



BODY Dialogue

ANNOUNCEMENT FROM ISC BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

Scholarship for ISC Graduates and Instructors to ISC Quadrennial Gasshuku 2012

There are 8 ISC Scholarships for Graduates or Instructors to provide some financial assistance for 2012.

Please submit your application by email to ISC Board Chair Connie Borden-Sheets at bordensheets@aol.com.

Six scholarships of \$200 USD and two scholarships of \$400 USD are offered.

The \$400 USD scholarships are for individuals teaching Shintaido in newly developing areas.

The \$200 USD scholarships are divided: two for Europe, two for the America's and Australia; two for Japan/Asia.

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I N S I D E

Reflections on Shintaido/Taimyo/Life Exercise

by various Shintaido Practitioners

The following are short essays submitted to Master Instructor H.F Ito by people who have participated in his Taimyo network classes. [Ed.]

Masato Kawahatsu

I was surprised at the similarities between my teaching and ideas, and Shintaido. I have been teaching Japanese calligraphy, mixed martial arts and spiritual counseling with this focus – How can we be one with the Great Universe and gain total peace of mind now and for eternity?

As I was doing “Hoten Kokyu-ho” (Hugging Heaven – Breathing Exercise), I remembered my own experience when I was 20 years old. One night, as I looked up at the dark sky, I had an out of body experience. I was able to see or feel the last day of my physical life. It was an empty feeling in my heart and it had no spiritual value at all. At the same time, I had a view of the future of humankind. It was an enormous disaster which was larger than 9/11 or the 2011 Tsunami in Japan. I was greatly shocked and spiritually awakened. This experience changed my life direction 180 degrees. I realized that spiritual happiness and richness is our true purpose in life. After that experience I enrolled in the Konko Seminary. While I was in seminary, I had an experience of becoming one with the Great Universe and found total peace in my life and beyond. It’s like a single drop of rain which drops into the great ocean and becomes One. However, it has been very difficult to share this understanding with people who live in this country. My group calls itself, Shin Shin Gakudo (The Way of Mind, Body and Spirit). Through training in Japanese calligraphy, martial arts and spiritual counseling, I try to help people maintain balance between mind, body and spirit.

One important martial arts technique is Sukashi (Letting go) which is the same as Wakame movement in Shintaido. I think that Shintaido can help people maintain their peace of mind. My hope is that Shin Shin Gakudo also can help people who will be able to gain peace of mind through training.

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2012 International Shintaido Gasshuku Update

Early Registration has been extended to February 29th to make the event as affordable as possible to all who wish to attend. As of December 31st, 2011, 68 people have registered traveling from Australia, Canada, England, France, Germany, Japan, and the United States.

This a very special opportunity to study with the Founder of Shintaido, Hiroyuki Aoki and the four Master Instructors – Haruyoshi Ito, Mitsuru Okada, Masashi Minagawa, and Michael Thompson is not to be missed! We come together only once every four years to live in community and experience keiko with students and teachers from around the world.

The Gasshuku Team has been working hard to bring the event together – thanks to Assistant Manager Sandra Bengtsson and Rob Kedoin, Webmaster, for their many contributions. We've added to the team, Stephen Billias, Housing & Transportation Coordinator, Shin Aoki, Exam Coordinator, and Robert Gaston, Hakama Care Team Leader. Byron Russell has been busy working on designing and producing marketing materials for the gasshuku.

Check the website for new or updated pages in the upcoming months – Transportation, Instructors, Exams, and Participants.

Hope to see you in July!

Cheryl Williams, Gasshuku Manager

cwilliams1218@aol.com 415-298-1780

Visit our website: <http://2012.shintaido.org/>

DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSIONS

The next issue of *Body Dialogue* will be in July, 2012.

Please submit articles, poems, pictures to the editor at:
newsletter@Shintaido.org. Deadline for submissions is May 15, 2012.

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An Inspiration from Carole Brouillette

Last weekend I had an inspiration that I wish to share with you.

I was transporting old wood from the Dojo to the garage wood stove and had to climb a very little hill, but I was tired. I realized that I was walking using only my legs. I switched to koshi movement, and naturally my walk was much easier, as I'm sure you would have guessed!

And not only my walk was easier, but also instead of using only my lower mind, when I switched to koshi movement my mind was enlightened and allowed me to receive this inspiration.



Here is the inspiration that came to me:

"All you realize in Presence (body-mind-spirit-aligned with Earth and Big Sky) is easy or easier, clear, softly beautiful, efficient. This is LOVE in action. Otherwise all you realize leads at best to a loss of energy, or at worst, to war..."

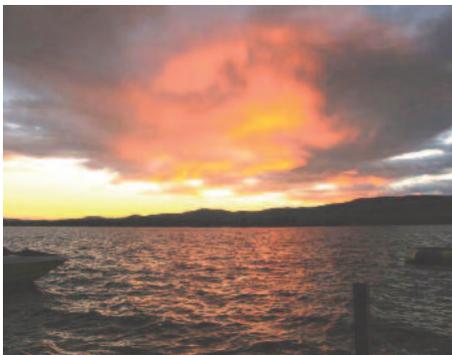


photo by Jim Sterling

The Seven Teachings of Water

by
Kanbei Kuroda

It is water that moves others by moving itself ...
 It is water that constantly moves, seeking a path ...
 It is water that, when blocked, finally breaks through with 100 times the force
 It is water that cleans itself, washes away the dirt from others, and can encompass both clean and dirty
 It is water that runs down to the sea, turns to steam, turns to cloud, turns to rain, turns to snow, turns to fog, freezes into a mirror of ice crystals, and never loses its own character ...
 It is water that cools the summer heat, refreshes thirst, heals dryness, and sustains all living things ...
 It is water that always tries to go lower, shapes itself to any container, creates terrible chaos when it is angry, and permits nothing

Offered by Ito Sensei as a commentary on the theme for the Shintaido 10th International Gasshuku in 2012.

Special appreciation to Lee Seaman & Tomi Nagai-Rothe who helped with this translation!

This is the teaching of the Japanese Samurai Kanbei Kuroda who was the military advisor of Toyotomi Hideyoshi.

Read about Kuroda:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kuroda_Yoshitaka

Read about Hideyoshi:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Toyotomi_Hideyoshi



Inaba Mountain Moon - The young Toyotomi Hideyoshi leads a small group assaulting the castle on Inaba Mountain

ISC Scholarship

Continued from p.1

SCHOLARSHIP DESCRIPTION:

The ISC Board of Directors has budgeted \$2000 USD for the purpose of providing scholarships for use at ISC quadrennial international events to ISC members who hold a rank of Graduate or Instructor, or the equivalent. Distribution of scholarship monies shall be adjudicated and administrated by the ISC Board Scholarship Committee, established by the ISC Board of Directors.

PURPOSE:

The purpose of these scholarships is to encourage upcoming instructors by making their attendance at the "International" more affordable.

ELIGIBILITY:

Eligibility for the scholarships is limited to Graduates and Instructors, or the equivalent (sho-dan or ni-dan in karate or bojutsu), who are paid ISC members. Those who hold any rank of Senior Instructor/San-dan and above are not eligible. In addition, those wishing to receive scholarships must demonstrate an active role in the instruction and promotion of Shintaido. Applicants must be members in good standing of the ISC, with all monetary dues paid as required for International gasshuku attendance. While scholarships are offered, there disbursement is not guaranteed. The Committee may opt not to distribute funds when it judges that applications lack sufficient merit.

DISTRIBUTION:

Two scholarships may be distributed to each of the three ISC-recognized regions: North America/Australia, Europe, and Japan in the amount of \$200 USD. In addition, two scholarships of \$400 USD are reserved for individuals living in areas outside of the current ISC regions or in areas of the world underserved by the ISC. If for any reason fewer scholarships are distributed, the funds will revert to the ISC for general use.

APPLICATION PROCESS:

Applicants must nominate themselves.

Deadline:

February 1, 2012 (six months in advance of the International)

Submission: e-mail is preferred by the committee:

To: Connie Borden, ISC Board chair at bordensheets@aol.com.

Cc: Applicant's immediate instructor who is endorsing the application (see below)

Contents of Application:

Applications must include the following three items as separate attachments to the same e-mail:

1. A description of the applicant's current Shintaido-related activities.

2. A description of foreseen benefits expected in attending the event. (Both descriptions, combined, should not exceed 400 words.)

3. A primary endorsement: This is a statement of endorsement by the applicant's immediate instructor who holds the rank of Senior Instructor or above or the equivalent (San-dan).

Primary Endorsing Instructors:

The primary endorsing instructor, when possible, should be a person who directly oversees the applicant's activities in the region where the applicant lives.

The statement of endorsement should describe the applicant's relationship with the endorsing instructor and address the appropriateness of the award, according to the above sections on "Purpose" and "Eligibility".

Announcement and Disbursement of Awards:

Once the application has been submitted, the ISC Board Scholarship Committee will inform all applicants of decisions no less than four months before the start date of the intended event. Scholarship monies will be sent directly to the event's organizing team to be held until the applicant registers in person at the event. Scholarship money may not be used as a deposit to secure one's place at the event. If a recipient fails to attend the event, the money will be forfeited and returned by the gasshuku organizers to the ISC. Any scholarship recipient who becomes unable to attend the event should inform the ISC Board Scholarship Committee and the 2012 Gasshuku Manager as soon as possible.

POST-EVENT WRITTEN APPRAISAL:

Scholarship recipient will write a brief appraisal of the influence of the experience on their instructional activities for a period 6-8 months after the attended event. This appraisal should be submitted to the primary endorsing instructor as an attachment to an e-mail. The instructor is asked to then forward the document via e-mail to the ISC Board's Scholarship Committee, attn. ISC Board Chair Connie Borden-Sheets at bordensheets@aol.com and to the region's technical committee chair. Scholarship recipients who live outside current ISC regions may similarly submit these materials to their endorsing instructor, who will forward the statement to his/her TC chair and Connie Borden-Sheets.

QUESTIONS:

Communications, particularly questions, regarding the scholarship application and award process and the follow-up process should be sent by e-mail to ISC Board Chair Connie Borden-Sheets at bordensheets@aol.com.

Reflections on Taimyo *Continued from p.1*

David Palmer

For me, having a regular time to move into a state of consciousness from which I can view myself and the world from a higher "altitude" is critical. The world is becoming more complex by the day and that level of complexity requires a new level of consciousness. This becomes all too clear when tragedy strikes. I know you have been deeply affected by the Fukushima disaster. While the human and economic toll the tsunami took was terrible, as you pointed out, the effects of the nuclear disaster may well be far more longlasting not only on the health of individuals, but on the health of the culture as a whole.

I was moved by the July slaughter (77 killed, 96 injured) of the Norwegians, many of them children. Norway is one of the most stable, peaceful and progressive societies in the world. Has the world gone mad? Is the problem a lack of education, a declining sense of personal responsibility, poor planning, an inadequate infrastructure, bad immigration policies, insular societies, or disconnection to our environment? Actually, of course, the answer is all of these and more.

How do we avoid getting overwhelmed and respond appropriately to the trauma that surrounds us? This is why I come to Monday night Taimyo practice. I am looking for that big space inside me that allows me to experience all that is happening in this moment in my inner reality without getting hijacked by any one emotion or reaction I may have. I believe that we have to embody peace if we want to deal with the complexities, resolve conflicts and create solutions.

Ito's class is a study group where we get to safely explore what relationships feel like: the relationship we have with all of the neurotic, unbalanced, immature parts of our selves, the relationship we have with each other, the relationship we have with our environment and the relationship we have with the Kosmos.

Just the fact that we are willing to pay attention changes us. The fact that we do it in a group magnifies the benefits. The process of exploring those questions through our body grounds whatever answers arise in the material world. This is no intellectual exercise. This is personal and global problem solving that comes from the deepest parts of our consciousness. This is Taimyo.

Jane Yung

Part I

I have also followed the response/reaction of the Norwegians to their recent terrorist tragedy – in contrast to the U.S. response to 9/11. Norway responded with an open heart and mind – wanting to understand what would compel someone or groups to kill others, and to understand the seeds of hatred that explode and destroy. Norway called for understanding -- not fear, hatred and retaliation, as the Bush

Administration did in its response to 9/11. Knowing that a country can respond in such a positive way is an inspiration to keep my heart and mind open and understanding.

Coming back to Shintaido these past few weeks has been a homecoming. It's similar to finding an old, trusted friend again. Beyond my gratefulness to share the same space with you and marvel at your development, focus, growth and sincerity, I have not forgotten what brought me to Shintaido over 30 years ago: the realization that body movement can open one's heart and mind to find trust in oneself, in others and ultimately the universe. I love the simplicity and flow of the Taimyo Meditation exercise. I thank Connie for providing the most perfect inside and outside place to practice. When the last practice is over next Monday, my carload of newest Shintaido practitioners (Kawahatsu Sensei, Ikuko and Cesar) just might be the last ones to leave, as they soak up basic Shintaido. I am so grateful for having Shintaido in my life again. At 61, this ol' heart, mind and body still has plenty of space for hugging heaven, wakame, becoming dragon and tiger, rock/lock, panic, bamboo, Tenshingoso in the chair, Conga-line massage, 12 and 6 o'clock stretches! You have made this possible. Arigato gozaimasu.

Part II

This morning while going to work and this afternoon while working on some work at home, the word "connection" came back to me loud and clear. That's a very powerful feeling. To feel connected to everything. I think that is what is most appealing to me about the Konko faith – though I am not a member of the Konko church – I am very comfortable with its recognition of the oneness of the universe. For many years I have admired the Native American philosophy of the universe's oneness. Konko, like Shintaido connects me to my Japanese spiritual roots. Everything is connected.

Part III

After all these years, I still haven't taken any drugs or gotten drunk! Shintaido has long been my "natural" high. It's with deep gratitude I thank you again for reawakening and helping me find a trusted friend again

Tomi Nagai-Rothe

I had a very intense experience tonight of movement (kata - form) as life analogue. As much as I've practiced Hoten Kokyu-ho (Hugging Heaven Breathing Exercise) I've never used the small and large circles to embody something that connects me to the World. I've been thinking about life and death a lot lately. One of my favorite uncles has just entered hospice care and the prospect of losing him makes me really sad – especially on top of two other deaths in my family this year. And of course that makes me think about my own death, my fears, my legacy, my relationship with my chil-

Reflections on Taimyo *Continued from p.5*

dren and grandchild and the nitty gritty aspect of life. What DO I really believe about what happens at death? How should I prepare myself? What does my religion tell me? What does my intuition tell me?

Your invitation at the beginning of class to respond to Paul Gauguin's question, "Where have we come from? Who are we? Where are we going?" allowed me to start my reflection. As I said in class, I think we come from a great Love. And in life, we are a manifestation of that Love with a mission to amplify it. And I think we return to that Love – or are melted into it at death.

So I took your cue to practice Hoten Kokyu-Ho as an embodiment of life. I tried to make it about cells (small circle) and the Universe (large circle), but it ended up being about my present life (consciousness), my life time, and the space and time beyond my life. And somehow, looking up at the stars and bending down over and over again, and connecting the small circle of my life and the big circle of God/the Divine/the Universe things felt complete. I felt complete.

Words really fail at expressing what it was exactly or how it happened. But it felt like your poster about Mind-Body Unification – through one movement, mind and body become one. Though tonight it felt more like mind/body/spirit/mystery of life become one. A state of Grace.

There are some things that we cannot grasp or attain through our own intellect or actions, and occasionally we are graced with an experience not of our own making. I am grateful that Shintaido/Life Exercise has helped me and continues to help me live in this way – unlocking the doors to the Great Mystery. I hope I can do your teaching justice as I try to amplify it through my life.

David Sirgany

I came to class to see Ito Sensei and because I enjoy seeing the community practicing together. I also enjoy and feel inspired by Ito's teaching. I find Ito's "gorei" (leading) and what is transmitted to be highly potent. His presence and the space he holds seems to allow something deep within me to relax. I feel a kind of deep trust in which truth is easily brought forth. There is a simplicity that allows the subtly of experience to present itself vividly. My mind quickly and easily settles down and the richness of those present begins to reveal itself. The practice itself is always very powerful as I feel energy patterns throughout my body reactivated and hidden strengths emerge again. Ito Sensei calls forth and masterfully conducts a symphony of pure and positive intentions leaving participants free to rest within the heart of their own experience. He continues to be an inspiration to me.

Pamela Olton

Thank you so much for our time together and the great Japanese food. These moments and our Monday classes have been the best parts of my summer this year.

I will try to put into words my experience(s) during our weekly Taimyo classes:

Generally, I have found that the classes have allowed me to have a very strong re-connection with Shintaido basics like Tenshingoso, using the voice, breathing exercises, and wakame/bamboo practices. With no limitations on my stiffer older body, I have been able to go very deeply and freely into finding balance and posture. The meditative part of class has been very clear and more effortless than ever before. Two weeks ago on August 22, I came to the class quite desperate for relief from a very challenging day. It involved my ongoing work at the Haight Ashbury Free Clinic giving acupuncture to patients with my students from the American College of Traditional Chinese Medicine (ACTCM). We have been going through growing pains from the merger of the Haight Ashbury with Walden House, a much larger non-profit. They hired two nurses to oversee and reorganize the medical clinics and neither are acupuncture users. They had scheduled a whole new group of patients to be seen that Monday morning by new western medical providers and had neglected to advise me or make accommodation for fitting in my 20 patients. It was like a nightmare with crowds of patients showing up and no room for them. We all struggled without any resolution that morning. I did however pull up my bamboo self and went to talk to the CEO to find out what was going on, and was assured that they had no plans to eliminate acupuncture or change my programs. Feeling a little better, I spent the rest of the day observing the nurses who were still behaving as if I was not there. So that evening, I came to Taimyo exhausted and confused. Glad to let it all go during warm ups, relieved to be for some small time in a space of people committed to finding peace and looking for conflict resolution. I just opened my voice and lungs and tried to get my center. Then outside in the yard, we began the moving meditation and by then I had forgotten the rest of my day. I felt free and at peace. As we stilled our bodies and posture for the final meditation, I could feel myself centered at my crown chakra and sense beams of bright light going up and out into the night. There was an image of a pyramid of crystal beaming this light and at the base of the pyramid, the anguished faces of the two nurses struggling, almost like the tiger and dragon. I was outside of this struggle, I was watching but not emotionally involved anymore. Indeed, I realized in this moment that I would somehow find a way to bring healing to them in our situation.

This personal story is but a tiny bit of conflict in the face of the city, or country or world we are living in. I have been thinking deeply about how much powerful prayer and meditation will be needed to help us all. Our classes are so dense and focused and effective at helping us begin to be calm and

rooted. I am so grateful for your teaching and continued efforts at bringing this to us.

Nicole Masters

During the opening of our meditation of Taimyo meditation, I had a strong vision while you were describing the many difficult nuances of the Fukushima disaster's aftermath. The vision was that the people of Japan are being suppressed and told to continue doing their job as though nothing is wrong. This is much like my experience of growing up in a dysfunctional family dynamic with an imaginary elephant in the room that nobody talks about unless they want to be reprimanded. The political figures and world at large just want the people to "suck it up" and keep going. The political powerful are suggesting that the Japanese economy will collapse or suffer greatly if they stop for even a moment and consider the options for the greater well being of the people or the planet at large. What appears clear at this time is that continuing in the dysfunction and not talking about the safety of the Japanese people or the world at large is not safe for anyone.

This brings me to my hope that the Japanese people could possibly be the best people in the world to overcome the pressure of the dysfunctional political dynamic. I believe the Japanese people have the strength to stand strong like bamboo, as world leaders, and light the way for a better future in this highly reactive and dangerous time. I have reason to believe this through my practice of Shintaido with you. Shintaido practice taught me how I can be strong yet yielding to forces at large without being pushed or knocked aside. I believe that this wisdom you have brought to me and shared around the world is a part of your culture and deeply rooted.



Sword Play (a prose poem)

They aren't real swords,
Just simple wooden sticks,
With no curves, no blades, no points.
Yet when we swing them,
Everything about us is revealed—
Our strengths and weaknesses
Our dreams, our hidden challenges,
All there for the discerning eye to see.

How is that possible?
How is it that we are like children playing with toys,
Yet when we draw our swords
Our deepest selves are stripped bare and put on display?

I examine my sword carefully.
It's made of purple heart wood,
An endangered species we don't use anymore.
It's dense, rough-grained, not beautiful.
My sword is particularly unrefined.
I haven't sanded down the facets at the handle as many people do.
It looks half-formed, primitive.
After twenty years, the facets have smoothed out somewhat through use.
It fits me. In some strange way, it *is* me.

We cut each other open, try to transform ourselves using our sensitive swords.

Transform ourselves, transform each other, transform the world.

Stephen Billias
December, 2011

BODY

Dialogue



新
体
道

"Shintaido" means "new body way." It is 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 and meditation traditions, but the aim is to help modern people rediscover the original wisdom known by the body and realized through movement.

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