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Carried in Our Actions
by David M. Valadez

Deshi: Sensei, in the training, in the skills we develop, in the relationships we build here, it is said that we seek to foster the mature spirit – one filled with virtue.

Sensei: So it has been said.

Deshi: While I can see the training, and while I can touch the skills, and while I can feel the relationships, I cannot sense these virtues of which we speak. How am I to relate to them when I cannot know them to be as real and as tangible as these other things? They are so abstract, so intangible. When they come to me through the teachings, how do I take them for myself? Where shall I hold them – in my pocket? In my heart? In my mind? Can I truly grasp these things?

Sensei: Intangible they are not. And because they are not intangible they cannot be placed in the emptiness that makes up one's pocket. Nor can they be placed in the "heart," which is an imaginary place men use to mark the infinity of their emotions and to hide their incomprehension of that infinity. Nor can they be placed in the mind, which is an imaginary place men use to mark the infinity of their thought and to hide their incomprehension of that infinity. So tangible are these virtues that they can be, and must only be, received and held in an equally tangible place.

Deshi: Where is that? Where shall I hold them?

Sensei: Hold them in your actions.