

**WOW! Treasure of the Heart**  
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In an oft-quoted line, Nichiren Daishonin urges Shijo Kingo: “From the moment you read this letter on, strive to accumulate the treasures of the heart!” (MW-2 [2nd ed.], 238). Maybe this means to cultivate kindness, fond memories, and good relationships with others. But it also means to strengthen your determination.

Wishes, hopes and dreams are the stuff of the heart. And sometimes this stuff is unfocused and scattered, like carbon dust, if you will. When we chant, we consolidate this dust. We harden and hone it, transforming it into a diamond, a glittering gem of determination. As SGI-USA Study Department Chief Ted Morino once told me, when our determination is solid like a golf ball, we can sail high and far when we’re hit with problems. If our determination is soft like a beach ball, though, we tend to drift and bounce around.

When I chant about my heart’s desire, I concentrate on solidifying my determination. Otherwise, when I rationally contemplate my situation, I get depressed. Without going into detail let me just say regarding my prayer: my environment and my self-slandering inner voice are shouting, “No! Never! Ever!” But my heart says yes, however faintly. When I chant, I feed this little yes. I nurture and protect it. It’s growing, becoming more concrete. I pray for it be so strong that my environment echoes it back to me.

I can’t say that I’ve read everything that the Daishonin wrote. Even so, I’ve never found a passage that says: “When your situation is completely hopeless, utterly impossible, I recommend that you change your prayer to one that is more likely to be fulfilled.” As far as I know, he never said anything of the sort. Rather, Buddhism teaches that no prayer goes unanswered.

And yes comes from the heart.

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