



The Gift of Danger: Lessons from Aikido

Mary Stein

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Mary Stein took up aikido in her mid-fifties and quickly learned what it really means to face danger—both external and internal. In this powerful collection of short essays, she vividly describes learning an active and spirited defense on the mat, in the process uncovering a lifetime of habitual tensions and emotional reactions, of flight and ineffective fight. Stein's thoughtful musings make clear how the practice of aikido can show what is really needed, right now. *The Gift of Danger* is aimed at men and women for whom the question of what is genuine in their lives has taken on fresh urgency.

Above all, Stein shows that a sense of danger has extraordinary importance for the martial artist; when danger is present during training, one learns to test limits and respond quickly and accurately. We follow the author as she stands, tentative but determined, on the razor's edge between knowing and not knowing, judgment and impartiality—the only place where real growth can occur. *The Gift of Danger* is both a striking story of personal growth and a potent argument for aikido as a model for human behavior.

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