

# **Hikitsuchi-sensei's essay on Iaido, Aikido and Zanshin, 1973**

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May 21, 1973

ZANSHIN is to leave behind unified KI unrelaxed (undone). In IAI-DO, your sense your opponent's (attacking) KI in advance thereby impeding his/her attack and take him/her down. Never relax (undo) your KI until the end because the (downed) opponent may come back to attack you again and throw you off guard. (ZANSHIN is) leaving unified KI to the full. KI is sprit. KI is heart. Aikido practitioners should especially train IAI-DO to learn how to, among other things, unify and let out your KI. This is of absolute importance to those who want to master AIKIDO. That is, AIKIDO is a SHINKEN SHOBU(\*\*\*). Train as though your life depended on it. Because it is the road to a training of true self-being.

-Michio Hikitsuchi 10th Dan.

(\*\*\* Note: SHINKEN SHOBU - The original Japanese meaning is sword fighting with live blades. In more commonly used Japanese, SHINKEN has the meaning of earnest or serious and SHOBU meaning a match.)

Translation by Yoji Imaya

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What is "Zanshin" (Focusing Spirit)

"Zanshin" is an art of maintaining your universal "Ki" spirit and remaining completely focused until the end. In case of Iaido, you need to sense opponents aggressive "ki" energy before they attack you and completely deny them any opportunity to attack you. Then you must beat them. However, just because they are down (or beat), you never know if they will attack you again. So it's important that you remain completely focused until the end. Ki is a study of true spirit and heart. All the Aikido practitioner should practice/train in Iaido to polish their universal "ki" spirit and study how to release their "ki" energy. This is extremely important training for all the Aikido practitioners. In all Aikido is an martial art of "Shinken Shobu" (Live Blade practice. Highly intense practice). Give everything you have during training because the path of "True Spirit Development" continues.

-Michio Hikitsuchi 10th Dan.

Translation by Tsurushima Shinjiro

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1973. 5. 21 日

ざんしん  
残心とは、

どういつ <sup>き</sup> <sup>と</sup> <sup>のこ</sup>  
統一の気を解かずに残しておくこと。

いあいどう ばあい おいて き <sup>を</sup>  
居合道の場合、相手の斬りつけてくる気を、こちらが

さき <sup>さつち</sup> <sup>あいて</sup> <sup>で</sup> <sup>ばな</sup>  
先に察知して相手の出鼻をくいき、これを倒し

てしまう。しかし倒れた相手が、いつ不意に

ふたたび <sup>き</sup> <sup>し</sup>  
再び斬りかかってくるかも知れないので、

さいご <sup>き</sup>  
最後まで気をぬかないこと。

どういつ <sup>き</sup> <sup>じゆうぶん</sup>  
統一した気を充分とどめておくことである。

き <sup>たましい</sup> <sup>こころ</sup>  
気とは、魂、心なり

しあきおしや <sup>とく</sup>  
合気道修行者は特に居合道も修行して、

き <sup>かた</sup> <sup>どう</sup> <sup>あほ</sup>  
気の一、気の出し方等を覚えること

しゆう <sup>とく</sup> <sup>もの</sup>  
合気道を習得する者にとっては

ぜつたい <sup>たい</sup> <sup>せつ</sup>  
絶対大切なことである。

すなは <sup>しん</sup> <sup>けん</sup> <sup>はう</sup> <sup>ぶい</sup> <sup>いのち</sup>  
即ち合気道は真剣勝負(命がけて、けいこする。

しんじん、ようせいのみちと……真人養成の道であるから)