

# PACIFIC SHINTAIDO



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Pacific Shintaido Bulletin

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## Contributions, please

Please send articles, poems, pictures, information, letters, to the Pacific Shintaido Bulletin, care of:

Stephen Billias  
36 El Cerrito Avenue  
San Rafael, CA 94901-1959  
Next issue in September.

## Come One, Come All!

June 28, 1997. Open keiko for all classes. See details in this bulletin.

## Meet Sally!

Sandra Bengtsson writes of her experiences before and after giving birth to Sally, the newest member of the Pacific Shintaido community. See below.

## Ito lectures

Notes from Ito sensei's lecture on the four levels of teaching Shintaido. See page 2.

## Full Moon Keiko

Howl at the moon in Shintaido! See inside.

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## ANOTHER SHINTAIDO BEGINNING

by Sandra Bengtsson

### Before the Birth:

When I considered getting pregnant, I thought my years of Shintaido practice would help me through the experience of having a baby. My husband of five years, Robert Gaston, and I are Shintaido instructors so it is a primary part of our lives. Shintaido has provided me with knowledge of my body, as well as the ability to stick it out when the going got tough. Shintaido also gave me a community of friends and keiko partners for support during this process.

Shintaido was fundamental to the changes and personal growth that has given me the confidence and optimism to decide to have a child at all.

As I reach my eighth month of pregnancy, the big question for me is how will Shintaido help me in labor - complete self-interest, but compelling nonetheless. Will all the attempts (not

successes) at *shoko* pay off? Will all those years of jumping help me push? Will I be able to stick with it not get so afraid that I lose my focus? We'll see.

In the meantime, Shintaido has helped both Robert and me in our childbirth classes. Our teacher shows us a technique, and asks us to try it. Sound familiar? For other people in our class, partnering up (even with their spouse) and pretending to do some movement seems incredibly inhibiting. For us, it's just *kumite*.

### After the Birth:

Well, it's six weeks since I had our baby Sally, who's sitting on my lap sleeping as I write this. Looking back at what I wrote I'm not entirely sure what to make of it.

I had a long and challenging labor, something I was hoping wouldn't

happen. I hoped that since I was in good shape (I did keiko the week before giving birth) mine would be one of those eight hour labors, where I felt great right after. Instead I went to the hospital on Saturday morning and had the baby on Sunday night. I guess my labor was more like a *gasshuku* than anything else.

Like a *gasshuku*, it definitely had its moments. There was a lot of just being there, waiting for the labor to progress, being present for the contractions and wondering if I was doing the movements the right way, a feeling I have often had in keiko. For this portion of labor, the Shintaido meditation I did was extremely beneficial. It was hard and it hurt, but being able to breathe deeply into my hara made it easier to deal with contractions. Since I had contractions for almost two days, this skill was very valuable.

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On Sunday, as the contractions grew more intense, I started vocalizing "e" from *tenshingosō* as I exhaled. This was an extremely primal experience. I had imagined doing this before I went into labor, and it really helped me. Robert also did "e" along with me, so I didn't feel alone as I labored.

Late on Sunday my doctor said that we might want to consider a Cesarean section, if things didn't progress more quickly. Even though it had been a long labor, I was shocked by this, and said I didn't want to do that. I decided we had to really dig deep and find a way to make this baby come out without surgery.

So Rob and I (along with our birth coach, Susan), asked for some private time. The doctor and nurses left us alone. It was clear that we had to use our imagination to get my body to open. We each picked an image to meditate on. I still can't believe the image I came up with - that of the caldera of a volcano, with lava filling it. As the lava filled to the top, the edge of the volcano crumbled off, leaving it more open. It seems pretty wild now, but after all that labor, it made sense.

So we meditated for about a half an hour. When I was next checked my doctor said that the edge of my cervix had thinned enough and I could begin to push. I pushed for several hours and could not have kept going without Robert. He counted *gorei* for me and the baby. Never have I been so aware of being supported by the rhythm of the *gorei*, being carried to a place I couldn't have reached by myself.

The Shintaido techniques that I used during my labor were extremely beneficial. But there were also many other aspects of Shintaido that carried me through: the *gambatte* spirit of just keeping going; the true beginner's mind of a first-time mother; and trust in my *kumite* partner, Robert.

In Shintaido we talk about life and death during *kumite*. I have tried for many years to understand this concept, but never really comprehended it.

While my life was never in danger during this labor, the life and death aspect of it was very present.



*Sally Bengtsson just after birth*

And the life portion of labor is what I have now - a beautiful baby daughter, a wonderful Shintaido baby. Like a great *gasshuku*, I'd do it all again.

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## Ito Sensei's Lecture: The Four Levels of Teaching in Shintaido

*In late March, Ito sensei gave a lecture on the principles of Unification in Shintaido and how they applied to teaching. The following are brief notes from that lecture, along with Tomi Nagai-Rothe's fine diagrams of the subject.*

The first level of Shintaido is Mind-Body Unification. This is written in Japanese as *Shin Shin Ichi Nyo*. Here the practitioner begins to unify his or her mind and body, by the

practice of basic Shintaido techniques. Of course any one of the four levels of teaching may contain any of the other levels, so for example, a student doing basic warming up may suddenly find themselves at the fourth or highest level of Shintaido, but it is more common for a teacher to lead a class through the four levels. Basic *Kenko Taiso* is the best practice for *Shin Shin Ichi Nyo*.

The second level is Unification of Self and Other *Ji Ta Ichi Nyo*. This level has four sub-levels:

- Deny Other/affirm Self
- Deny Self/Affirm Other
- Deny Self/Deny Other
- Affirm Self/Affirm Other

Each of these sub-levels is a stage in the achievement of *Ji Ta Ichi Nyo*. Until we can affirm ourselves while at the same time affirming others, we have not yet achieved the highest practice of Unification of Self and Other. Shintaido exercises which emphasize *Ji ta Ichi Nyo* are: Stretching, *Wakame*, and *Tenshingosō Kumite*.

The third stage of Unification is Unification of Self and Nature. *Chi Ga Ichi Nyo*. This is when we try to incorporate Big Nature (*Dai*) into our practice, bringing our surroundings, the ocean, the sky, the forest, all that encompasses the world around us, into our practice. *Tenshingosō* is a wonderful vehicle for experiencing this level of Shintaido and for helping students to do the same.

The fourth and highest level of Shintaido practice is Unification of Self and Heaven, *Ten Ga Ichi Nyo*. In this practice we become one with the Universe. *Eiko Dai* is the highest expression of this level of Shintaido, and the easiest way for students to reach *Ten Ga Ichi Nyo*.

These are brief notes. For a fuller explication, you can purchase a pamphlet on Meditation Class from Shintaido Publications. Call Ito sensei at 731-9364.

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## Open Keiko

There will be an open keiko for all classes practicing Shintaido in the Bay Area:

Date: **Saturday,  
June 28, 1997**  
Time: **8:30-10:00am**  
Place: **Ocean Beach at  
Lawton**

This is an opportunity for people in different classes to meet each other and share kumite. It's also a great chance for outreach--bring a friend, introduce someone new to Shintaido. Share the MAGIC of our special practice.

Instructor Shin Aoki will teach.  
**10:30 - 12:00** lunch at Laurence Mourey's house in the Richmond District (pot luck--please bring food to share with 4 others)

**12:00 - 1:30** conversation about teaching Shintaido and leading groups (optional)

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## A JULY FULL MOON KEIKO

*Full moon --a plateful  
yummy shrieking joyful face  
what is it to you?*

In Japan, a rabbit in the moon pounds mochi (sticky rice cakes), and saying "it's a wonderful moon" is a literary way of saying, I love you.

Come and bring all your moon images and associations for a keiko celebration of moon and stars by Lake Temescal. We will practice "hoshi otoshi" (knocking down stars), taikimai (sky dancing) and flower walking meditation in this beautiful, yet easily accessible, Oakland Hills spot.

Sponsored by Steve Marylander and Tomi Nagai-Rothe

**Date/Time:** Saturday, July 19 from 8:30 to 10:00pm with food and full moon conversations following.

**Location:** Lake Temescal Park in the Oakland Hills (Just off Hwy 24 before the Caldecott Tunnel < about 15" from downtown SF in off-peak

hours) Westbound< Take Hwy 24 east toward Walnut Creek, exit at Broadway, just before the Caldecott Tunnel. At the stoplight, go straight. Stay in the right lane and go up the hill on the frontage road about 1/2 mile. The park will be on your right. Park near the grassy field (straight ahead) and walk around the bushes to the left.

Eastbound - Take Hwy 24 west, exit at Broadway after the tunnel. Go left, under the hwy. At the first light, make a sharp left turn and follow directions above.

**The Weather:** Even in Oakland, it's wise to dress in layers. We will meet even if it's cool and foggy. In the unlikely chance of precipitation, call Tomi's number for a message after 6:30pm on July 19.

**Clothing:** keiko gi or light colored sweats.

**Transportation:** Call Steve Marylander (415-584-6624) or Tomi Nagai-Rothe (415-221-0463) for carpooling information.

**Cost:** It's free.

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## Informal Family Keiko and Old-fashioned Picnic

For families, old-timers, new-timers, never-before-timers

**Saturday, September 6 (9:30 to 2:00pm)**! It will be fun and very informal.

Come for keiko, come for just the warm-ups and stretch, come for the play (if we have lots of kids it may be more play than traditional keiko), come and nap on the grass, come for the picnic or come for the Frisbee. There's no pressure to do anything but COME! More details in late July.

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## New Equipment Manager!

Jennifer Peringer has agreed to become the new Pacific Shintaido equipment manager. We will be restocking our supplies of gi's, tabi, and other items in the near future. Domo arigato gozimas, Jennifer! Please contact Jennifer at 824-0456 if you have any equipment needs.

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## Bohs and Jos available!

Our local *katanakaji*, Michael Buckley, has milled a new set of bohs and jos. Please contact Michael at 331-6254 if you would like to buy a boh or jo.

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## Some details about Tomi's Thursday Class:

### "Playing on a Moving Planet"

An ongoing series of outdoor practices at Lake Temescal Park, Oakland (off hwy.24)

#### **SCHEDULE:**

**June-July** Basic Shintaido forms (toitsukihon), partner work and everyday applications.

**August-September** Basic Bojutsu (getting acquainted with the six-foot wooden

staff as an expressive tool)

**October** Shintaido meditation forms

**November-December**

Introduction to bokuto (formal wooden sword) and preparation for Kangeiko - New Year's Practice

**For info.:** Contact Steve Marylander (tel.) 415-584-6624 (e-mail)

steve\_marylander@peoplesoft.com

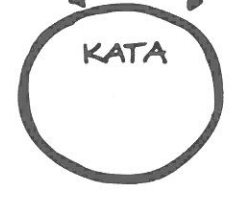
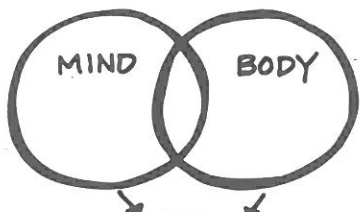
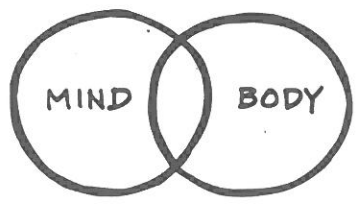
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## Lost and Found

Mila Gelman has a thermos with a pump handle that was left with her after International Gasshuku in 1996. Please contact her at 566-0269 if it's yours or if you know who owns it.

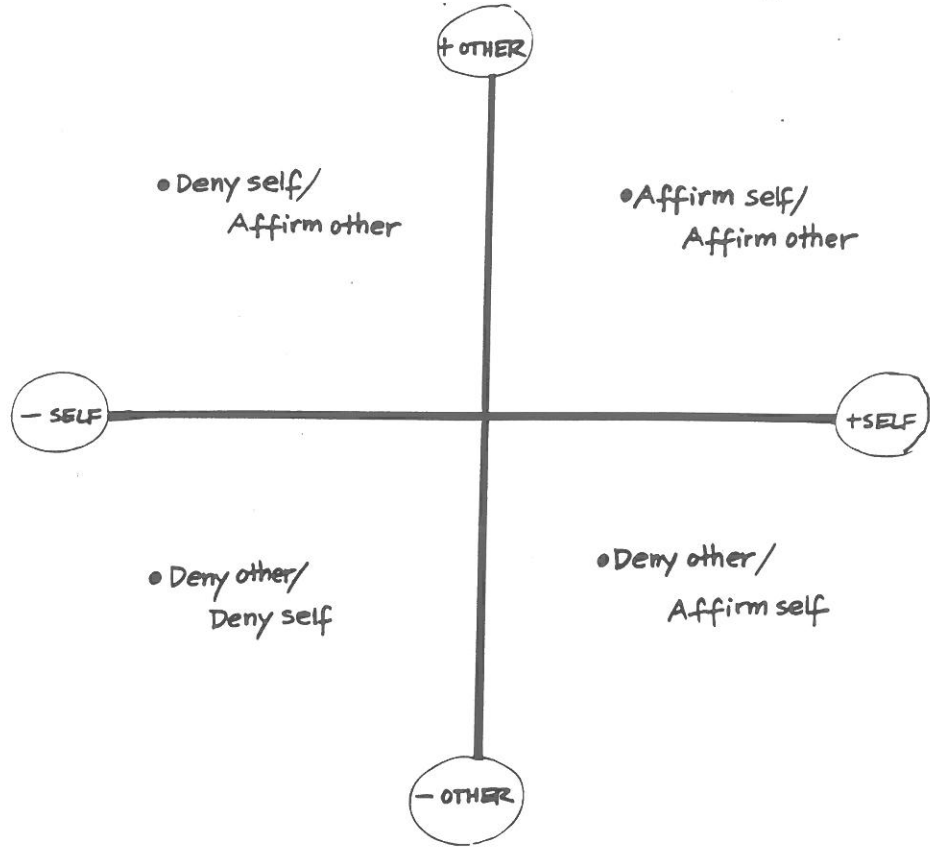
1

Mind Body Unification  
 身心一如  
 Shin Shin Ichi Nyo



2

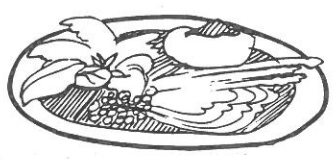
Unification of Self and Other  
 自他一如  
 Ji Ta Ichi Nyo



3

Unification of Self and Nature  
 地我一如  
 Chi Ga Ichi Nyo

• FOOD



• BREATHING

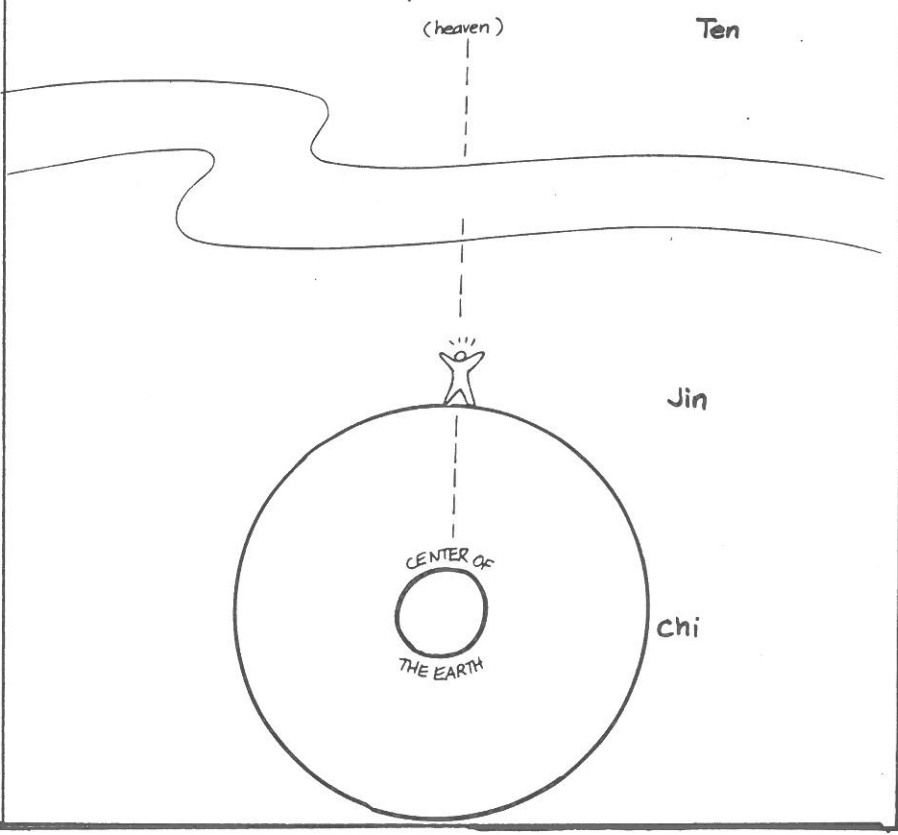
• REPRODUCTION



(ontogeny recapitulates phylogeny)

4

Unification of Self and Heaven  
 天我一如  
 Ten Ga Ichi Nyo





## Current Class Schedule

Class	Instructor	Date and Time	Place
Advanced Shintaido	James Sterling (contact Robert Gaston at 454-4749)	Sundays 8:30am-10:00am	San Domenico School, end of Butterfield Road, San Anselmo
Kenko Taiso for Health	Bela Breslau (contact Bela at 459-5803)	Mondays 7:30pm-8:30pm	San Rafael Comm. Ctr. 485-3333
Shintaido	Laurence Mourey (contact Laurence at 666-3864)	Tuesdays 6:30pm-8:00pm	50 Oak Street at Van Ness in San Francisco
Shintaido Bôjutsu	Jennifer Peringer (contact Jennifer at 824-0456)	Wednesday mornings 7:30am-9:00am	Holly Park off Cortland in Bernal Heights
Shintaido Bôjutsu	Robert Gaston (454-4749)	Wednesdays 6:30pm-8:00pm	San Rafael Comm. Ctr. 485-3333
Shintaido	Tomi Nagai-Rothe (contact Steve Marylander at 584-6624 (e-mail) steve_marylander@peoplesoft.com)	Thursdays 6:00pm-8:00pm* *see details in this bulletin	Lake Temescal, Oakland (off route 24)
Shintaido Karate	Shin Aoki (contact Shin at 510 284-3318)	Saturdays 8:00am-9:30am	Lake Temescal, Oakland (off route 24)

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Kazu Yanagi	415-567-8335		