

STUDYING 'THE HUMAN REVOLUTION'
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While helping gather info for a timeline of the three Soka Gakkai presidents for this year's Day of Indiana, I was embarrassed by how little I know about the Soka Gakkai's history.

Sure, I knew who the three presidents were and was at least aware of some of the chain of events that shaped our organization's history, but not enough to fill a timeline. And so the research began. I began rereading *The Human Revolution* and when I finished, there was plenty of information for the timeline.

But it didn't stop there. I continued reading *The Human Revolution*, devouring each chapter and volume. And when I finished, I wanted to talk about it. This stuff was too good to keep to myself. So a few months ago, a small group started reading *The Human Revolution* together.

Each of us would become passionate as we shared our impressions on second Soka Gakkai president Josei Toda's release from prison and his single-minded vision to rebuild the organization in war-torn Japan. How he never wavered in the slightest as he struggled to propagate the Daishonin's Buddhism. How he set out to accomplish this mission the very day he was released from prison. How he stood alone with a collapsed business empire and no money in his pocket.

Our group has already learned much from the study sessions together. For example, how we should study. On page 64 of *The Human Revolution's* first volume, Josei Toda said: "You can't grasp the Lotus Sutra just by studying. How can I explain it? Perhaps because I had to face persecution—anyway, once I grasped the core of the sutra, I could read it easily. It's incredible."

When I read *The Human Revolution* for the first time years ago, I read it as a history book, nothing more. But as my faith deepened over the years, I suddenly began to grasp the purpose of studying *The Human Revolution*. It teaches the importance of the Soka Gakkai and how crucial is its preservation. Not to mention how practitioners of this Buddhism should face struggles.

And much can be learned from Toda's struggles. At a time when anyone could reasonably be in a state of total despair from the malnutrition, illness and poverty Toda experienced, Toda's sense of mission was unshakeable. Obstacles were no match for his strong spirit. Because he never lost sight of his mission, Josei Toda persevered and won.

The more I read *The Human Revolution*, the more I am compelled to focus less on my problems and more on protecting the Soka Gakkai. The three Soka Gakkai presidents endured the harshest of circumstances to build and protect this wonderful organization. So whenever I balk at study or organizational responsibilities, I remind myself of *The Human Revolution*. Because of Josei Toda's selfless efforts, the Soka Gakkai exists today. The least I can do is help protect this organization so that future generations can encounter this wonderful organization and discover true happiness based on the Daishonin's Buddhism."