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**Seeing Beyond**  
by David M. Valadez

Deshi: Sensei, you say that Aikido is not in the techniques. How am I to understand this?

Sensei: Imagine a dark heavy cloth that stretches from horizon to horizon and that has countless tiny holes poked through it. On the other side of this cloth is a great light. From a long way off, for a person of little learning, this cloth will appear as the night sky and they will come to mistake it for the universe itself. For a person up close, for a person of great learning, they will be able to approach the cloth, peer through any hole and see the great Sun that is on the other side – the single source of all Enlightenment. She who is stuck on the techniques mistakes the holes for stars and sees not the true source of all light, of all wisdom. She who is connected to the great light, with their eye up close and looking through the cloth, sees not the cloth at all.

Deshi: It is a matter of seeing beyond then, of seeing the other side, of looking deeper? How should we strive to do that?

Sensei: It has been said that in order to cultivate wisdom we should approach our learning in the following manner: We are urged to rely on the teaching, not the author, the meaning and not the letter, the truth and not the convention, the knowledge and not the information. In this way, we will separate ourselves from the superficial and thus bring depth to all that we do and all that we are.