

## Featured Senior Instructor, August 2019



### Harry Concepcion

Aikido of San Jose, San Jose, California  
Division 3

My Aikido journey began in October 1988. I was a cocky young man who had just ended 12 years of practicing “hard” style martial arts. It was time for a change and I was looking for a martial discipline that offered depth and substance beyond competitive fighting and tournaments. After doing some research into internal martial arts, I decided to give Aikido a try. Then one fateful afternoon 31 years ago my life was forever changed. I visited the Aikido Of San Jose dojo which was located in San Jose’s historical Japantown and observed a class. Jack Wada Sensei introduced himself to me and proceeded to demonstrate some technique. What I witnessed was extraordinary. “Aikido is about achieving harmony with the Universal Ki or energy. You can say that the training of an Aikidoist is like the training of a Jedi Knight!” Wada Sensei explained as he gracefully and effortlessly threw his attackers. I then experienced a moment of clarity and certainty unlike anything I ever experienced in my 19 years of life.

I knew without any doubt that Aikido was my path and I had found what I was looking for. “Sign me up!” I replied. I immediately fell in love with the smooth yet powerful movements integrated with O-Sensei Morihei Ueshiba’s philosophy of personal development and harmony.

Aikido Of San Jose has been in existence since 1976 and is located in downtown not far from San Jose State University. Our dojo is spacious and well lit, situated

on the second floor of an historical building that was a cannery in the 1920s. We have a dedicated group of instructors and students and offer classes 7 days a week.

I currently train and teach adult classes 6 days a week at our dojo. In the past, I taught the teenager's class, and was instructor of the Aikido Club at San Jose State University.

Although Jack Wada Sensei has given me a solid foundation in Aikido "basics", he continues to inspire and guide me in my daily training. Over the years, I have also trained with Motomichi Anno, Robert Frager, Robert Nadeau, Linda Holiday, Frank Doran, Hiroshi Kato, Hiroshi Ikeda, and Mary Heiny Senseis. They are teachers that I admire and consider influential in my education.

## **My Most Memorable Aikido Experience**

Is happening right here and right now! My journey continues. Looking back at my 31 years of training, I find it difficult to narrow it down to just one. I have travelled to dojos all over the world and partaken in so many unique experiences (on and off the mat) with many amazing people in the Aikido family.

I suppose it can be said that I still haven't come down from the "exuberant high" that I felt from taking my very first class! There is nothing else that I love more than the joy and exhilaration of day-to-day practice. For me, Aikido is not just a mere hobby, it is a path to self-actualization and a Way Of Life.

O-Sensei Morihei Ueshiba has given the world a truly transformative approach to cope with the trials and tribulations of modern life. I am fortunate to have discovered it at a young age.