



Neil Mould, Staines Dojo, Ren Shin Kan, writes:

Dear UKA Scribe readers

Being an Instructor is no easy task. You can ask any Instructor of Aikido and I'm sure they will all tell you about the difficulties they have experienced in starting up and running a dojo.

As everyone knows, the most important part of a club is its students/members. When a potential student turns up at the dojo, ready to join in, the Instructor has the difficult task of trying to judge what this potential student is looking to gain from their first experience of Aikido. Do they want to see blood and guts spread out across the dojo or do they want to see graceful movements?

Should the Instructor be successful in reaching those expectations of the potential student, the Instructor then has to try to maintain those expectations and find the means to motivate the student to become successful in their Aikido career.

What creates a successful career for a student? Time. Time is the most important factor. The more time a student dedicates to the art the better the student will become. It goes without saying really.

So the next question to ask is, how does an Instructor encourage their students to put more time in to their Aikido? This is the ultimate question: how can somebody ask another person to give up their free time to go to courses, go to extra nights or even train at other clubs? What gives an Instructor the right to do this? My answer would be that the Instructor is doing their job. A student pays the Instructor money to sup-



port the club's venue and for the time and knowledge of that Instructor. The Instructor then has the responsibility to improve that student's Aikido ability.

What is the goal of an Instructor? I can only answer this on a personal level. My goal is to get students to a level where they are able to instruct others, potentially set up their own dojos and to reach a level where they begin to

think for themselves and develop their own technical ability.

So then, what is the point of my notes above? I would just like to say thank you to all those instructors who have stuck around for year after year, inspiring people and motivating people to continue in the art of Aikido. A big thank you to those students who have supported their Instructors to the best of their ability, even through the stresses put on to them in order to achieve the Instructor's goals.

Without these people the new wave of Instructors in the UKA would not be in a position to teach and eventually take over from our existing Instructors.

I trust the new wave of Instructors to come through will fill the shoes of our current Instructors. In order to do this, they need the effort and support of all the UKA students and their peers. And the most important factor, time: time to settle in to the role and show you their capabilities.

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