Featured Instructor, March 2009

Harvey Moskowitz, 5th Dan, with wife, Catherine Tornbom, 3rd Dan
Saguaro Aikido, Tucson, Arizona
Division 3

I found out about Aikido while in the Army in Korea in 1958 when I was reading a book about Asian martial arts. Included was a section about Osensei and his Aikido. I was fascinated by the description of Osensei's ability. After the Army, living in Washington State and Texas, other interests and activities distracted me from finding a dojo.

Finally, in 1969 while living at a retreat center in Los Gatos I heard about Robert Nadeau Sensei, went to visit his Mountain View dojo, and started training with him in February of 1969. Until my recent move to Tucson in July of 2008, I trained with Nadeau Sensei except for two periods: 1977 – '78 while training in Iwama and 1982 to '86 while working in Austin.

For the last few years, my main interest in training revolves around bokken practice. My experience with the use of bokken and other implements is that their use enhances – beyond open handed techniques - our sensitivity to partner's movements and our ability to sense and be in a larger space.

As a Buddhist, I am aligned with the Aikido philosophy of not gratuitously causing injury – I believe that this feature is unique to Aikido. Therefore, in training where both uke and tori are each armed with a bokken, I practice techniques that are essentially the same as regular unarmed Aikido

techniques (Ikkyo, Kote Gaeshi, etc). Each technique finishes with tori taking uke's bokken.

Catherine Tornbom, Mark Stempel and I are in the process of establishing a dojo here in Tucson. We do have a name: Saguaro Aikido. We are creating our business plan and exploring various ways to instruct beginners. We currently offer two classes per week.

My most Memorable Aikido Experience
Some magical moments have occurred for me at Nadeau sensei's classes. These were facilitated by his talent for establishing a highly energized space and guiding us to the experience of this space (Aiki).