

Featured Teacher, December 2020



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I started training in 1988. In the USSR, from 1980 to 1988, it was forbidden to practice martial arts. After the cancellation of this ban, I wanted to practice in a kung fu club, but there were no more training places in the club. The Aikido group still had spaces and the schedule of classes was convenient. I met my first teacher, Emelianenko Vasily Ivanovich. He was one of the first Aikido enthusiasts in the USSR. At that time almost nothing was known about Aikido in Russia. He had experience in Karate and was very interested in Aikido. Classes at that time were mainly training in Karate, but if we used gymnastic mats, it meant Aikido techniques. It was a fun and interesting time.

In 1989 my teacher invited the leaders of the Copenhagen Aikido Club, led by Ethan Weisgard 3 dan at the time, to teach a seminar in St. Petersburg (Leningrad). This is how I first joined a real Aikido class! It was unforgettable! Since then I fell in love with Aikido!

I founded my Club of Traditional Aikido in 2001. These days we do not have a lot of people, only about 12 students. We rent a training space at a dojo and train 2 hours 3 times a week at the Martial Arts Center.

Thanks to Aikido I have met many interesting people from many countries of the world. All these people are my teachers. In my Aikido there is a piece of each of them. I would like to list them all, but the format of this note does not allow to do this ... My diplomas 5 and 4 kyu were signed by Ethan Weisgard and Jan Steffenson from Denmark, 3-1 kyu by Takeji Tomita Shihan, I received my black belt from Ulf Evenaaas Shihan, and my teacher Patricia Hendricks Shihan gave me my 2, 3, and 4th Dan. She was always my teacher even before I met her. I could watch the video of her seminars for hours and learn to copy her ukemi!

My Most Memorable Aikido Experiences

First trip to California to uchi deshi with Patricia Hendricks Shihan and CAA meeting in San Jose! It was unusual journey - without knowing the language, alone, I flew half way around the world, but I really wanted to and that's why I got there!

For 30 years I have been asking myself the question - what is Aikido for me, I think I still have 30 years to find the answer!