

THE AIKIDO DETECTIVE FROM KODAMA

Dear friends and associates,

My name is Hidenori Kanazawa. I am an agent of the Kodama Intelligence office in Tokyo. I was admitted to membership of WAD Japan in 2006 upon the recommendation of Mr. Hiroshima, the WAD Ambassador for Japan. Some of you will recognize me from the WAD conferences held in Tokyo and Malta where I gave an aikido demonstration during the event. Today I would like to talk a little about aikido and its influence in my development as a detective.

Aikido is a traditional Japanese martial art that has been practiced and handed down by a samurai family over 800 years. Unlike other martial arts such as Kyujutsu (bow and arrow), Sojutsu (spear) and Kenjutsu (sword), the nobler aim of this art is to subdue your opponent without harming or killing him. Aikido is an unarmed martial art that evolved from, and is based on sword (Kenjutsu) principles. It is designed to take on not just a single opponent but also simultaneous attacks from multiple opponents both armed and unarmed.

A key principle of this art is the need to harmonize your mind and movements with those of your opponent. You do this by simply blending in with the attacking force and in the process take control over your opponent's attack as you move in tandem with him. Of course it is very difficult to realize this in a real life situation and is the reason that it takes such a long time to reach even basic proficiency in the art.

Despite this rather unorthodox concept to martial arts, proof of aikido's efficacy is best evidenced by its adoption in the training curriculum of the Tokyo Metropolitan Police Academy. Aikido training is also mandatory for all the women police officers in Tokyo. I was trained with selected police officers in a special instructor course and qualified as a certified international instructor.

In our work as detectives, we use all sorts of techniques such as disguising oneself, tailing and staking out our subjects in intelligence gathering. In practice, it is the mental strength that determines the successful application of these techniques; insights, concentration, profoundness in analysis, mental control in coping with a subject etc.

I learned the importance of those mental aspects while training as a disciple under my aikido master. As a martial artist, we constantly need to sharpen our five senses to think ahead and proact to a masters' movement. To be able to do that, it is very important to think and view things from master's perspective. We need to place ourselves on the same plane as our opponent so that we can understand their mind. I think this is the single-most important thing which I learned from my aikido training. I have since realized that the principles I learned in aikido is equally applicable to other aspects of life. Despite never having had the need to use aikido to defend myself in real life, I have benefitted immensely learning aikido in dealing with people and situations.

There is another important aspect of our work as detectives in the field - developing relationships and establishing connections with people are essential ingredients of our work. We need to establish rapport with police officers, government officials, lawyers, journalists etc. We obtain information from them and we sometimes provide them with information in turn. Through aikido, I learned the virtues of patience, respect, duty and modesty. These virtues I learned helped me tremendously in establishing relationships and in connecting with people. Aikido has become part of my daily life and work.

Looking back, I feel that I have been very fortunate that I came to know of and learned aikido. When I was a rookie, my boss took me to a martial arts demonstration hosted by a local police department. This is where I saw aikido for the first time and I was fascinated by the beauty and dynamism of the art. I could not wait to start learning the art. Life always surprises. At the time, I never imagined that one day I would end up becoming an instructor in the art, let alone adopting aspects of it in my profession.

I am grateful to my boss, Kodama. He was my boss, my mentor and and my motivator. A selfless man, he was always thinking about the development of the detective industry. He always showed me that no matter what work you do, your work has to in some way, contribute to the development of the human society.

My mission is to keep developing the teachings of Kodama and put into effect his idea of societal contribution through the work. Aikido helps me to achieve these goals. I further believe that cultural activities can bridge the borders between nations, races and religions. I do hope that we can build deep relationships through WAD and contribute to world peace through our work.

Thank you very much.

Hidenori Kanazawa.



Hidenori Kanazawa (left) visited Malaysia - Dato Som Sulaiman, Siti Naidu & Chung Tuck Yew played host.

