

**SGI PRESIDENT IKEDA'S ESSAY  
RENEWING OURSELVES EVERY DAY**

**BY HO GOKU**

*In this new essay series, SGI President Ikeda uses his pen name Ho Goku — as he does in The New Human Revolution — to write the story-behind-the-story. We hope you will enjoy reading this new series, known as “Thoughts on The New Human Revolution,” in the Seikyo Shimbun, the Soka Gakkai’s daily newspaper.*

A new year. The sun of a grand state of being rises high. On the second day of the new year, I celebrate the start of the Year of Victory of the People with my dear and most esteemed fellow members at the Tokyo Makiguchi Memorial Hall.

Today is also my 70th birthday. I have received greetings and congratulations from fellow members all over the world. I am humbled, yet also very happy.

Jan. 2 is also the publication date for volume 1 of *The New Human Revolution* in Japanese [published in English by the SGI-USA in 1995]. I hope it will offer some small encouragement to all of you. I thank all those who assisted with its publication and all my readers.



Just a month before my 30th birthday, I made the following entry in my beloved diary: “I have no life apart from working, advancing and living with all my might alongside President Toda. I have come to realize that I am who I am because of my mentor.”

So sickly was I that the doctors told me I probably wouldn’t live to 30. My mentor, Josei Toda, showed more concern for me than anyone. He continued to guide and encourage me with compassion and strictness. I spent my days and nights in an exacting, unceasing struggle to propagate Nichiren Daishonin’s Buddhism.

When my strength was sapped by ill health and exhaustion, Mr. Toda said to me: “You are waging a battle against the three obstacles and four devils. Take all your pain and suffering directly to the Gohonzon, and fight to overcome every obstacle.”

He also told me, “Live your life and forge your faith in such a way that you can meet death with dignity and composure whenever it should come.” His voice — the voice of a strict yet loving father — pierced the very depths of my being. On another occasion, Mr. Toda said to me: “I will give you my life! Live, in my stead, live long!”



My mentor breathed this life into me, and I triumphed over my fate, over being hounded by the demons of illness — and I reached the age of 30. Exalted, I recorded in my diary how I had spent each decade of my life and what my goals were for the decades ahead.

**To the age of 10:** Growing up the son of a humble seaweed harvester.

**To the age of 20:** Self-awakening and struggling against illness.

**To the age of 30:** Studying and practicing Buddhism, and making earnest efforts to defeat the demons of illness.

**To the age of 40:** Perfecting my study and practice of Nichiren Daishonin’s teachings.

**To the age of 50:** Making a clear statement in society.

**To the age of 60:** Completing the foundation for the kosen-rufu movement in Japan.

But my diary says nothing about what happens after 60. I never thought I would live beyond that age.

Incidentally, it was in the autumn of my 57th year — a few months before I turned 58, the age at which Mr. Toda died — that I fell ill and was hospitalized.



If Mr. Toda were alive today, he would shortly turn 98. I am convinced that I have lived to see this 70th year because Mr. Toda shared a portion of his life force with me.

Victor Hugo began to write his great novel *Ninety-three* when he was 70. At about the same age, Leo Tolstoy began to devote his energies to writing his masterpiece *Resurrection*. Soon after becoming 70, founding Soka Gakkai president Tsunesaburo Makiguchi began publishing the journal *Kachi Sozo* (Value Creation), opening the way for fresh discussion and debate toward spreading the greatness of the Daishonin's teachings.

Now, with Ho Goku as my pen name, I am applying myself earnestly to writing volume eight of *The New Human Revolution*. The serialization of installments in the *Seikyo Shimbun* will resume shortly.

If I were to set down what I have accomplished from age 60 to the present, along with what I envisage for the decade ahead, it would read as follows:

**To the age of 70:** Establishing the principles of a new humanism.

**To the age of 80:** Completing the foundation for worldwide kosen-rufu.

From that point on, in accord with the Mystic Law and the undying, unaging nature of life expounded in Buddhism, I am determined to take the lead in kosen-rufu throughout eternity.



In a poem he wrote when he was more than 70, Goethe said:

*“Tell me! How you keep on renewing yourself?”  
You can do it, too, if you always rejoice at what is great.*

My life is one great journey for kosen-rufu. Before me I see the hope-filled mountain range of the 21st century.

The third stage of life is synonymous with the third youth. An ancient Chinese maxim urges, “Renew yourself each day.”

I vow with the firmest determination to exert myself “bravely and vigorously” again this year (*The Lotus Sutra*, p. 23).

**WT**