

## WORDS TO THE WISE THE SPIRIT OF LEADERS

**Someone reported to me that you had fallen ill. Day and night, dawn and dusk, I prayed for your recovery to the Lotus Sutra; dawn and dusk, I prayed to the heavens. Today I learned that you have recovered, and my joy knows no bounds. (*Goshō Zenshu*, p. 1298)**

### FROM SGI PRESIDENT DAISAKU IKEDA:

*The following excerpts of SGI President Ikeda's guidance on leadership were taken from Faith Into Action (now available in SGI-USA bookstores and by mail order).*

Leadership is not a matter of ordering people around but of first taking action yourself. By initiating action yourself, you will win others' trust, and they, in turn, will take action.



It is important for leaders to have the spirit to bring out each person's potential. Leaders shouldn't judge others based on outward appearances or decide from their own narrow perspective that someone is unsuitable or no good. Racking your brain over how to uncover and bring out others' strong points is the true measure of a leader. This is the art of leadership.



Even if all the leaves on a tree should fall off in a strong wind, as long as the branches and trunk remain in tact, in time the tree will again produce flowers. Like wise the spread of Buddhism will continue as long as there remain people of genuine faith. The important thing, therefore, is to raise one person of genuine faith.



Prayer is most fundamental in raising capable people. You pray earnestly to the Gohonzon that the person you have found will become an able person important to the SGI-USA. And then with this prayer, you take the utmost care to help that person develop.



A single person is important. Everything starts from treasuring just one person. This is the eternal formula for the development for kosen-rufu.



Small-scale discussions or dialogues are important, the kind where you can talk directly, face to face, close enough to sense each other's warmth. Discussion that is not unilateral but convincing—discussion carried out this way can revive weary hearts, open closed minds and change the cycle of bewilderment and despair into one of conviction and hope.



To whomever you are speaking, if you have a broad mind and the magnanimous spirit to embrace and understand their feelings, their hearts will open up, revealing understanding and sympathy. Your ability to do this depends on your state of life. If you develop a state of life that enables you to be flexible, you can easily open the door to other people's hearts, stirring or soothing their emotions, developing on the situation. This is the essence of a dialogue based on a profound understanding of human nature.



When youth are awakened to a sense of mission, their power is limitless. Ultimately, we have to entrust our hopes and visions for the future to the youth. This is a golden rule. Youth is pure. Youth will rise up to fulfill their ideals without calculation or self-interest. The fundamental spirit of a leader must be to reach out to such young people, to work with them and bring out their capabilities and direct their youthful energies in a positive direction.



If leaders make constant efforts to study hard, grow and maintain a sense of freshness, the organization will advance and be filled with dynamism. An organization will change and develop to the extent that leaders change and develop themselves. The advancement of kosen-rufu in the community and country proceeds likewise.



The most important condition for leaders is sincerity. By contrast, an authoritarian air will only serve to alienate people, and intelligence alone may not produce anything of lasting value. Sincerity is what touches people's hearts, forges bonds of trust, and imparts a sense of security. A person of sincerity creates a relaxed, almost springlike atmosphere about him or her.



It is natural to encourage the person standing right in front of you. However, the true worth of leaders is determined by the extent to which they direct their attention toward those supporting that person at home or behind the scenes. Behind each individual is a network of connections with many others, including family members and friends. What is important is how much consideration we can show toward these people.



The Soka Gakkai's second president, Josei Toda, often said: "I have lost my beloved wife. I lost my beloved child. That's why I can be president." Someone who has not had to struggle in life, someone for whom everything has gone favorably and as they desired, cannot help others become happy. Unless we have suffered ourselves, we cannot truly understand other people's feelings or the real power of Buddhism.



Guidance in Buddhism is aimed at the very depths of life. It is an all-out challenge to motivate people to change their lives. Unless our own lives overflow with vitality, nothing we do or say will penetrate others' lives.

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