

Educating Through the Body – Developing the Human Heart

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ABSTRACT

“Education” is a process intended to achieve and bring the best out of individuals. But due to a long held Illustration tradition we have forgotten to pay attention to our human development. We have neglected to define what that “best” might be and to look for the right formula to do this. We have basically focused on developing the best of ourselves by studying different sciences and gathering information and by developing intellectual skills. However our new century demands an effort to find a new formula that will help us get the best of ourselves as human beings by using our human energy, something that should be obvious in a world full of different kinds of energy (solar, electrical, nuclear, and the like). We still have to discover our human energy, multiply it and use it in our contemporary world. This goal should be a complement and an innovation in education since our human energy has driven human development from the beginning of times and has taken us to where we are today. We have created a civilization but now we must learn how to live peacefully and cooperatively so we can control our destinies in this and all the following centuries. This article defends the importance of educating people’s human heart by discovering and using their own physical energy. It explains how Aikido, a contemporary non-fighting martial art, is a formula that can be used in education together with the regular subjects that are part of both formal and informal programs. Aikido is a new educational paradigm intended to help individuals develop a new kind of humanity. It presents general results from a doctoral thesis in education that evaluates Aikido’s potential in education that can help us achieve the best there is in human beings. This work also aims to present some results regarding the use of Aikido in accordance to its particular humanitarian goals.

INTRODUCTION

Educating the heart has been a challenge for many centuries. Aristotle is said to have pointed out that education is incomplete without it. A long time after him, the term “education of the heart” (*Herzensbildung*) was used again by the German writer Friedrich

Schiller in reaction to the Enlightenment idea of an education that separated feeling and thinking in favor of using the senses and the mind in a scientific way in support of a logical education. There was also another famous German, Wilhelm von Humboldt who thought about this but preferred to talk about an “education of the character” -*Bildung des Gemüths*. According to Frevert (2012) in the XVIII century the heart was considered as the site of both feelings and character.

Since then, this topic has called the attention of Education because since the XVIII century it was considered that a man had to be physically, mentally and spiritually educated in order to take a step forward in the civilization process. It was believed that education had to cultivate human values and strengths since negative actions due to feelings such as envy, greed, fury, and hatred are known to disturb a healthy pacific life. But since this situation has escalated throughout centuries, contrary to scientific expectations and knowledge, philosophical dissertation and analysis as well as religious directives and efforts, it is evident that the heart still has to be educated. Contemporary people like Sir Ken Robinson (2011) and the Dalai Lama (2013) have talked about their concern about educating both the heart as well as the mind. And about sixty years ago, Morihei Ueshiba (1883-1969) developed a new Japanese activity he named Aikido that is intended to train people in the art of peace and to educate the human heart by making people return to their humanity. Aikido is a highly ethical, secular, and educational system designed to gain consciousness of who we are and how we act as human beings. It also helps to achieve a strong character and a full conviction of the need to think and behave in a universally constructive way in terms of union, confluence and harmony. Seen as a contemporary martial art, Aikido has the potential to train people to react constructively and in full control and balance of their emotions in order to overcome uncertainty, weaknesses, and all kinds of violence.

When talking about the heart it is important to realize that humans are born not with one but two complementing hearts: (a) one is the organ that pumps the blood in our body and keeps us alive, and (b) the other is the impulse, desire and will driving our destinies that can help us to succeed in life and to find happiness. The most important kind of success we need today is the final elimination of all forms of violence (physical, psychological and verbal) and destructive thinking which points out to the education and professionalization of our own humanity. From an Aikido perspective inhuman people are those people who discriminate, abuse, betray, hide, confuse, and pretend as much as those who are selfish and violent. So educating this driving-human-heart is really important today because it supports our feelings, our emotions and helps us deal with frustrations and animosity. From an Aikido perspective, when people are sad, when frustration is overwhelming, when depression takes over, when betrayal is present or when the truth is hidden or a murder is committed, it is because people have a weak, small and sick heart which lets negative things be in control and makes people use their intelligence under negative and destructive emotions. The Dalai Lama (2013) has pointed out the need of “some sort of education

system that may be universal and able to fit in secular education in order to make people achieve both a healthy body and a healthy mind”.

Also from this perspective, being able to overcome personal weaknesses is to have a big, strong, and solid heart, and thus a greater humanity. But this kind of heart needs to be trained, something that points out towards physical training as a vital experience. Weaknesses cannot be overcome by means of mental study or scientific approaches and analysis so much as it cannot be overcome by means of psychological intervention or religious teaching. Many centuries ago Aristotle realized that both virtues and defects lie within us and we can cultivate them by force of habit since they are not something innate (Politics, book five).

RE-ORIENTING EDUCATION

The term “education” comes from the Latin *educare* (to raise/to instruct) and *educere* (to bring out/to achieve) and formal school has traditionally emphasized instruction and cognition over formation and intuition obviously putting aside the intention to bring the best out of individuals in order to achieve human success. In its more general sense education is a form of learning in which the knowledge, skills, values, beliefs and habits of a group are transferred from one generation to the next through both formal and informal learning, storytelling, discussion, research and training. These forms of education, taking place under the guidance of others or carried out through autodidactic learning, are experiences that have a formative effect on the way a person thinks, feels, or acts so they are considered educational. But education needs to be reoriented in such a way that all knowledge, skills, values, beliefs and habits can be guided by the spiritual human heart that leads people to succeed and share with the rest of human beings. As Sir Ken Robinson (2011) has stated, “education is the process by which we give people a sense of who they are and their capabilities, so that life can mean something to them and to the rest of us”.

It seems that the concepts included in such a general definition –knowledge, skills, values and habits– need to be reoriented towards the individual self in order to change the current intellectual paradigm for a new one focused on the body so that people can learn to recognize their human energy, to value human skills, to improve their habits and to reinforce their constructive beliefs by means of a formula free from all kinds of violence. The expression “to learn by heart” needs to be complemented by expressions such as “to live/ to act/ to grow/ and to improve/ by heart”. Knowledge is defined as “familiarity and understanding of facts, information and also skills and habits of a group” but it is necessary to pay attention to knowledge as “familiarity, understanding, and development of the human heart” too as part of the urgent need of a new set of skills and habits that may benefit the one universal group represented by humankind. The crisis we live in our

contemporary world demands this reorientation, a change of paradigm, in order to achieve an integral education that may lead to the professionalization of a human heart driven by full conviction and cultivated by means of a new paradigmatic physical training. Educating the heart requires constant training and hard practice.

Educating through the body is important if we want to reorient contemporary education. Instead of expanding theoretical knowledge we need more experiential and intuitive formation: we need to go back to the individual rather than elaborating new theories about him/her. A change of paradigm may help to change previous primitive behavior, to refine human conscience in people and to achieve a noble heart driven by a new kind of human energy. Aikido was designed to cultivate the human heart by joining it to the center of our body and by making multiple-sided movements intended to make an impact in our brain so as to intuitively lead our lives in a different way. This new paradigm has an ethical system of physical work that helps strengthen values and virtues and is intended to put people in mutual communication by using a new kind of habit formation training. We need to reinforce knowledge not only as a result of cognitive and referential processes but also as a result of intuitive and constructive experiences. Rather than transferring knowledge through storytelling, discussion and research processes which emphasize discursive and mental procedures it is necessary to transfer it through positive, self-awakening physical activities hidden in the heart of our human nature.

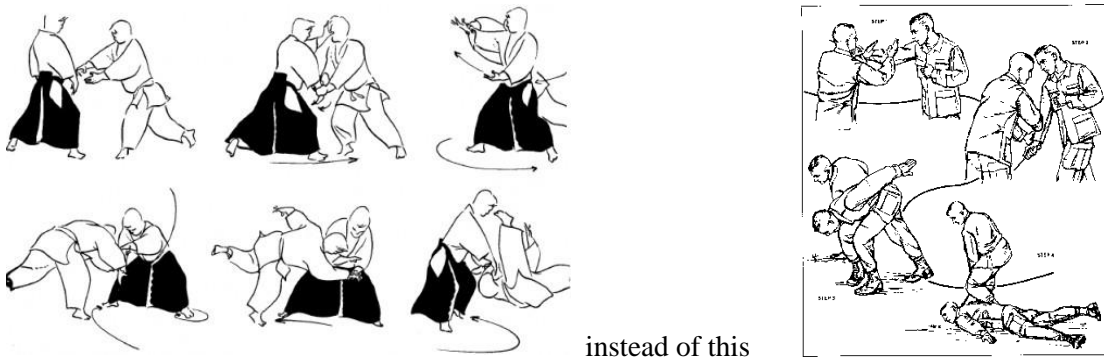
When considering that the next step to improve education to make a better world and to find happiness lies in the development of sensitivity and intuition it becomes evident that a new kind of training is needed. We can try to convince ourselves to be good and change but it is also possible to rely on our body to help us transform ourselves in a direct, active way. Physical training is an important educational tool which has been neglected in the past because it has been mainly seen as preparation for sports and competition. But it can be used for much more than that: it can be used as a means to help us recognize the potential of human energy, improve it, multiply it, and use it in order to grow and succeed in life. From an Aikido point of view training in a different way and with different goals in mind can definitely impact our lives. It is then necessary to consider the development of the human heart as a goal and to turn our attention to care of ourselves and to work with both body and heart.

As an activity Aikido inherits the virtues and values the ancient samurai warriors, without the combat goals and skills they used to train for. The balance, stability and control gained through Aikido prepare individuals to face the challenges of life and to overcome human weaknesses. This was also a special physical education formerly reserved for the noble samurai classes of Medieval Japan which Aikido has adapted to meet the needs of our contemporary world in order to achieve human excellence.

SO WHAT IS AIKIDO?

Aikido is a new paradigm in contemporary Martial Arts. It was developed between 1920 and 1969 by Morihei Ueshiba, a Japanese master who devoted his life to design an art free from fighting goals and techniques and changed them to educate the heart (*kokoro*) in order to meet our contemporary need for peace and harmony. Its first forms were developed before World War II and took its final form after the disastrous end of the war. Mr Ueshiba was strongly convinced that our minds needed to be reoriented in order to develop a universal humanity so he designed an activity intended not for self-defense but to create an AIKI culture, a culture of union, confluence and harmony. He realized that since human kind has created a civilization it now needs to learn how to live in it (Escobar, 2002). So he devoted his life to create a paradigmatically new art intended as a particular space and time devoted for human growth.

He saw the need to develop a higher kind of human energy he called KI, a potentially improved “life energy” resulting from the intervention and combination of: (a) *kokoro* (the conscious, imaginative and constructive human heart), and (b) *seika tanden* (the body center located at our lower abdomen). The founder called this union *shin shin toitsu* and he discovered that using it could enable people to create Ki an energy which is also produced by the circular Aikido movements in accordance to the force of gravity and the combination of the expanding and contracting forces known in Physics as *centrifugal* and *centripetal* so that action results are like this:



The use of these universal forces implies taking advantage of the energy found in the universe and the movements practiced in Aikido are intended to be applied absolutely free from human negative intentions and brute, destructive force. By using this new kind of energy a person avoids using the muscular and violent strength and reactions previously utilized for war and fighting; by doing so, it develops the happy and balanced sensation of a body full of a highly noble and superior energy. According to the founder of Aikido this is the energy needed to be used for self-growth and transformation, the energy that pumps constructive strength and solid character into the human heart, in words of Mr. Y. Kurita

Yutaka, the last *uchideshi* (live-in student) of the founder of Aikido who teaches at the Kurita Juku school - México.

Aikido teaches that in order to experience a satisfactory self-fulfilled life people must work with their emotions and learn how to develop personal strengths as well as a new set of values based on the no-violence principle. Its goal is to live with integrity and human dignity, according to the strengths and virtues the human driving heart is constituted from. The physical activities of Aikido give people a sense of direction and understanding of their human souls and mindsets embodied by *kokoro* (their heart). And by using it individuals can achieve human excellence and a complementary human professionalization which is still absent in education. The new century demands an education of the human heart if the goal is to really improve societies; if men really wish to be civilized and sensitive they must change first so that they are able to change with others. Only an education of the heart may help us get together, pursue one same human goal, support each other, and achieve mutual growth, benefit and human integration: that is the meaning of the word “AIKI” in Aikido.

If we don't develop a human heart ourselves how can we expect the world to do it? If we don't make an effort, how can we expect any improvement? So instead of mere discourse intended to convince, the best way to really accomplish improvement is through a transforming work of the body that implies a real effort, self-conscience and control. Learning and practicing positive physical moves can eventually give people constructive thinking and teach non-destructive actions. This may eventually change our current mind frames centered in the use of selfish violence and destructive competition. Aikido is an activity that can physically transform and improve old frame-minds.

Aikido embodies the qualities and virtues aimed by those interested in spiritual development, it teaches people how to prepare for a great life and not for a big fight, it is intended to help individuals transform themselves and their communities, to gain the will and power to overcome their weaknesses and to defeat their real enemies: laziness, selfishness, aggressiveness, hypocrisy, disrespect, intolerance, corruption, abuse, and many more. That is why Aikido is usually referred to as the “art of peace” since it embodies the unity, confluence, and harmony (AIKI) concept. This means we need to educate people on how to have a competent human heart. By doing so we might be using the secular education system the Dalai Lama is looking for and scholars like Sir Ken Robinson have not yet proposed. Aikido is definitely a secular ethics system based on physical constructive movements absolutely rid of violence, ancient martial forms and useless competition, an element forbidden in Aikido because it creates selfishness, animosity, envy, fury and many other negative emotions. Aikido is meant to give people a sense of who they are and their capabilities.

USING THE BODY TO BECOME COMPETENT HUMAN BEINGS

“Competence” is a common term used in contemporary education to refer to the integral capacity a person needs to act and perform as necessary to solve professional and work problems. But we also need a human competence that can help us to be in control of life as well as to live in peace and harmony. To be competent in human being terms requires a positive and constructive frame of mind in addition to the referential knowledge acquired in school in order to be in control of one’s own life and to transform ourselves and our societies. As some authors like Pimienta Prieto (2012) say, competence requires skills, attitudes and values learnt both mentally and physically in an ethical context, and Aikido provides practitioners with the most ethical point of view: the rejection of all forms of violence and destruction. Aikido is designed to train the body in such a way that people can learn how to get rid of violent intentions, it transforms the mindset in favor of one’s self-control in preparation for the collaboration and support of others.



So this

is not the same as this



Aikido has the potential to help educators prepare their students in the four educational competencies that according to Delors (1996) have been recently established by the UNO so that they can: (a) live harmoniously with others, (b) do the best for themselves and others, (c) be the best human beings they can possibly be for their own good and that of others, as well as how they can (d) learn about themselves and others. Arts and sciences require particular talents in order to succeed whereas Aikido only requires human energy and will. Proposing to use Aikido as an educational method is paradigmatic based on the currently accepted idea that knowledge is not something acquired exclusively through the brains but also through the body. According to Hannafford (2008) physical action is crucial from the moment we are born since it creates the multiple brain connections that empower our cognitive potential as well throughout all of our lives.

Aikido is a space where people can be aware of their own being and human potential and a time devoted to find, recognize, multiply and apply an improved human energy called Ki which is to be used in all aspects of life and not just in the training hall. Aikido is transcendental, because its movements are designed to help people transcend themselves led by their human heart, a heart which makes us different from other species, given our capacity to learn, transmit, propose, express, change and transform this world

(Escobar, 2014). Talking about human energy in Aikido is talking about what is necessary for our human potential to improve as when compared to the energy needed for a car to operate, a house to be illuminated, a will to reach a goal and an effort to achieve. This is the kind of heart that can be educated through the body in order to give a new dimension to the old saying “Know thyself” by switching it to “Conquer thyself” in order to transform and improve the civilized world.

DEFINING WHAT IS BEST FOR HUMAN BEINGS

They say all a Man wants is happiness so finding a way to live in peace and harmony should be a must. But in order to engage in such a project people need a special kind of energy, an energy that supports and strengthens human nature and Aikido is designed to teach people about this energy. What is best for humans is undoubtedly to try their best to find a formula or a method to develop humanly and to learn how to put an end to violence and selfishness for the sake of their survival.

Contrary to science, religions, and art, which have promoted the use of reason, love, compassion and sensitivity, as ways to improve the human heart, Aikido instructors believe problems can be solved when human beings act in correspondence. They claim problems can be resolved by developing a capacity to live in union, confluence and harmony, something that can only be done through a conscious and continuous effort. It might be said that it is a sort of neuro-physical programming activity: it deals with the creation of new conscious habits in order to eradicate violence and negative behavior, it works on behavioral patterns through experience so it can be considered a new kind of "programming". This kind of programming is intended as a new methodology for *Personal development* since it includes activities that improve awareness and identity, develop talents and potential, build human capital, enhance quality of life and contribute to the realization of dreams and aspirations given the Ki energy that helps achieve all this. People's goal is to live happily but human society is shaped by negative forces that work powerfully against this basic desire, such as greed, violence, environmental destruction, and attitudes that create big inequalities between people. Aikido can help by teaching them how to get rid of the primitive impulses that only trigger selfishness in human beings.

Religions see consideration, compassion and kindness as countervailing forces to the destructive aspect of human nature and see them as a sense of solidarity with others and life in general. Instead Aikido teaches practical solidarity, compassion and consideration learnt by experience and interaction as the best possible counteraction to such destructive aspects by teaching that transformation of one's self may take us to a better life, supported by the right attitude and the right frame of mind. This is the kind of heart Aikido aims to cultivate between people and the search for correspondence between human hearts is the clue: the less correspondence between actions, attitudes and thoughts the more chances there are to kill the possibilities of being happy and civilized. Aikido works apart from

ideologies, religions, political and scientific thoughts and concentrates on the work of the body in positive actions and in accordance to the higher order of the universe.

Working out the heart cannot be done through physical activities such as Tai chi, Yoga, Painting, Music or Ballet because they don't have an impact on practical life. When they are practiced it is basically in an individual way and through the mind and body and not the human heart: (a) Tai chi is a slow motion activity done by each person individually and there is no helping partner to share this energy with, (b) Yoga is also a one-man work that promotes good health, relaxation and the work of postures, and (c) Painting, Music and Ballet help express human emotions but they don't care about gravity, balance, stability and strength borrowed from contact with the Earth and the interchange of energy with a partner. And most previous Martial arts are done for the sake of competition, combat and fighting, they are self-centered and they don't teach care about others and their human condition, they were not designed to interact and communicate, as Aikido was.

So Aikido is an outstanding formula designed to educate the human heart (*kokoro*) since it cares for values derived from the ancient samurai ethical code named *bushido*, such as:

- a) Integrity, nobleness, magnanimity (JIN) – A human being is capable of improving, of becoming noble and of understanding good in everything. Aikido practitioners work to overcome the state of separateness and division of contemporary life. It rejects violence and competition because they lead to lack of harmony and make people lose their dignity as human beings.
- b) Fraternity, loyalty and honorability (GI) – Practitioners work for the sake of collaboration and partnership, mutual help, service and attention to themselves and others rather than fighting and opposing. They work to grow personally and for the sake of the group.
- c) Courtesy and respect (REI) – Aikido stresses deference and consideration people must have towards themselves and others. Right actions are the result of a right thinking and they show the noble essence of humanity. Aikido's discipline is rigorous in order to forge the nobleness of human substance. Courtesy and respect lead to the spiritual and sacred dimension of people's lives.
- d) Intelligence and wisdom (CHI) – It is very important to know how to benefit and use knowledge, and how to make it serve others, so as to support and recognize their human dignity. Aikido acknowledges that the intellectual capacity of men is the result of the work of the left and right sides of the human brain but it also believes that such an intellectual potential can be increased when both cognitive and spiritual competences are integrated: perception and learning can be done not only in the head but also in the heart and low abdomen (*kokoro* and *seika tanden*) so that intelligence is enriched by intuition.

- e) Faith and confidence (SHIN) – Aikido practice is designed to help people know themselves comprehensively; it is designed to overcome fears and limitations in order to reach our higher potential and to acquire a complete trust in what we are so that both classmates and the environment can perceive and benefit from the nobleness that can be reached from them. Aikido believes in the union, confluence and harmony formula created and developed by its founder master Morihei Ueshiba.

These values make practitioners develop one single heart (*kokoro*), one shared mentality, one same will and one simple formula for growth, one mutual way free from previous ideologies and goals that only divide; they do so without hurting their personal interests or disrupting their personal qualities. All the above-mentioned values are meant to lead, further and respect the freedom everyone has to achieve success in all aspects of their personal life. A heart of such magnitude can help people to keep up all the strengths, virtues and ethical aspirations they need in the 21st century. Such a single great heart can be both the motor and the purpose of everybody's actions. One single heart can be the beginning and the end of the great cycle of life. In Aikido the heart is the personal strength, commitment, and full conviction to do what is right, correct and positive by rejecting all negative or violent actions and behavior. Positive Psychology proposed in the West by Seligman (2009) is a new attempt to help people use their signature strengths every day to produce authentic happiness and abundant gratification, to develop strengths and virtues, and Aikido can be the methodology it needs to achieve this, another way of practical intervention.

AIKIDO AND POSITIVE PSYCHOLOGY

Positive psychology is the branch of psychology that uses scientific understanding and effective intervention to aid in the achievement of a satisfactory life, rather than merely treating mental illness. Since it began, Positive psychologists agree that one must live a happy, engaged, and meaningful life in order to experience "the good life". The topics of interest to researchers in the field are: states of pleasure or flow, values, strengths, virtues, talents, as well as the ways that these can be promoted by social systems and institutions. It looks for a state of "flow" which leads to a sense of satisfaction and achievement: Aikido only differs in the fact that it is the individual him/herself who has to work on such topics and make a concrete effort to achieve them.

Aikido and Positive psychologists –as can be understood to Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi (2000)-, are concerned with positive experiences and positive relationships as can be seen in the following definition: "Positive psychology is the

scientific study of positive human functioning and flourishing on multiple levels that include the biological, personal, relational, institutional, cultural, and global dimensions of life." Aikido studies human functioning, works with it and demands its full consciousness in order to flourish on those same dimensions starting with the individual in order to have a positive impact on the institutional, social and global dimensions. Aikido focuses on the same levels Positive psychology studies and has them as a formula to achieve a successful life. Aikido looks at success as a result of the physical application of its special energy force called KI. It complements the idea and the path to happiness embodied through the centuries such as happiness obtained from: (a) self-knowledge (Socrates), (b) rational activity in accordance with virtue over a complete life (Aristotle), (c) regarding philosophy as something utilitarian, and from (d) valuing the individual emotional expression (as Romantics did). And by helping people develop a strong character and solid positive attitudes, Aikido helps them have the spirit to face the challenges they find throughout their lives by keeping them in a constant state of flow and positive action. It teaches them to adapt to various circumstances and to rely on their own energy, which has no age, no political ties and no religious bounds. Aikido helps them give meaning to their lives and a deep sense of accomplishment, flourishing of the self and improvement of their human relations. Aikido is beneficial to families, schools and companies and differs from Positive psychology in that it doesn't encourage individuals to strive to their best but makes them do it instead.

Psychology has helped people change negative styles of thinking and feeling and its approach has been very successful in changing how we think about people, our future, and ourselves. Aikido people change by means of its peculiar physical training so it can be assured that it promotes a realistic way of fostering well-being in individuals and communities. It doesn't have a set of rules or commands but a set of movements designed to make people become used to "no violence" and to grow as human beings. Its approach is a result of the humanistic and philosophical sources of the East but it cannot be found in just any regular Aikido school since there are also four different forms of practice neglected by regular, common instructors, namely: (a) IPPAN GEIKO (general practice), (b) TANDEN GEIKO (practice centered in the lower belly / abdomen), (c) TOKUBETSU GEIKO (practice according to the philosophy of self-improvement), and (d) KI NO NAGARE GEIKO (practice with the special energy that characterizes Aikido). The first kind is found in most schools whereas the other three are taught in just a few selected schools.

A RECENT STUDY ON AIKIDO AND HUMAN ENERGY

In a recent doctoral study, still unpublished, I have discovered that not all schools teach the original Aikido developed by its founder. It was carried out between 2013 and 2014 and it covered 6 different cases (schools): two in Texas, one in California, two more in Mexico

City and one in Aguascalientes city (Mexico). Only one school was found to have an instructor who was not only a former student of the founder of Aikido but also an instructor interested in creating a Manual of topics related to the activities practiced in training sessions. This instructor is Yutaka Kurita, a former live-in student of Morihei Ueshiba who currently lives in Mexico City and works in what is now a new comprehensive approach of the Aikido originally developed by its founder. It was concluded that not all of them understand and educate practitioners in human energy and *kokoro* (the human heart) because their main goal is to practice techniques and they don't work on the physical self-conscious use of gravitational forces or the development of the human heart. Being aware of one's body, of the positive effect of non-martial moves, and to use our human heart to discover the essence of human beings takes time, effort and a good and interested instructor.

The results from the research carried out clearly indicate that Aikido activities and experiences as well as its environment contribute to the creation of a new *habitus* (the lifestyle, values, dispositions and expectations of the particular group formed by practitioners) based not on social position but on the particular lifestyle this activity generates. This according to the term as was coined by the sociologist Bourdieu (1960) which is known in correct Aikido as *Wa no kokoro* ("circular/reciprocal heart"), according to Kurita Y. (2015, Mexico). Unfortunately five out of the six cases analyzed limit their teaching programs to technical aspects and they miss the development aimed and proposed by the Founder of Aikido. It was clear that the physical education received in elementary and high schools must not be stopped since the activity benefits adults as well as adolescents and children. This is due to a lack of well-prepared instructors who should be interested more in the educational potential of Aikido rather than its technical/mechanical or martial-like aspects.

The study proved that only a renewed professional and comprehensive instruction in Aikido can have a positive and beneficial impact on the affective, social and corporal dimensions of practitioners. Since practicing Aikido can help people have a higher quality of life it is necessary to further its practice and teach lower instructors about this potential. Aikido has the potential to improve the quality of life by means of a development of the human capacity to be sensitive, intuitive, attentive and considered and civilized. This means –as the study revealed– that only 6 out of 38 practitioners miss the growth Aikido is supposed to give them. This is quite significant because Aikido is currently practiced all over the world but mainly as a new martial (fighting) art as can be seen in the hundreds of the YouTube videos and books published up to date in many countries.

It seems hard to find a good educational Aikido school since many only see and work on the surface. However, and due to the very nature of the art, they all are driven at least by the same constructive idea of avoiding violence and working in favor of the union, confluence and harmony with others. If individuals change themselves they can transform their societies. If they don't develop a human heart, they cannot expect others to trust and

communicate with them. If they don't overcome their own weaknesses, they cannot help others to become competent as human beings. The vital energy we are born with is all the energy needed in Aikido as an education project but it has to be raised to the KI level, the *energy* necessary to fuel up the works of the human heart. This KI is life energy at its most in reference to good judgment, human reason; determined will, strong spirit and positive, fully committed heart develop throughout AIKI practice. Changing the current education paradigm implies revising the old Cartesian saying "I think, then I am" in order to be aware that "If I think in a certain manner, then I surely am the result of that way of thinking". And if I act in a certain manner I will certainly change my way of thinking. Aikido training is intended to develop one's own energy, to help people to get rid of negative aspects that spoil their human heart. As a new paradigm Aikido teaches how to make a friend out of an enemy, how to get the best from the personal effort made to cultivate healthy attitudes and a healthy frame of mind.

Throughout its physical activity Aikido creates the special energy already mentioned. This new KI energy can be used for an integral education given the multiple values we assign to our body. According to Delgado and Zurita (2002) the body can be seen differently as a dynamic, esthetic, ethic, social, and instrumental body. Thus Aikido takes advantage of this and uses the body to transform people through the development and multiplication of human constructive energy. A new, AIKI culture, a new kind of humanity, requires the exploration of activities that can contribute to education and help improve the person's capacities and skills for life and not just for work or profit or more scientific development.

CONCLUSION

Aikido is about training the heart throughout the body in order to refine people by means of an extremely specialized physical exercise. It helps to develop human energy of higher quality and potential and represents a step forward in physical education as it inherits a training system considered educational in the East: Aikido is a new and different means of human knowledge transference. The old idea that the "the mind controls the body" is challenged in Aikido when the person can see that the mind has nothing to do when the body is numbed, tired, swollen, or hurt in any form and when neuro sciences support the idea that the body contributes to the general conformation of the mind. From an Aikido point of view, it seems that the body needs to be rescued and utilized if a change of the heart is to take place.

It seems clear that due to a long held Illustration tradition we have forgotten to pay attention to human development. We have neglected to define what is best for all of us and to look for the right formula to improve and transform societies. We have basically focused

on developing the best of ourselves by studying different sciences and gathering information and by developing intellectual skills. However our new century demands an effort to find new formulas that will help us get the best of ourselves as human beings. It is absolutely necessary to question ourselves to see if human education is or is not part of the general system centered on sciences and managing information, It is necessary to ponder if the individual is getting training to develop a human heart, apart from religions and philanthropy, and if the individual is trained to react more sensitively towards things, nature, society and all the world he is immersed in.

This can be done by using our human energy, something that should be obvious in a world full of different kinds of energy (solar, electrical, nuclear, and the like) but we still have to multiply and apply such human energy in our contemporary world. This goal could be a complement and an innovation in education since human energy has driven human development and has taken us to what we are now. We have created a civilization but now we must learn how to live peacefully and cooperatively so we can control our destiny in this and the following centuries. This article contends about the importance of educating people's human heart by discovering and using a new kind of energy named KI. It explains how Aikido, a contemporary non-fighting martial art, is a formula that can be used in education together with the regular subjects that are part of both formal and informal programs. Aikido is a new educational paradigm intended to help individuals develop a new kind of humanity and from the results derived from doctoral thesis in education that evaluate Aikido's potential it can be concluded that it can help us achieve the best there is in us as human beings.

With a human heart, service, respect and care for others begins with oneself and is done by overcoming our own weaknesses in a process that brings out the best in all of us in a conscious and attentive attitude applied to human life. Full conscience and commitment must be the essence of the heart we need to transform education in the 21st. century.

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