



VRJWILLIGERS
ACADEMIE Amsterdam

Masterclass Japanese concept of *ba*

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Objective: To explore the Japanese concept of *Ba* and how it can help in our volunteer work

Content

We often think that learning and creativity are individual processes, but we influence and need each other in this process. We are corporeal beings, in a physical environment, and are related to each other as well as to our history and culture. In this way an energy field (*Ba*) comes alive. If we are aware of this field (*Ba*) we can consciously use it in our interaction with each other. In this masterclass we learn to feel the *Ba*-field and how to use this to our advantage in interaction with each other and we learn the importance of passive listening. How we feel and sense is important as well as how we think.

Emiko shares about her business background as well as about her volunteer work with the Japanese fishermen after the tsunami. She is interested in how people interact and work together. People are sensing each other. You can feel it, if somebody is really listening.

In order for a good *ba* to emerge, you should not push and have goals, but be patient. Conflict and crisis are signs that something is moving. This can lead to progress and a big shift in creating *ba*. (comment of one of the participants: 'the universe is giving more space').

There is a question if you loose your own personality if you adapt all the time. Emiko sees that it could be strength as well as a weakness. Therefore we have to ask ourselves the question 'who do we want to be in this environment, now and in the future.'

Ba is about feeling the context and about what we feel instead of words, therefore it is important to meet physically and do things together.

How can we create a good *ba*?

We work together in small groups on the question 'how can we create a good *ba*?'

If everybody is happy, it is a good *ba*

- openness
 - don't bring your own luggage
 - if you can relax, the other can relax as well
 - you need to create room for the other
 - harmony is about flexibility and acceptance
 - diversity is important for a good *ba* (Dutch people are very direct and Japanese people are indirect, we have richer communication if we can learn from each other and expand our ways of communicating)
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- openness, kindness, respect each other
 - energy management
 - nice harmonious setting, light (this is not a guarantee, but 'what we can do, we have done')
 - kindness, respect, patience, happiness
 - creating space for the other
 - being in your body, your body is always present

Emiko comments that she feels a good *ba* in the volunteer academy and with the participants.