



Training with the Master: Lessons with Morihei Ueshiba, Founder of Aikido

John Stevens, Walther V. Krenner

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"The Purpose of Aikido is to remind us that we are always in the state of grace," said Morihei Ueshiba (O-Sensei). If anyone embodied that state of grace, it was O-Sensei himself, the founder of Aikido and perhaps the greatest martial artist who ever lived. But who was the man who created this martial art known as the "Art of Peace"? What were the principles—always more spiritual than physical—that this "warrior for peace" espoused? And how did O-Sensei's own movements embody the high standards he set for himself and others?

Training with the Master addresses all these questions, centering around 157 photographs of unrivaled quality, shot when O-Sensei was eighty-four years old and at the peak of his career as a teacher, martial artist, and spiritual seeker. Here, frozen forever in time, is a day in the life of the Founder, on and off the mat. We see him in training, from his initial bow before the dojo shrine and warm-up movements, through a series of exercises, postures, pins, and throws, to the concluding "seated breath-power training" and mutual back-stretching. We see him demonstrating his immobilizing wrist grip; explaining the mysteries of Ki, the vital life force, and how to control it; speaking to his students; taking refreshments—and flashing the smile that itself drew many to the practice of Aikido. Framing the photographs are a biography of O-Sensei by John Stevens; a compilation of quotations from the Founder's talks, sayings, and poems; and examples of his calligraphy.

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