

Learning through Teaching

By Haruo Matsuoka

I have learned many things through my teaching experience. When you want to improve your Aikido technique, you should understand the importance of teaching. Teaching goes beyond techniques and knowledge of Aikido. It is something that improves you spiritually.

For example, if you have some students, and you think about how you should do something to help them improve, then you must think about how to teach them. At that time you can create and discover new ideas such as new techniques or fundamentals of techniques. Your teaching attitude is “take care of your students.” The most important thing is for the instructor to have a spirit of self-dedication when teaching. If the instructor has an arrogant attitude that is selfish and authoritative, the instructor cannot create and discover new ideas in this process.

This is an important concept. When the instructor wants to improve his technique, he must change his attitude. That means to understand and practice this spirit of self-dedication. It is difficult to teach your students. You share with them all you know. Therefore, you need to have perseverance, patience, and generosity. You may think that teaching will not improve you, but it is training your heart, and at the same time, there is some discovery of techniques. Keep in your mind that, through this process, you are improving spiritually. Keep working on it.