



INTERNATIONAL SHUGENDO ASSOCIATION 国際修験道協会

The Shugendo Tradition of Mt. Koshikidake

STUDENT CURRICULUM

The following describes a typical basic course of study for Koryu Shugendo students in our organization, including eligibility and testing process for various practices. Before reading, please be aware of the following:

- International Shugendo Organization is a not-for-profit religious organization, recognized by Koryu Shugen Honshu in Japan, and advised by our Headmaster Shokai Koshikidake. All donations are used by ISA to support Shugendo activities.*
- The exact course of study for each person may vary depending on their needs and abilities. Many additional practices, both before and beyond the final step shown here, are not listed.*
- Any certifications given by ISA have expiration dates: the student must continue to practice, and certifications must be renewed to remain valid.*
- Note that regardless of this curriculum, the teaching of any ritual or giving of any kanjo (empowerment) is completely at the discretion of our Headmaster, Shokai Koshikidake.*

STEP 1: Apply to join International Shugendo Association (ISA). Applicants need to be approved, submit the entrance fee, and begin making the monthly donation. The Daily Recitation book is included with this entrance fee. Once accepted, access to online resources (currently, in closed Facebook group pages) will be given.

Beginners should first focus on learning to chant the **Heart Sutra** and **Fudo mantra**, using instruction (in-person and online) to learn the proper manner. They should chant the Heart Sutra every day until they can do so smoothly, and should practice chanting the Fudo mantra as much as possible. They should be able to chant the mantra at least 100 times continuously and smoothly in a session.

When they can do these things, students can begin to learn basic meditation methods such as **Gachirinkan** (moon-disk meditation) and the meditation of connecting with Fudo Myo-o (**Nyuga-ganyu-kan**) using the mantra.

STEP 2: Next, students should work to master the **Shugendo Daily Recitation**. During this time, they should also complete the **1000 prostrations practice**, and a total of **1000 Heart Sutra recitations**. After a minimum of 3 months, individuals who have been practicing regularly can request to have their Daily Recitation and basic meditation methods tested. This may be done in person or online, as required.

STEP 3: After passing this test, students are allowed to learn the first of three basic rituals: **Ajikan**. (The full practice of Ajikan Goma Saho will be taught, but at this stage it is not necessary to use the fire portion). This may be taught in-person or online as circumstances require. The donation to our H.Q. for instruction and materials, including the text, is \$300. After a minimum of 2 months of Ajikan practice, students may be tested. Where necessary, again, this test may be done online.

****A student who successfully passes this test and wishes to do so may be given permission to organize an informal study group, where interested persons can meet to practice together. The group's members must of course all join ISA and follow the same study process described here. The group will make a regular donation to ISA, and will receive continued instructional support from senior members.*

STEP 4: Students who have passed the Ajikan test may begin learning another important ritual, **Senko Goma**. This may be taught in-person or online as circumstances require. Instruction may be separated into 4 or 5 lessons of 1.5-2 hours each in order to cover all material. An example lesson plan may be like this:

- Lesson one will teach the students the basic concepts of Senko Goma, what utensils to prepare, how to set the practice area, and a basic overview of the ritual.
- Lessons two and three will teach the ritual itself, how to use all the implements, mantra, mudra and sutra, but without the actual fire.
- Lesson four will teach how to conduct the fire portion correctly.
- Lesson five will teach all the small details and basic visualization.

The donation to our H.Q. for instruction and materials, including the text, is \$300, to be submitted before the first lesson.

After instruction, the student must practice Senko Goma at least 100 times. When that has been completed, the student may be tested. If successful, a certification will be issued; this does not certify the student to teach Senko Goma, but it authorizes him or her to use the ritual to pray for others.

STEP 5: While practicing the 100 times senko goma, which can take some time, it may also be possible to learn the third basic ritual, **Fudo Nenju Ho**. The donation to our H.Q. for instruction and materials, including the text, is \$300.

All of the preceding study is open to all members, and is sufficient practice for one's whole life. But those who wish to study more deeply may be invited to apply for Step 6:

STEP 6: Tokudo, basic ordination, is possible for eligible students who have finished their 100-times Senko Goma practice and passed that test, and who have attended at least one **Mountain Training** (it is possible to receive tokudo at the first mountain training, depending on the applicant). ***This is the moment that you become a formal disciple of Koryu Shugen Honshu.*** Tokudo has to be performed in person, with no exceptions. Kirigami detailing a number of **Post-ordination Practices** will be given at this time, and these must also be learned if not already known. The donation for tokudo to our H.Q. is \$800. The applicant will also have to purchase the robes, which need to be prepared at least one month in advance.

STEP 7: After tokudo, students may begin to study the **Gyoja Daibosatsu Ho** ritual. The learning sequence may be similar to Senko Goma. At this point, the student will need to begin acquiring the full set of proper ritual implements. The donation to our H.Q. for instruction and materials, including the text, is \$300, to be submitted before the first lesson. After performing Gyoja Daibosatsu Ho 100 times, it will be tested similarly to Senko Goma.

STEP 8: After successfully passing the test for Gyoja Daibosatsu Ho, students may begin study of the five **Gosonpo**, which are goma rituals centered on:

- **Fudo Myo-o**
- **Juichimen Kannon**
- **Yakushi Nyorai**
- **Daikokuten**
- **Bishamonten**

At this point, the student will need to construct or acquire a proper gomadan (fire altar, indoor or outdoor) and have a suitable practice place allowing the ritual fire to be made. The learning and testing process may be similar to Senko Goma, with the usual \$300 donation for each ritual to our H.Q. for instruction and materials.

****A student who masters at least three of the Gosonpo may request to organize an official ISA-affiliated practice group.*

STEP 9: After learning all of the Gosonpo, performing the Fudo Goma at least 100 times, attending Mountain Training at least 5 times, and clearly understanding the meaning of Mountain Training and **Saito Goma**, students may be eligible to receive **Bosho Kanjo** and be designaged **Kesa-Gashira**, a mid-level of priest mastery in Koryu Shugen Honshu. Shortly before or after this time, the **Fudo Myo-o Roku-dan Mikkyo Goma** will be taught. For this, a donation of \$500 will be given to H.Q. for instruction and materials, and proper implements must also be prepared.

****A student who has completed study to this level may be permitted to establish an official branch temple under the guidance of ISA.*