

News from Shin Kaze Special Edition March 2022

Shin Kaze Aikido Alliance is an organization dedicated to the practice and development of Aikido. It aims to provide technical and administrative guidance to Aikido practitioners and to maintain standards of practice and instruction within an egalitarian and tolerant structure.

PREFACE

By Robert Zimmermann Shihan
Dojo-cho - Toronto Aikikai, Canada
President - Shin Kaze Aikido Alliance

This is a Special Edition of the Shin Kaze Newsletter that we are issuing on humanitarian grounds based on the situation in Ukraine.

Mikhail (Misha) Korozey, 4th dan, is the dojo-cho of the Sei Fu Kai dojo in Kyiv, and represents Shin Kaze Aikido Alliance in Ukraine. He is also the president of the Union Aikido Aikikai Ukraine federation of dojos.

For the past few Summers prior to the start of the pandemic, Misha used to visit Toronto Aikikai regularly for a month of intensive training, and over the years he has invited me to instruct Aikido seminars at his dojo. As I came to know Misha, his family and his students we became good friends.

Fortunately, Misha is well and healthy, but as a result of current events and to be on the safe side, his wife and daughters have decided to move to Poland. Unfortunately, because of his age, Misha must remain in Ukraine. Together with some of his dojo members and their families, he has temporarily relocated to the Western part of the country, where things are calmer for the time being.

As you can imagine, this is not an easy situation in so many ways.

When I messaged with him recently, I asked him how Toronto Aikikai could help, for example financially. He said any assistance would be very much appreciated and welcome, and that the most efficient way would be to transfer funds directly into his credit card. We were fortunate to find a way to do this through a Canadian bank that does not charge commissions, and Joel Posluns Shihan offered to collect the funds and do the necessary transactions.

If you are so inclined, you can send a donation to Misha through Joel's Paypal account using this email address posluns@telus.net, this [Paypal link](#) or the QR code below. Even if you can't contribute right away, we will continue collecting funds on a regular basis and sending them to Misha periodically. Thank you very much in advance for your generosity.

Below is a translation from Russian of a write-up from Misha on his recent experiences to give you a taste, through the eyes of a fellow aikidoist and Shin Kaze member, of the situation they are living in Ukraine.



From Ukraine

By Mikhail Korozey
Dojo-cho - Aikido Sei Fu Kai Dojo, Ukraine



In search of safety.

None of us could ever have thought that we would wake up early in the morning like our grandparents once did with news that war had begun! It's shocking! The future is disappearing.

On the first day, no one could believe it, many said that they wanted to wake up. People on the street in huge queues for groceries in stores and at ATMs for cash, their faces were gray, conversations were not heard, a very strange, abnormal atmosphere. Scary!

From early morning until afternoon we were frightened by the news, rocket attacks on many military targets, videos of explosions and a map showing enemy penetration into the territory of Ukraine. Huge columns with enemy equipment.

In the afternoon we heard explosions and fighter jets flew right over us. Then we found out that they were ours and they shot down several enemy helicopters not far from our house.

In general, reality was covered with a thick blanket.

Constant air raids, everyone runs to the bomb shelter.

Of course, in such a situation, there was no question of continuing Aikido practice.

Some immediately left Kyiv, or even the country. But many remained and joined the detachments of the so-called territorial defense, formed by ordinary citizens willing to voluntarily take part in the defense of their home, hometown, country.

We decided to leave the city by the night of the first day of the war. After repeated rocket attacks on Kyiv and constant warnings of an air attack, there were calls to urgently go down to the bomb shelters, where it is cold and very uncomfortable. For those living in residential areas, basements in old houses and parking garages in newer ones served as bomb shelters, which are of course unheated. Our children's health was of concern, they could get sick in such conditions. But they refused our offer to take them to another country, not wanting to part from their homeland.

We put together some luggage with the minimum necessary things and documents and we left on the morning of the second day of the war. It took 3 hours to leave the city. We were lucky our friends had two cars, where we fit two families of 4 plus 3 cats :).

Although the safest direction was West, there were terrible traffic jams and a herd of people driving 30 hours to advance only 600 km, as roads and bridges had been blown up. We decided to go south, not far from Kyiv. We were on the road all day, and not without trouble. Our tires were pierced in a desolate place. But these are trifles compared to the war, and the feeling that we had left all our usual lives in the past.

First night in a hotel, the next one in a rented apartment. Sirens and the expectation of bombings. Chores, walks to the store, physical exercise and not daring turn off the TV with the news for even a minute. Lots of news channels in Telegram. Curfew. No alcohol law. Lack of products due to logistics difficulties. How many days of relative calm to expect, not counting the terrible news and regular air raid alerts?

The news comes that Russian tanks are firing at the nuclear power plant, which is 200 km from our location. Nuclear Threat. We decided to take the girls abroad. We became 3 families and 3 cars. A journey that amounted to 1000 km, that in peacetime would take 14-15 hours turned into a five-day marathon. The worst section was covering 195 km in 14 hours. There was no gas or food at the gas stations. With stops in a cold unheated house. Warmth with friendly people and excellent cuisine, in a faceless hotel.

Breakfast is coffee, boiled eggs and bread and butter. The next meal is in 10 hours. The fastest leg of the journey, the last one. Normal traffic, no traffic jams, but a strict check of documents and inspection of cars. When we finally arrived in the city it turned out that there were no vacancies at all. This is because 70,000 refugees arrived in this city with a population of 120,000.

But we were lucky, Aikido friends helped us here too. I am with my family on the same bed, but all together. Our friends, two families were also lucky, they stayed in the apartment's office, that doubled as a makeshift bedroom.

Our journey continues, to a safe place somewhere, somewhere to help volunteers and all together towards peace and victory!



With fellow practitioners in south western Ukraine.



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