



Total Aikido: The Master Course

Author: Gozo Shioda
Genre: Aikido and Other Martial Arts
Publisher: Toyko/New York: Kodansha, 1997
ISBN: 4-7700-2058-9
RRP: £19.99 (+£2.80 p&p)

*In this, the sequel to his best-selling *Dynamic Aikido*, legendary Aikidoka Gozo Shioda offers a programme of full instruction for his Yoshinkan Aikido syllabus.*

Published shortly after Shioda's death in the 1990s and with prefaces by both his son (and eventual successor) Yasuhisa and London-based translator (and Yoshinkan 6th Dan) David Rubens, *Total Aikido* is an in-depth and accessible yet unintimidating instruction manual. It assumes little or no inherent knowledge on the part of the reader. Instead, they are taken on a journey from the basic principles of the art through to the final section on 'Ogi (Hidden)' techniques. Similarly to its forerunner, the book is packed with photographs showing both Shiodas demonstrating everything discussed in the text, stage by stage. The main body of the book is split into five sections, which are then divided and subdivided into techniques and subsections covering the various standardised methods of attack (Shomen Uchi, Katate Mochi etc.), as well as a demonstration on 'Practical Application'. In addition, *Total Aikido* is also peppered with 'Shioda's sayings', a group of quotes from Shioda or indirect observations from the founder Ueshiba. These offer a philosophical and theoretical insight to complement the practical knowledge on offer.

Though it is certainly possible to read this book cover-to-cover – I certainly have – *Total Aikido* is best used for reference, something made far easier by its compartmented layout. Personally, as somebody who has spent many years training with and learning under practitioners of Yoshinkan Aikido, I have found it invaluable. However the principles highlighted in the text are pertinent to students of all schools. Ultimately, then, this book contains practically every technique one may want to know, particularly those students at Kyu grades, such as myself.

10 sausages out of 10

RW Nov 2013