



David M. Valadez  
Senshin Center  
Dojocho

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**Self-Deceit**  
by **David M. Valadez**

Deshi: You say that our practice can and should have at its center the sensei/deshi relationship. I feel that I have that. Only, it seems that my practice is then so dependent upon you. If you are not practicing, I do not practice. Can this be right?

Sensei: No, this is not right. If you practice only when you believe me to be practicing, then even then you are not practicing. Believe me, I do not practice only when we can practice together. In this way, I can practice with you. Practicing "with you" is something altogether different from practicing "because of you."

Deshi: Practicing "with you" is having the sensei/deshi relationship at the center of my training. Practicing "because of you" is not having the sensei/deshi relationship at the center of my training, because then I am not training.

Sensei: This is right.

Deshi: What is it then that I do have, if not practice, when I am training because of you?

Sensei: Self-Deceit.