



BODY Dialogue

Journal of the U.S. Shintaido Movement

Issue No. 7, 1998

Hitori-geiko, or the Art of Solo Practice

2 Conversations Among Shintaido Practitioners

The question: What motivates you to go out and practice on your own? Or, if you find it difficult, what makes it difficult?

[Note: in order to preserve the original flavor of the conversation, this transcript contains some adult language].

Cambridge, MA Cast of Characters:

JB, a student of about 2 year's experience.

MP, friend and practitioner of other martial arts.

PDF, Shintaido Assistant

DF, a Shintaido Instructor.

JH, a Shintaido Instructor.

JB: I find it incredibly difficult to practice on my own, because it's intimidating, and I'm lazy.

JH: People yell "Hiya!" at you.

JB: So I need the butt-kicking of one other person to say hey!

Let's go practice. Maybe some of it also feels like I don't have enough experience to know what to do because in *keiko* (practice) there's a leader.

PDF: I found those *genki* (healthy, strapping) young men inspired me to do some practice.

MP: Is that because you felt rusty or old?

PDF: Just riding on their wave of enthusiasm.

MP: There's a lot to be said for weather. Spring coming for example, it's not a stressful thing for me to go out and do some stretching and running around, which ultimately turns into a workout.

DF: So the winter is more difficult.

MP: In December the chances that I'm going to go out by myself—I mean, I see you doing it, but basically I think you're a fucking nut, and it doesn't inspire me, I don't try to emulate it. I dismiss it as bizarre behavior by Mrs. Franklin's youngest son.

JH: I think in the middle of the winter I always get a cold and that knocks me out. Because once I get a cold then it's hard to get going after that.

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Stream of Consciousness

Shintaido and Non-violent Resistance

by Haruyoshi F. Ito

At the age of 22, I received some words of wisdom from Egami-sensei [master of Shotokai karate and teacher of many of the founders of Shintaido— ed.] as a present for my university graduation. He told me, "From now on, your life is your *dojo* (practice space). Remember that the more you develop your Karate in your life, the less chance you will have to use it. And finally, you may reach the level at which you will never use actual technique throughout your life time, if you are lucky. But, if you end up meeting an accident that causes you to use your Karate on a practical level, it is your misfortune. At that time, you must be ready to die."

Shintaido will not help demonstrators fight with the police, but help them prepare their minds...

At first, I simply appreciated this message as a kind of warning about my short temper which I used to have in my youth. Later, I started to understand his wish for me, that I could keep improving on what I learned from him, until I accomplished his dream (*Heiho to shite no Karate*, or "to complete Karate as a way of establishing Peace").

Political Movements

In the first weekend of June, 1996, I was in Koln, Germany to lead a Shintaido weekend seminar organized by Koln Shintaido Group. People came from different regions of Germany: Stuttgart, Regensburg, and Berlin. Some came from France, and England. It was a small Gasshuku (15 people), but it still had a nice international flavor.

When we had Q. & A. session on Saturday night, three participants, Amras & Joey Weber, and Helmut (a friend of theirs from Schnega) asked me a question which I was not able to answer. Their question: How can Shintaido be used by the people who go to picket lines of public demonstrations? Is it possible to use some Shintaido techniques to stop the forcefulness of the police which is used unfairly?

Amras saw Shintaido in 1986 in France for first time. She was attending the Annual National Gasshuku of French Shintaido as one of the macrobiotic cooking team. After the event, she came to me and asked if I would come to Berlin, where she was living, if she organized a local workshop. Not expecting too much, I gave my conditions which she had to meet before I would agree to come.

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David Franklin

新
体
道

"Shintaido" means "new body way." It is a an art form, a health exercise and meditation through movement developed in Japan in the 1960s. Shintaido grows out of the roots of ancient martial arts, meditation and yogic traditions, but the aim is to help modern people re-discover the original wisdom known by the body and realized through movement and gesture.

GO TAKE A FLYING LEAP

by David Franklin

What is the purpose of the many jumping, hopping, and low-center walking movements in Shintaido? These exercises are a significant part of most Shintaido classes and they are unique to the Shintaido system. No other movement form or martial art that I have seen stresses such unusual ways of moving forward through space.

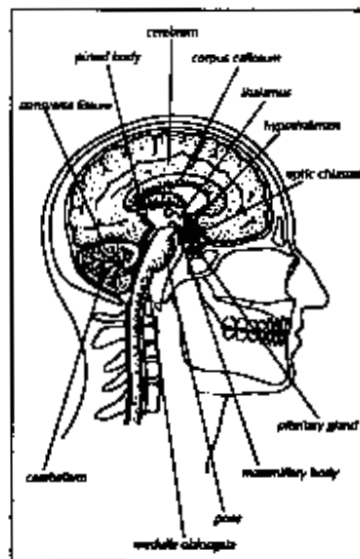
I think the phrase "moving forward through space" is the key here. Most of these movements call attention to the act of moving forward. In the age of mechanized transportation we sometimes take the simple act of moving through space for granted—just step on the escalator, push the button for the floor you want, turn the ignition and put the pedal to the metal.

On a more basic level, most people most of the time simply see what they want and walk to it. But even for people without a disability or injury, it wasn't always so easy. Imagine the infant we all were, moving for the very first time intentionally toward something, every resource it has engaged in the incredible struggle to move itself forward.

The infant represents our past, our earlier self, for whom moving forward through space is a step along the path of engaging with the world. But we could also look back to the history of evolution to understand the meaning of "going forward."

One way of understanding the structure of the human brain is the "triune brain" scheme of American neuroscientist Paul MacLean. According to this idea, the layers of the brain reflect the way it evolved over time. The deeper layers are older—they evolved earlier—while the more superficial parts are the more recent developments.

The deepest, and therefore most ancient part is called the brain-stem or "reptilian complex." While the higher "limbic system" and "neo-cortex" deal with more complex emotions and abstract ideas, the deep reptilian brain is the home of the most primitive urges like hunger and aggression.



We still carry the history of evolution written into the structure of our bodies, and the primitive reptilian complex, far from being a leftover remnant of the past, sits at the center of our brains, almost literally at the core of our being.

When we say the reptilian brain is the home of "aggression," this might be misleading. We usually think "aggression" has something to do with anger or hostility. But I doubt that fish and reptiles take things personally, get insulted and angry, and then behave aggressively. In fact the origin of the word "aggression" is completely neutral: simply "to go forward."

Going forward is one of the most basic expressions of life. Even bacteria, among the simplest single-celled animals, have been found to move toward sources of food. In some way they are behaving "intentionally." They are not just passively sitting there, letting the chaos of their environment take over. They are making

an effort to stay alive, going forward to seek something they need from their world. They are expressing some kind of self-organizing principle, which is about as close as we have come to defining "life."

The jumping movements of Shintaido can re-introduce even the most athletic among us to the struggle to move forward. Maybe this can help us connect to the reptilian brain or to some deep and primal part of our consciousness; I don't know.

But I'll admit I like the image of all living things engaged in the dance of life together. Fish gotta swim and birds gotta fly; bacteria wiggle, salmon swim up stream, and here and there on the surface of the earth, people dressed in white hop, skip and jump across green fields.

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P.O. Box 22622
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Shintaido of America
 P.O. Box 381672
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Cultural Translation: The Senpai-Kohai Relationship in America

by John Seaman

In general terms, *senpai* is a more senior member of an organization and *kohai* is the more junior. More specifically, in the study of an art, a senior student mentors a more junior one. The Senpai-Kohai relationship in Japan becomes both a way to pass on the corporate culture and a way to speed up the development of the junior through a closer apprentice relationship than would be possible between the junior person and the *Sensei*, or master.

The junior person thus gains— at least in theory. The senior person also gains by getting a chance to teach— and thus learn in a different way— what she or he already knows. And the organization gains in several ways.

How we can have a culture of two hundred million people each of whom took the road less traveled staggers the imagination...

You will note that the relationship contains several premises. For the relationship to be meaningful in this culture, each of these premises must be translated from the Japanese culture into a functional equivalent for this culture. In the 22 years Shintaido has been in this country, there is no clear evidence that we have made a successful translation.

Translation is, of course, not the only option for cultural transfer. Some groups try to make Americans into Japanese or Chinese or whatever, much in the same ways that Americans and Europeans have tried to make Africans and Asians into Americans or Europeans. This has never been a realistic option for us since one of Shintaido's great strengths in Japan has been to free Japanese from Japanese cultural constraints. To try to make Americans into Japanese only to try to free them from being Japanese is too silly for us even in our most twisted moments.

Another option is ethnography studies: look at how the senpai-kohai relationship works in general in Japanese society (and it is quite common) and then at the particular refinements and twists that Shintaido in Japan made on the senpai-kohai relationship as variations and adaptations on a cultural theme. The ethnographical study approach distances us into viewing senpai-kohai either objectively or exotically— either with cold alienation or as something desirable to the degree it is alien. I think every Shintaido group in the U.S. has had people come, for a while, because it was exotic, non-American. However, it is hard to see how Shintaido could be powerful in everyday life when framed in those terms. It becomes an escape, not a way of living in the world— at which point the power of *dai-jodan eiko sei* (a sword cut from overhead straight forward) is utterly lost. Why bother to cut down into the world at all?

Obviously, I favor the translation method over either the transformation of Americans into Japanese or ethnographic studies. Translation entails a number of problems, as the old Italian proverb that “the translator is a traitor”, points out. The advantage of translation is the likelihood of use, including use in non-*keiko* (practice) contexts. Without translation into terms lived rather than into terms exotic, few of the students I teach would use the senpai-kohai tool except with a great expenditure of will power each time. It would remain unnatural and nonintuitive— a model that might be appropriate for Japanese culture but irrelevant in daily living here.

So I would like to focus on some problem areas in translating senpai-kohai relationships from terms exotic into terms lived, or, in other words, from head knowledge into heart knowledge.

Cultural uniformity and mapping the known

The first approximation of senpai-kohai is that of singing in a choir or being on a rowing crew: the group together can do things an individual can't. Without the coxswain to set the timing, the oars would crash against each other rather than providing smooth power. In choral singing, a note can be held beyond the breath of any one singer by having the singers stagger their breathing. In either case, to attain the grace, beauty, and power possible, the individuals must submit to the direction of someone who is not doing the same thing: the coxswain doesn't row and the director doesn't sing. Examples of this are not hard to discover in Shintaido practice.

The senpai is assumed to see more clearly the goal to be attained— the coxswain because of his or her privileged position and the director because of his or her training and skill. And herein lies one of the major problems translating senpai-kohai into living terms of our culture. We don't believe that other people see better, we don't believe in privileged positions, and we really don't believe in other people's superior training and skill— not really. Look at Robert Frost's poem where he says, “Two roads divide and I took the one less traveled— and that has made all the difference.” How we can have a culture of two hundred million people each of whom took the road less traveled staggers the imagination, but in fact that is what almost each and every one of us claims. Or songs like “I did it my way.”

Japan's culture is largely monolithic. People begin in very much the same place and have been subjected to quite similar training. The culturally acceptable responses to situations are limited. Therefore, the behavior resulting from a given stimulus is fairly predictable. None of those initial conditions— monolithic culture, beginning in the same place, subjected to the same training, limited acceptable cultural responses— are true in this culture. Therefore, predictions of future behavior along the lines of “if you do this for the next year, then you will change in that way” have a significantly lower likelihood of being true.

The ability to predict future changes because the reactions to given stimuli have been mapped is one of the strengths of the senpai-kohai relation in Japan. We cannot translate that into American culture because the initial conditions upon which it depends are absent. We would have to teach people to be Japanese first before we could use senpai-kohai that way. While an insightful senpai can get close to 100% accurate predictions in Japan, we are left with something similar to Paul Samuelson's observation that “Wall Street indexes predicted nine out of the last five recessions” (Newsweek, Sept 19, 1996, p. 92). In our culture, the short-term steering of the choir director or of the coxswain, with a higher degree of feedback between performance and vision, will more likely produce the desired changes.

Ebullience vs. Standing

Ebullience comes from a Latin word meaning “to boil over” and hence to be enthusiastic. Americans, more than anyone else in western culture, are ebullient. We boil over. We head for a spiritual ebullience where the separateness necessary for hierarchy evaporates, and, along with it, most of the structuring concepts that depend on contrast.

Americans, in general, seek a constant level of minor ecstasy where the unique attributes of one definition are boiled off and then fuzzily attached, as in a stew, to all things; the result, in the long run, is definitions becoming little more than different names for the same grand thing. (For those interested in philosophy and theology, Americans, by some process I don't pretend to understand, are natural-born children of Eckhart but seldom acknowledge or even know of the relationship).

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She surprised me six months later, sending me a letter and asking me to come to Berlin since she enrolled enough people through her macrobiotic cooking class. Since then, she has organized three workshops in Berlin, and two workshops in Schnega, inviting me as a guest instructor.

In 1992, Amras and Joey bought an old farm house in Schnega, a small town located in the middle of triangle area of Berlin, Hamburg and Hannover, and relocated there. They also started a local Shintaido class in conjunction with her cooking class.

The Wendland region has been known for its Anti Nuclear Power Movement since 1976 when the German government started to build an atomic waste deposit near the village of Gorleben. Since then the movement in this region has become a broad movement among all citizens. They succeeded in avoiding high radioactive transport for over 18 years.

In 1995 the German government forced the first CASTOR transport with 30,000 police in the deposit area, against resistance by thousands of activists. The resistance culminated in various sit-ins, blockades and other actions.

The second transport was in the Spring of 1996. The resisters became more organized with a picket line, but the police force guarding the train was expanded as a countermeasure. After all the experiences of police violence, anger, fear and helplessness, Amras, Joey and Helmut asked my advice for how to deal with such a situation because they believe that I am a Master of Japanese martial arts.

The Koan of Non-violence

At first I thought, do I know how to fight back against the police? Are they looking for actual fighting techniques? Secondly, I realized it would take at least a couple of years for them to get trained and become a kind of front line warrior. Thirdly, even if they succeeded in their training, there was no guarantee that they would not hurt themselves. Were they ready to get hurt, or hurt others if necessary? They might succeed in defending themselves temporarily, but sooner or later more police would come back with an even stronger force.

At this point, I realized I was stumped, so I asked them to give me some time to think about the question. Their question became my new *kôan* (a paradoxical question used in Zen Buddhism). I kept thinking about it, but never came up with a proper answer for them. After one year had passed I returned to Germany again. I was nervous and feeling guilty about going back there to meet the three of them.

On June 26, 1997, I took a flight from Paris to Hamburg, and then took a train from Hamburg to Uelsen. When I saw Amras at the Uelsen station, I told her that I had not come up with an answer yet, but was hoping it would come by the end of the workshop. She said, "I am sure you will!"

Harmony of Voices

After giving me a couple of hours to rest at her quiet farm house in the peaceful country side of Northern Germany, she invited me to a practice session of the local choir group. On the way to the local community center, she asked me if it would be possible to lead a half-hour *kenko-taiso* (health exercises) session for the members. Of course my answer was "Yes!"

That evening I lead a 40-minute Shintaido session for the members of the local choir group before they practiced their singing. There were about 50 people in the Hall, including Helmut and a few local Shintaido members. After their practice, many of them told me that they felt more power in their singing than usual. Of course I was happy to hear that because I thought they must have experienced "Ten Ga Ichi Nyo" or "unification of cosmos and self" through the effect of Shintaido. I also assumed that they all belonged to one church.

Later, I found out that the choir group did not have any affiliation with one church, but they were organized as part of their expression of the Anti Nuclear Power Movement. They

actually had formed a picket line at public demonstrations, and often ended up confronting the police force. I was really astonished. As soon as I started listening to the details of their activity at the picket lines, a moment of "Shinkû" or "true emptiness" arrived in my mind and body and I received a great inspiration.

The members of this choir group mainly do two things in the picket line: sing and apply first aid. But, before they go to a demonstration, together with thousands of other people, each of them writes a letter to the Minister of Interior. Each letter declares their wishes to eliminate nuclear power but promises that they will never use their muscle to fight against the police. They sign the letters with their own names and addresses.

The Wendland Anti Nuclear Power Movement includes many

It is not so easy to behave in a peaceful manner, unless you erase all anger in your mind. The point becomes how much peace can you keep in yourself, when you are in an unreasonable and unfair situation.

styles of protest. Some people choose to fight. When they do that, the police have the right to fight back using the same level of violence. For instance, if someone uses a stick, the police are allowed to use their sticks. If people in the picket line throw stones, the police are allowed to shoot tear gas. Once force is used, they do not need to relocate people in the picket line, because the picket line itself will move. Since the police are trained for this kind of action, it takes, in a way, less time and energy for them to clean the field than to relocate people doing passive resistance from one place to the other.

Often in an actual picket line, some individuals may attract or invite the police to respond to them with violence, so it is very important for people who are protesting not to do this. It is not so easy to behave in a peaceful manner, unless you erase all anger in your mind. The point becomes how much peace can you keep in yourself, when you are in an unreasonable and unfair situation.

According to their experience, the more they remained quiet, and sang quiet songs, the more they created a positive effect in the picket line. They calmed people at the demonstration as well as the police. This let the police use more time and energy to remove people from the front line. This is a great example of "Passive Resistance!" When I heard their explanation, something clicked in my mind, and I realized that I had found the answer that I had been looking for the last year. I decided to teach Shintaido to the people who go to the picket lines just like I teach it to health caregivers. Shintaido will not help them fight with the police, but help them prepare their minds to face them.

The End of Martial Arts?

I have practiced Shintaido for the last 33 years after four years of Karate training, which I started at the age of 18. Now I know how to fight, with or without weapons. My way of teaching fighting techniques has become more mature so I can help many students develop their fighting ability much faster. However, I also reached a new level of understanding: The more effort I put into developing martial arts for myself and my students, the more I create a space that invites people to use their martial art knowledge in a broader application.

My love and passion for my research and development of strong fighting arts has reached an end. I recognize that I have

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been practicing martial arts all these years, without peace in my mind. Thirty seven years I spent. What a long way I had to come to understand my original weak point. I wonder, was there any other way for me to find peace in my mind?

Egami-sensei's message came to my mind once again. On the one hand, I was very happy and encouraged by the answer I found for Amras, Joey and Helmut. On the other, I was sad, and discouraged, because I suddenly felt that all of my focus on studying and developing my fighting form throughout my life was now useless.

The weekend workshop which was organized by Amras, Joey and Helmut went well. Thirty people were there. We had two classes on Saturday, and one class on Sunday, and had nice weather, too. The same people who I saw one year ago came back. At the end of the workshop, sharing my answer for the question posed one year ago, I told them that "Shintaido will not help them fight with the police, but help them prepare their minds to face them. The POINT is that it is not your arm and muscle but your mind control that protects you, and ends up saving you and your friends. The goal of our practice should be to find and keep perfect peace in our minds." I explained that the same people who gave me the question also gave me a chance to find an answer.

Peace Activist Discussions

On July 13, at the end of the British Shintaido Summer Seminar and Examinations, I shared my latest thoughts on martial arts. The people who especially appreciated my growth in this sense were Marcus Grant and Vicky Meadows. They said Shintaido and the environmental movement are the foundation of their relationship. They met each other 16 years ago, when Jennifer Peringer was offering Shintaido sessions at London meetings of an anti nuclear power group. All of sudden, I became very close to three of them, and thanked them for running ahead of me.

On August 17, 1997, I had an opportunity to discuss this issue (Shintaido's involve-

ment with the environmental movement in Germany) with two peace activists and one scholar: Kaz Tanahashi, Alan Senauke and Linda Hess in Berkeley, California.

Kaz is an artist, poet, writer, translator and calligrapher. Readers of *Body Dialogue* may remember Shintaido's participation in the "Circle of the World" at the Parliament of the World's Religions in Chicago in 1993, and the "Circle of All Nations" for the 50th Anniversary Celebration of United Nations in San Francisco in 1995. Kaz is the one who developed the original idea and gave us direction at both performances.

Alan is a musician friend of Henry Kaiser, a priest at the Berkeley Zen Center, and director of Buddhist Peace Fellowship which is an ecumenical organization of socially engaged Buddhists, involved in mindful non-violent peace and reconciliation work, social service in the streets, international aid, and conflict resolution. BPF is steadily developing a Buddhist understanding of the social forces that directly shape our societies and lives. Alan often visits the refugee camps near the border of Thailand and Burma, and provides them with medical aid.

Linda Hess is a specialist on Hindi literature and Hinduism. She has taught in universities including Stanford University and U.C. Davis. Her publications include *Bijak of Kabir*.

When I shared my latest thought about the effect of my mar-

tial arts and its new goal, they gave me some feedback.

1) They think that martial arts training still has a lot of value for people who go to the "front line".

As long as you have patience, you can control your anger. Besides anger, the other emotion you must handle in this kind of situation is your fear. It is anger combined with fear that invites violence. The violence which comes from the combination of anger and fear is very scary. It can get out of control.

Here is the analysis: If you are trained in martial arts and know how to defend yourself, you have choices. For instance, you can fight back if you really wish, but you may choose not to on purpose. When you have choices in your mind, you feel free. If you are free in your mind, you end up having confidence. Once you start having confidence in yourself, it appears naturally in your actions.

The difference is that if your mind is between anger and fear, any people who confront you (the police in this case) end up playing on your emotions. But if they find confidence in your posture and actions, they will respond with respect.

Therefore, if practicing the fighting forms of Shintaido can help people control anger and fear and develop confidence, it still provides a positive and useful effect to those who go to public demonstrations. The harder you train in Shintaido technique, the calmer and steadier you will be able to keep yourself in an actual situation.

2) In the activity called Passive Resistance or Non-violent

Resistance, your goal does not have to be to win the battle on the day of the demonstration. In fact, you should not want to kill any of the police who represent the opposing principles. The point is how to win your situation. You must have a long range plan or *kokyū* (literally, "rhythm" or "deep breathing"). It is okay to lose the battle in the picket line.

Plan to lose the battle, but as slowly as possible. Ideally, nobody should get hurt. In a way, it is like pulling out your troops from a battle you may lose, so that you do not lose

too many soldiers. To contribute to this kind of protest movement, Shintaido's way is to use your power of concentration and clear consciousness, which Shintaido students usually develop through their daily practice.

Another day you may get to speak out about the situation. You may have a chance to write an article and put it in the newspaper, or get an interviewed by TV, radio, or magazine media. You can send your letter of appeal to politicians. These kind of activities are also tactics in the quiet battle.

Shintaido can be cool and passive when facing the police, but help you be hot and active when you do other activities. In this way, sooner or later you will meet with "Ten no Toki, Chi no Ri, Hito no Wa" or "heavenly timing, benefit to the earth, harmony of people," and finally you will find new directions for what was once a problem, and the problem itself will have disappeared.

I would like to express my special appreciation to Amras, Joey and Helmut for providing me an opportunity to upgrade the level of my Shintaido wisdom. Also, I thank Kaz, Alan and Linda for their encouragement of my work and their suggestions to the Wendland Anti Nuclear Power Movement. ●●●



Sarah Prince

Solo *continued from p. 1*

MP: Though technically I know that if I were to go work out, I'd actually beat the cold.

JH: Yeah, I've had both happen. Sometimes it gets worse, and it gets down into your lungs. That's kind of ugh. It's hard. I still go out, but I can't do the same kind of practice.

DF: Actually that fits very well with Chinese medicine, that if the cold has invaded up to a certain level that's closer to the surface, it's easy to expel it by just moving the energy and doing exercise, but if it goes into a deeper level, it's much harder to push it out just by doing exercise.

MP: I would also say that with Shintaido in particular it seems that the element of contact with other people is such an integral part of it, that I'm not sure you can actually have a full workout by yourself. Because by the very nature of it

you come to class and you have a question, it'll sink in more, what you practiced.

DF: I find that one of the main things that motivates me to get out there and do it frequently is that if I don't I just feel groggy and fucked up and cranky and after a couple of days of not doing anything, I just don't feel good... I think you get over a certain hump where it's easier actually in some ways to keep doing it than not to do it.

JH: We should talk about how there are endorphins in your body that you actually become addicted to, and you get high, and then when you stop making them, you get withdrawal from endorphins, which makes you grumpy and groggy, and cranky, and then—

DF: Well if I've got to be addicted to something, then Shintaido is as good as anything else.

have to do on a regular basis. I don't have a pattern when I practice by myself. I do the warmups carefully, but then I just do what I feel like I want to do. I used to always take my *boh* (6-foot staff), because I love the boh, but—the first time it happened—this was really strange—I brought out the boh and warmed up with it, but then I just didn't feel like doing something with the boh, and I spent two hours doing Shintaido stuff.

So I thought I loved the boh more than anything, but I discovered it just depends on my mood. Also I discovered that practicing alone is something I can do when I visit my mother, to counteract all the food she feeds me. She has a little park right next to her house and I can go out early in the morning. I bought a boh there, and I keep it under the bed. She kindly offered me her closet pole, but I wanted something a little bit better... For me, practicing by myself was also a way to accelerate the learning process. In class I'd listen to you guys say how to do it, and kind of go on autopilot, but when you do it by yourself, you really have to think about what you're supposed to be doing, and if there's something you don't know, it becomes readily apparent. And that makes you pay more attention the next time you do it in class.

ET: You, Michael, rather than doing what you feel like, you tend to do the same kind of thing each time when you practice by yourself—you come with a plan, such as—

MB: Oh, such as particular karate kicks, or how to receive a certain movement.

ET: Myself, I like to go to the *dojo* (practice space) and do what I feel like doing. It's nice, especially because when I teach, or go to class, I can't do that, I have a plan or somebody has a plan for me, so it's nice when my plan can be just to go, and do whatever I want to do. And sometimes I lie on the floor, and I have spent entire keikos lying on the floor, and that can be good. Sometimes I feel as if having to spend energy on thinking "what am I going to do next" is a little dissipating, and in that way it's useful to have a plan. But then I also have the experience of going without a plan, and beginning, and not being sure what I'm going to do next, and not even sure how long I'm going to stay, and then something kind of takes hold of me, and I go much beyond what I thought I was going to do. So those kinds of experiences are very encouraging.

RG: Another thing you as a teacher have to take into account is the needs of the group—so for example you and Michael might want to do something that other students can't do, because of physical limitations—or the rest of the group might need to do a lot of something that you're already tired of. So when you practice by yourself you can give yourself the room, without having to worry about other people.

ET: Well one thing somebody who's teaching always needs to do is practice, ahead of time, all the things they're going to teach. So that's an important aspect of private practice for



Bill Burtis

you're dealing so much with the exchange of energy.

JB: Yeah, I would agree with that, that goes to the core of why I haven't practiced on my own.

JH: Yes but *hitori-geiko* (solo practice) is part of Shintaido. There is a word and a structure for it and there's this element of you are supposed to go out and practice on your own.

JB: It would be good to hear what the structure is, because that is a problem I've thought of.

JH: Part of it is going out by yourself and reinforcing what you've done in class, and then when you come to class you have actually done it before, and then the stuff in class is almost—it doesn't seem unimportant, but—

MP: It's not isolated to just in-class. It starts to permeate your life. I think that's important.

JH: Yeah, and you also discover things on your own that are hard to discover when you're in class, because the teacher is always babbling at you. Also sometimes it's good to have two people just figure it out, or by yourself, "Hmm, I forget how to do this." And then when

Albuquerque NM Cast of Characters: JT, a Shintaido student who has been practicing about 1 year.

RG, a student who has been practicing about 3 years.

ET and MB, Instructors who've been practicing for years and years.

JT: I practice in my back yard. At first when I started practicing by myself, the main obstacle was the memory thing. Remembering the movements. That's getting better now. I do whatever I feel like doing that day. I like doing warmups, and I really like the breathing meditations.

RG: At first I practiced in my back yard. But that was just too hard, worrying about the dogs, and tripping on stuff—and also, I was self-conscious about the neighbors. Actually, that was the first barrier to practicing by myself... I was so self-conscious about other people seeing me... It was one thing getting comfortable with you guys out there, but then the first time I went to do it by myself, it brought all that self-consciousness back. But that very quickly faded. And now I can practice by myself if, whatever we did in class, I want to do more. Or if we go a week or two without class for whatever reason, I can go out and practice and kind of get it out of my system, because at this point it's something I

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teachers.

JT: Unlike the gym teacher who sits and says, “Run 50 laps. Faster.”

ET: Right. It’s interesting that three of us are saying that we like to go without a plan, because I know other people often say that to get motivated, to get themselves out there, they like to have a program, something like: for the next two months I’m going to work on X, or study a *kata* (form)— this can give a form and a shape to people’s practice.

JT: When I do it by myself, I just feel like it’s a way for me to handle some energy that I’ve got going on, so the only time I do it is if I’ve got energy that needs to be focused or shaped somehow.

RG: It’s interesting you say that, because sometimes I’ll just go

...[O]ften people who have been practicing a long time do keiko that’s mostly solitary... I guess after you’ve done enough partner practice you are able to use your environment like a partner.

with the flow of what I feel, and other times I’ll be more uncertain, and if I spend too long thinking about it, it kind of knocks the wind out of my sails. So it can be good to have a plan—

JT: Or maybe a backup plan. “If nothing strikes me, I’ll do this.”

RG: Right. On the other hand, sometimes you’ll get inspired to do something. Probably the most meaningful practice I ever had by myself, I don’t know what I was doing before but I just felt like doing *aozora taiso* (“blue sky exercise”), with voice, I don’t know how long I spent doing it, I was hoarse afterward. I lost all sense of time. But that wouldn’t have happened if I’d been following a plan.

ET: I like going to the same place each time, and not having to worry about that aspect of it— where’s it going to be, what’s it going to be like. And because I like to establish a relationship with a place...What about you, Michael? What are the obstacles to your private practice?

MB: What are the obstacles? Some of the motivations that get you to practice— like other people expecting you— aren’t there, so if you don’t go, the only person who’s going to care is you...that’s not necessarily a disadvantage, but you have to be motivated on your own.

ET: But what about the days when you don’t really want to go? Because the two of us have a schedule, we go at the same time every week for our own practice, to a gym at UNM.

MB: Well, when it becomes a habit, that almost becomes an external motivator. It’s almost a keiko with its own special time.

RG: Do you guys get that sense of missing it, if you don’t do it for a week or two?

ET: Yes. But one of the things about doing your own practice is that you can also make the decision to miss it— not to go— and it’s kind of nice to have that choice, and sometimes it feels like the right choice too. And other times it feels like it was a cop-out, should have gone anyway even if it just means lying on the floor— but go to the dojo, go to the dojo....

RG: Actually that’s an interesting point, maybe there’s some value to having a program— maybe you decide to go to a class because everybody’s going to be there, and left to your own devices you wouldn’t have gone. So you’re starting your practice at a different place than you ever would really experience by yourself.

MB: But you can have that when you’re practicing by yourself, too, if you can make yourself go, and one way to make yourself go is if you know you don’t have to do very much, or stay very long.

ET: If you only go when you feel like it, you miss the experience of

going when you don’t feel like it, which can be very useful too.

MB: But sometimes it’s also good not to go.

JT: I guess the only time I feel I go is because of mood— that’s when I really feel compelled— because I don’t have any “should I, shouldn’t I.”

RG: For me this raises the question of how important is partner practice in Shintaido. When I practice by myself I enjoy learning in a different way than I learn with a partner, though I get a huge charge out of going to *kangeiko* (midwinter retreat) and working with all different kinds of people. So I’m kind of curious, do you get the same value out of the experience by yourself— even if that’s all you’re doing?

MB: I think the partner practice is essential, but having had the experience, and anticipating having it again, you can call it up when you practice alone

RG: I’m just curious, because partner practice is such an important part of Shintaido, whereas some other arts, like Yoga or Tai Chi, are clearly solo events. They’re very internal, or at least they appear to be. So where is Shintaido in this? Can you make it an internally focused practice, or is there some essential part of it that involves practice with another person?

ET: I think you need partner practice at certain points, but I’m not sure if everybody needs it all the time. I think that people move through different stages in their practice, and often people who have been practicing a long time do keiko that’s mostly solitary— partly this is because they may get spread out geographically, but also because— I guess after you’ve done enough partner practice you are able to use your environment like a partner.

MB: At a certain point I think it’s good to have a partner to make everything more real, to make sure you aren’t imagining things that aren’t really happening. But after a while you can begin to imagine that experience more accurately...

RG: So kind of imagining a partner?

MB: More— interacting with the environment.

ET: So practicing by yourself doesn’t necessarily mean focusing only on yourself. If you already have an awareness in your body and spirit from the practice, you don’t need other people around, you can go out alone and bring that experience to your practice.

RG: That ties back to what you were saying, about a relationship with the space. When I’m practicing with you guys, I’m not as aware of the space. But when I’m practicing by myself, I’m much more conscious of the space, and I like that space in the park, and I’ve gone there enough that it’s like a friend to me. And you know, that space where we practice now near that screen of trees, that’s our dojo space but it’s not my space. I go further in, to a little clump of trees, and that’s my space, and it’s very different from the space I have with you guys.

JT: I actually built a space in my back yard. Surrounded it with rocks. I don’t only do Shintaido there. Sometimes I sit there, or read the paper.

RG: I wanted to say one more thing about practicing alone. One of the biggest motivations to start practicing by myself, was after Shintaido had begun to become really important to me, I started thinking what would happen if you guys left. And I realized that until I could practice on my own, wanted to practice on my own, I would never know that I had Shintaido for myself. It would always come from you. And in a way that’s kind of selfish. I didn’t really know quite how to think about it— but I wanted to own that part of my life. And that is now true. I know now that I could practice by myself, and go once a year to Kangeiko and have all my bad habits smacked out of me. But I would keep going.

ET: That’s great. ●●●

Cultural Translation

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The ability to stand means waiting in tension with at least one force always testing one. The force (gravity in this case) is usually attractive. Ebullience, instead of standing over against the attractive testing force, generally heads directly for anything it finds attractive.

The senpai-kohai relation privileges standing rather than ebullience; as such it falls outside the conceptual framework of Americans. The standing is the standing-under necessary in understanding, a standing in terms of the unique attributes of a particular discipline. For Japanese, each discipline has unique attributes and therefore a unique hierarchy. The disciplines range from being a sushi chef to playing Shogi (Japanese chess) to painting dragons for sale at temples to flower arrangement to swordsmanship. My wife Lee and I talked once with a man who sold paintings of dragons at a temple. The discipline took five years under a master dragon painter: four years learning to paint the heads, the last year learning to paint everything else.

Standing, in the unique attributes implied by hierarchy, involves a complementary relationship of two factors we Americans usually think of as antagonistic: power and humility. One can stand in a hierarchy only when one combines both power and humility.

Consider the Roman centurion who comes to Jesus that he might cure the centurion's dying child. (A centurion commands a hundred soldiers [century= one hundred]; there are about ten of them in a legion of soldiers; there are only one or two layers of officers between a centurion and the emperor). When Jesus responds to the request by saying that he'll go to cure the child, the centurion responds that he is not worthy to have Jesus enter his house. Now this could be actual humility or else the centurion's understanding that not only does he represent the hated conqueror but also that Jewish law forbids this itinerant miracle-worker from entering the house of a gentile. In either case, the centurion says "Just say the word and he will be cured. For I am a man of authority and under authority. If I tell someone to 'come', they come and if I tell someone 'go', they go."

Thus power and humility combine in hierarchy: I am a man of authority and under authority. Jesus adds the kicker by tracing out the third element mixed in with power and humility. He says, "Nowhere in Israel have I found such faith."

The centurion, an alien, displays faith, authority, and humility and thus avails himself of the power present. Americans, with their highly engaged sense of irony, don't do faith and humility well, neither do we function well with this sense of authority—of having it because we are under it—because we are so concerned with level playing fields.

What's in it for the Senpai?

A few years ago a number of books and business magazine articles appeared on the value of mentoring. They all talked about how a business would prosper if only the older (and presumably wiser) executives in a company would mentor the younger. Much of this excitement has disappeared since they found almost none of the older and wiser businessmen were acting as mentors because there was no reward for doing so.

The one place that mentoring has proven successful as a concept has been the women's movement, particularly in academia. The mentor is rewarded by the (slowly) changing ratio of female to male professors, so that a woman no longer finds herself the only female on a faculty or in a professional meeting. Books such as *A Hand Up* make the rewarding side of mentoring quite evident.

Where reward for mentoring is not clear, mentoring tends to be pushed to a low priority. The U.S. Shintaido movement is already troubled by a surplus of instructors who have no desire to instruct. The Presbyterian church has a rule that a pastor is ordained to function. If a pastor stops acting as a pastor for three years, he or she loses the ordination and must

reapply if and when he or she wants to start pastoring again. The same idea might, with profit, be applied in Shintaido of America.

But if we have so many instructors who don't want to instruct, the motivation of a senpai mentoring as a way to practice teaching must surely be absent in many cases. Why, then, would a senpai mentor? What would keep mentoring a high priority?

In Japan, the senpai-kohai relationship is partly practical, partly cultural. It's not cultural in this country, although certain institutions, the Navy and other branches of military for example, build it into their officer training. With any practical aspect also missing, mentoring often gets pushed to a much lower priority than doing one's own practice. In the past, we have seen this particularly around exams.

We cannot, by fiat, establish any meaningful senpai-kohai relationship. Without some reward to and/or recognition of the value of each senpai, the relationship will not develop on its own. Aoki-sensei used to say, "It's O.K. if you get ahead of me. Then I have to run to catch up with you and I'll be going faster than you and pass you. Then you'll have to run and catch up and pass me." We do *Tenshingoso Kumite* (a basic cooperative partner exercise) to change our partner so that they will change us and we reach a world neither of us could by ourselves. If we treat the senpai-kohai relationship as if we were doing *Tenshingoso kumite*, then it will benefit the senpai. And then it will have priority.

What are we as Senpai to pass on to Kohai?

Finally, you may have noticed I've made no mention of one of the important premises of the Senpai-Kohai model: corporate culture. That's because after 22 years of involvement in Shintaido, I still can't figure out whether we have a corporate culture or not. Not that evidence is lacking. We have plenty of evidence to support both possibilities. But the evidence lacks any coherence. As far as I can tell, we do a drunkard's walk around the issue of corporate culture.

In part, this originated with Aoki-sensei's use of modern artists as models, most of whom were anti-structure and anti-corporate culture. They were all lone wolves. On the other hand, *kumite* (partner practice), which is anti-lone-wolf, is a vital part of what we do.

What, exactly, do we intend for the senpai to pass on to the kohai? In Japanese Shintaido, a large part of what the senpai passes on is models of how to escape the repression inherent in Japanese culture. Given the radical individualism of American culture and the American habit of following the latest fad of salvation for a month or two before starting yet another new diet or life style, cultural repression is not a major issue although continuity might be.

The conflict of fantasies between lone-wolf modern artist models and anti-lone-wolf *kumite* models has provided a powerful—although not always useful—dynamic in Japanese Shintaido. However, it is worth noting that getting a historical account of Japanese Shintaido proves exceedingly difficult. The conflict of fantasies biases Japanese Shintaido against historically accurate records. I thus found Michael Thompson's book (*Untying Knots, A Shintaido Chronicle—Shameless Plug*; see page 11 for ordering information) a healthy sign for SoA (Shintaido of America).

The conflict of fantasies between lone-wolf and anti-lone-wolf must necessarily translate differently into a culture where two presidents as distinct as Ronald Reagan and Bill Clinton can win their first term running as outsiders and their second term running as insiders. I can't point to a single example of anyone in SoA, myself and Lee included, who have done an adequate translation on this point.

If Americans had as much love for the word "dialectic" as we do for "dialogue", the task would be easier. As it is, we too often do hard flip-flops between lone-wolf and anti-lone-wolf without evolving a useful dynamic. ●●●

PRACTITIONER'S CORNER

To Follow

fol·low (fŏl'ō) *v.* **-lowed, -lowing, -lows.** —*lr.*

1. To come or go after. **2.a.** To pursue. **b.** To keep under surveillance. **3.** To accompany; attend. **4.** To move along the course of. **5.** To obey; comply with. **6.** To accept the guidance, command, or leadership of. **7.** To adhere to; practice. **8.** To result; ensue. **9.** To be attentive to. **10.** To grasp the meaning or logic of; understand.

FOLLOWING was the theme of Pacific Shintaido's Kangeiko, or cold weather practice, in 1998. The Kangeiko was held on a January weekend, at a retreat center (and functioning ashram) on top of a misty, rainy mountain in California. The theme of following seemed to follow us into the new year, and here are reflections by four people who attended this weekend. Stephen Billias is a Shintaido Graduate from California, and was also manager of the Kangeiko. Nancy Billias, his sister, is relatively new to Shintaido and practices in Massachusetts. Roby Newman is a Graduate who lives in California. Eva Thaddeus is a Shintaido Instructor in New Mexico.

Stephen Billias

When samurai bowed to their *daimyo* (feudal lord) in ancient Japan, it was to expose their necks to his naked blade, to show that they were unarmed, that they entrusted their lives to him, that they served him completely.

This was my first idea about following. As *gasshuku* (retreat) manager, I had the privilege of choosing the theme for the event, and this idea led me to choose following as the theme of Kangeiko 1998.

After that, elements of the event came to me serendipitously. Part of my job was to prepare a brochure for the event. First I found the photo for the cover, then later some quotes about the attributes of geese as they follow one another in migration, and finally I discovered the *I Ching* hexagram of following, with its pointed and meaningful passage: "Movement and Joyousness. No blame." But it wasn't until a few weeks before the event that Mr. Ito explained to me that the *kanji* (Japanese characters) for *keiko* (practice) had their roots in the word for following, and that *keiko* was translated as "following the old ways." This made it seem like I had picked an easy theme, rather than a difficult one.

Still, following can be hard. My idea was to explore what we can learn by allowing ourselves to be led. Like many people who come to Shintaido, I have a fairly sizable ego. I'm a published author, I hold a business job, I'm a person of substance. Yet I've felt about myself that I don't have a problem checking my ego at the door and being attentive and respectful to my teachers. I've done a lot of *sensei* care, and I've tried to learn how to be invisible, not to draw attention to myself, to serve the *sensei* so that the *sensei* can give the best teaching possible. What could I learn about following?

My lessons were to come from being the organizer. In the business world, I deal with people who, like me, are paid to

perform complex tasks quickly and efficiently. The whole American capitalist system is built on the concept that time is money. But many people in Shintaido don't work in the business world. They are teachers, hospice caregivers, massage therapists, body workers, psychic channelers! The timing of these people is vastly different from that of business people, and their ways of getting things done are also different. If I tried to

That's why Shintaido is so good for me. Never mind beginner's mind: I have a beginner's body (and didn't know it after the January weekend!). At every *keiko* I ask my chunky 40-year-old body to do all kinds of things it has never dreamed of. And I am terrible at it, and this time there is no fooling my body, my partner, or my *sensei* [teacher] about my practice. The wonderful thing about



Jennifer Hicks

enforce the "Do it Now!" ethos of the investment brokerage where I am now contracting, I encountered resistance and hostility. I had to learn to follow the timing of others, to practice patience and empathy.

When I arrived at Kangeiko, I found that everyone had done everything asked of them. Everyone was willing to pitch in and help at the event, and all went well. Even in the midst of a rainstorm of Biblical proportions, everyone kept up good spirits and stayed focused. I think it's a credit to all of us, and to our devotion to Shintaido practice, that we were able to have a successful and even joyous event under such dreary weather conditions.

My thanks again to everyone who participated in Kangeiko 1998. I learned much about myself, and about following, this year.

Nancy Billias

Perhaps because of the recent Olympics, I've been thinking a lot about going for gold. I am extremely competitive. I always have to be there with the right answer or quick comeback— have to get it right the first time, and excel at it. Fortunately for my sanity, I am pretty talented at a lot of things (except maybe humility...). All my life I have ended up in positions of leadership, more often than not winging it, making it up as I went along, but fooling most of the people, most of the time.

Shintaido is...it is perfectly all right for me to be a beginner, to follow, and I should try to stay in last place as long as I can, to retain— and even go deeper into— the beginner's mind.

Now this dynamic has its ups and downs. There is the frustration of not being able to grasp a concept in my body— and if I stop to think about it, I'll never get it. Tony Hammick, our wonderful teacher from England, drove me crazy one night while for at least 20 minutes I struggled with a certain step. He looked utterly bemused, and kept saying in a puzzled way, It's a quite simple movement, really... He must have said that 25 times. I never did get it, that night, but when I got home, my *sensei* explained it to me again, and I got it within a few seconds. In that instance, I had to follow myself, to wait patiently for the movement to enter my body.

There is also, for me, a great joy in following. One of the best moments for me occurred on the first afternoon. We were doing a movement (*sumo*), where partners lock hands on hips and one tries to walk forward while the other tries to prevent them from moving. After a few

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rounds with different partners, Jim [Sterling] asked if anyone was still not tired. Of course I raised my competitive little hand and said, Me, and I'd like to do sumo with my brother Stephen! Everyone cheered, and Stephen proceeded to lift me across the floor like a feather duster. Jim decided to help out, and got behind me to redress the balance. Now I know what the cheese in a sandwich feels like. But also, I know a little more about following, because between these two practitioners my body was just so much energy to be moved through. For me that was a tremendously freeing moment, one that only came about through following. Wow. I hope there is lots more where that came from!

There is the frustration of not being able to grasp a concept in my body—and if I stop to think about it, I'll never get it... In that instance, I had to follow myself, to wait patiently for the movement to enter my body.

Roby Newman

Following is about letting go. It demands trust in the other, whether it be sensei, life partner, or business associate. Shintaido is a wonderful laboratory for working with all the ego traps of I me mine that occur in our Western, access-your-modem-at-Internet-speed world (perhaps the same would be true if I were living in Lhasa, Tibet, but this is the only culture I know).

My particular brand of negative consciousness, which so often gets in the way of true following, is the anxiety that comes around exams. It's a kind of tunnel vision where there often seems no light at the end, i.e., I will fail, look bad, disappoint my teachers, myself, God and the universe. I suffered through such a spell at the recent Kangeiko at Mount Madonna in early January. I was going to take my graduate exam for a second time, and felt reasonably prepared for the movements I knew I would be tested on.

However, by Sunday morning, I had passed through a sleepless Long Night's Journey Into Day, worrying about my impending doom silently, and aloud with a peer and instructor. As a result of this growing angst, I wasn't able to fully give of myself in keiko, and consequently could not appreciate the nuance of following, nor its joy. I was too much in my mental inquisition, and not enough in my body.

Yet, when I stood on the gymnasium floor with Stephen Billias, co-examinee, the panic and despair that had been building seemed to miraculously melt away. I remember doing the exam, but not thinking the exam. I was present with my kumite partners, in the moment which is one of the keys to understanding, and practicing, Shintaido. I had no sense of time in the exam, nor goal. I was in it and of it, just as geese in formation are the flock. It was a lesson in humility, for the work to be done in and out of keiko to drop the ego's ball and chain, and in appreciation of the practice. For after seven years, was a blessing to know, again, that it really does work.

Eva Thaddeus

For this reflection on following, I want to write about two times when I didn't follow. The first took place a couple of years ago, in an Aikido dojo. The second was last month, at Pacific Shintaido's Kangeiko.

I am a Shintaido Instructor who studied Shintaido for almost ten years in Cambridge, Massachusetts before moving to New Mexico. About a year after I moved to Albuquerque, I joined an Aikido dojo. It had gotten lonely practicing and teaching Shintaido without the support of a group. I longed to be a student, and have someone else to tell me what to do. My goals were to become part of a community of martial art practition-

ers, and to learn more about the connection between Shintaido and Aikido. I had no intention of letting Aikido supplant my Shintaido practice, and I was very clear with myself about that.

Shintaido and Aikido have a lot in common philosophically, especially where following is concerned. Both teach the importance, in partner practice, of the "receiver's" ability to respond to the "leader's" or "attacker's" movement softly and immediately. However, the actual techniques of the two art forms are very different. Aikido is based in circular, centripetal movement; most techniques spiral inward and downward, and power comes from twisting the hips. Shintaido, with its karate connection, uses more straight, direct lines and outward expression of energy. We are used to stepping, pushing forward with our hips rather than twisting them. As a result, I found that my Shintaido experience confused me when I tried to learn Aikido, and I hoped to put it aside and cultivate a beginner's mind.

The Aikido dojo was an impressive place. The head instructor had great experience, and high ranking in the art. He fostered a serious and dedicated atmosphere among the members of the dojo. There were probably fifteen or twenty people who practiced almost daily. The success of the organization also impressed me very much—it had over fifty members and owned its own building. In spite of all this, I deeply missed elements of Shintaido practice that I did not find in Aikido, such as the bright, glorious feeling of expansive movement and vocalization. I resisted being won over by Aikido's sheer impressiveness; I felt Shintaido was something precious that I had the responsibility to protect. As somebody practicing with the explicit goal of not making Aikido a priority, I began to feel I was in a false position as an Aikido dojo member.

One day I was at an Aikido class practicing a technique in which the attacker grabs her partner's wrist, and then becomes the follower as her partner takes control of her body, whirls her around and brings her face-down onto the mat. I was aware of a reluctance as I practiced this exercise, and I landed on the mat pretty hard, face first. I wasn't hurt, but the sensei came up and yelled at me. "What did you learn from that?" (Aikido senseis seem to like to yell. Maybe it's a Zen thing.)

I didn't answer her at the time, but I knew what I had learned. I had learned that I didn't want to be studying Aikido. I had learned that I was a reluctant follower, and that if I didn't either practice wholeheartedly, or quit, I was going to get injured. Aikido is more stringent this way than Shintaido: if you don't follow quickly and accurately, you are very likely to get whipped around and hurt. I went home and wrote a letter of resignation to the dojo. I explained to that I had another practice more important to me, and couldn't follow theirs at the same time.

In my experience as a follower at Shintaido's Kangeiko, I was in emotional rather than physical danger. It was a hardtime for me because my baby had died two months before. Nonetheless I was loving the experience of moving my body in such difficult and familiar ways. In general, I felt pretty good. But one exercise was upsetting for me. In the partner exercise *hikari*, or "playing with light," one person holds the other's wrists and, with closed eyes, follows where he leads. The person leading endeavors to draw his partner out of herself, with gentle or sudden movements. Following in *hikari* has always been frightening for me, with its sense of being launched into the unknown. If I follow with less than full willingness, I usually realize I am being cowardly or lazy.

Early in the weekend I practiced *hikari* with Friedemann Schulz. When it was my turn to be the follower, I felt a strong invitation to come out of myself, to let my feelings escape. I had a lot of feelings, of course, and it was a sharply painful experience, but I felt better afterwards, released.

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Then, in the last class, I did hikari once more. This time my partner was Jim Sterling. His leading was even more intense than Friedemann's. The wrists I held jerked me forward. I felt I was being asked to go to pieces. And I decided not to.

I realized I had a choice. I wasn't being forced to follow. I wouldn't get injured if I didn't, because I was grabbing Jim's wrists and could let go if I wanted to. This is characteristic of Shintaido: that



Jennifer Hicks

the person following, not the person leading, is the one holding on. (I remember my sensei Michael Thompson quipping many years ago, "That's the difference between a movement and a cult.") I decided to refuse the invitation to go to pieces, because it didn't seem like what I needed. Jim sensed my resistance, and we moved on to something different.

My point is this: we don't always have to follow. It is something we should do willingly. Not because we are forced to, or even because we are asked to. We should follow because we want to, because we choose to, because we have a reason to do so. Sometimes, choosing not to follow is cowardly. Sometimes, it is wise. ●●●

VIDEOS

NEW Taimyo Kata and Tenshingoso (\$20)
Detailed instruction in Taimyo Kata, concentrating on breathing and energy cultivation techniques. Also includes instruction in the Tenshingoso reverse-breathing technique, basic Tenshingoso, and seated versions of both kata.

Kenko Taiso Instruction Video I (\$20)
Produced by On-Site Enterprises, this 50-minute video presents the classic Shintaido *kenko-taiso* warm-up sequence with detailed explanation. The 15-minute warm-up sequence, done in a standing position, is an easy-to-follow stretching and strengthening routine that is excellent for those who are relatively new to body movement.

Kenko Taiso II & III: (\$20)
Demonstrates a series of more advanced health exercises and stretches that two people can do together, and an introduction to group warm-up movements. Also includes sections on self-massage and *seiza* meditation with the diamond mudra. Excellent for instructors or group leaders who want to broaden their techniques for leading group warm-up exercises.

Golf-Do (\$20)
Master Shintaido Instructor H.F. Ito teaches the Way of Golf, a series of exercises designed to help golfers: (1) stretch and limber up; (2) relax; (3) focus and concentrate; and (4) enjoy. Using a golf club instead of the traditional six-foot oak staff, Ito demonstrates the proper way to stretch, relax the body, and prepare the mind for a pleasurable round of golf. Mr. Ito also provides focusing exercises for the eyes and mind. Golf-Do provides insights into the unification of mind and body that produces the best of golf.

Life Burn (\$20)
Document of the live painting / shintaido / music performance collaborations at the Theater Yugen in San Francisco in August 1992. Featuring painting by Kazu Yanagi; music by Henry Kaiser and others; and Shintaido movement led by H.F. Ito.

Kata and Kumite (\$20)
H.F. Ito gives instruction for *kaiho-kei* (opening and challenging) exercises with Michael Thompson and Robert Bréant. Includes: *kaiho-kei* group practice, *bojutsu kata* (hi no kata, kaze no kata, sho-dan, nidan), *jojutsu kata* (taishi, hojo), *karate kata* (sanchin, tensho), *kumibo* (bo vs. bo) arrangements, *kumitachi* (sword vs. sword) nos. 1 - 9. 120 minutes.

Set of 6 videos above: \$100

PUBLICATIONS

NEW Untying Knots: a Shintaido Chronicle
by Michael Thompson (\$20 / \$15*)
More than the story of the early days of Shintaido in the U.S., this autobiography of revelation chronicles one Westerner's efforts to embody the wisdom of the East.

Shintaido: the Body is a Message of the Universe by Hiroyuki Aoki (\$20 / \$15*)
For over ten years this textbook has served as a gateway and guidebook to the practice of Shintaido. Includes sections on the history and philosophy as well as detailed explanations of technique. 120 pages, illustrated with photos. This second printing features more information about the ten Shintaido meditation positions.

The following five booklets are available individually or as a set for \$25 (postpaid):

Tenshingoso and Eiko
by Hiroyuki Aoki (\$10)
This booklet is for Shintaido practitioners what the Diamond Sutra is for Buddhists: a concise yet thorough description of the basis of practice. Tenshingoso and Eiko are two of the fundamental movements of Shintaido, which embody philosophies and prescriptions for human growth. Contains practical advice for all levels.

The Zero Point of Consciousness and the World of Ki (\$5)
In this interview Mr. Aoki describes his experience of reaching the "space of *mu*" (nothingness). He also discusses his unique understanding of *ki* energy (life force).

Origins, a History of Shintaido
by Shiko Hokari (\$7)
One of the founding members of Shintaido relates the stories of Rakutenkai (the group that developed Shintaido), and the conditions of society and consciousness in the late 1960s in Japan.

Improvisation and the Body (\$3.50)
Japanese jazz musician Toshinori Kondo discusses Shintaido, performance, and music. Illustrates how one artist benefitted from Shintaido by going beyond his limits.

Student Handbook
by Faith Ingulsrud (\$3)
Written by an American Shintaidoist who grew up in Japan, this handbook helps ease the culture shock sometimes experienced by Americans encountering Japanese customs and terminology in Shintaido. Includes a glossary and description of the basic structure of a Shintaido practice.



The Shintaido Textbook is a must-have for all serious Shintaido practitioners.

PUBLICATIONS & VIDEO ORDER FORM (Prices include postage and sales tax)

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