



the ART of
PEACE

MORIHEI UESHIBA
Translated & edited by John Stevens



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THE ART OF PEACE begins with you. Work on yourself and your appointed task in the Art of Peace. Everyone has a spirit that can be refined, a body that can be trained in some manner, a suitable path to follow. You are here for no other purpose than to realize your inner divinity and manifest your inner enlightenment. Foster peace in your own life and then apply the Art to all that you encounter.



ONE DOES NOT need buildings, money, power, or status to practice the Art of Peace. Heaven is right where you are standing, and that is the place to train.



ALL THINGS, material and spiritual, originate from one source and are related as if they were one family. The past, present, and future are all contained in the life force. The universe emerged and developed from one source, and we evolved through the optimal process of unification and harmonization.



THIS IS HOW THE universe came into being: There was no heaven, no earth, no universe—just empty space. In this vast emptiness, a single point suddenly manifested itself. From that point, steam, smoke, and mist spiraled forth in a luminous sphere and the sacred sound SU was born. As SU expanded circularly up and down, left and right, nature and breath began, clear and uncontaminated. Breath developed life, and sound appeared. SU is the Word mentioned in many world religions.



ALL SOUNDS AND vibrations emanate from that Word. Your voice is a very powerful weapon. When you are in tune with the cosmic breath of heaven and earth, your voice produces true sounds. Unify body, mind, and speech, and real techniques will emerge.



THE ART OF PEACE emanated from the Divine Form and the Divine Heart of existence; it reflects the true, good, beautiful, and absolute nature of creation and the essence of its ultimate grand design. The purpose of the Art of Peace is to fashion sincere human beings; a sincere human being is one who has unified body and spirit, one who is free of hesitation or doubt, and one who understands the power of words.



合氣道
盛平

Ai-ki-do, the “Art of Peace,” signed “Morihei.”

Heaven, earth, humankind,
United in the Path of harmony and joy,
Following the Art of Peace,
Across the vast seas,
And on the highest peaks.



IF YOU HAVE LIFE in you, you have access to the secrets of the ages, for the truth of the universe resides in each and every human being.



THE ART OF PEACE is medicine for a sick world. We want to cure the world of the sickness of violence, malcontent, and discord—this is the Way of Harmony. There is evil and disorder in the world because people have forgotten that all things emanate from one source. Return to that source and leave behind all self-centered thoughts, petty desires, and anger. Those who are possessed by nothing possess everything.



PRACTICE OF THE Art of Peace is an act of faith, a belief in the ultimate power of nonviolence. It is faith in the power of purification and faith in the power of life itself. It is not a type of rigid discipline or empty asceticism. It is a path that follows natural principles, principles that must be applied to daily living. The Art of Peace should be practiced from the time you rise to greet the morning to the time you retire at night.



PRACTICE OF THE Art of Peace enables you to rise above
praise or blame, and it frees you from attachment to this
and that.



INNER PRINCIPLES give coherence to things; the Art of Peace is a method of uncovering those principles.



A GOOD MIXTURE is 70 percent faith and 30 percent science. Faith in the Art of Peace will allow you to understand the intricacies of modern science.



CONFLICT BETWEEN material and spiritual science creates physical and mental exhaustion, but when matter and spirit are harmonized, all stress and fatigue disappear.





Ai, the character for “love.”

USE YOUR BODY to create forms; use your spirit to transcend forms; unify body and spirit to activate the Art of Peace.



If you have not
Linked yourself
To true emptiness,
You will never understand
The Art of Peace.



THE ART OF PEACE functions everywhere on earth, in realms ranging from the vastness of space down to the tiniest plants and animals. The life force is all pervasive and its strength boundless. The Art of Peace allows us to perceive and tap into that tremendous reserve of universal energy.



Eight forces sustain creation:
Movement and stillness,
Solidification and fluidity,
Extension and contraction,
Unification and division.



LIFE IS GROWTH. If we stop growing, technically and spiritually, we are as good as dead. The Art of Peace is a celebration of the bonding of heaven, earth, and humankind. It is all that is true, good, and beautiful.



ALL THINGS ARE bound together harmoniously; this is the
real law of gravity that keeps the universe intact.



NOW AND AGAIN, it is necessary to seclude yourself among deep mountains and hidden valleys to restore your link to the source of life. Sit comfortably and first contemplate the manifest realm of existence. This realm is concerned with externals, the physical form of things. Then fill your body with *ki* and sense the manner in which the universe functions—its shape, its color, and its vibrations. Breathe in and let yourself soar to the ends of the universe; breathe out and bring the cosmos back inside. Next, breathe up all the fecundity and vibrancy of the earth. Finally, blend the breath of heaven and the breath of earth with that of your own body, becoming the breath of life itself. As you calm down, naturally let yourself settle in the heart of things. Find your center, and fill yourself with light and heat.



ALL THE PRINCIPLES of heaven and earth are living inside you. Life itself is the truth, and this will never change. Everything in heaven and earth breathes. Breath is the thread that ties creation together. When the myriad variations in the universal breath can be sensed, the individual techniques of the Art of Peace are born.





Dai (okii), the character for “large, big, great.”

YOUR BREATH IS the true link to the universe. Ascending breath spirals upward to the right; descending breath spirals downward to the left. This interaction is the union of fire and water. It is the cosmic sound of A and UN, OM, *Alpha*, and *Omega*.



CONSIDER THE EBB and flow of the tide. When waves come to strike the shore, they crest and fall, creating a sound. Your breath should follow the same pattern, absorbing the entire universe in your belly with each inhalation. Know that we all have access to four treasures: the energy of the sun and moon, the breath of heaven, the breath of earth, and the ebb and flow of the tide.



THOSE WHO PRACTICE the Art of Peace must protect the domain of Mother Nature, the divine reflection of creation, and keep it lovely and fresh. Warriorship gives birth to natural beauty. The subtle techniques of a warrior arise as naturally as the appearance of spring, summer, autumn, and winter. Warriorship is none other than the vitality that sustains all life.



LIFE IS A DIVINE GIFT. The divine is not something outside of us; it is right in our very center; it is our freedom. In our training, we learn the real nature of life and death. When life is victorious, there is birth; when it is thwarted, there is death. A warrior is always engaged in a life-and-death struggle for peace.



CONTEMPLATE THE workings of this world, listen to the words of the wise, and take all that is good as your own. With this as your base, open your own door to truth. Do not overlook the truth that is right before you.



TRUE WISDOM COMES from intellectual education, physical education, ethical education, and *ki* education.



THE UNIVERSE IS our greatest teacher, our greatest friend. It is always teaching us the Art of Peace. Study how water flows in a valley stream, smoothly and freely between the rocks. Everything—mountains, rivers, plants, and trees—should be your teacher. The world’s wisdom is contained in books, and by studying the words of the wise, countless new techniques can be created. Study and practice, and then reflect on your progress. The Art of Peace is the art of learning deeply, the art of knowing oneself.



CREATE EACH DAY anew by clothing yourself with heaven and earth, bathing yourself with wisdom and love, and placing yourself in the heart of Mother Nature. Your body and mind will be gladdened, depression and heartache will dissipate, and you will be filled with gratitude.





Ikiru, the character for “life.”

Do not fail
To learn from
The pure voice of an
Ever-flowing mountain stream
Splashing over the rocks.



THE ART OF PEACE originates with the flow of things—its heart is like the movement of the wind and waves. The Way is like the veins that circulate blood through our bodies, following the natural flow of the life force. If you are separated in the slightest from that divine essence, you are far off the path.



THE ART OF PEACE possesses all wisdom and all power, and it gives birth to natural beauty. The subtle changes between the four seasons of spring, summer, autumn, and winter give birth to different techniques. The Art of Peace seeks to create ultimate beauty, a beauty that springs forth from the four corners and the eight directions of the world.



YOUR HEART IS FULL of fertile seeds, waiting to sprout. Just as a lotus flower springs from the mire to bloom splendidly, the interaction of the cosmic breath causes the flower of the spirit to bloom and bear fruit in this world.



EVERY STURDY TREE that towers over human beings owes its existence to a deeply rooted core.

