



Daniel Schmitt

3rd degree Black Belt

The study of Aikido over the years has become an integral part of who I am. It has been a means of staying healthy and active as I grow older. It has taught me many valuable techniques that I can employ as a business professional for engaging others in negotiations, and it has resulted in an ever-expanding my social network locally and internationally.

When I started practicing Aikido, I was living in Japan in a northern fishing port city called Ishinomaki. I did not have any martial arts training. I did not speak the language, and I did not know anybody. I thought that by joining the local dojo I could address each of these points I was interested in learning a martial art, and since I was living in Japan, it seemed the perfect place to do so. While training, I was sure there would be many opportunities to learn the language at the same time. What is more, I was confident that I could make friends with other members of the dojo. Little did I know at the time how incredibly true this would turn out to be.

I still maintain strong friendships with many of the members of the Ishinomaki dojo. After the triple disaster of March 11, 2011, I was proud to organize charitable activities with broad support of the Midwest Aikido community help them directly in their efforts to rebuild.

Today, my training in Aikido continues to take me around the midwest and regularly back to Japan. It continues to challenge me to remain physically fit and flexible with regular training, and it has developed a confidence and awareness that guide me both personally and professionally. It is more than a hobby or a workout routine, it is a way of life.