

## VOICES: How do you maintain a seeking spirit after many years of practice?

*Members of New York #2 Joint Territory respond:*

For me it is important to always maintain clear goals. When these are accomplished, I create new ones. It is vital for me to stay close to the members and work side by side with them. Struggling together to make a happy life encourages and inspires my practice consistently. Every day I fortify my practice by studying SGI President Ikeda's guidance. I have seen members revolutionize their lives with daimoku and study of *The Human Revolution*. Using this practice to find answers to life's problems is the heart of a seeking spirit.

— SUSANA MOROMISATO, Garfield, N.J.

I try to make a seeking spirit my attitude toward life every day — to build on yesterday, to go further than before, to learn as much as I can about life and living. Wanting to continue to always move ahead is based on deep appreciation to the Gohonzon for how far I've come up to now and how much I've changed.

— STEVE PIONTEK, Allendale, N.J.

During my 26 years of practice, I have found three basic things that keep my seeking spirit alive: daimoku, caring for others and study. Chanting daimoku makes my life strong and joyful, and trying to help others become happy forces me to seek deeper compassion, wisdom and courage. For me, the key to keeping this whole process going is daily study before doing morning gongyo. Then, when I start to chant, I hit the ground running — my mind is already focused on "What can I do for kosen-rufu?"

— BETH POPPER, Englewood, N.J.

In a word, *gongyo*. When I joined in 1969, my district leader told me that gongyo was the bottom line of this practice. "If someone is doing gongyo then that person will always win," he said. This has remained a guiding principle in my years of practice. During morning gongyo and daimoku, I plan my day, determining to challenge my weaknesses and to implement to the best of my ability Nichiren Daishonin's teachings. After gongyo, I study for about five minutes. From these actions naturally flow a seeking mind and joy of practice.

— KENNETH BOYCE, Amsterdam, N.Y.

When the priesthood issue first surfaced, I found it very confusing and it brought up many questions. The general feeling in our area, especially from the people in leadership positions, was not to take sides. It was very difficult for me to take a stand against evil when I couldn't even see it. Only because I sought to understand President Ikeda's guidance and the Goshu in my life did I resolve my doubts and deepen my understanding. Taking a strong stand against Nikken and struggling with this issue has totally rejuvenated all aspects of my practice.

— GAIL LOCKWOOD, Buffalo, N.Y.