

## Thank You Very Much

**T**he longer I practice aikido, the more I find it applying in my daily life. Take bowing. We have a motto in aikido that says, "When in doubt, bow!" It's funny – and it's also true. We bow as we enter the dojo. We bow as we get onto the mat. We bow to the teacher as class begins. During class if a teacher gives individual instruction, we bow to them again and then to our partner. At the beginning and end of each technique, we bow and thank our partner. At the end of the class, we bow to each of our partners in turn and say, "Thank you very much" – and use the name of the person we're thanking, as in, "Thank you very much, Kathy." We bow as we get off the mat and bow again as we leave the dojo.

Over the years I've had many opportunities to thank my fellow students and teachers, and when I say "Thank you" I try to mean it. Of course, sometimes this is easier than other times. There are some partners that are a joy to work with, and it's easy to be sincere. You feel a connection with them that enhances your own energy and feeling of well being. They give energy and you receive it – you give and they receive. Power transfers back and forth in an effortless flow. This back and forth with a partner you like feels great and is what aikido is all about.

### Choosing Your Attitude

There are other partners that aren't as much fun. Sometimes I end up practicing with a partner who throws too hard for me. Or a partner who wants to give instruction all the time when all I want to do is practice. Or a partner who's a beginner, when I came to the dojo wanting to practice hard and fast. But at the end of practicing the technique, I bow to them and say, "Thank you very much." At first I didn't always feel my thanks were genuine, but I'd go through the motions anyway. As time went on and I continued in my practice, I began to look for something to appreciate about practicing with each person, regardless of how much I enjoyed it, so that when I said "Thank you very much," I meant it. In doing this, I found that these "less than ideal" partners became my best teachers. For example, with the partner that throws too hard, I learn how to take care of myself. I have to stay very present and use proper technique in

order to fall safely. With the "instructor-partner," I learn patience, appreciation and maybe even a thing or two I didn't know about the technique. With my beginner partner, I get to learn through teaching and to practice patience once again. And at the end of class, as I bow to them and say "Thank you very much," I know that it's real. I may not get to choose my partner, but I can choose my attitude.



### Life Lessons

One of my first aikido teachers said that there are a lot of lessons on the mat, and it's been quite enlightening to learn this one – but it's not the end of the story. Even more interesting is noticing this "Thank you very much" aspect of aikido in my life off the mat. It happens in workshops with "difficult" students, when instead of trying to prove I'm right I choose to be grateful for the opportunity

to center and blend. To see if what I'm teaching really does apply to their problem. And I bow (internally) and think, "Thank you very much." Or I'm in a hurry at the checkout line and there's a person ahead of me who needs a price check or can't find their wallet – something that is slowing me down. I think, "Thank you very much" and look around for something to be grateful for, like a chance to breathe and be aware of living this moment of my life. It can be anything or any one that feels like a conflict. I bow to the difficulty, say "Thank you very much," and wait for the gift.

What is finally the end of the story (or the beginning) is that this sense of appreciation is growing. I say thank you a lot more often. And I see more and more what there is to be grateful for rather than unhappy about. This alchemy of attitude is simple in principle and complicated in execution. It requires nothing less than changing my self. But when I do, my most difficult characters and situations turn out to be my most powerful teachers. I've made a new year's resolution to look for one opportunity every day to practice this new technique. Just think – if I can change everything I struggle with into an unexpected gift – what a difference it will make in my life! It brings new meaning to something Morihei Ueshiba, the founder of aikido, once said: "Opponents confront us continually, but actually there is no opponent there."

Best wishes for a happy and peaceful new year!

Very little grows  
on jagged rock.  
Be ground.

Be crumbled,  
so wildflowers will  
come up  
where you are.

You've been stony for  
too many years.  
Try something  
different.  
Surrender.

Rumi

### Aikido Based Workshops

**Conflict Resolution  
Training & Facilitation**

**Voice Work**



Judy Ringer





## JudyRinger.com

*If you enjoy surfing the web, you can now receive **Power & Presence** – and a lot more tips and information – at [www.JudyRinger.com](http://www.JudyRinger.com). Our new site offers support on conflict skills and communication training, conflict facilitation, private coaching and aikido. You'll also find in-service workshops and upcoming events. Please stop by!*

## Please tell me!

*If you prefer to receive **Power & Presence** electronically, let me know:*

- *By phone 603-431-8560,*
- *By email [judyringer@rcn.com](mailto:judyringer@rcn.com), or*
- *Online at [JudyRinger.com](http://JudyRinger.com) on the Contact page.*



### Journey To Center



Judy "dances" with Tom Crum at Tom's Journey To Center program last October at Peaceful Valley Ranch, in Lyons, Colorado.



## real life

### **Appreciation and centering go hand in hand.**

From Tammy Spencer, Financial Services Department, York Hospital

The day before my 35th birthday I decided to stop at Dunkin Donuts on my way to work. On the way out of the parking lot, my red sports car was hit by a large old van pulling in. My immediate reaction was to jump out of my car and begin yelling. I shouted, "Don't you have enough room in your own lane?" – along with a few other choice words — while the woman in the van was getting out, stammering her apologies and trying to explain through my shouting that it was truly an accident.

At that moment my brain registered what I had just learned the day before in a seminar at work called The Magic of Conflict. We were taught to center ourselves before reacting in anger, and to try and take a different perspective on the conflict. Normally I would have kept on fighting, with me being right and her being wrong. Instead I chose to stop and center and listen to what the other person was saying. In my anger at my precious car being damaged I may never have heard that she was on her way to be with one of her 14 adopted children who was undergoing surgery that morning at Boston Children's Hospital. Because I did listen,

suddenly my repairable car meant very little, and I met an incredible human being who gives enormously to others and who touched my life by helping me realize how insignificant the little things are. If all I remember from those classes is to center, that alone will change my life and the kind of energy I send out to others daily.

What's funny is that I was one of those who did not want to attend the mandatory classes, yet I truly did take what I heard home with me, and it is making a difference. I'm even teaching it to my husband!

### **Centering has innumerable real life advantages.**

From Ellen Marlatt, General Manager, Independent Archaeological Consulting, LLC

I really have been meaning to write ever since the workshop – I have kept it in mind ever since. For me the centering part was especially profitable. The next day when the phone rang at work, I took "a moment" to center and was able to talk calmly and articulately with a major client. It apparently worked, because we got a HUGE \$\$\$\$\$ project out of it. Thanks for reminding us to refocus on what matters.

## resources

### **Aikido — The Way of Harmony**

Many of the principles incorporated in The Magic of Conflict and The Powerful Voice come from aikido, the Japanese martial art which means "The Way of Harmony." In aikido, students learn to blend with an attack and redirect energy without harming the attacker. There are excellent schools in Portsmouth, Portland and Cambridge that belong to the United States Aikido Federation and whose teachers are well-known throughout the U.S. and the world.

**Portsmouth Aikido** was founded in 1995 and meets three times a week at the Seacoast Family Y, 550 Peverly Hill Road, Portsmouth. On Tuesdays and Thursdays practice runs from 7:45 - 9:00 p.m. and on Sundays from 2:15 to 3:30 p.m. Dues are \$40.00 per month, and there is a \$25.00 registration fee. You may come by at anytime and watch a class, which is the best way to see if this martial art is for you. Or visit us online at [PortsmouthAikido.com](http://PortsmouthAikido.com).

### **Conflict Lab**

Like anything else, to get better at dealing with conflict you have to practice. The Conflict Lab is an opportunity to "get on the mat" with the difficult situations in your life. See "Workshops" section for more details.

### **Create Your Own Workshop**

After attending a staff development or team building workshop, it pays to take the time to review and integrate what you learned. For example, create a review training, Power Point presentation or discussion group, and ask each team member to present one concept. Teaching is a great way to reinforce what you want to remember yourself.

### **Private Coaching Sessions**

If you prefer working on your own to working in a group, or if you have employees who would benefit from personal coaching, private sessions are available to build skills in conflict management, presentations, and public speaking. Call Judy at 431-8560 or Email [judyringer@rcn.com](mailto:judyringer@rcn.com).

The words *Power and Presence* are used in numerous and sometimes contradictory ways. In *The Magic of Conflict* and *The Powerful Voice* workshops, *power* is defined as the life force that connects, engages and flows internally and from one person to another. *Presence* refers to a quality of being in the world and in the moment, a unity of mind, body and spirit that fosters connection with ourselves and our deepest values, a place of awareness and stillness that promotes appropriate action.

*Power and Presence* is published three times per year to provide ideas, information, and inspiration on conflict, change, connection and power, and ways to make conscious choices about them.

## workshops

### **The Magic of Conflict**

Does conflict throw you for a loop? The Magic of Conflict workshop is about discovering how to live the life you want. You'll gain a different perspective on conflict, learn concrete skills that engage the body as well as the mind, and practice ways to feel more confident, calm, and present in all aspects of life. Treat yourself or someone else and register today. Enrollment limited to twelve participants. See Calendar for date and time.

### **Assertive Communication and Conflict Resolution**

Do you find it difficult to ask for what you want, say no, or express a difference of opinion? Since most of us have been conditioned to view conflict as negative, it may be difficult to assert our position at times. Assertive (versus aggressive or passive) communication can help create a sense of self and foster an environment which is meaningful and fulfilling. This workshop will help you express yourself with equanimity and clarity while honoring other perspectives. Co-facilitators are Judy Ringer and Tom Dubois. Enrollment limited to ten participants. Sponsored by the Kittery Recreation Department. Please call 207-439-3800 to register. See Calendar for date and time.

### **The Conflict Lab**

Offered at the request of past participants in The Magic of Conflict, we will focus on applying the Aiki approach to conflicts that participants bring to the group. If you've taken a Magic of Conflict course and understand the concepts of centering, power, discovery and change, but need additional practice and reinforcement, this program will provide it. At each session, you'll have an opportunity to practice, review skills, and receive coaching from the facilitator and help from other students. Enrollment is limited to 10 participants. When you register it is for all three sessions. See calendar for date and times.

**Submit to a daily practice.  
Your loyalty to that  
is a ring on the door.**

**Keep knocking,  
and the joy inside  
will eventually open a window  
and look out to see who's there.**

**-Rumi**

## registration

### **Yes, I want more information about:**

The Magic of Conflict  The Powerful Voice  Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Please add me/my colleague to your mailing list:

Please call to discuss creating a program for my organization:

Please reserve space for me in your upcoming workshop:

Title of Workshop: \_\_\_\_\_

Total Cost: \_\_\_\_\_ Deposit enclosed: \_\_\_\_\_ (minimum \$50)\*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Occupation: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone (day): \_\_\_\_\_ (night): \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: \_\_\_\_\_

\* *Discounts available for multiple participants from the same family or company as well as some partial scholarships.*

**Please take a minute** to let me know if you'd like to continue receiving this newsletter. Please return this form, call, or e-mail indicating Yes or No. Thanks!

**Yes, please keep me on.**  No, please take my name off the list.

**MAIL TO: Judy Ringer • 76 Park Street • Portsmouth, NH • 03801-5031**

## calendar

### February 24 • 10 a.m. - 3 p.m. **ASSERTIVE COMMUNICATION & CONFLICT RESOLUTION**

Tuition: \$45.00 per person  
(bring bag lunch)

Location: Kittery Recreation Dept.  
Register with Kittery Rec. Dept., 207-439-3800

### March 24 • 9 a.m. - 4 p.m. **THE MAGIC OF CONFLICT**

Tuition: \$135.00 per person  
(lunch and workbook provided)

Portsmouth Location TBD  
Call, email, or return Registration Form

### April 10, 17, and 24 (3 Tuesdays) • 5 - 7 p.m. **CONFLICT LAB**

Tuition: \$135.00 per person  
Portsmouth Location TBD

Call, email, or return Registration Form

Please register early.

All workshops have minimum and maximum participant requirements.

### **CUSTOMIZED PROGRAMS**

The following are examples of programs designed for organizations. All trainings are tailored to meet specific goals and objectives. Please call for additional information.

### **CORPORATE/BUSINESS SEMINARS**

- Conflict in the Workplace
- Team Building: Working Together Effectively
- Assertive Communication
- Powerful Presentations
- Difficult People: Tormentors or Teachers

### **PROGRAMS FOR EDUCATORS**

- The Magic of Conflict
- Violence: Dealing with Anger (for students)
- Helping Students Deal with Anger and Conflict (for teachers)
- Team Building: Working Together Effectively



# Judy Ringer

76 Park Street • Portsmouth, NH 03801-5031

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## inside

**Thank You Very Much**  
**Real Life**  
**Aikido**  
**Conflict Lab**  
**Create Your Own Workshop**  
**The Magic of Conflict**  
**Assertive Communication &**  
**Conflict Resolution**

*All meaningful and lasting change begins on the inside. —Martin Luther*

## quotables

### **The Magic of Conflict**

- *This is the second time for me doing this workshop — I got even more out of it this time.*
- *Great ideas about how to stop, think and get yourself under control before addressing problems —and simple enough to use daily.*
- *Thank you for your informative class...it is always good to learn new ways of seeing the world!*

### **The Magic of Conflict**

The Magic of Conflict involves both body and mind in a journey of change, using simple and powerful kinesthetic exercises from the gentle martial art of Aikido ("The Way of Harmony"). Based on the book by Thomas Crum, The Magic of Conflict is a course in conflict, personal growth, and better relationships. We examine beliefs about conflict that hold us back, practice skills such as centering, listening, and managing emotions, and strengthen our commitment to make new choices. This workshop is about changing ourselves at a deep level and discovering how to live the life we want.

### **The Powerful Voice**

Do you wish you had a more powerful speaking voice? Do you have skilled, capable employees whose confidence is hampered by a soft-spoken, harsh or shaky voice? How we use our voice is closely connected with who we are. The Powerful Voice workshops teach how to develop a stronger, more effortless voice, how to give clear, effective, and compelling presentations, and how to be more confident in front of an audience of one or one hundred.



**Aikido Based  
Workshops**  
**Conflict Resolution  
Training & Facilitation**  
**Voice Work**

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