

## Risky Questions

*Over the past few months, Ito-Sensei shared some questions written by French Shintaido practitioner and psychoanalyst Sylvie Alexandre for a book she is preparing. Ito sent them to healthcare professionals and others who practice Shintaido.*

*Valerie Sarfati Cohen translated these questions from French into English.*

*Here is Sylvie Alexandre's introduction to her questions: [Ed.]*

The pedagogy of Shintaido is centered a lot on the notion of risk. (The practitioner takes a risk when practicing or we could say practicing Shintaido is not a harmless practice.) There is the risk of meeting one's limits, weaknesses, tensions and pains. Then to bring the follower to a "change of state" (that is from a state of less-energy, physical possibilities, will, courage-to a state of more) to continue the movement beyond what he or she thought they could carry out (going beyond our usual limits). This change may take place in the practice with a single partner or in a group.

*Here are the original questions, followed by responses from various contributors. Some of these responses are in the form of email exchanges. [Ed.]*

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## Shintaido and Troubled Kids

By Geoff Warr

*Geoff Warr qualified as a teacher in 1978, and spent 25 years working as a staff member, and later as a manager in special schools and institutions for kids with emotional and behavioural problems. For the past three years, Geoff has been developing training programmes which focus on the sympathetic management of difficult and potentially dangerous behaviour.*

*He was introduced to Shintaido in 1981, and became an instructor some ten years later. After spending most of his working life in London, Geoff moved to Ramsgate, on the Kent coast, in 2005.*

*He lives there now with his wife, where both are frequently visited by their three grown-up children, and their one and three quarter grandchildren(baby due at the end of July). Visitors from the U.K. and farther afield are welcomed with enthusiasm.*

For 25 years starting in 1979, I worked in institutions that provide residential care for kids who cannot live with their families. These institutions are extreme and unnatural environments, and although their official purpose is to provide care and therapy, they are frequently seen by the kids who live in them as places to which they have been sent for punishment.

Typically, the kids have experienced failure and rejection within their own families, compounded by a sequence of unsuccessful attempts at intervention. So, they tend to be mixed up, messed up and angry. It is therefore a long, uphill battle for staff working with the kids to convince them that they actually want to help rather than add to existing miseries.

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## More Shintaido One liners From Shintaido Northeast Gasshuku 2007

"Shintaido brings up our body intelligence, honing our radar; we gain more discernment."

"Unconscious acceptance." Jennifer Wilkov

"I had to get broken enough to let all that go."

"Heavenly Truths are all around us. All we have to do is pick them up. Shintaido helps us to have that trust."

"Social (community) support gives us the courage to take risks for change."

"Through Shintaido I gained enough sensitivity to stay alive." Bill Burtis

"If you study Shintaido long enough you won't go down the wrong street." Ito Sensei, as quoted by Bill Burtis

"Shintaido tunes us up." Bill Burtis

"Shintaido is part of my personal toolbox." David Curry

"Shintaido: Change perspectives -- from zero to infinity, from self to others, from east to west and from earth to sky, discover the way to open your mind using your body!" Patrick Bouchaud

*Two quotes from Ito Sensei from the June Workshop:*

"We think we choose Shintaido but Shintaido chooses each one of us."

"The essence of Shintaido is not something completed that we are going to study. We're developing it each time we practice together."

## DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSIONS

The next issue of *Body Dialogue* will be in January, 2008.

Please submit articles, poems, pictures to the editor at:  
[newsletter@shintaido.org](mailto:newsletter@shintaido.org). Deadline for submissions is November 15, 2007.

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## Risky Questions

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**Question 1: Is there a pedagogy of this risk, and if yes, does that correspond to a specific notion in Shintaido philosophy or, more widely, in Budo?**

**TOMI:**

*Tomi Nagai-Rothe is a senior consultant and graphic facilitator with The Grove Consultants International in San Francisco. She has two grown children, one of whom practices Shintaido. Tomi has been practicing Shintaido for nineteen years and is a Shintaido instructor, ranked sho dan in Shintaido bojutsu (study of bo or wooden staff).*

"Pedagogy - the art or science of being a teacher, generally refers to strategies of instruction, or a style of instruction." Wikipedia

Using this definition, I would say that I do not use risk as a style or strategy of instruction. However, I do frame Shintaido as a powerful spiritual and personal development tool - one that can allow us to fully and compassionately encounter our big and small selves-for example, our weaknesses, our tensions, our pains, as well as joys, aspirations and mystical union with God.



*Tomi Nagai-Rothe*

My understanding of Budo philosophy - and by extension, Shintaido - is that it asks us to stand at the edge of life and death. You could call this "taking risk", or you could simply say that it means meeting life truthfully. When we open our bodies in the line of attack, are we taking a risk or are we being surprisingly open?

**VALERIE:**

*Valérie Sarfati is a project manager for the car maker Renault in France. She has two children. Valérie has been practicing Shintaido for twenty years and is now a Shintaido Instructor and sho dan in Shintaido Bojutsu.*

Yes, I think there is pedagogy in Shintaido to teach people to go beyond their limits. For me, the essential one is the keiko (practice, class) itself. If the keiko is well structured and respectful, it creates a space, a "frame", that allows the students to explore their possibilities, their inner world and express their true identity. The "exterior frame" gives us an "inner frame". This "frame" is the condition to allow us to go beyond our limits and to take risks to meet our difficulties, weaknesses, fears because, in a keiko, there is no judgment, no comparison. Each of us is unique and confident that he can show all of himself, and share. This is the greatest tool that Shintaido pedagogy offers to me and what allows us to grow. When we can, regularly, experience this "frame" (each keiko) we can slowly transfer this behavior to our daily life, losing fear to show who we are inside and sometimes becoming proud of ourselves, with a bit of compassion for our imperfections.

In one word, this pedagogy develops love for ourselves, probably the best way to live happier and to appreciate others and nature more. So, as instructors, we must be aware of that, respectful of the space we create, for our students and also for ourselves, including our own mistakes and errors.

**ROB:**

*Robert Gaston is a Special Education teacher at the James R. Sylla School in San Anselmo, California. He lives in Novato with his wife, Sandra, and daughter, Sally. Robert is a Senior Instructor with a San Dan rank in bojutsu and a Sho Dan rank in karate. He has practiced Shintaido since 1983.*

Yes, *eiko-dai* (big glory). It has roots in *budo* but is expressed uniquely in Shintaido. I have used the words that we use to describe eiko for my students to help them talk/physically work through crisis points in their lives without resorting to violence to self or others.

**Question 2: What name would you give to this pedagogy which operates a movement for "mobilization of one" to go further, to go beyond the limits?**

**TOMI:** Personally, I think "going beyond our usual limits" is highly over-rated and too easily misinterpreted. This phrase conjures endless *Eiko-dai* or *Kaikyaku-sho* (small forward jump) practice and the liberation that occurs once one pushes through the pain and mental anguish. This is one potentially useful experience for someone who is of my daughter's age and physical ability (26 years, trim, and strong). It is only one path to places beyond the visible world.

Yet there are SO MANY PATHS - even for a young person. And there must be other paths for someone my age (51) who is genki (healthy) but slowing down. Ito-sensei talks about his work to bring more people "to zero" (on an X, Y-axis) - rather than to a coordinate of X-8, Y-10. "Going beyond our limits" presumes that we have the wherewithal, interest and ability to deal with our existing situation (physical, emotional, psychological, financial, class, spiritual etc.) But that isn't always the case. Sometimes we must simply find a way to compassionately be in the place we find ourselves.

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If one proposes a framework of risk - even on a psychological and not physical level - then so many people will be excluded. What about people who have been oppressed their whole lives or whose families have been oppressed for generations? I worked with a group last summer that included such people and truthfully, I don't think they wanted or needed to explore their pains, limitations, and weaknesses. I think that "going beyond our usual limits" is the domain of us who are incredibly privileged and haven't had enough life privation to challenge us to the core

I believe the purpose of Shintaido is to bring us into a healthy, natural relationship with all of Creation: other people, the natural environment, ourselves, our belief system. Part of that is being aware of worlds and realities beyond the observable - being able to explore them and bring back useful insights to share.

### PAULA:

*Paula Kerby is retired and lives with her husband, Bill, in Washington State. She was introduced to Shintaido four and a half years ago and it helped her energy--compromised by a health condition--so much that she has done her simple practice every day since. She leads a small group on Whidbey Island.*

(In response to Tomi's entry) Given the nature of the women who come to my little practice here--one in her 80s, one in a wheelchair, all of us facing various health issues--everything you wrote speaks directly to us. My personal practice, as I think you know, has been about acceptance and compassionate exploration of what exists each day, rather than charging my limits. I do think this is a getting-older thing as well as a health-related thing.

And why not? We spend our childhood and young adulthood putting ourselves out there, pushing the limits, taking risks. To acknowledge calmly and explore with interest this new body in which we awaken day after day as we age (or, perhaps, if we are injured or ill) is the task my recent years have given me. There is a simple, organic quality to honoring these cycles, not lamenting the end of one as the next one manifests, but entering each with curiosity and openness, so that we do not miss what it brings.

**TOMI:** (responding to Paula) With Ito and John and Lee's help, I've really been re-thinking the whole "going beyond limits" approach that Shintaido instructors were taught in the early days. I think it was very appropriate for Shintaido's founders - young, physically fit men (and a few women) who needed to push themselves to the limit and break themselves down in order to change their consciousness. But as Shintaido ages and as the practitioner audience broadens, it becomes more and more apparent that we need other strategies.

**PAULA:** (a second response to Tomi) Your thoughts on the young, inspired, bursting-with-energy founders of Shintaido--what it was then and how it can continue to serve and

inspire all of us as we age--seemed spot-on to me. This is a valuable conversation to have, as the founders and many practitioners age.



*Paula Kerby*

When I witnessed "real" Shintaido, vigorous and thrilling, I actually experienced depression, feeling a magnetic attraction yet realizing with some shock that it is too late for me, that in this lifetime I will never be able to do that. Lee and John were very helpful at that time, pointing out philosophically that we older practitioners have already, in different ways, taken those risks, expended that energy--that we are in fact beginning Shintaido from a whole different place. Okay, I listened, but part of me couldn't fully buy it. However, as I have continued to do my simple practice, day after day, and as it continues to unfold, to offer "AHA!" moments, to take me to new places, I know it's true. My BODY knows it's true.

**TOMI:** (a final response) I used to tell my 75+ year old student, Virginia Won, that she already embodies Shintaido and that we aspire to her level. Truly, she has learned and embodies so much that many of us are still far from attaining. And we need her more than she needs us! I think that as we mature, age, and continue to practice, we begin exploring the non-material aspects of life - a huge spiritual landscape and ultimately, Ten (heaven). It is definitely the good stuff as far as I'm concerned! And according to Ito, one really important goal of keiko is to help us realize what lies beyond the visible world.

### FRIEDEMANN:

*Friedemann Schulz is a psychotherapist by profession. He is a trainer at the Pacific Gestalt Institute, and he teaches at Antioch University Los Angeles. He has been practicing Shintaido since 1980 and is a Shintaido Senior Instructor, san dan in Shintaido Bojutsu and shodan in Shintaido Karate. Friedemann was born in Germany and he lives in LA with his wife and two children.*

I would say that "going beyond our limits" is intrinsic to any learning situation. We are at one point, and we are asked to or want to go beyond what we know, feel comfortable with, etc.

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The question is: what supports this process? I think that depending on the situation what drives/supports the "going beyond our limits" is either shame or trust. Shame, as in pressure "to do what is expected", or "to do what others do", or "to do what the teacher is asking to do" (even if not experienced as something desirable).

Trust, as in wish to move in a desired direction with the support of the relationship with the teacher, as in "I trust him or her that he or she has my best in mind", or the other practitioners "I want to go where they have gone."

**ROB:** Yes and no, it is codified in the context of keiko but for use in other arenas such as I do it is not always clear. When I have gotten to teach as a Shintaido Instructor to these students they are flabbergasted at the change they see in me as I now have tools for approach that are tested and validated in the keiko context.



*Robert Gaston*

I have assisted Aikido and yoga instructors in teaching our students and taught Shintaido myself. The "dojo" and all it means, I have noticed, lends an ability for students to go beyond themselves in psycho-physiological ways that the same movement and philosophy will not enable in other contexts. It lends the Instructor paths to the psyche that have no defense mechanisms installed and they can have a beginner's mind experience. The crossover into regular life for Shintaido practitioners in general I see as much easier and more common even in beginners. (The student that tells you they did tenshingosho in the subway or when they are waiting for a doctor's appointment.)

**Question 3: Is there a particular educational process for this pedagogy? (i.e. How to bring people to go beyond their limit?) How does it take place within the framework of the practice?**

**TOMI:** (I respond to this question from within my pedagogy, rather than one of "bringing people beyond their limits.")

I believe that each person has some experience of all Creation. This is the underlying assumption in my Shintaido

teaching. Some people in my class have really explored more limits and "gone beyond" to a greater degree than I have. So it's not for me to assume that I should take them there.

My pedagogy is based on openness (physical and otherwise) and exploration of life experience through movement. Within this framework I share new movement "pathways" in a supportive environment. Those pathways are simple and flowing movements that lead into the kaiho-kei (opening and expressing) curriculum. I often use metaphors from nature - the rise and fall of waves, stepping into a field of grass. Practitioners embody the flow of fairly sophisticated movements before they learn specific techniques

I believe this is a simple tool for beginning to bring ourselves into right relationship with one another and the universe. Practitioners can use it to take themselves beyond any conceivable personal limits, or they can use it to heal themselves and others - or they can use it in ways I have yet to imagine.

**ROB:** This is hard and I am not sure I have English words to describe it. I think it is the philosophy of Shintaido as expressed in the Japanese "ten chi hito bito ware itai" phrase; little by little it enters the Shintaido practitioners' world reality. This involves all of the martial ideas of concentration, discipline, etc., but it also taps into more mystic ideas of unification with something greater and a brotherhood (not sure of the non-sexist word) of humanity and all beings. We can become effective and embody ideas of compassion and love (agape).

**Question 4: What quality is mobilized in the practitioner? (Is it an attention, a concentration, a discipline, a listening to one or the other, an overtaking of one or something else?)**

**TOMI:** I include an excerpt from a blog by Linda Foss, a student who attended my class for 4 months and is eloquent in describing the approach I use. Linda describes a hitori-geiko (self-practice) experience after leaving San Francisco:

**LINDA:**

*Linda Foss lives in Lafayette, Louisiana where she practices Shintaido. She helped with copy-editing for this issue of Body Dialogue.*

"This morning, I practiced Shintaido in the gray foggy field. I practiced the 'gentle' version - 'gentle' being a bit deceptive. What you learn to do is to let go of physical control and effort. You practice softening.

I guess this class was a receptive class. You first learned in effect to listen with your whole body. You didn't move your arms, chest, abdomen--you let go of control. As though you were a seedling responding to sun, your body opened.

As though the wind or ocean waves were pushing and pulling your legs. By the time your movement became active, it often didn't feel intentional at all. The body moved effortlessly. More like an ego-less conduit of energy. You became bigger, brighter than your body.

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"To acknowledge calmly and explore with interest this new body in which we awaken day after day as we age (or, perhaps, if we are injured or ill) is the task my recent years have given me." Paula

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Awareness of classmates was enhanced. Often, as in other classes, movement synchronized, or became complementary with each other. Of course my only classmates this morning were the birds. Still, this process I learned and practice continues to offer me both softened awareness and strength. I suspect that even as we age and lose physical capacity, this process will be possible, and will offer the intense awareness of aliveness and connection. I'm appreciative."

**FRIEDEMANN:** Increased awareness. Any novel experience is by definition a contact with something we haven't known previously. If we are open to the newness of the experience the result will be a new perspective, new sensation, new emotional experience, new insight, etc.



*Friedemann Schulz (leading)*

**ROB:** We all start where we are; we can't start at any other place. Shintaïdo, if provided in a supported context, can be a benefit. My students are hard to reach, yet they are affected by Shintaïdo practice. My use of Shintaïdo movements and its philosophy have allowed person to person effect for both the students and myself.

**Question 5: Do we need special abilities to do that or can these abilities be developed through the practice?**

**TOMI:** No special qualities required. (If we had everything we needed, why would we come to keiko?)

**Question 6: What are the qualities that the instructor has to develop to bring the follower to take control of this change?**

**FRIEDEMANN:** I don't think that we need to have special qualities to develop an increased awareness. If we are willing to pay attention to what is, and what we bounce up against or make contact with, we are continually experienc-

ing the novel or going beyond our limits. A person in wheel-chair can do that (see Stephen Hawking).

If we value increased awareness as a result of the contact with a novel experience, then that is the benefit. The instructor needs to value or be interested in increased awareness in order to foster the same curiosity in the student. With that, the student develops interest in continued contact with novel experiences and the growth that results from it.

*This is the end of this article, but not of the dialogue. We would like to encourage others to participate and respond. Here is another question from Sylvie that might provoke more exchange: "What are the benefits for the individual, at the physical, mental, and spiritual level, of practicing Shintaïdo?" To be continued...[Ed.]\*\*\**

Hey,  
Who's running this show anyway?  
Damn,  
I thought it was me.  
and just when I'm about to be "the Man"  
shit.

Who is this man?  
What is this wizmical fabrication  
rolling about  
steeped in blind self-centered pettiness?

Who is this seeing  
this window  
this opening?

Now, can I take off all that bondage  
like an old winter coat  
and leave it on the ground

Just walk away  
as the wise one's say  
just walk away

I don't move further than arm's reach  
who can trust total freedom?  
who lives as love enough to just walk away?

*David Sirgany  
January 7, 2005*

## Shintaido and Troubled Kids

*Continued from p. 1*

During the early part of my career, my jobs tended to focus on working directly with the kids. Later, my work concentrated more on staff management and training. Three years ago, I started freelance work specialized in staff training which I call Safety First.

This package is designed to train staff whose clients present extremely challenging and/or violent behaviour.

### Connections between my work and Shintaido.

My introduction to Shintaido came from Stuart Blackburn who was a colleague in a newly opened institution for troubled kids in London in the early 1980's. Stu had been to Japan a decade earlier as one of the first wave of British keiko converts. He told me a bit about Shintaido on our way to my keiko baptism, and I was attracted on two levels to the idea of learning a martial art form. Firstly, I'd always been a keen sportsman. Secondly, and much more urgently, my job involved situations which were seriously frightening and violent. My naïve hope was that Shintaido would provide an instant solution, a set of techniques which would empower me to cope with my work's routine challenges and occasional nightmare scenarios. I hoped to find quick, practical solutions for professional problems. What I actually found was an entirely different world - one which intrigued me and which I fell in love with.

I have vivid memories of my first keiko. It entailed a warm-up with a lot of high kicking, followed by a practice comprised of interminable jumping, and shorter interludes of crawling, round the perimeter of the park. After a couple of hours of this rather specialist curriculum, I was introduced to the mystery and wonder of Tenshingoso. The whole thing affected me powerfully. I was hooked.

At one level, it's obvious that jumping frog-like around a park has little direct relevance to being confronted by a disturbed and distressed teenager who is intent on violent attack. And yet, I am absolutely convinced that there is something profoundly powerful and effective at the very heart of Shintaido which enables us to cope better when confronted with danger. This stuff is not easy to put into words, but I'll try to offer some bits of personal perspective.

One thing which I have come to realize through keiko is that any form of attack makes the attacker vulnerable. This holds true for all varieties of striking and punching attacks. But for me, the essence of Shintaido philosophy is that the vulnerability inherent in an attack is not necessarily exploited in order to hurt the attacker. There are more attractive and often more effective opportunities to absorb or extend the movement. An attack can be transformed and elevated from a win-lose battle to a win-win outcome. To achieve this, we need to remain calm within ourselves and attuned to our partner's actions and intentions. (Ito Sensei led a workshop, years ago, in which we had extensive kumite with open hand, bokto and boh. Ito's repeated instruction was "Don't

wait for their body movement. By then, it's already too late. You have to read and react to their intentions as soon as they come into their minds.")

I feel that being able to anticipate an attack plus being committed to avoid any disproportionate reaction or retaliation creates a powerful cocktail that takes the heat out of potentially violent situations. My professional experience of threatening situations is that very often the aggressor is driven by a variety of fears, including fear of retaliation. This leads to a tactic of "getting your retaliation in first." If there's no reason to fear retaliation, often the aggression itself becomes unnecessary.

I was talking recently with a friend and colleague with whom I was doing training on "Managing Aggression and Violence." The conversation got to the subject of "attacks make the attacker vulnerable." Her comment was, "The trouble is, this lot aren't worried about being attacked with fists or sticks; they're worried about getting shot." So I told her about Ito Sensei, and learning how to read the first signs of intent, not waiting for the end product of enactment. We both felt slightly less like helpless and hopeless victims.

### Teaching Shintaido in work situations:

In the past, I have occasionally done some Shintaido teaching directly with staff, and sometimes with the young people with whom I've worked. In one particular establishment, it seemed to be both popular and successful for a period of about six months. However, the composition of the group changed and interest waned. I think that for me, there was always a problem about role conflict. It felt awkward stepping out of the Manager's role, becoming temporary Sensei, and then back to being the Manager again. I've also always been a Manager who maintained a fairly strict boundary between the roles of Residential Care Staff and Counsellors or Therapists, and it felt like mixing Shintaido with Management could pose the same sort of problematic issues. It wasn't really a case of encountering resistance from the organizations for whom I worked, but more to do with my own reluctance to mix work and keiko. I think there also may have been a bit of me which wanted to keep keiko as my separate and personal antidote for a highly demanding and stressful job.

### Q. Are you still practicing Shintaido?

A. The answer to this question covers the entire spectrum of no, yes, and partly. From my introduction to Shintaido until the mid 1990's, I attended Keiko on a regular, at least once a week basis. I also had periods when I taught classes. But for the past decade or so, my involvement in formal keiko has been a kind of "Sinatra-esque" series of comebacks at Daienshu and other big events. This approach to practice has been simultaneously exciting and seriously painful. It's always a joy to be reunited with brothers and sisters in Shintaido. It's always a delight and a revelation to receive Gorei from Senior and Master Instructors. However, the effects of irregular but massive infusions of Shintaido on an ageing and out-of-tune body will be understood by anyone who has a sympathetic imagination. So these days, no regular or routine practice. However, I do feel that there has been a

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## Shintaido and Troubled Kids

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significant coming together of my previously separate worlds of work and Shintaido. I am now self-employed, so have no boss, no job description, no set terms and conditions of service. What I do is provide training called Safety First. This had a narrow start in that initially it was just aimed at people who do the same kind of work with the same kind of kids that I used to. Now, I'm trying to expand to a far wider audience.

The core elements of Safety First are as follows: Prevention is better than cure; diversion and de-escalation are better than confrontation; using physical force as a means of control must only be an option of last resort; if used, force must be at the minimum level for the minimum time; gratuitous infliction of pain is unacceptable. All of these requirements of training remind me powerfully of aspects of kumite, where we try to work with a partner rather than confront an opponent; where we seek an outcome of mutual growth rather than beating an enemy; where an "attack" can be absorbed rather than overpowered. So there are some techniques I use in training which are pure Shintaido. But, even where the techniques have other origins, for me their point and purpose is embraced in keiko feeling.

As well as trying to widen the market for Safety First, I've started collaborating with two friends. One of them is a Judo Instructor and self-defence expert. The other is a teacher of Tai Chi. We're trying to share our martial art skills and understandings in the development and dissemination of the Safety First package.

All of which brings to mind a conversation I had about twenty years ago with Michael Thompson Sensei. Michael was saying that for him and his generation of Shintaido Instructors, they had the privilege of learning directly from Aoki Sensei. Their job was the development of Shintaido hardware. He said that for me and my generation, the task was to research, devise and deliver Shintaido software. It feels like it has taken me a while, but I'm excited and happy to be here now.\*\*\*

All expression comes FROM WITHIN OUTWARD, from the center to the surface, from a hidden source to outward manifestation. The study of expression as a natural process brings you into contact with cause and makes you feel the source of reality.

*Samuel Silas Curry*

*founder of The School of Expression, now Curry College in MA:*

*Suggested by Rob Kedoin \*\*\**

## Sword that Kills, Sword that Gives Life

*The theme of Pacific Shintaido's Kangeiko 2007 was "Sword of Life, Sword of Death." In Japanese: "Katsu-jin-ken, Satsu-jin-ken." The following short essay provides some insight into these concepts from the point of view of a practitioner of Kendo. [Ed.]*

In my experience, I have seen many kendoists requesting matches against much more skilled opponents. They do not do this merely as a means of testing one's own skill or proving something to themselves. The Katsu-jin-kendoist does this in hopes of being shown their own weakness. Many times I have seen and heard of kendoists remarking about experiencing a feeling of true beauty and understanding when being struck as if their opponent (often a highranking sensei) struck their soul. In this way, kendo becomes a means to enlightenment for the practitioner.

Enlightenment in Katsu-jin-kendo, however, is not limited only to its practitioner. Observers also are given this opportunity. Katsu-jin-ken intends kendo to be beautiful and artistic...Kendo is a harmonic and graceful dance between opposing yet complementary forces. Should it convey this to the observer, he gains a vision of beauty from which he may also be inspired in his life. Unlike Satsu-jin-ken which is selfish, Katsu-jin-ken strives to share beauty and strength with everyone.

The final aspect of Katsu-jin-ken that Komizu-sensei has continually stressed, is that kendo is about cutting. One does not cut his opponent (like in Satsu-jin-ken) so much as he cuts himself. One cuts off all unnecessary preconceptions, all fears, doubts, surprise, and hesitations (four poisons of kendo). One cuts off one's ego and pride. All the things in one's life that are malignant or simply a bad influence or habit, Katsu-jin-ken challenges the kendoist to cut. For only after a kendoist cuts off all these things does one truly begin to learn and master the things he needs to live a good fruitful life."

*from Paul Cho's "More about Kendo" web site:*

<http://studentorgs.utexas.edu/utkendo/hyunoo/zanshin/katsujinken.htm>

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## Minagawa Sensei on Sword of Life and Death

*from his Q&A at Pacific Shintaido Kangeiko 2007*

Question: "What are you seeing when using the sword of life and sword of death? Where are you looking?"

Minagawa's answer: "Looking beyond. Don't get stuck on the question of meaning. Just watch and listen from inside. When doing shoko, keep looking 'there.' If you're studying not moving, don't move."

"Satsu (sword of death) is useful to be able to say "No." To stop bad things that are going on. Just practicing Shintaido is a healing."

"Aoki Sensei said: 'Shintaido keiko lets us experience freedom. We can use it to shape our lives. If we do this, our life will be complete.'"\*\*\*



## VIDEOS

**Kenko Taiso II & III: (\$20)**

Demonstrates a series of more advanced health exercises and stretches that two people can do together, and 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 are leading group warm-up exercises.

**Golf-Do (\$20)**

Master Shintaido Instructor H.F. Ito teaches the Way of Golf, 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 how to stretch, relax the body, and prepare the mind for a pleasurable round of golf. 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.

**Roots of Shintaido (\$20)**

Footage from the 2001 West Coast winter retreat in Juarez Springs New Mexico. Two lectures by Master Instructor H. F. Ito on the history, lineage, and philosophy of Shintaido in relation to Japanese karate and sword traditions, footage showing the relation of fundamental open-hand techniques to closed-fist techniques, and bokuto movements 1-9.

Set of all 4 videos above: \$70

## DVDS

**Kata and Kumite (\$15)**

H.F. Ito gives instruction for kaiho-kei (opening and challenging) exercises with Michael Thompson and Robert Breant. Includes: kaiho-kei group practice, Jojutsu kata (hi no kata, kaze no kata, sho-dan, nidan), Jojutsu kata (taishii, hojo), karate kata (sanchin, tensho), kumibo (bo vs. bo) arrangements, kumitachi (sword vs. sword).

**Kenko Taiso Instruction (\$20)**

Produced by On-Site Enterprises, presents the classic Shintaido *kenko-taiso* warm-up sequence with detailed explanation. The 15-minute warm-up sequence is an easy-to-follow routine that is excellent for those who are relatively new to body movement.

**Taimyo/Tenshingosho (\$15)**

Master Instructor Masashi Minagawa performs Taimyo Kata, then leads a group of students through Tenshingosho. This beautiful DVD, set in an English park, provides a step by step illustration of the Taimyo Kata form, as well as basic Tenshingosho technique."

**Self Care Program for Hospice Caregivers (\$15)**

Master Instructor H.F. Ito leads hospice caregivers in a Shintaido program designed to relieve the stress of their emotionally demanding jobs. Master Ito uses the Shintaido techniques of Kenko Taiso, Wakame, and Tenshingosho to teach caregivers how to relax and meditate.

## BOOKS

**Cutting the Blue Sky**  
various authors (\$20)

An anthology of the best articles from the Shintaido of America newsletter over the past 25 years. There are 32 articles by students and instructors, 33 photos, 162 pages, grouped by topics: the roots of Shintaido, cultural clashes, spiritual development, using Shintaido in the world, and musings on timing, facing death, the invisible world of the 4th dimension, and passive resistance.

**Untying Knots: a Shintaido Chronicle**

by Michael Thompson (\$20 / 15\*)

This autobiographical memoir by one of the co-founders of Shintaido of America tells of the author's cross-cultural adventures in France, Japan, and California in the course of his 25-year Shintaido career.

**Shintaido: the Body is a Message of the Universe**  
by Hiroyuki Aoki (\$20 / \$15\*)

For 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.

## MINI-BOOKS

**Tenshingosho 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. *Tenshingosho* and *Eiko* are two of the fundamental movements of Shintaido, which embody philosophies and prescriptions for human growth.

**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 of Aoki-sensei's early days.

**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. Includes a glossary and description of the basic structure of a Shintaido practice.

Set of all five Mini-books above: \$25

**Greater Nature Cards (\$10)**

High-quality images on 4" X 6" glossy card stock, blank inside, SoA logo and website on the back.

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on-line at [www.shintaido.org](http://www.shintaido.org)

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# BODY *Dialogue*

Journal of the U.S. Shintaido Movement

Issue No. 21, 2007



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.