

What is Aikido

Around 1979 we took a rafting trip in the Sierra foothills in California. On the way back a discussion erupted in the van I was riding, about the true meaning and purpose of Aikido. There were seven of us in the car. All of us are still in Aikido today. All of us are teachers today. The discussion's topics ranged from: "is Aikido a martial art?" to: "what is the end result of Aikido training?" The discussion went on for almost two hours while we were driving back towards the bay area. Suddenly Bernice who until that moment said nothing, voiced this question: "do you want to know what Aikido is?" everybody waited, and she continued: "Aikido is what we do every day on the mat in Aikido classes". The effect of her words was so stunning we all went quite immediately. The simple truth of it blinded me like a lightning bolt in the darkness of the vehicle. It must have had a similar effect on the others as the discussion ended right there.