

SIGN POSTS: The Best Daughter I Can Be
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Even strangers were rewarded when they came together and treated someone as a parent. How much more so will be the case with actual brothers and sisters when they treat each other kindly and take care of their own father and mother! (*The Major Writings of Nichiren Daishonin*, vol. 6, pp. 72–73)

I have seen many references by Nichiren Daishonin to parents, but I found this letter to Shijo Kingo especially meaningful. Nichiren tells the story of young men who adopt an older woman, caring for her as their own mother, and the benefits they then receive.

Although I have always considered myself fortunate to have the parents I do, like many young adults I became increasingly critical of them with age. This tension in our relationship increased around the time I encountered this Buddhism. I immediately shared Buddhism with them; they were uninterested and ignored it.

Recently I decided to relocate across the country and accept new responsibility in the SGI-USA. I wanted to share my excitement with my parents, but they were concerned I was making a mistake. We had several difficult phone calls where I tried to convince them otherwise.

Finally, in tears in front of the Gohonzon, I determined to show them with my life that I was doing the right thing. Instead of focusing on what I wanted from them, I looked for what I could give them to help ease their concerns. I arranged to visit them during my move, and they were comforted by seeing my confidence in this new opportunity.

During a recent trip to Japan, I wrote a memo about my family to President Ikeda, who replied with gifts for my parents. A vice president told me, “Even though your parents don’t practice, please cherish them and be the best daughter to them.” I am determined to treat them with this kind of appreciation, to take care of them as Nichiren teaches. Through my example, my parents will without doubt come to appreciate my practice — and most important, become happy through my happiness.

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