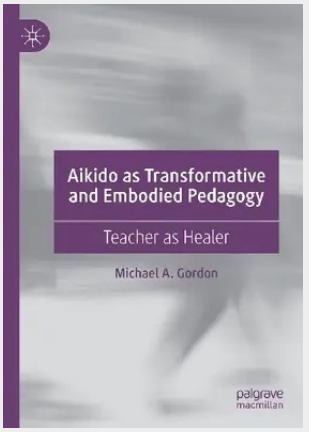
Gordon

Aikido as Transformative and Embodied Pedagogy

Teacher as Healer



Drawing on the author’s lifelong practice in the non-competitive and defensive Japanese art of Aikido, this book examines education as self-cultivation, from a Japanese philosophy (e.g. Buddhist) perspective. Contemplative practices, such as secular mindfulness meditation, are being increasingly integrated into pedagogical settings to enhance social and emotional learning and well-being and to address stress-induced overwhelm due to increased pressures on the education system and its constituents. The chapters in this book explore the various ways, through the lens of this non-violent relational art of Aikido, that pedagogy is always something being practiced (on the level of psychological, somatic and emotional registers) and thus holding potential for transformation into being more relational, ecological-minded, and reflecting more ‘embodied attunement.’ Positioning education as a practice, one of self-discovery, the author argues that one can approach personal development as engaging in a spiritual process of integrating mind and body towards full presence of being and existence.

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