



## Welcome

Welcome to Falls Road Aikido! We have three intentions for our students

1. Safety
2. Fun
3. Transforming into a highly effective martial artist.

Falls Road Aikido produces champions in life as well as in the martial arts.

We are a small traditional aikido dojo with a twist. "How we train in the dojo is exactly the same way we will show up in life" is a driving motto that moves us towards our goals of being the best martial artist that we can be. This means that realistic kicks, punches, chokes and even being taken to the ground are a part of our regular training.

Even though we use colored belts to indicate our rank, promotion is not our goal. Instead we are dedicated to helping each other grow into confident, grounded, unshakable, loving human beings who could, if necessary, keep ourselves and our attacker from getting hurt if the need would arise. We come from a long line of aikidoka who practice hard with the intention of rising above our egos to find peace within ourselves.

We understand that this would not be possible without our mutual willingness to allow each other the use of our bodies for practice. This is an honor and we never forget that. While pushing ourselves to our own limits we take great care not to harm our partners during class.

We believe that it is our job to support each other's journey toward inner peace and strength. We open our door with this intention in mind. Everyone is encouraged to come watch a class or join us on the mat. I assure you that you will learn something incredible about yourself.

## Location

Address: 1400 Coppermine Terrace  
Baltimore, MD 21209

Phone: (508) 284-2910

Email: [riverofki@gmail.com](mailto:riverofki@gmail.com)

<http://www.fallsroadaikido.com>

Lead Instructor: Sempai Cara-Michele Nether

## Class Schedule

Adults:

*Monday 6:00 – 7:30 pm*

*Wednesday 6:00 – 8:00 pm*

*Sunday 10:00 – 12:00 noon\**

*\*Weapons Class first Sunday of the month  
9 – 12:00 noon*

## Please Join Us on the Mat!

Visitors are always welcome to watch class and are encouraged to participate. Feel free to invite your friends to join us. Visitors may try out a class for free. Adult members must be thirteen years of age or older; students under eighteen must have a parent's permission to join. Junior Classes begin at 6 years old. Information about these classes can be found at [fallsroadaikido.com/junior-class](http://fallsroadaikido.com/junior-class)

*IF YOUR HEART IS LARGE ENOUGH TO ENVELOP YOUR ADVERSARIES, YOU CAN SEE RIGHT THROUGH THEM AND AVOID THEIR ATTACKS. AND ONCE YOU ENVELOP THEM, YOU WILL BE ABLE TO GUIDE THEM ALONG THE PATH INDICATED TO YOU BY HEAVEN AND EARTH. MORIHEI UESHIBA*

## **What is Aikido?**

Aikido is a Japanese martial art that devotes its training to powerful self-defense techniques and the development of Ki (internal energy). The goal of Aikido is to teach students to maintain a relaxed, calm state during stressful situations, whether they involve physical, mental, or emotional confrontations. That's what makes Aikido so useful in everyday life.

Ki No Kawa, or "River of Spirit," describes our way of training and of being. We strive for harmony with ourselves and others. Our training is dynamic yet suited to the individual's own pace. Competition and other ego-boosting activities are not part of Aikido training; the practice is devoted entirely to self-development. Through serious hands-on training students gain confidence in their ability -- physically, mentally, and emotionally. Students concentrate on empty hand techniques as well as how to skillfully use and defend with and against tanto (knife), bokken (wooden sword), and jo (staff). In addition, Ki breathing exercises help students develop the ability to extend Ki while fostering a calm, clear mind even in the face of an attack.

## **What is Ki No Kawa Aikido?**

Ki No Kawa is a form of Aikido that emphasizes the unconditional acceptance and blending of energy (Ki). It is focused on achieving the unification of mind, body and spirit into one movement with total concentration and purpose. Ki No Kawa means "River of Ki" or "River of SPIRIT." Ki No Kawa, unlike other forms of Aikido, believes in

the realistic application of Aikido as a martial art AND a path for spiritual growth. In addition, Ki No Kawa practitioners believe and follow

the "Five Principles of Aikido" as taught by O'Sensei and the "Four Principles to Unify Mind and Body" as taught by Koichi Toheisenisei.

## **About Sensei Wirth**

Sensei Michael Wirth, founder of Aikido Ki No Kawa, has nearly thirty years of Aikido experience. Before establishing his own organization in 1991, Sensei Wirth studied with Sensei Maruyama. Sensei Wirth believes in the realistic application of Aikido as a martial art AND a path for spiritual growth.

## **Kin No Kawa Locations**

1. Main Line Budo  
Location: Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania  
Website: [www.mainlinebudo.com](http://www.mainlinebudo.com)  
Hanshi Michael Wirth Founder and Chief Instructor
2. Lehigh Valley Dojo  
Location: 1736 Allen St, Allentown, Pennsylvania  
Website: [www.kinokawalv.com](http://www.kinokawalv.com)  
(484) 619-3319  
Sensei Mesut Pervizpour
3. Falls Road Aikido  
Location: 1400 Coppermine Terrace  
Baltimore, MD 21209  
508 284-2910  
Website: [www.fallsroadaikido.com](http://www.fallsroadaikido.com)  
Email: [riverofki@gmail.com](mailto:riverofki@gmail.com)  
Sempai Cara-Michele Nether

*AS SOON AS YOU CONCERN YOURSELF WITH THE 'GOOD' AND 'BAD' OF YOUR FELLOWS, YOU*

CREATE AN OPENING IN YOUR  
HEART FOR MALICIOUSNESS TO  
ENTER. TESTING, COMPETING  
WITH, AND CRITICIZING OTHERS  
WEAKEN AND DEFEAT YOU. ~  
**MORIHEI UESHIBA**

## **Aikido Principles**

### **The four principals taught by Koichi Tohei**

Mind and body were originally one. Do not think that the physical power you have is the only power you ordinarily use to live and grow. The power you ordinarily use is like the small, visible segment of an iceberg. When we unify our mind and body and become one with the universe, we can use the great power that is naturally ours.

1. Keep one-point
2. Relax completely
3. Keep weight underside
4. Extend Ki

### **The Three Principles of Ki No Kawa Aikido**

1. The realistic application of the principles and techniques of Aikido to the living of everyday life.
2. The realistic application of the principles and techniques of Aikido in the defense of family, friends, country and those in need.
3. Blending with energy met whether positive or negative with a relaxed, focused and steadfast mind, body and spirit.

### **The Five Principles of Aikido**

1. Aikido is the path that joins all paths of the universe throughout eternity; it is the Universal Mind that contains all things and unifies all things.

2. Aikido is the truth taught by the universe and must be applied to our lives on this earth.
3. Aikido is the principle and the path that joins humanity with the Universal Consciousness.
4. Aikido will come to completion when each individual, following his or her true path, becomes one with the universe.
5. Aikido is the path of strength and compassion that leads to the infinite perfection and ever-increasing glory of God.

## **Falls Road Aikido Lead Instructor**

### **About Sempai Cara Michele**

Sempai Cara Michele Nether, founder and chief instructor of the Falls Road Aikido, is a Nidan in Aikido who studied under Ki No Kawa founder Sensei Michael Wirth and Yandon Sensei Kyle Olinger. Sensei Olinger, formerly an officer with the Reading, PA, police department, brought real-world experience to Sempai Cara Michele's martial arts training. Sempai Cara Michele also teaches a women's self-defense course.

Sempai Cara Michele is an acupuncturist and functional medicine practitioner. She is also the founder Women in Wellness, Acupuncture and Nutritional Family Care.

THE PURPOSE OF TRAINING IS TO  
TIGHTEN UP THE SLACK, TOUGHEN THE  
BODY, AND POLISH THE SPIRIT.  
**MORIHEI UESHIBA**

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## **Dojo Dues, Membership, and Other Fees**

### **New Students**

- You are encouraged to try several classes before committing to training.
- There are never any contracts, and we do NOT sell you to a third-party billing service.

### **Training Dues**

- Adults' dues are \$95.00 per month automatic payment.
- Drop in class is \$15.00.
- Pay your dues on time without being reminded or prompted. You should pay your dues continuously, as a demonstration of your serious commitment to the dojo, for as long as you consider yourself a member of the dojo.

### **Other Fees**

- Gi (training uniform) New students will need to purchase a gi. (Unless you already own a plain-white, "judo-style" gi without patches or embroidery.)
- Testing Fees: 6th -3rd kyu test fees are \$25.00, 2nd – 1st kyu are \$50.00 and dan test are \$100.00. Dues are to be paid before each test. Students usually test two or three times per year.

## **Dojo Rules and Etiquette**

The etiquette requirements may change depending on which class you attend. Because we tailor our arts towards emotionally mature people who are capable of self-discipline and control, we do not see a need for a stiff, militaristic atmosphere. However, some basic dojo rules are listed below to encourage safety and mutual respect during practice.

- Students should arrive about 15 minutes before class to change into clean gi.
- Members must be dressed, sitting in seiza, and ready to practice 5 minutes before the beginning of class.
- Members who are late for class must wait off of the mat in seiza until Sempai acknowledges them before bowing onto the mat. (Bowing is a form of paying homage to Aikido, O'Sensei, the dojo, Sensei, and your training partners. Alone the bow is but a hollow shell, it is the spirit in which it is done that gives it value and meaning.)
  - Bow toward the shomen (the front of the training hall) when entering and leaving the dojo.
  - Bow in front of your partner when beginning and ending practice.
  - Bow and thank Sensei when receiving individual instruction during class.
- Members must ask permission to leave the mat for any reason other than an emergency and again wait for permission to rejoin the class.
- All students sit in seiza or Indian style while Sensei is teaching unless instructed otherwise.
- Members are required to buy a white or natural-colored cotton judo gi by the end of their first three months of practice.
- Students must maintain good personal hygiene. All members also must keep fingernails and toenails trimmed short. Gis must be laundered after each class.
- All cuts and/or open wounds must be covered during practice. Supplies are provided.
- Discrimination of any type including - sexual, religious, or racial, will not be tolerated under any circumstances.
- Maintaining the dojo is the responsibility of all the students. It shall be kept clean at all times.
  - Mats shall be swept before class

- Matt shall be disinfected after each class.
  - All areas must be swept or vacuumed.
  - Bathrooms and dressing rooms should be clean, neat and orderly.
  - Walking areas should be kept free of all personal effects including shoes.
  - All surfaces should be kept free of dust.
- At the beginning and end of class, sit in order of seniority. The senior student sits first and to the right.
  - Seniors students are responsible for lining up other students properly before and after class.
  - Senior students are responsible for all dojo rules being followed.
  - Junior students are responsible for following the senior students' example.
  - Inform your instructor before class if you have any injuries or limitations.
  - Never train under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
  - Sign in the attendance sheet before each class.

*Senior students will guide you in proper dojo etiquette and procedures, but the basic rules are as follows:*

- Bow onto and off of the mat.
- Respect your instructors, including senior students (2nd kyu and above) who are leading class.
- Address Sensei as Sensei and all Dan ranks as Sempai both on and off the mat.
- Respect each other.
- Don't wear jewelry on the mat.
- Don't chew gum on the mat.
- Don't bring food or drinks onto the mat.

*"THERE ARE TIMES WHEN YOU MAY BE OVERWHELMED BY THE TEACHINGS OF THE WAY. AT SUCH MOMENTS, IT*

*IS IMPORTANT TO CONTINUE WITH THE ORIGINAL SPIRIT OF A BEGINNER."*  
**MORIHEI UESHIBA**

## **Helpful Hints for the Beginning Kinokawa Aikido Student**

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### **BEGINNER'S MIND/ATTITUDE**

Most of the things you are about to learn will be new to you. Open your mind to new possibilities. Empty your cup so you can be ready to fill it. Come to Aikido ready for new possibilities of expanding your beliefs so you will find it easier to accept new teaching. Let your mind be empty. Aikido is a very natural art. Most of your training will be learning to let go of limitations of previous habits and reactions. You will notice maybe even in the first class that when your body starts feeling a natural flow you will learn faster and easier. Find similarities in the movements. Enjoy the present moment and present technique. The secret to success is daily training.

### **BE NON-JUDGMENTAL**

As we grow up we often compare ourselves with others or with the expectations that we have for ourselves. You are where you should be as an Aikido student. We have a saying that there are no mistakes in Aikido. Everything that you do in class is correct, meaning that your action is simply an expression of your state of being right now. Don't hamper yourself by judging whether you are right or wrong. Strive for perfection, all the time realizing that whatever you can do at the moment is perfectly right.

### **HAVE FUN!**

Aikido is natural, flowing, beautiful and

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loving. Don't turn it into work. Enjoy your Aikido practice and relax. With patience and persistence you will master Aikido. You have the whole of the rest of your life to train. It's your responsibility to make every minute of your Aikido training enjoyable.

### **BE SAFETY CONSCIOUS**

Respect your body and protect it from injury. Your consistent daily training is going to guide you at a controlled rate. Be patient with your body (especially with regard to rolling). You will automatically learn to do beautiful rolls on the training surface without discomfort. Each person has their own unique way of mastering a technique. Respect the timing of how you learn and you will be safe.

*More people quit Aikido because of injuries than for any other reason!!! In nearly every case the injuries could have been avoided simply by following the guidelines we will present here.*

Remember: Pain lasting more than a few moments is a sign that something is wrong. If you are hurting, stop and consult with your Sempai/Sensei. Nobody can feel your pain but you. If you are hurting, stop until you are sure you've corrected the problem and you are comfortable about going on.

**Do Not** practice with nonstudents. Resist the temptation to go home and see if the arts work on your husband, wife, best friend, worst enemy, etc. In classes the Sensei is very cautious in making sure that the uke (the attacker) understands his or her part and can flow safely with the art. The first thing a nonstudent may do is try to resist by flinching or pulling away. This may cause an injury in your hands.

## **Frequently Asked Questions**

### **Q: Is Aikido effective as self-defense?**

A: For many police officer and nightclub bouncers, Aikido has proven much more useful than the kicking and striking arts. But Aikido is a subtle art that takes time and persistence to master.

### **Q: Do I have to be in great physical shape to start training?**

A: No. Aikido is extremely aerobic, but you train as hard as you are capable of while gradually extending your capacity. Regular Aikido training will definitely get you in shape.

### **Q: The falls look a little intimidating. Will I get hurt being thrown?**

A: When you first start training, you'll get a bit sore using muscles in a different way, but injuries beyond the occasional scrape or bruise are unusual in Aikido. New students concentrate on learning to fall correctly to lessen impact and until they can confidently fall safely they are not thrown hard.

### **Q: Is Aikido a true martial art, or is it more like tai chi, a meditative practice?**

A: Visit three different Aikido dojos and you're likely to see what appears to be three distinct arts. On one end of the spectrum, some dojos emphasize the deadly self-defense techniques popularized by the likes of Steven Seagal, while at the other end Aikido is practiced almost entirely as a meditative art with little self-defense application. Aikido Ki No Kawa falls somewhere in

the middle, with an emphasis on hard physical training to learn practical self-defense techniques while also striving to develop calmness and Ki development.

**Q: How long does it take to get a black belt?**

A: There is no “Black Belt club” and there are no guarantees, but students who train consistently can expect to earn their black belts in four to five years.

**Q: What about rankings? Are there tests?**

A: Students below black belt are tested from 6th kyu (the rank immediately after white belt) to 1st kyu (brown belt). Promotions are granted through our association with Aikido Ki No Kawa, based in Allentown, PA.

**Q: How many times do I need to practice each week to advance?**

A: Students should try to practice at least twice per week.

**Q: Does the bowing in Aikido have religious significance?**

A: No. Students of all faiths practice Aikido. The bowing is a tradition to show respect for the art and its founder, whose picture is displayed at the front of the dojo, and to one’s fellow students and the instructor.

**Q: Do I need to worry about the Japanese terminology?**

A: No. The terms are fairly simple, and you’ll pick them up easily as you practice. The glossary included in this

handbook is a useful reference for most of the terms you will encounter.

## Glossary

There are a few terms you will have to learn. The names of techniques are given in Japanese, since the Founder of Aikido lived and died in Japan, and the teachers who first popularized Aikido came from Japan. Most techniques have no name, or if they have a name, it is a general one. Do the best you can with this situation. Before long you’ll know many techniques, and if you practice hard for a long time, you’ll forget them too, as the mechanical mind you learned with is replaced by Spontaneous Easy Presence.

*Aikido:* The way of mind, body, and spirit coordinated in harmony

*Atemi:* Striking techniques to move the attacker’s mind

*Bokken:* Wooden practice sword

*Gi:* Training uniform

*Hanmi:* The relaxed stance of Aikido. From

hanmi students can move quickly in any direction.

*Hanmi handachi:* Techniques practiced with nage sitting and uke standing.

*Hara:* The center point of the body in the lower abdomen through which ki emanates. Movement should start from the hara.

*Irimi:* Entering line of attack directly at uke

*Jo:* Wooden staff

*Jo dori:* Techniques of staff-taking

*Kata dori:* Shoulder grab

*Katate dori*: Wrist grab  
*Katate dori ryote mochi*: Grabbing wrist with both hands  
*Ki No Kawa*: River of spirit  
*Kokyu*: Breath power; timing  
*Kokyunage*: Breath throw; timing throw  
*Kubishime*: Choke hold  
*Kumi jo*: Two-person jo practice  
*Kumi tachi*: Two-person sword practice  
*Kyu*: The six student grades below dan (black belt)  
*Maai*: The distance in space and time between nage and uke  
*Munetsuki*: Punch to the chest or solar plexus  
*Nage*: Throw, or person who throws  
*Nidan*: Second-degree black belt  
*O'Sensei*: Great teacher; honorific used exclusively for founder of Aikido, Morihei Ueshiba  
*Randori*: Free practice against multiple attackers  
*Rei*: To bow  
*Ryote dori*: Grabbing both wrists  
*Ryokata dori*: Grabbing both shoulders  
*San*: One with honor. Ki No Kawa students use this suffix when addressing their classmates to show respect for their fellow aikidoka (example: Bill-san).  
*Sandan*: Third-degree black belt  
*Seiza*: Formal kneeling position  
*Sensei*: Teacher  
*Sempai*: Senior student leading class  
*Sempai Ni Rey*: Bow to Sempai  
*Shikko*: Knee walking

*Shodan*: First-degree black belt  
*Shoman Ni Rey*: Bow to the front  
*Shomenuchi*: Strike to top of head  
*Suwariwaza*: Techniques starting with both partners in seiza  
*Tachi*: Japanese sword  
*Tachi dori*: Sword-taking techniques  
*Tanden*: The hara  
*Tanto*: Knife  
*Tanto dori*: Knife-taking techniques  
*Tenkan*: Turning  
*Tsuki (pronounced "ski")*: Straight punch to the stomach  
*Uke*: Person who is thrown; Receiver of the Nage's energy; usually the attacker  
*Ukemi*: Art of giving nage a realistic attack with which to practice, and of falling without being injured  
*Ushiro*: From behind  
*Waza*: Technique  
*Yokomenuchi*: Strike to side of head



<b>Counting in Japanese</b>	
One	ichi
Two	ni
Three	san
Four	shi
Five	go
Six	roku
Seven	shichi
Eight	hachi
Nine	kyu
Ten	ju