

Aikido, the Way of Harmony – Brief Notes on the Six Techniques

1. *Ikkyo*, “first teaching”

Ikkyo is an elbow control that from whatever attack, is accomplished by connecting to the opponent’s arm just above the elbow, and from underneath the arm using the thumb underneath to assure that the arm is lifted slightly to connect to the shoulder. The execution of the technique whether in front of the body (*omote*) or behind the body (*ura*), is done by turning the hand inward with the palm down and the thumb inward as the hips turn, drawing the opponent’s balance outside of his/her center.

2. *Shihonage*, “four directions throw”

Shihonage is a wrist control that from whatever attack is accomplished by spiraling the opponent’s out from the body by reaching over the wrist and then straightening the wrist while turning the hips. Then either *irimi* (enter) or *tenkan* (pivot) and bring the opponent’s elbow over your head as your hand presses forward, being careful not to let the opponent’s hand come above your head. Execution of the technique is then accomplished by using the ring and little finger to twist the opponent’s wrist in toward his/her forearm, and then cutting down as if striking with a sword. Your hand should end up inside of your knee, and do not let go of the opponent.

3. *Kotegaeshi*, “wrist reverse”

Kotegaeshi is a wrist control that from whatever attack is accomplished by sliding the hand down the opponent’s forearm (your right hand on his/her left and vice versa) until your thumb is on the back of metacarpal of the opponent’s hand, and your ring and little finger are reaching around the wrist. You will then slide forward or back depending on whether you are in front of the body (*omote*) or behind the body (*ura*), and turn the hips to connect to the shoulder. Execution is then accomplished by stepping back and turning the hips 180° while pressing forward with the thumb. Your other hand can assist by pressing on your own thumb only.

4. *Kokyūho*, “breathing method”

Kokyūho is accomplished by imbalancing the opponent’s head. From whatever attack, your body movement should draw the opponent into a position that brings their head just above and behind your shoulder and upper arm. Execution is accomplished by lifting your arm until the opponent’s head is tilted backward, then turning your hips, shifting your weight forward, and lowering your arm to maintain contact with his/her head as you bring his/her head behind his/her balance, therefore leaving him/her no alternative but to take a side fall or a roll.

5. *Iriminage*, “entering throw”

Iriminage is also accomplished by imbalancing the opponent’s head, however this time the front of your shoulder and upper arm. From whatever attack, your body movement should first draw the opponent so that their head is in front of your shoulder and upper arm. Execution is then accomplished by lift your arm upward until the opponent’s head is tilted backward, and then turning your thumb inward and downward to maintain connection with the head as the hips are turned and your weight is shifted forward, leaving him/her no alternative but to take a side fall or a roll.

6. *Kokyunage*, “breath throw”

Kokyunage is the only technique during this course that requires that the *uke* take a roll upon execution. For that reason it is taught last to allow time for plenty of practice rolls. There are many variations of *kokyunage*, but they all have the same execution: you take your opponent’s entire body balance in such a way and in such a direction that the preferred alternative is for him/her to take a roll.