbie

Walking into the dojo for the first time is the hardest part.

→ **Feeling Out of Place**

Being the new kid, at any age, is hard.

→ **Fear of Looking Stupid**

We're conditioned to think we should *already* know everything.

→ **Being Out of Shape**

All that getting up and down... Uggh!

→ **Nobody Wants to Play with Me**

"I'm just going to slow everyone down."

## Learning to Learn

It may have been years since you had to learn a new motor skill - like tying your shoes.

- **The Body Learns Differently**  
Body and brain are different animals.
- **Learning By Watching/Feeling**  
Strategies for picking up on what the instructor is demonstrating.
- **Correction is Not Criticism**  
When your teacher corrects you, they are not condemning you, just giving you information. (Same with "praise!")

## Books

A few books that can help you get your footing with you first start training:

**In the Dojo — A Guide to the Rituals and Etiquette of the Japanese Martial Arts**

by Dave Lowry

**Aikido Sketch Diary — Dojo 365 Days**

by Gaku Homma Sensei

**The Language of Aikido — A Practitioner's Guide to Japanese Characters and Terminology**

by Michael Hacker



## Don't Quit

**It's fine to quit**, *if* Aikido really isn't your thing. But if you're just scared, frustrated, or pushed to the edges of your comfort zone, *don't quit*.

→ **Loss to you**

Training can transform your quality of life, and your relationships.

→ **Loss to the dojo**

You're not "a customer." Your dojo wants you to succeed and belong.

→ **Loss to the community**

Think of the difference you might make in the world!

# Finding Your Place

Moving toward belonging and community.

- **Connections and Mentors**  
Senior students are often happy to help and answer your questions.
- **Doing Your Share**  
An important part of dojo membership is helping out. But how?
- **Your First Exam**  
A rite of passage, and maybe the first time you've been tested since school days. Everyone freaks out, a little.

## Books

Personal stories that helped me see training  
— and its challenges — in a new light:

**The Way of Aikido — Life Lessons from an  
American Sensei**

by George Leonard

**Horsemanship Through Life**

by Mark Rashid

## A Deeper Practice

Technique isn't the destination, it's the vehicle.  
Seeing your own bigger picture.

→ **Feeling & Developing Qualities**

Meditation, exquisite awareness, and developing qualities through training.

→ **Conscious Training & Mastery**

Repeating a technique 1,000 times, badly, won't make you better. Refine!

→ **Taking Aikido Off the Mat**

Looking for how the principles you embody on the mat also serve you in your life, work, and relationships.

## Books

Going deeper. Looking at training beyond just doing techniques correctly:

**Mastery – The Keys to Success and Long-Term Fulfillment**

by George Leonard

**The Intuitive Body – Discovering the Wisdom of Conscious Embodiment and Aikido**

by Wendy Palmer

# Q&A / Next Steps

Thank you for participating in this session. I appreciate your time, your commitment to your own training, and your dedication to your dojo community and students.

## Visit [GrabMyWrist.com/AFBB](http://GrabMyWrist.com/AFBB)

- Check out the list of books I've mentioned here.
- Find the recommended articles
- Look for the Helpful Stuff link in the top menu.

## Watch for my upcoming books, starting with ...

From Aikido to Zanshin - 26 Essays on the Martial Art of Peace

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