

## **Reigisaho - Etiquette for Beginners (see website for full version)**

Aikido is deeply influenced by traditional Japanese values. A centerpiece is Rei, which means "appreciation and respect" and the manner by which it is expressed (Reigi saho) to O Sensei, your instructors, your partners, the dojo and yourself. If you have questions about proper dojo etiquette, please ask an instructor. If you have questions about terminology consult an instructor or the glossary on the website. When you visit other dojos, abide by their rules of bowing and etiquette.

### **Proper Dojo Etiquette:**

- When you enter or leave the dojo proper, either through the front door or from the dressing area, make a standing bow toward the Tokonoma and wipe your mind clean so that you find yourself in the moment.
- Whenever you step on or off the mat, make a kneeling bow to the Tokonoma. At Two Rivers Aikikai, bow to the Tokonoma by simultaneously placing both hands on the mat in front of you. Keep your back and neck straight as you bow. When you complete your bow, remove both hands from the mat at the same time. For all other kneeling bows, place your left hand on the mat first and then your right hand. To complete your bow, remove your right hand from the mat and then your left hand.
- Class begins and ends with a bowing ceremony. Students should make all effort to be on time for class to clear their mind and take part in the ceremony.
- While the instructor demonstrates a technique for the class, sit silently in seiza or anza and focus your attention on the instructor. Do not sit with your back to the Tokonoma. When the instructor finishes the demonstration and asks you to practice, bow to the instructor then turn and bow to a partner.
- Do not leave the mat without first receiving permission from the instructor. Your partner can inform the instructor if you are bleeding and need to get off the mat quickly. To leave the mat, make a kneeling bow toward the Tokonoma, unless you need to get off the mat quickly. To rejoin the class, make a kneeling bow on the edge of the mat and wait for the instructor's acknowledgement to rejoin the class.
- When you step onto the mat after a class has started, make a kneeling bow toward the Tokonoma and wait silently in seiza for the instructor's acknowledgement to join the class. After the acknowledgement, make a kneeling bow to the instructor and join the class carefully.
- When the instructor asks you to line up to end class, line up silently in seiza or anza. Bow with the instructor toward the Tokonoma. When the instructor turns to face the students, bow to him or her and say "Domo Arigato Gozaimashita" Sensei or Sempai. Wait for the instructor's direction to thank each other, bow once more toward the Tokonoma and then proceed to thank all students in the class.