



ESSAY
President Ikeda explains why he feels giving university lectures is so important.

page 2



NEWS
China's Nankai University honors the SGI president.

page 10

A Civilization That Ensures Justice

Courtesy of SEIKYO PRESS

In his speech at the January Headquarters Leaders Meeting, at which he received an honorary doctorate from Delhi University, the SGI president looks to India for lessons on creating a just civilization. He asks us to 'listen again, with intent humility, to the profound spiritual message that continues to arise, calmly and quietly, from the eternal land of India.'



SGI members from India attend the SGI training session in Japan in September 1998, with representatives from 59 other countries and regions.

Congratulations on the start of the new year! My best wishes to all of you! Rabbi Abraham Cooper, associate dean of the renowned Simon Wiesenthal Center in Los Angeles, and Prof. Alfred Balitzer of Claremont McKenna College are presently visiting Japan. During one of their discussions here, they made an observation that I want to share with you. They expressed concern about the Japanese tendency to gloss over issues related to World War II and Japan's past history of aggression against other nations. It's this seem-

ing desire to bury the past, and simply forget all about it.

Such an attitude is in stark contrast, they said, to the growing tendency in other parts of the world—particularly in China, the United States and the leading nations of Europe—to leave an accurate record of history for the 21st century. How is it possible to steer a correct course for the future, they asked, without a correct understanding of history?

Their assessment is right on. That is the conventional wisdom of the world.

More and more in Japan, however, we are seeing a trend to cover up the

facts of history that are unpleasant or inconvenient and to teach a false history of events. A dangerous nationalism is spreading.

It is imperative, therefore, that we of the Soka Gakkai fight against these forces, that we strive with all our strength to expand the alliance of people of conscience and reason. And let us do just that!

Rabbi Cooper and Professor Balitzer referred to the SGI leader's courage in speaking out and taking action in a country where fact and truth are so easily distorted. Proclaiming

that calls for peace are meaningless unless they are accompanied by action, the two men paid tribute to President Ikeda's efforts to foster individuals of character, who are unafraid to take a stand for justice and truth when the need arises.

There is also no place for vagueness when recording the history of kosen-rufu. We mustn't turn a blind eye to people who betray the Soka Gakkai, who trample on the trust of their fellow members or who seek to suppress the

PLEASE SEE SPEECH, 6

EXAM

Sample questions for the April 25 Entrance Exam.

pages 3-4

ESSAY

President Ikeda's wartime memories.

page 5

YOUTH

In 'Seize the Day,' Marion Wheeler's experience from the SGI Fall Training Course.

pullout section

By DAISAKU IKEDA
SGI PRESIDENT

SGI PRESIDENT IKEDA'S ESSAY



WHY I GIVE UNIVERSITY LECTURES

SGI President Ikeda first began giving university lectures 25 years ago at UCLA with 'Toward the 21st Century.' Since then, he has spoken to university audiences the world over about making the 21st century a century of humanity. 'We must build roads of cultural understanding, communication, friendship and hope that connect the civilizations and peoples of our world,' he writes in this essay. 'That is why I continue to speak and give lectures.'

How quickly time passes. It was 25 years ago, on a sparkling spring day in 1974, that I stepped up to the podium of the Dickson Lecture Hall of UCLA. At the invitation of the university, I was giving a lecture entitled "Toward the 21st Century." It was the afternoon of April 1. In Japan, it was the morning of April 2, the anniversary of the death of my mentor, Josei Toda.

Sixteen years had passed since his death, and I, his disciple, Daisaku Ikeda, was 46. Mr. Toda's sincerest wish was for world peace, and he devoted his life to building a fortress of peace in people's hearts. Embracing my mentor's spirit and vision, I spoke that day of making the 21st century a century of humanity.

That was the first time that I spoke at a world-renowned center of learning.



My second university address was in the beautiful month of May the following year, 1975, at Moscow State University, in what was then the Soviet Union. The honorary doctorate I received on that occasion was the first I was to accept from a foreign university. My lecture was titled "A New Road to East-West Cultural Exchange."

At the time, the icy wall of the Cold War, which separated East and West, was thick and hard. Deep mistrust and suspicion divided the opposing camps. How could this wall of ice be melted?

My conclusion was that the only way was through cultural exchange, through exchange and communication between individuals, a type of exchange that would transcend the barriers of ideology. We needed to build a Silk Road of the spirit.

I will never forget how urgently I made my case for opening the door for that sort of communication to the audience of a thousand in the Culture Palace of Moscow State University. I strove with all my might to convey my message — as if I were engaged in a dialogue with each person present.



Prof. Leon A. Strijak interpreted for me on that occasion. He had worked through the night to fin-

ish the translation of my clumsy manuscript into perfect Russian. And although he was exhausted by the effort, he did a splendid job interpreting. I learned later that he asked one of his students

1837, titled "The American Scholar," was described as "an intellectual declaration of independence" for American culture, and it remains an important intellectual milestone today.

nese University of Hong Kong and the University of Macau. I have also spoken at other universities in Asia, including the University of the Philippines in Manila and Tribhuvan University in Nepal, as well as Ankara University in Turkey, at the crossroads of East and West. In Europe, I have given lectures at the University of Bologna, the oldest university in Europe, Saint Kliment Ohridsky University of Sofia in Bulgaria and the University of Bucharest in Romania.

I have spoken at various other institutes, research centers and human rights organizations, including the Institut de France in Paris, the Gandhi Smriti and Darshan Samiti in India, the Rajiv Gandhi Institute for Contemporary Studies, also in India, the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences in Beijing, the Simon Wiesenthal Center's Museum of Tolerance in Los Angeles, the East-West Center in Hawaii and the Brazilian Academy of Letters in Rio de Janeiro.



During one of my lectures, the microphone cut off twice. "Let's take a little break," I joked. "It seems I haven't paid my electricity bill." My audience responded with warm laughter.

When I was speaking at the University of Havana, there was a terrible thunderstorm and pouring rain outside. I began my lecture by saying: "Thunder — what beautiful music of the heavens! The heavens are beating their drums to congratulate humanity's progress toward the victory of peace. It is a great symphonic performance for our benefit."



Courtesy of SEIKYO PRESS

SGI President Ikeda lectures on 'The Age of Soft Power' at Harvard University, September 1991.

to remain on standby near the podium to take over if he became too tired to continue.

Several of the students in the auditorium that day, including Prof. Strijak's understudy, are now playing leading roles in promoting peaceful, friendly exchange between Russia and Japan.



Universities are centers of learning and intellect. In their hallowed halls, the world's future is created.

Not infrequently, addresses given at universities have great historical value. For example, the famous lecture that philosopher Ralph Waldo Emerson gave at Harvard University in

I have had the good fortune to speak at Harvard on two occasions myself, in 1991 and 1993. My lectures were "The Age of Soft Power and Inner-Motivated Philosophy" and "Mahayana Buddhism and 21st-Century Civilization."



In addition, I have spoken at many other universities, including the Columbia University-affiliated Teachers College in New York, Claremont McKenna College in California, the University of Havana in Cuba and the University of Guadalajara in Mexico. I have given addresses at Beijing University, Fudan University and Shenzhen University in China and at the Chi-

I am happy to say that my lectures have been well received. The internationally acclaimed scientist Linus Pauling responded with profound sympathy to my explanation of the Bodhisattva state of compassion in my lecture at Claremont McKenna College. He declared that acting in the spirit of "No. 9" — that is, the ninth of the Ten Worlds, the state of Bodhisattva — is the true duty of all human beings.

I also have a fond memory of shaking hands with many students who came up to me after one lecture. I shook hands with so many that my arms ached.

And several students who heard my lectures at Beijing University became interested in the Soka Gakkai and came to Japan to research us. Nothing pleases me more than when my lectures succeed in stimulating an ever-expanding sympathy and interest.



We must make the new century a century of peace, life and humanism. To achieve that, we must build roads of cultural understanding, communication, friendship and hope that connect the civilizations and peoples of our world. That is why I continue to speak and give lectures. I am calling on individuals to join in the task of linking the world together.

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'The Life of Nichiren Daishonin'

from *Living Buddhism*, pp. 14–35

Q1:

What was the practice that Nichiren Daishonin proclaimed on April 28, 1253? (*Living Buddhism*, p. 15)

Q2:

Describe the significance of the Tatsunokuchi Persecution in terms of Nichiren Daishonin's identity. (*Living Buddhism*, pp. 17–18)

Q3:

After the attempt to execute Nichiren Daishonin at Tatsunokuchi proved unsuccessful, he was exiled to a cold and forbidding place that he was not expected to return from. What was this place? (*Living Buddhism*, pp. 18–19)

Q4:

What did the Daishonin teach his disciples in response to their discouragement over his exile? (*Living Buddhism*, pp. 18–19)

Q5:

During the Sado Exile, the Daishonin completed the theoretical foundation of his teachings. What two works written during this period established the theoretical framework for his inscription of the object of worship? (*Living Buddhism*, p. 21)

Q6:

Nichiren Daishonin repeatedly stated in his writings that a Buddha is what? (*Living Buddhism*, p. 18)

Q7:

After what event did Nichiren Daishonin start inscribing the Gohonzon? (*Living Buddhism*, p. 23)

Q8:

The inscription of "Namyoho-rence-kyo" and "Nichiren" on the Gohonzon indicates what principle? (*Living Buddhism*, p. 23)

Q9:

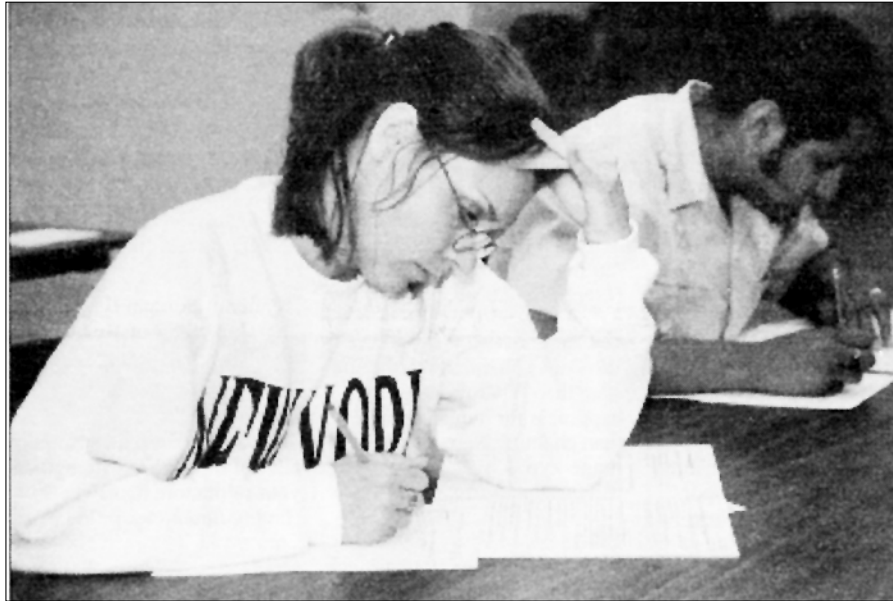
Following a Chinese proverb that says if one's warnings go unheeded three times by the sovereign, one should leave the country, the Daishonin retired to Mount Minobu and prepared for the great task of eternalizing his Buddhism. Retirement did not mean a life of leisure for the Daishonin. What three things did he

Sample Questions for the Entrance-level Exam

This year's Entrance-level Exam will be held Sunday, April 25, throughout the country. Actual questions for the exam will be based on the sample questions that follow. The page numbers that appear in parentheses at the end of each question will direct you to where the answer can be found. The actual exam questions will be in multiple-choice format, so this sample test is more difficult than the actual test will be. Also, of the following questions, only 40 to 50 percent will appear on the exam, which is expected to consist of 25 to 35 questions. We hope this information will assist you in preparing for the exam. Good luck!

— The Study Department

Photo by GREGORY NAKASUJI



Study is one of the most important aspects of practicing Nichiren Daishonin's Buddhism.

do at this time? (*Living Buddhism*, p. 25)

Q10:

To foster the faith of the disciples he was training at Mount Minobu, the Daishonin gave an important series of lectures. What were these lectures on, and under what name were they set down in writing by Nikko Shonin? (*Living Buddhism*, pp. 24–27)

Q11:

In what way did the behavior of the Daishonin's followers after the persecutions surrounding Tatsunokuchi and the Sado Exile differ from their behavior following the Atsuhara Persecution? (*Living Buddhism*, p. 29)

Q12:

What activity by Nichiren Daishonin's followers caused the authorities to persecute them?

(*Living Buddhism*, p. 27)

Q13:

Who did Nichiren Daishonin name as his legitimate successor? (*Living Buddhism*, p. 32)

Q14:

Why did five of the six senior priests abandon the Daishonin's teachings after he died? (*Living Buddhism*, p. 34)

Q15:

What slanderous acts did the five senior priests commit? (*Living Buddhism*, p. 34)

Q16:

Why did Nikko Shonin leave Mount Minobu and establish Taiseki-ji temple near the foot of Mount Fuji? (*Living Buddhism*, p. 34)

Q17:

What was Nikko Shonin's pur-

pose in writing "The Twenty-six Admonitions"? (*Living Buddhism*, p. 35)

'On Attaining Buddhahood'

from *SGI-USA Study Program Entrance-Level Textbook*, pp. 6–31

Q18:

How do the Daishonin's teachings about the Mystic Law differ from the views of most other religions? (p. 10)

Q19:

What does it mean to "perceive the nature of your own life"? (p. 21)

Q20:

What is the Daishonin trying to illustrate by using the analogy of a poor man counting his neighbor's wealth day and

night? (p. 21)

Q21:

What attitude will lead us to feel that our practice is an "endless, painful austerity"? (p. 23)

Q22:

What constitutes the attitudes of non-Buddhists according to this letter? (pp. 22–23)

Q23:

What does this letter emphasize as a key element in our Buddhist practice? (p. 23)

Q24:

What attitude prevents us from experiencing "great joy" in our practice? (p. 22)

Questions 25–26 are based on the following passage:

It [the Jomyo Sutra] further states that if the minds of the people are impure, their land is also impure, but if their minds are pure, so is their land. There are not two lands, pure or impure in themselves. The difference lies solely in the good or evil of our minds. (MW-1, 4)

Q25:

What Buddhist principle is illustrated by this passage? (pp. 26–27)

Q26:

What does "the good and evil of our minds" mean? (p. 25)

Q27:

Where is the Buddha land? (p. 25)

Q28:

In the principle of "the mutually inclusive relationship between life and all phenomena" what does *life* represent? (pp. 18–20)

Q29:

In the principle of "the mutually inclusive relationship between life and all phenomena" what does *phenomena* represent? (pp. 18–20)

Q30:

According to Nichiren Daishonin, what beliefs constitute inferior teachings? (p. 21)

Q31:

When would chanting Namyoho-rence-kyo still be considered practicing provisional teachings? (p. 20)

Q32:

The Daishonin teaches us that

PLEASE SEE QUESTIONS, 4

Photo by MICHAEL ANTON

QUESTIONS, FROM PAGE 4

when chanting to the Gohonzon we should “summon up deep conviction that _____.” (p. 23)

Q33: What action of Buddhist practice does the Daishonin compare to polishing a mirror? (p. 29)

Q34: According to this letter, what is “the direct path to enlightenment”? (p. 9)

‘The Real Aspect of the Gohonzon’

from *SGI-USA Study Program Entrance-Level Textbook*, pp. 32–53

Questions 35–44 are based on the following passage:

Never seek this Gohonzon outside yourself. The Gohonzon exists only within the mortal flesh of us ordinary people who embrace the Lotus Sutra and chant Nam-myoho-renge-kyo. The body is the palace of the ninth consciousness, the unchanging reality which reigns over all life’s functions.... The Gohonzon is found in faith alone. As the sutra states, “Only with faith can one enter Buddhahood.” (MW-1, 213)

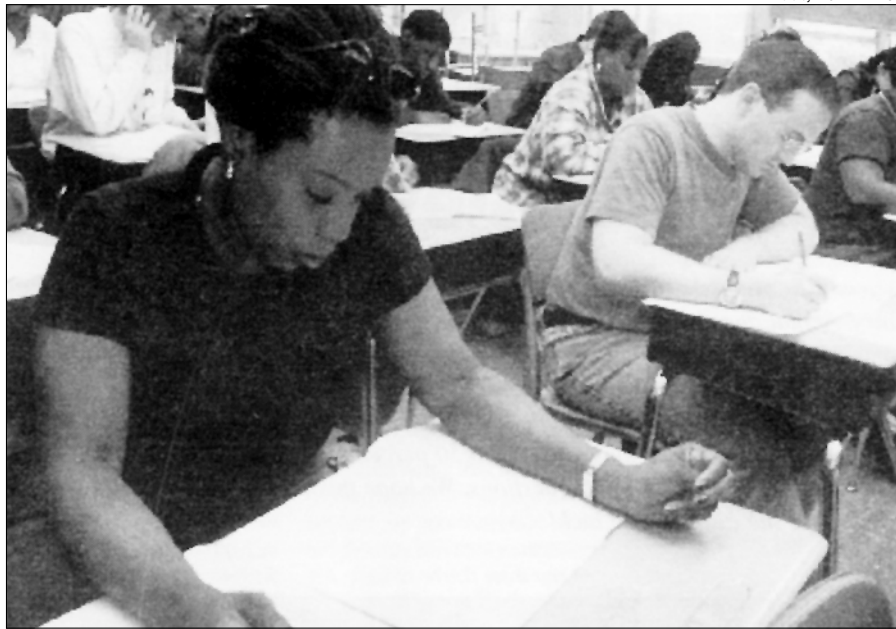
Q35: What is Nichiren Daishonin urging us to seek within our own lives? (p. 39)

Q36: What is the meaning of the passage “The body is the palace of the ninth consciousness, the unchanging reality which reigns over all life’s functions”? (p. 42)

Q37: In this letter, Nichiren Daishonin refers to the Gohonzon as “perfectly endowed.” Why are the other Buddhist objects of worship incomplete compared to the Gohonzon? (pp. 43–44)

Q38: No one has unwavering faith from the outset. How can we define faith at the beginning of our practice? (p. 49)

Q39: When we chant daimoku to the Gohonzon we experience the interaction of the four powers. Two of the four powers are 1) the power of the Buddha and 2) the power of



Members in New York take the Elementary Exam in October 1998.

the Law. How can we activate the power of the Buddha and the power of the Law in our own lives? (p. 41)

Q40: Shakyamuni’s disciple Shariputra was considered to be the “foremost in wisdom,” yet even he could not attain enlightenment through his wisdom. How did he attain enlightenment? (p. 46)

Q41: Even though doubts are natural and unavoidable, it is important to strive for doubt-free faith. Instead of worrying or tormenting ourselves, what should we do when we have feelings of doubt or insincerity in our practice? (p. 51)

Q42: What two actions express faith in Nichiren Daishonin’s Buddhism? (pp. 51–52)

Q43: What point is the Daishonin trying to teach us in this writing through the examples of the Emperor of Han and Li Kuang? (pp. 51–52)

Q44: Down the center of the Gohonzon, inscribed in Chinese characters, are the words “Nam-myoho-renge-kyo, Nichiren.” What Buddhist principle does this indicate (include the component parts of that principle)? (p. 38)

‘Happiness in This World’

from *Living Buddhism*, pp. 7–13

Q45: How can we elevate our inner life-condition? (*Living Buddhism*, p. 7)

Q46: Why is it important to elevate our inner life-condition? (*Living Buddhism*, pp. 7–8)

Q47: Why does Nichiren Daishonin state that “There is no greater happiness for human beings than chanting Nam-myoho-renge-kyo”? (*Living Buddhism*, pp. 7–8)

Q48: What enables us to experience the “joy derived from the Law”? (*Living Buddhism*, pp. 8–9)

Q49: How is “joy derived from the Law” different from the “joy derived from desires”? (*Living Buddhism*, pp. 8–9)

Q50: Why is attributing the cause of our happiness or unhappiness to someone else contradictory to the teaching of the Lotus Sutra? (*Living Buddhism*, p. 9)

Q51: Practicing with what determination in our Buddhist practice contributes to the development of our state of life? (*Living Buddhism*, pp. 8–9)

Q52: How does the phrase “Happy and at ease” relate to our lives? (*Living Buddhism*, p. 9)

Q53: What does it mean to be a Bud-

dha of absolute freedom? (*Living Buddhism*, p. 10)

Q54: What does achieving “peace and security” mean? (*Living Buddhism*, p. 11)

Q55: What is the Buddhist understanding of “life’s hardships”? (*Living Buddhism*, pp. 12–13)

Q56: Why does Nichiren Daishonin tell Shijo Kingo to “strengthen your faith more than ever”? (*Living Buddhism*, p. 13)

Q57: What is the meaning of Nichiren Daishonin’s advice to Shijo Kingo to “just chant Nam-myoho-renge-kyo, and when you drink sake, stay at home with your wife”? (*Living Buddhism*, p. 12)

Q58: What is the purpose of our practice of faith? (*Living Buddhism*, p. 7)

‘Questions and Answers on the Temple Issue’

Questions 59–63 are based on the “Introduction”:

from *Living Buddhism*, pp. 36–41

Q59: What is it about the nature of Buddhism that challenges those interested in passivity and unquestioning obedience from believers?

(*Living Buddhism*, p. 36)

Q60: What passage from the Lotus Sutra regarding persecutions applies directly to the SGI? (*Living Buddhism*, p. 36)

Q61: How does Buddhism characterize opposition by authority? (*Living Buddhism*, p. 37)

Q62: What is the meaning of obstacles to our Buddhist movement? (*Living Buddhism*, pp. 36–37)

Q63: What does opposition from the priesthood mean to the SGI? (*Living Buddhism*, pp. 37–38)

Questions 64–66 are based on question 2:

“Why is it important to know about the temple issue?”

Q64: How can we benefit by understanding the temple issue? (*Living Buddhism*, p. 38)

Q65: What is meant by “correct faith”? (*Living Buddhism*, p. 38)

Q66: In terms of the future, why is it important to understand the temple issue? (*Living Buddhism*, p. 38)

Questions 67–70 are based on question 4:

“What is the real difference between the temple and the SGI?”

Q67: What is Nichiren Shoshu’s position on the equality between lay members and priests? (*Living Buddhism*, p. 39)

Q68: How does Nichiren Shoshu’s view of the Gohonzon contradict Nichiren Daishonin’s view? (*Living Buddhism*, p. 40)

Q69: Nichiren Daishonin clearly states what it means to receive the heritage or lifeblood of faith. How is Nichiren Shoshu’s view different from the view of the Daishonin? (*Living Buddhism*, pp. 40–41)

Q70: How does Nichiren Shoshu and the SGI differ in action and commitment to kosen-rufu? (*Living Buddhism*, p. 41)

By **DAISAKU IKEDA**
SGI PRESIDENT

SGI PRESIDENT IKEDA'S ESSAY



I WILL FLY ON WINGS OF PEACE

President Ikeda grew up during World War II, and here he shares some of his worst wartime memories. These experiences led him to a life dedicated to peace. 'I am determined to fly on wings of peace around the globe, as long as I have strength, as long as I have life,' he writes in this essay.

April 1, 1937. I clearly remember the date because it was also the day I started fourth grade. That day, a Japanese newspaper held a grand ceremony to name and launch an aircraft it was sponsoring in an attempt to set a long-distance speed record for air travel between Tokyo and London.

The flight was also to be part of the celebrations for the coronation of George VI of England. I went with the rest of my class to Tokyo's Haneda Airport, located nearby, to watch the event. A large crowd had gathered.

At the ceremony, the plane was named *Kamikaze* or *Divine Wind*. I will never forget how loudly and excitedly I cheered when the *Kamikaze* rose into the clear skies after festive balloons and doves had been released in celebration.

The Japanese-designed-and-built aircraft set a world record by covering the distance between Tokyo and London, including stops in between for refueling, in 94 hours, 17 minutes and 56 seconds (51 hours, 19 minutes and 23 seconds of actual flying time). During a monthlong tour of Europe, the *Kamikaze* also made goodwill visits to Brussels, Berlin, Paris and Rome, where it was welcomed by huge crowds.

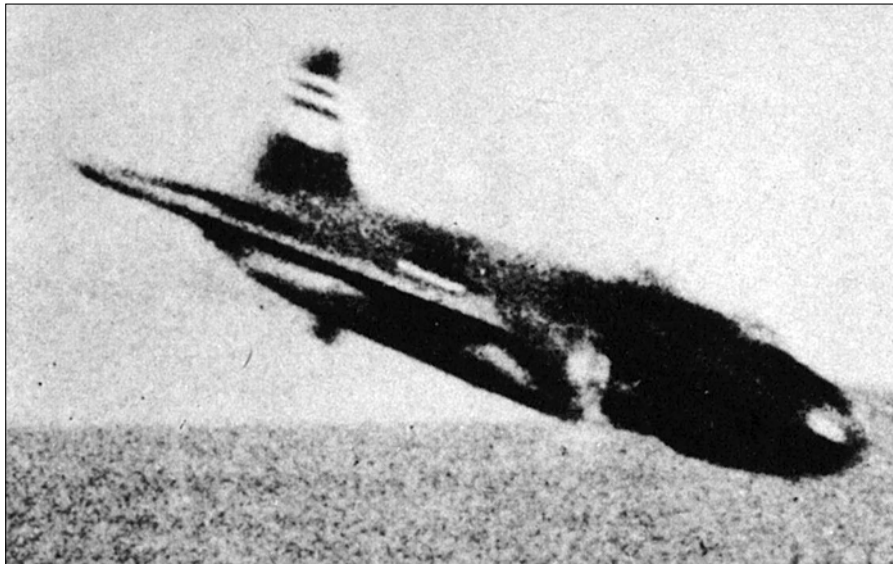


In August two years after the *Kamikaze's* record-setting flight, two other Japanese newspapers jointly sponsored an around-the-world flight by an airplane dubbed *Nippon*. It had goodwill visits scheduled in cities in North America, South America, Africa, Europe, the Middle East and Southeast Asia.

Once again, a large crowd of well-wishers gathered at Haneda to see the plane off. I remember going to the airport with my schoolmates for this event, too, and that we carried little Japanese flags.

The *Nippon* crossed the Pacific and Atlantic Oceans and traversed five continents, setting an around-the-world record by covering a distance of more than 31,000 miles in 56 days.

The *Kamikaze* and the *Nippon* were engraved in my young mind as wings of peace; they flew through the skies to build bridges of goodwill and friendly relations with other nations of the world.



The same name of the plane — 'Kamikaze' — that had made a historic goodwill flight in 1937 was used for a special attack force that flew suicide missions in war.

But a little more than two years after the flight of the *Nippon*, on Dec. 8, 1941 (Japan time), the Japanese military launched an air attack on Pearl Harbor and initiated the Pacific War.

That morning, my family and I heard a voice on the radio say: "This is a special news bulletin. The Army and Navy Department of Imperial Headquarters announced at 6:00 a.m. today that the Japanese Imperial Army and Navy..." Our faces darkened with anxiety as we listened to the announcement of Japan's initiation of hostilities against the United States.

When the broadcast was over, my father said with a sigh, "So now we're at war with America as well." He looked at my oldest brother, who had just been discharged from active duty and returned home from China. He must have worried that my brother would be shipped off to war again.

That day, the whole school

was buzzing with news of the Japanese victory at Pearl Harbor. But in fact, that day was the start of an oppressive, gray time in our lives. Blackouts were later put into effect, and towns grew dark. Even lights at home had to be covered with a dark cloth.



A year after the war with the United States began, my brother was called back to active duty by the Army and sent to serve overseas again. I will never forget the words he said to me, "Daisaku, there is no glory in war."

My three other brothers, all older, were also drafted in quick succession. The early victories of Japan's forces proved to be fleeting, and the war began to turn harshly against us.

But the reports from the battlefield were filled with flowery rhetoric of heroic feats — so that the Japanese people never knew the real situation. "Retreat" became "repositioning of forces,"

and cruel deaths in battle were "glorious sacrifices," using a term that in Japanese invokes images of jewels being smashed and their fragments scattering with exquisite beauty.



Eventually, the Air Force of the Imperial Navy formed a special attack force called the Shimpu (or, as it is more popularly known, Kamikaze) Tokkottai. These were the young men who flew suicide missions, the *Kamikaze* pilots. Their planes carried only enough fuel to reach their target — enemy ships — and when they did, they were expected to crash into it, to destroy or disable it and its personnel as their plane exploded and they sacrificed their precious lives. How ironic that the same name of the plane that had made that historic goodwill flight years earlier should be used to such an utterly different end.

From around November 1944, the U.S. Air Force began regular bombing raids on Tokyo. During a huge air attack one night in April 1945, I left the air-raid shelter where I'd taken refuge and began running toward Tokyo Bay. When the sun came up the next morning, I found that I was the only one in my family to have returned home. It occurred to me then that my mother and father and the rest of my family might all have died, and I was filled with remorse and self-recrimination for not having found a way to stay at their side.

Then, around noon, my mother appeared, and eventually my father returned, too. Everyone in my family was safe, and we all grasped each other's hands in joy and relief.

Our home in Kojiya had been destroyed as part of the forced evacuation policy, and the small dwelling we hastily built in Magome was burned down during the air raids. Each time I fled among the burning ruins, I remembered my brother's words: "Daisaku, there is no glory in war." He never returned to us alive.



I hated war. And I hated the leaders who incited people to war. I asked myself what I could do to make sure that such a tragedy never happened again.

Then one day, my life's course was set. I met Mr. Toda, who upon his release from prison stood up to bring happiness and peace to the people.

Thirty-four years ago today, on Dec. 2, 1964, I began to write my novel *The Human Revolution* in Okinawa, which had suffered more in the war than any other place in Japan. I began the novel with the words "Nothing is more barbarous than war. Nothing is more cruel."

"A world without war" has been the constant cry of my heart. I continue to write to drive that message home and to build bridges of friendship. I am determined to fly on wings of peace around the globe, as long as I have strength, as long as I have life.

This series is published as "Thoughts on *The New Human Revolution*" in the *Seikyo Shimbun*.



Photo by JONATHAN WILSON

'It is crucial that we foster a new generation of leaders. This is the only way. This is the formula for victory.'

SPEECH, FROM PAGE 1

kosen-rufu movement.

Rather, it's vital that we thoroughly expose their actions and see that they are brought to justice. If we leave things vague and ambiguous, our foundation will begin to crumble.

A bright future awaits us only if we keep fighting against — only if we completely defeat — those who would destroy Buddhism.

The world is our stage, Buddhism teaches.

Incidentally, I recently received a message from Cuban President Fidel Castro, saying that he was very happy and honored by the good wishes I had earlier conveyed for his good health considering his busy schedule. In his message, he declared that, since he is a "revolutionary," he will keep fighting until his final breath for the dignity of the Cuban people and the sovereignty of the Republic of Cuba.

He called me a revolutionary, as well, one who fights each day for the dignity of ordinary people, regardless of the consequences. And acknowledging the long hours I work, seven days a week, for the accomplishment of world peace, the Cuban leader wished me good health in my endeavors. He also voiced his hope that on my next visit to the Americas, I will visit Cuba again.

When I visited Cuba about three years ago, I received a very warm welcome.

During his stay, in June 1996, he met with President Castro in the Palacio de la Revolución in Havana.

The world is our stage. Nichiren Daishonin serenely dismissed the ruling authorities of Japan of his day, calling them "the rulers of this little island country" (*The Major Writings of Nichiren Daishonin*, vol. 1, p. 176).

The Daishonin's Buddhism derives from an infinitely vast state of life — one that encompasses the entire world and universe. So let us of the SGI, its practitioners, turn our hearts to the world and the universe while taking action in our local communities.

To form spiritual ties with India has been the SGI's long-held dream.

It is an unsurpassed honor today to welcome such distinguished philosopher-scholars from India, the land of a great spiritual heritage that is the treasure of all humankind.

Most esteemed Vice-Chancellor Mehta, Madame Mehta, Pro-Vice-Chancellor Ahmad, distinguished professors of Delhi University, ladies and gentlemen: I wish to express my deepest appreciation for the degree of doctor of letters, *honoris causa*, which has been conferred upon me by your venerable institution.

I regard this event as one of profound significance. For to

form spiritual ties with India, the birthplace of Buddhism to which we owe such an immense debt, has been the cherished dream of followers of the Daishonin for 700 years.

The Soka Gakkai's first and second presidents, Tsunesaburo Makiguchi and Josei Toda, strove valiantly to make that dream a reality. I therefore dedicate the honor that has been conferred on me by your illustrious institution to my two noble predecessors. It is also my firm belief that people 50 or 100 years hence will look back on today's historic ceremony with great pride.

Gandhi was determined to win — to even turn his enemies into allies.

Allow me to share an incident that took place when Mahatma Gandhi was fighting for human rights in South Africa (from *Gandhi the Man: The Story of His Transformation*, p. 47). Gandhi sought the repeal of a notorious law requiring the registration of all Asians.

Passed in 1907, the law mandated the registration of all Indians over the age of 8 resident in South Africa. Their fingerprints were taken and kept on record, and carrying the Asian resident registration card was made compulsory. Non-compliance meant stiff fines, imprisonment, the loss of the right to residence and, ultimately, deportation.

Gandhi went straight to the general who was the head of the government and told him, "I've come to tell you that I am going to fight against your government."

Gandhi was a person of true courage. This is the only way one can fight injustice.

The general laughed scornfully and queried: "You mean you have come here to tell me that? Is there anything more you want to say?"

"Yes," Gandhi said distinctly, "I am going to win."

What a wonderful assertion! He'd already decided on the outcome. In terms of his powerful resolve, he had already won.

Astonished, the general asked, "Well, and how are you going to do that?"

Gandhi smiled and replied, "With your help."

True to his declaration, Gandhi in the end managed to turn the general into an ally for his cause. He did this by winning the general's respect through his personal integrity and courage. And finally, he succeeded in having the law repealed. This is a true story.

As a result of Gandhi's long, nonviolent struggle, during which he courted imprisonment, the law was repealed and basic civil rights for Indians were in 1914 brought into legislation.

What boldness, what spirit, what optimism Gandhi displayed! How inspiring were his actions! These are the qualities and characteristics of a true revolutionary. I want all of you, the revolutionaries of Soka, the revolutionaries of the new century, to emulate his spirit.

A revolutionary must have iron strength and fortitude. Someone commented on what they saw as a growing number of Soka Gakkai leaders who lack courage and backbone compared to the early days of the organization. They noted that there were even some who had risen to high positions thanks to the sincere support of fellow members but had become ungrateful and arrogant. Such people, this person said, were truly foolish and not to be trusted.

I call on the youth division to stand up once again and build a new Soka Gakkai!

Even if no one else does, I will stand. Even if I am the only one, I will fight on! I am a suc-

cessor to Mr. Makiguchi's legacy. I am a direct disciple of Mr. Toda. I will strive once more, onward into the 21st century. Please join me!

In Japan and around the world, New Year's saw the SGI make a magnificent departure — with an alliance of hope unprecedented in size and number — for the 21st century. There is no other organization in the world like the SGI, whose members are practicing in exact accord with the Buddha's will and decree. It is an organization directly connected to the Daishonin.

Let's advance joyfully with the resolve that if the Soka Gakkai is rock-solid, then Japan and rest of the world will be rock-solid, too. We are working for no one and no cause other than kosen-rufu, the happiness of the people, and our own fulfillment. And if we're going to strive in that endeavor, then let's achieve a really stunning victory!

New beginnings can always be traced back to just a few people, Gandhi taught.

Twenty years ago, on Feb. 6, 1979, I arrived at New Delhi airport just after midnight. It was my first visit to India in 15 years.

As dawn broke, the streets of Delhi were enveloped in a magical morning mist. It was a solemn, breathtaking picture.

The very first thing I did was pay a courtesy call on your splendid Delhi University. As Soka University founder, I also presented some books to your library, an expression of goodwill, in a ceremony in the university's Tagore Hall. That visit remains a golden page in my life.

Delhi University is a renowned center of learning that is creating new directions for human history. Many decades ago, it was the cradle of India's struggle for independence. Mahatma Gandhi visited the university many times, engaging in dialogue with students as he led the movement for India's self-rule. Gandhi saw a great ray of hope in the beautiful unity of the university's youth, who were striving to learn together, rising

PLEASE SEE SPEECH, NEXT PAGE

SPEECH, FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

above differences of birth, social standing, and religion.

As a young university in those days, Delhi University faced many challenges, such as finding adequate funding and facilities. Its student body was still small.

Gandhi, with his penetrating insight into history, watched warmly over the university's development. Said Gandhi: "A beginning is always made by a few, even one," and "Strength of numbers is the delight of the timid. The valiant in spirit glory in fighting alone."

Living up to Gandhi's prediction, Delhi University went on to achieve spectacular growth and development.

We need new talent, new ways of thinking — there's no other way to win now.

Vice-Chancellor Mehta is one of India's leading political scientists. In his capacity as vice president of the International Association of University Presidents, he has also exercised vibrant leadership in the sphere of global education.

In his highly acclaimed book *Beyond Marxism: Towards an Alternative Perspective*, Prof. Mehta stressed that "a new integral man must accompany the new social revolution" (p. 38). I am in complete agreement with this.

In order to emerge victorious from a period of profound historical transition, we need the contributions of new talent. We need expanding ranks of capable people with fresh ideas and new ways of thinking.

It is crucial, therefore, that we foster a new generation of youth and raise a new generation of leaders. This is the only way. This is the formula for victory.

That is why I want the youth division members to advance freely and without restraint. There's no need to be shy or hesitant. Just follow your heart, and do what you feel needs to be done. I want you to open a vast path of kosen-rufu double that of the present — and even double that again! I entrust everything to the youth division members, successors in whom I place the utmost faith. That time is already here.

The women and youth of Gandhi's movement had no thought of reward or personal gain.

Many women came together to courageously take part in Gandhi's nonviolent movement. Some had young children who accompanied them and died along the way. Still these brave mothers forged on, enduring all. Said one stalwart mother: "We must not pine for the dead who will not come back to us for all our pining. It is the living for whom we must work."

Women and youth joined in the struggle for independence with no thought of reward or personal gain. They did not let grief or sorrow defeat them. They did not succumb to self-pity.

Their selfless dedication was a source of immense courage and inspiration for Gandhi himself. He declared that the highest respect and honors belonged not to him but to these ordinary people.

One scholar said that it is an obscene affront to civilization that politicians and the like — those who use the people to get ahead — are lavishly honored, while ordinary people working valiantly to improve society at the grass roots are never recognized.

Today is also a women's division leader's meeting. With the same spirit of veneration and affection Gandhi had for women, let us convey our greatest respect and appreciation to the women's division members, the noble mothers of kosen-rufu!

The members of the women's and young women's divisions are the treasures of our organization. The members of the men's and young men's divisions are not to behave arrogantly toward them or scold them. Arrogant, high-handed behavior is inexcusable in any leader.

Madame Mehta has likewise made enormous contributions to social welfare and education while wholeheartedly supporting the extremely busy vice-chancellor. Let's applaud her for her wonderful efforts.

Mr. Makiguchi said that if you're deadlocked, go back to your starting point.

Mr. Makiguchi, the originator of value-creating education,

often said, "When you come to a deadlock, go back to the beginning, to your starting point." This is a well-known principle.

Humanity is now in a serious deadlock. It is vital, therefore, that we listen again, with intent humility, to the profound spiritual message that continues to arise, calmly and quietly, from the eternal land of India.

The starting point of a steadfast humanism is the concept of human victory based on the Dharma — meaning the Law, justice, or truth — as was demonstrated by India's King Ashoka. I spoke about this in my lecture at the Rajiv Gandhi Foundation (see January 1998 *Living Buddhism*).

Prof. Rana of Delhi University, one of our distinguished guests today, is a renowned authority on King Ashoka.

During World War II, when Mr. Makiguchi was interrogated in prison by the Japanese military authorities, he asserted with great dignity his commitment to the Buddhist principle of relying on the Law, not on people. The Law is what matters. People are fickle, but the Law is constant, unchanging. We should therefore base ourselves on the Law.

Mr. Makiguchi based his actions on the fundamental principle of the universe, the eternal, unchanging Law. From this noble perspective, he looked down upon the power of military authorities.

This is the great Soka Gakkai spirit. There is no stronger, happier way of life than one lived

in harmony with the ultimate Law.

There is no strategy more powerful than the strategy of the Lotus Sutra. There is no joy greater than chanting Nam-myoho-enge-kyo. Let's advance with that unshakable conviction.

The deepest struggle is against the negativity and destructiveness within the human heart.

We find these words in one of King Ashoka's rock edicts: "All people are my children. What I desire for my own children — and I desire their welfare and happiness both in this world and the next — that I desire for all people" (*The Edicts of King Ashoka*, p. 18).

I have always believed that the essence of humanistic education, as well, lies in teachers' determination to love their students as if they were their own children.

Another of King Ashoka's rock edicts states that ruling a country means working for the happiness of the people. Still another describes the task of governing as repaying the debt owed to the people [for their sustenance and support].

Government or political leaders who exploit the people for all they're worth, who gain power and position as a result, and who then strut around,

puffed up with self-importance, don't know the first thing about the true meaning of governing. Even more deplorable are those who have no sense of gratitude toward the people, who betray the people and their trust. They are the lowest of the low.

Gandhi, who revived King Ashoka's spirit in the modern age, listed politics without principles as first among his list of seven sins (see Jan. 15 *World Tribune*, p. 11). He repeatedly taught that without a firm spiritual base, without the support of a religious outlook, politics will become debased and corrupt.

In light of the Mahatma's beliefs, the assertions and actions of the SGI are valid and correct.

Prof. Mehta also said with great eloquence and insight: "Whatever we may think, evil will always keep its place in the human heart, especially in places of power. We all combine within ourselves, though in different proportions, good and evil, brute and human. But our task as civilized beings is not to unleash evil upon the world, but to fight it and evolve towards better ideals..." (*Beyond Marxism*, p. 131).

I completely agree with his words. The deepest struggle is the struggle against the negativity and destructiveness — the devilish nature — within the human heart. Therefore, we must fight against the devilish nature of power, against wanton abuses of authority. Leaders, especially, must stand in the van-

PLEASE SEE SPEECH, 10

Photo by DIXON HAMBY



'Live eternally / Like a phoenix / Soaring through the sky.'

乙御前母御書

池田會長講解

一二七三年(文永十年)十二月(推定)五十二歲作

真是一趟奇蹟之旅。

一位女性帶著幼女，從鎌倉跋山涉水到佐渡。

一對母女翻山、越嶺、渡海，喘呼呼地出現在流罪中的日蓮大聖人面前。

「誠大不思議」(乙御前御返事)——可說是從現實上無法想像的不可思議。

大聖人看到鎌倉女信徒突然出現在眼前，或許懷疑自己是否看錯了？

在無人造訪的地方，一位女性居然帶著幼小的女兒前來。驚奇之餘隨即轉變為感動的心情。

「一路平安無事吧！孩子無恙吧！真是感謝！沒有比此事更令人高興的了！」

面對一位信心專一不二的女性，大聖人如此問候。

或許發自仰慕遠在佐渡的大聖人之一念！「於此大難時，實在是坐立不安。」希望能為大聖人分擔些許辛勞。

這封寫給「乙御前之母」的信讀數七百年前一位「求道之母」為仰慕其師，抱持著千山萬水我獨行的信心。



池田會長

這是何時寫的呢？雖只寫著十一月三日，但近年來的研究，比較肯定一二七三年寫於佐渡這種說法。

在寄出此信前一年的五月，大聖人曾寫了一封「日妙聖人御書」。那封信也和「乙御前之母」一樣，是寫給一位帶著幼女遠至佐渡尋訪大聖人的女性的書信。大聖人為這位信徒取名為「日妙聖人」，對其稱讚不已。

迄今，一般的看法認為日妙聖人與「乙御前之母」是同一人，本篇講義也將據此說法論述。

乙御前之母
今是為敬慕法華經，而將成佛之女人也。再者，今是無心執筆，但仍多言之。又聞御房等多承照拂，先此申謝。

《通解》
此致乙御前之母
現今，因為(您)仰慕法華經，故是必定能成佛的女人。

(基於此因)雖然現今的狀況實無心思寫信，(另有解釋：我實在文筆不好)，但仍時常寫信給你。

又聽說，您很照顧(鎌倉的)弟子們，實不知如何道謝才好。

「若你不能成佛，到底誰能成佛？若你不能成為幸福的人，這佛法到底是為何而有的？」御文中散發著大聖人這份心意。

人的價值在逆境時見真。身陷「千

人墮之者」(新尼御前御返事)的大法難渡海中，乙御前之母的行動綻放出不朽的光彩。是位成為末法萬年典範的「不朽女性」。

一二七一年(文永八年)秋天，當大聖人蒙受龍口法難、佐渡流罪時，門下也受到迫害的暴風雨吹襲。

有人被關入土牢，有人被沒收領地，或被逐出鎌倉。

結果導致很多弟子懷那退轉，或身雖不離但心已離。也有人僅僅捨棄信心，甚至辱罵大聖人。

也有為求自保而串通敵人的小人吧！這種人最後不但會落得兩邊不是人，而且連自己也沒有法信自己，最終陷入窮途末路，無法自拔。

反觀本佛，不管任何風暴，也吹不熄他胸中的火焰。雖身受佐渡流罪此畢生最大法難，大聖人卻自稱為「日本第一富者」(開目抄)，悠然地留下王者的足跡。

「救濟民眾的熱情愈增——大聖人將精神勝利的宣言透過開目抄，告知全體門下。此綻放光芒的信息，照亮了在大難中堅忍不移、互勉互持的門下心胸。

若是小小的火苗，遇上一陣陣風便熄。但大火卻相反，愈是遇到強風的吹襲，燃燒愈旺。大難是廣布前進的推動力。

接獲開目抄的四條金吾，無法坐視不顧，馬上離開鎌倉，趕往佐渡。

乙御前的母親也跟在，在逆風中不顧自身的危險，一心欲追隨大聖人。

面對此求道與報恩的行動，大聖人稱讚說：「豈有不成佛之理？」(乙御前御消息)

乙御前的母親心想：「現在，我能做些甚麼呢？」於是不遺餘力地照顧鎌倉大聖人的弟子們。

大聖人對這番厚情也答謝說：「不知如何道謝才好」，這句話使人感受到大聖人真誠的心意。

可是，近年來，有許多傲慢的

僧侶誤以為受到照顧是理所當然。他們正是箭頭對準大聖人的僧侶。

日蓮流放至此，原非無故。而汝以一介女流，迢迢來訪，具見十分厚意，感激之情，難以言表。

《通解》
我被流放到此地，是有其理由，而你身為女性，一路艱辛來到此地(佐渡)，表現出如此深厚信心的心志，我深深感謝。

她的行動就是「心志」的表現。心志——心指向何處之意。

她的遭遇並非幸運，早已因故和丈夫分離。女兒乙御前還是個稚子。

她牽著心愛的女兒的手，向佐渡出發。當時，雖然也有女性出遠門，但往佐渡的路崎嶇艱險，和鎌倉、京都間修整過的道路不同，必須翻山、渡海。就算是健壯的男性也必須走上三個月。

從鎌倉到佐渡，雖然距離更遠，也僅需二個星期，可見鎌倉佐渡路途之艱難。何況前往佐渡必需渡越的海也不平穩。有時為了等風平浪靜，可能要等上好幾個星期，乘船之旅也是今天我們無法想像的艱辛。

「山海遙隔，高山峨峨，海浪滿滿，風雨不隨時。」(日妙聖人御書)——山海遙隔，山勢峨峨，海面波濤洶湧，風雨亦不順。

大聖人的話絕不誇張。

一名女性帶著幼女出遠門是多麼辛苦呀！不論是牽著孩子的手一起走，或背著走，要是碰到大熱天，可能連汗都來不及擦拭。

「心志」決定人生
而且此行正值「北條時輔之亂」發生後不久，世局不穩，「民心如虎、如犬」(同前)，山賊、海盜也經常出沒。

這對母子必是好幾次，造訪不相識的人家，以免露宿。稚兒也曾哭泣不止吧！光想像那種情景，心中感動不已。如御書所說：「現身經歷三惡道之苦矣。」

但乙御前的母親不因此而受挫，因她想走大聖人走過的通往佐渡之路，想分擔師的辛勞。是那麼意志昂揚、心繫崇高。

信仰令人堅強，尤其是大難來時，真正的信仰者會綻放光芒。的確，沒過難比較好。但從某一方面而言，難以造就出末法萬年的「真金之人」。

強風掃落葉，但只要枝、幹無損，還有開花的一天，同樣地，「真實」之人尚在，佛法就得以弘揚。所以培育「真實的一人」非常重要。

大聖人讚歎乙御前的母親是：「日本第一法華經行者之女人」(同前)，並賜名「日妙聖人」。「日蓮」的「日」、「妙法」的「妙」，甚至尊為「聖人」。由此可知，日蓮大聖人認為，不論出家、在家，男女之別或身分的差異等，皆不足掛齒，關鍵在於對方的「心」、「心志」。

「心志」是指「心靈深處的一念」。也是指此人的生命本質，以何事為關注？人生以何事為祈求根本？「心志」雖然眼睛看不到，一旦面臨緊要關頭時，就會顯現出來。不僅如此，「心志」在日常生活瞬息萬變中，就已掌握人的一切，決定人的一生命運。華嚴經有云：「心如工畫師」，是意指心要如名畫家，能自如描繪心之所思。

人這顆心就像人生設計師、畫家、雕刻家、建築師。天台大師引用華嚴經這句經文，說示一念三千法門。為教導大家一念(心)具三千諸法，而特意借畫家這具體的人物來解釋。

凡事在於「心志」、「一念」。具體上也可指「希望」、「祈念」，或說是潛在意識。

自己將如何描繪未來？要成為怎樣的人？畢生要完成甚麼理想？心中要盡可能具體地將它勾繪出來，因為這將成為未來的藍圖。

若想依照這張藍圖，實際繪出一幅美好的人生名畫，則要靠「心志」的力量，以及「一念三千」的法門。

這幅想像圖愈具體、愈細密愈好。這樣的話，不但可使自己不停地有目標可循，而且能向前邁進。如此一來，可使現實的自己，一步步接近藍圖目標。

因為是一念三千，所以悲觀的想法、一念，會如實呈現於現實中，並實際導致負面的結果。甚至至可以說，悲觀的人，是自己造成自己所預想的結果。

因此，要抱持樂觀主義，佛法不教人悲觀。縱使毫無指望，佛法、法華經就是能令人秉持大確信，燃起無限希望。

日蓮大聖人以身證明了這點。連在死地佐渡，大聖人都微笑說：「斯足大悅」(開目抄)，這是開目抄的結語。

另外，大聖人也在佐渡，悠然地與門下最遠房約定說：「日蓮雖未得幕府之許，卻奉諸天之命而歸鎌倉」(最蓮房御返事，大華嚴經有云：「心如工畫師」，是意指心要如名畫家，能自如描繪心之所思。

我確信，是大聖人為末法萬年世界廣布的一念，化作今日創價學會的出現，在全世界喚起地涌蓮華。

「心志」的力量偉大無比。「乙御前之母」的心，直奔大聖人。由於追隨大聖人，使得乙御前之母的心也生起法華經所揭櫫的理想：令人人獲得幸福。

這種「心志」促使她跋山涉水遠赴佐渡。今天，希望各位也要好好地各自崗位，以崇高的理想為目標，安步當車、翻山渡海，前進到底。

新年賀詞

敬愛的全世界同志，向二十一世紀出發的這一年，恭賀新禧。在此獻出賀詞，慶祝各位迎來滿懷希望與勇氣的新年。

日蓮大聖人教示：「月自西向東，月氏佛法東流之相；日出自東，日本佛法還歸月氏之瑞相也。」「終必於一閻浮提廣宣流布之事，是一定者也。」遵照御書，實現佛法西還、世界廣布的預言，就是我們的工作。

若無此一，則大聖人的聖訓亦成虛言妄語。各位正是志願與最符合佛意佛教的父兄一起展開聖賢行動而出世的地滿菩薩，無比尊貴的佛子。

有賴各位努力，創價運動的溪流翻山越嶺，成為滋潤大地的滔滔大河，遍佈世界一百二十八國、區域。我向各位日以繼夜的努力活躍，表示由衷的敬意。

想必各位福德無量，功績輝煌佛法史；必獲三世十方諸佛稱許、護佑、惠及子孫萬代。

大聖人在有名的《報恩抄》中斷言：「日蓮慈悲廣大，南無妙法蓮華經，萬年之外，必流傳至未來而無盡。」是以無須著急，要成為好國民、好市民，在社會上打穩基礎，努力貢獻。

今年也請以「異體同心」的團結，和睦明明地前進。一起堂堂演出此生精彩的廣布人生戲劇。衷心祝福寶貴的各國同志日益健康、長壽，人人成為幸福的主人，無一例外。珍重！

一九九九年元旦
安公會長池田大作

勝利的實證

張麗蘭口述·韓盈盈筆錄

我和外子與信心結緣於十二年前，當時我們尚在台灣，女兒首先入信。信心單純的她，積極鼓勵家人接受妙法，我和先生雖未排斥，卻也未全心投入。我又曾因先生臥病在床，至廟中許願，總覺得接納另種信仰是對菩薩的不敬，內心始終有著猶豫與掙扎。

一九八八年十一月，我和先生來美定居，真正展開我們的「信心之旅」。抵美後，我們暫住妹妹家，熱心的會員很快與我們聯絡上。次月，我們即順利領到御本尊。但由於妹妹尚無信心，不便於她家中安置御本尊。兩個月後，我們另覓住處，始為御本尊找到安身之所。

移民家庭在異地展開新生活並非易事，更何況我們年事已長，兒女又不在身邊，更是加倍辛苦。語言障礙不說，就連出門開車對我倆也是一大挑戰。

然而透過信心，我們一點一滴克服過來，所從事的跳蚤市場小生意也漸漸上了軌道。我更在日後的教學活動裡，了解到皈依正法並非對神明不敬，反而是對諸佛與菩薩最高的供養與回向。從此以後，我真正打開心結，接納信心。

最讓我們欣慰的是，信心強盛的女兒在這短短兩年間，折伏家人親友鄰居逾二十人。一九九〇年間，我與先生回台探親，親朋好友一行廿三人組成一支陣容龐大的登山隊伍赴日本參拜大御本尊，在我倆的信心旅程上刻劃下重要的里程碑。

接下來的幾年裡，小孫兒相繼出世，我們將孫兒們帶來美國照料，享受含飴弄孫的樂趣。但也因有這些牽

體驗談

我漸漸減少參加活動的次數，常常是先生獨自前往，久而久之，我疏忽了兼顧信、行、學的基本原則。

一九九六年八月十九日的一起重大事故震碎了我安逸的夢，迫使重新面對嚴峻的宿命挑戰。那是一個星期天的中午，我們剛從跳蚤市場回到家，接到妹妹電話邀我們一起至媽媽家聚餐。我倆匆匆帶著小孫兒出發，車行至半路，我突然想起未戴假牙，於是折返家中取了假牙後再出門。就在我們左轉進入媽媽家附近的小巷時，一部飛馳而來的直行車將我們攔腰撞倒，巨大的撞擊將我震出車外，摔在廿五公尺遠的加油站前的人行道上。我陷入昏迷狀態，意識漸漸模糊，心裡記掛的是先生與孫兒的安危。



送達醫院後，醫生告知家人我的傷勢非常不樂觀，全身大量內出血，更有多處嚴重骨折，性命垂危須施行緊急手術。先將脾臟剷除，再作接骨，手術歷時十小時，先生和妹妹守候在手術不停的唱題。

這些送醫與急救的過程，我完全不清楚。當我再度恢復意識，已是手術後的隔日中午。躺在加護病房內，全身腫脹且插滿各種管子與一屋子的儀

器相接。我不能開口講話，因為咽喉已被切開插上管子，輔助呼吸。想嘗試用筆寫，但完全使不上力。唯一令我稍感安心的是得知先生與孫兒皆平安無恙。

由於尚未脫離險境，家人在醫護人員特准下進入病房作五分鐘的短暫停留。其餘時間只得守在病房外繼續唱題。獨處的我有如置身煉獄之中，每一分每一秒都是煎熬。手術後的劇痛撕扯著我，心理極度恐慌與絕望。不只一次向妹妹表示已放棄求生的意志，只求早點解脫。妹妹與家人不斷以信心來鼓勵我，好多會員自動來到家中為我唱題。兒女亦相繼自台灣趕來。眾人異體同心祈求我早日脫離險境，戰勝病魔。漸漸的，我的狀況趨於穩定，情緒亦緩和許多，自己也能於病房中默唱題目。說也奇怪，短短數分鐘的題目，總會讓我平靜下來，然後進入夢鄉。一週後，我已稍可用筆書寫來作表達，字跡雖潦草，但卻是一大突破。

隨後的兩個月內，仍不時出現危急狀況。首先是體內再度出血，導致血壓急劇下降，經醫護人員緊急處理才恢復過來。繼而因為嚴重的細菌感染，被轉移至隔離病房，身體狀況再度惡化。憑藉著家人強盛的信心與題目的力量，我一而再再而三的死裡逃生，我終於深深體會到妙法的偉大，不再厭棄生命，我告訴自己要堅強的活下去，因為我有廣布的使命。

由於心念的轉變，行動亦變得積極，從飲食的攝取到復健的作息，我都全力配合。終於在入院第七十九天，我平安出院，一如先生在我傷重時所祈願：「這裡是最好的醫院，有最好的醫師，加上我們最好的佛法，我太太一定會平安無事。」就是基於這種對御本尊的確信與向宿命挑戰的決心，我們成功地顯現了勝利的實證。

經過此次事故，我深切體悟到生命「蘇生」的意義。現在的我，充滿歡喜與感恩，與先生並肩走在廣布的道路路上。我們積極參加活動，一起學習成長，更分享我們的經驗，以鼓勵更多的會員，將自己蘇生的每一天都供獻給廣宣流布。

SGI一九九九年三大目標

為了配合支持SGI一九九九年主題「新世紀社區勝利之年」，學會訂立了三個目標：

- ①使SGI會員在日常生活中取得勝利。認真地將信心應用到每天面對的困難，並採取對付的行動，我們會突破困難，在日常生活中獲得勝利。
- ②使SGI會員在社區中獲得信任，擴展友誼。我們將舉行吸引社區人士，並傳授佛法原理的活動，以創造建立新的友好關係。
- ③繼續對抗阻撓廣布進展的不義行為。我們將使SGI組織內外的朋友都了解並警覺日蓮正宗曲解大聖人的佛法。

池田SGI會長新年賀詩

舞樂園 太陽 大地 行進 榮耀 希望 新聞
 勝利 樂園 太陽 大地 行進 榮耀 希望 新聞
 本年 樂園 太陽 大地 行進 榮耀 希望 新聞
 鼓舞 樂園 太陽 大地 行進 榮耀 希望 新聞
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 元初 樂園 太陽 大地 行進 榮耀 希望 新聞
 佛教 樂園 太陽 大地 行進 榮耀 希望 新聞
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 光明 樂園 太陽 大地 行進 榮耀 希望 新聞
 社會 樂園 太陽 大地 行進 榮耀 希望 新聞
 偉大 樂園 太陽 大地 行進 榮耀 希望 新聞
 照耀 樂園 太陽 大地 行進 榮耀 希望 新聞
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 功德 樂園 太陽 大地 行進 榮耀 希望 新聞
 功載 樂園 太陽 大地 行進 榮耀 希望 新聞

SPEECH, FROM PAGE 7

guard of the struggle against evil and injustice.

The key to contributing to the community is coming in contact with each and every community member.

My mentor, Josei Toda, once presented me with a poem filled with his boundless expectations:

*Live eternally
Like a phoenix
Soaring through the sky*

With these lines, I believe he was urging: "Just as a phoenix serenely wings its way through the heavens, make your way throughout the world your whole life long, into eternity. Live a long, long life and work intrepidly toward the goal of peace."

Deeply cherishing my mentor's warm expectations, I have lived all these years and striven earnestly for the happiness of humanity and world peace. I hope all of you will follow in my path.

It is a big, wide world. How foolish it is to be preoccupied solely with one small society or minor, insignificant things.

January is the month of Gandhi's martyrdom. [He died on Jan. 30, 1948.] What was his most pressing concern in the final period of his life, just prior to his assassination? India had finally achieved political independence the previous year. Thus, in order to reach the goal

of social, moral and economic independence, Gandhi now felt the need to create an organization rooted in the community, serving the needs of citizens.

He insisted that leaders come in personal contact with every villager within their jurisdiction. Gandhi himself took the lead in contributing to the local community. This undertaking was one of his final wishes.

Contributing to the community — the SGI has been doing just that for many, many years. The key in this endeavor is coming in personal contact with everyone in the community.

Vice-Chancellor Mehta has also written on this point: "We need to realise that, for most of us, spiritual life is to be found not in seclusion from society or residence in the Himalayan caves, but in participating sincerely in the social process. It is only through commitment to others that we can become ourselves" (*Beyond Marxism*, p. 37).

Only by working for the happiness of others can we realize our potential. In that sense, the daily activities of SGI members on behalf of their friends and neighbors can be thought of as one of the most appropriate, cutting-edge people's movements in the world today.

The Daishonin, the founder of the school of Buddhism we follow, left us these words: "Wherever we dwell and practice the single vehicle [the Mystic Law], that place will be the capital of Eternally Tranquil Light. And, without having to advance a step, those who are our disciples and lay supporters can view Eagle Peak in India and day and night will go to and

from the Land of Eternally Tranquil Light that has existed for all time. How inexpressibly joyful to think of it!" (MW-7, 27).

He expounded a great life philosophy.

Let's advance once again this year, holding high the banner of humanism of the SGI — in the communities in which we reside, in which we live joyfully, in the very place where we find ourselves now.

Gandhi wrote: "I believe in the truth implicitly that a man can serve his neighbours and humanity at the same time, the condition being that the service of the neighbours is in no way selfish or exclusive.... The neighbours will then understand the spirit in which such service is given. They will also know that they will be expected to give their services to their neighbors. Thus considered, it [service to neighbours] would spread like the proverbial snow-ball, gathering strength in geometrical progression encircling the whole earth."

Fearing nothing, fearing no one, is the way to true freedom.

Looking toward the future, Vice-Chancellor Mehta stated yesterday in a speech at Soka University, "The 19th century was the century of freedom; the 20th, of equality; and the 21st will be the century of justice...." I fully support this statement.

Justice — true justice is the happiness and welfare of humanity. The foundation for this is justice based on the Dharma or Law.

LEADERS CONFERENCE

Everything Depends on the Central Figure

SGI President Ikeda attended a conference with representative Soka Gakkai leaders from throughout Japan the evening of Jan. 20 in Shinjuku, Tokyo. He praised the efforts of SGI members in their various locales and spoke on the art of leadership: "Our movement to spread Nichiren Daishonin's Buddhism has developed through bold yet well-thought out action, through unceasing determination and perseverance. Being halfhearted, careless and unfocused only brings defeat. In short, everything hinges on the spirit of the central figure."

Toward the construction of a 21st-century civilization that will ensure the clear victory of justice, we are committed to creating firm bonds of friendship and solidarity with the esteemed scholars of Delhi University and the university's student body of 250,000, which is one of the largest in the world.

Unless justice triumphs, darkness will prevail. We cannot afford to lose in this struggle.

Defeat spells misery and unhappiness — be it for an individual or an organization. And, in order to win, it is important to fear nothing.

The great poet-sage Rabindranath Tagore is also the recipient of an honorary degree from Delhi University. Before a large assembly of students at the convocation ceremony at which this honor was bestowed, he recited his famous poem "Freedom from Fear."

Fear nothing! Fight proudly,

with your head held high! This is the key to true freedom, to victory. Never be afraid. Nothing can match the strength of those who stand on the side of justice, those who uphold the Dharma, the Law.

Finally, I want to share a few lines of verse from Tagore's "The Full Vision," which I loved to recite in my youth:

*The glory of the sun
Shines in the valour of man;
His rays dispel all darkness
on this earth.*

Thank you very much.

SGI President Ikeda's speech at the 30th Soka Gakkai Headquarters Leaders Meeting, held in conjunction with the conferral of an honorary doctorate upon President Ikeda from the University of Delhi, at the Tokyo Makiguchi Memorial Hall in Hachioji, Jan. 7.

SGI President Honored by China's Nankai University

On Nov. 25, 1998, SGI President Ikeda was inaugurated an honorary professor by China's Nankai University and an honorary director of the university's Center for Zhou Enlai Studies. The ceremony took place at the Fifth Soka Gakkai Student Division Leaders Meeting, which was held in Tokyo. In his acceptance speech, President Ikeda discussed the Japanese bombing of Nankai University in 1937 and the ensuing eight-year occupation of the campus by the Japanese army. Although the

staff of the university were forced to move their operations from one place to the next, President Ikeda explained, their spirit to educate and foster youth never wavered. As a result, many students raised during these eight years courageously stood up in opposition to their Japanese oppressors. The Nankai spirit is consonant with the Soka spirit, the SGI president said — the spirit with which the successive presidents of the Soka Gakkai have fought against the evils of nationalism.



President Ikeda and guests from Nankai University, Nov. 25, 1998.

Courtesy of SEIKYO PRESS

Mission Means To Use One's Life

PERSPECTIVE

In this perspective, Lisa Jones explores the difference between one's job and one's mission. 'An important aspect of my mission, I feel,' she writes, 'is to help people live the lives they dream of living. How can I spur others to turn their dreams into reality, if I'm not doing it myself?'

By LISA JONES
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

When I showed up for work that day, I didn't expect to leave my full-time position at the *World Tribune*. So what happened?

In one moment, less than a snap of the fingers, I saw that my job was not necessarily my mission. Then, call it faith or foolhardiness, I simply let go.

When monkeys move through the jungle, swinging from vine to vine, they do it in one of two ways, I'm told: They either hold on to a vine until they have the next one firmly in hand, or they completely let go and let momentum carry them to the next vine.

I swing through the jungle of my life in the latter fashion, releasing my grip, becoming airborne between two things, between this job and the next, flinging myself forward.

And I'm fine — until fear occurs to me.

"That was a wonderful vine

you just let go of," fear says. "Don't you miss it already?" This is the fear of irretrievable loss. Or "What makes you so sure there's going to be a 'next' vine to grab?" This is the fear of falling. (Someone once said that all fears are ultimately a fear of death. And so it is with me.)

In the past, fear has sapped my momentum. Fearful, I would hesitate, contemplate the likelihood of blunt impact with the ground and, naturally, become distressed. At such times, the voice of so-called practicality would say: "See!? It's better to hold on until you have your next job (or lover or whatever) in hand. Better to be safe, to hedge your bets." As if security can be ensured in this way.

Buddhist practice, of course, is what enables us to attain a secure state of life, no matter what our circumstances. In one sense it's a safety net. To me it's a pair of wings. And my mission, I feel, is to stretch those wings and fly.

For a couple weeks before I took the leap, I was in a state of generalized discontent. I had nothing specific to complain about. Even so, that old Peggy Lee song "Is That All There Is?" followed me around like the soundtrack to my personal life.

I wanted to open myself up to a new world of possibility, so I told one of my co-workers, "I'm going to change all my karma by Monday."

"Why do you always want to change yourself?" he asked. "Why don't you want to understand yourself instead? When you come to understand yourself as you are, transformation occurs naturally. Don't say, 'I'm this way, and that's good,' or 'This is a bad thing about me.' Don't pass judgment. Just see things for what they are."

This reminded me of a line from Nichiren Daishonin: "*Kan-*

jin means to observe one's own mind and to find the Ten Worlds within it" (*The Major Writings of Nichiren Daishonin*, vol. 1, p. 49). By chanting Nam-myohorenge-kyo to the Gohonzon, we can observe our minds and come to find Buddhahood within our lives. To truly perceive our own Buddhahood is indeed to transform our state of life.

I wondered as I chanted: What is the nature of my life? What do I really want? I had no specific prayer other than "Gohonzon, use my life." Whatever that meant.

Incidentally, the Japanese word for *mission*, *shimei*, literally means to use one's life.

I had assumed that my mission was to be staff writer. But that's a title, a function, a job. If there's a distinction to be made between job and mission, maybe it's this: You can quit a job, but your mission is inescapable. A job has parameters and consciously defined objectives; mission is free-flowing and, in my opinion, directed by love rather than ambition.

I'm not saying that job and mission are mutually exclusive or even that they're essentially separate. Gandhi once said, "My life is my message." And, to paraphrase him, I would venture that one's mission is one's life, and one's life is one's mission.

A job brings a paycheck (which supports one's life) and provides opportunities to create value. So a job is an undeniably important aspect of one's life and, therefore, one's mission. Yet just because one is jobless doesn't mean that one lacks a mission....

Ultimately, our mission as Bodhisattvas of the Earth is to lead all living beings to enlightenment. An important aspect of my mission, I feel, is to help people live the lives they dream of living. How can I spur others

to turn their dreams into reality, if I'm not doing it myself? My dream is to make a good living as a freelance writer. The only person who can make this happen is ME. So I'm going for it.

My co-worker once said that our lives are like flowing water, like a stream. In the course of our lives, we construct walls to control the flow or to steer the water in the way we want it to go.

In other words, we set a lot of rules and limitations for ourselves and others.

While these barriers may serve a valuable purpose for a time, they can end up creating stagnant pools or silt deposits — things that become more of a problem than the problem that we wanted to solve in the first place. So it's important to see where and why we've built walls and to remove them if we can.

In a way, I feel that leaving this job was like blowing up a dam. The roaring, raw power of an avalanche of water was wondrous yet terrifying and not entirely pleasant for my family and friends over the holidays, I must admit.

Of course, I'll still be writing for the *World Tribune* as a freelancer. And I feel as if I can accomplish anything.

Now that I consider it, I think I would like to be a river — that is my new career track.

I can see myself being a trickle (working in the mailroom of riverhood, as it were), then becoming a stream, then a full-fledged river — nimble enough to shoot around anything in my path, yet tenacious enough to carve canyons in solid rock — growing ever broader, ever deeper, more complex, until at last I merge with the wide blue ocean.

Then I'll start all over again, as I feel I am right now, as one tiny drop. WT



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SEIZE THE DAY
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FINE PRINT
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The *World Tribune* welcomes reader submissions. If you are interested in contributing an article or photograph, please contact us for guidelines. Together we can make a great newspaper.

Share Your Experience with the 'World Tribune'

Experiences in faith are among the most popular articles in the *World Tribune*. Whether told in the first or third person or in dialogue format, the story of how you became a better person through practicing Nichiren Daishonin's Buddhism can deeply influence the lives of others. If you'd like your experience to be considered for publication in the *World Tribune*, please send it to: *World Tribune*, Attn: Experiences Editor, 606 Wilshire Blvd., P.O. Box 1427, Santa Monica, CA 90406-1427; or e-mail wt@sgi-usa.org. Please include your name, address and telephone number! Your story should be no longer than five typed pages, double-spaced (approximately 1,200 words).

Mailbox

The 'Mailbox' will be back next week. Please keep sending us your letters about the *World Tribune*. Our new address is 606 Wilshire Blvd. P.O. Box 1427 Santa Monica, CA 90406-1427; or e-mail wt@sgi-usa.org.

AUDREY HEINESEN, TOKYO, JAPAN

How Soka University Opened My Life

When Audrey Heinesen entered SUA's graduate program in Calabasas, Calif., she didn't know it would change how she viewed the world. Four years later, she works at Soka University in Japan and sees her mission as being a humanistic educator.

When I first stepped onto the campus of Soka University of America, located in Calabasas, Calif., little did I know of the impact this experience would have on my vision of the world. In September 1994, SUA had just embarked on its own journey, making history by opening the first Soka graduate school in the United States. The graduate school was offering (and still is) a Master of Arts in Second and Foreign Language Education with a concentration in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages.

I, too, had started on a new path, uncertain of where it would lead me. After completing my undergraduate studies at the University of California, Berkeley, I hadn't decided what I wanted to do next. I found myself interested in the field of education, more-

over, seeking the passion of Tsunesaburo Makiguchi's philosophy of humanistic education. In addition, I was interested in going to Japan to study its language and culture. My mother, who is a native of Japan, always wanted the best education for her children and for us to realize the power of our Buddhist practice. I believe that it was her sincere determination and prayer that led me to U.C. Berkeley and then to SUA. My mother also led me to seek SGI President Ikeda's spirit. Therefore, I am eternally grateful to my mother for showing me the best path for my life.

After being accepted to the graduate school, I felt so fortunate to become a part of the Soka school system that President Ikeda founded in honor of his mentors Mr. Makiguchi and Mr. Josei Toda — a system with

founding ideals that are based on developing capable global citizens for the sake of humanity's happiness and peace.

President Ikeda, citing Mr. Makiguchi, said, "The vision he cherished of the kind of teachers who would carry out that sacred task is not of someone who sits ensconced on the throne of learning as an object of veneration but rather as a public servant who guides those aspiring to ascend that throne themselves."

Being a part of the first class with nine others coming from different parts of the world was an extremely enriching experience. Such a diverse make-up allowed us to explore each other's cultures and experiences.



Audrey on her graduation day, Dec. 20, 1995.

Academically, the courses are challenging and engaging. Our teachers of SUA gave us their passion, their support and friendship. Due to their sincere efforts, I was able to awaken my desire to be part of Mr. Makiguchi's, Mr. Toda's and Mr. Ikeda's dreams. In other words, I could realize my mission in life: serving others and contributing to the blossoming of each individual through education. The connection I made with my teachers is something I still cherish and appreciate to this day.

I am currently in my third year teaching at Soka University in Japan. With the sole wish of applying humanistic education in my classes, I am deter-

mined to help students reveal their full potential as leaders of the 21st century.

In conclusion, the education I received at SUA was both academically and spiritually invigorating. Being an educator allows me to learn from my mentor President Ikeda, who dedicates his life to a very clear purpose: the happiness of all. President Ikeda helped me find my dream, and SUA helped me realize it. I also cherish those at SUA who work so hard behind the scenes: dean, faculty and staff members who participate in this endeavor. I will apply what I have learned at SUA and continue to learn from my experiences in the future as a student of life.



Audrey performs for her fellow graduate students at SUA.

SUA Announcement

Now in its fifth year, Soka University of America's graduate school is accepting applications for its master's degree program in second and foreign language education.

Individuals seeking admission to the M.A. program must hold a baccalaureate or bachelor's degree with a minimum grade-point average of 2.7 or B- on a four-point scale. Applicants whose native language is not English are required to submit a Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) with a minimum score of 600. Applications for the 1999-2000 academic year are due by March 31. For more information, contact the Graduate Admissions Office at 26800 West Mulholland Hwy., Calabasas, CA 91302. Telephone (818) 878-3717, e-mail: grad_admissions@soka.edu.



James and Renu scout the L.A. skyline.

Renu: James, look at this.
James: What is it, Renu?
Renu: Look...I'm looking at my calendar.
James: Calendar? What for?
Renu: It's New Year's...How are we going to say Happy New Year to all of the youth?
James: I have an idea. Why don't we write something for *Seize the Day*?
Renu: Wow, James, what a brilliant idea! You are so wise (ha ha).

James' & Renu's Message

THE YOUTH IN 1999

Happy New Year!!! Last year was an amazing year of victory for the youth, ending with our nationwide victorious November commemorative meetings.



During his recent visit to America, SGI General Director Mr. Wada shared with us SGI President Ikeda's joy regarding the victorious gatherings throughout SGI-USA during the month of November. Mr. Wada encouraged us that the most important action to take now is to be able to treasure each one of the participants and guests who attended. Furthermore, he said that the SGI exists for the sake of the revolution or reformation of one single individual. And he emphasized that it is only through dialogue that true bonds can be developed.



Let's take these words from Mr. Wada to heart as we focus throughout SGI-USA for the next three months on propagation. During this first quarter let's visit all the guests who attended our November meetings and let's continue to share Nichiren Daishonin's Buddhism with our friends. In our dialogue at the December CEC with the youth region leaders from around the country, we made a goal to culminate our efforts during this first quarter by holding youth sponsored introductory gatherings to celebrate March 16. Toward March 16, let's set the stage for a great wave of propagation throughout

America. In his "Dialogue on the Wisdom of the Lotus Sutra: A Discussion on Religion in the 21st Century," President Ikeda talks about benefit. "Nichiren Daishonin's says, 'the element *ku* (in the Japanese word *kudoku*, or benefit) means eliminating evil, while the element *doku* means producing good' (*Goshō Zenshu*, p. 762). Benefit in the Daishonin's Buddhism means getting rid of the fundamental darkness in one's life and bringing forth goodness. To manifest benefit we need to carry out the practice of shakubuku, or propagation of the Daishonin's teaching."



This is the final year of this millennium. How fortunate we are to practice at this time with fellow members throughout 128 countries around the world and together with our mentor, President Ikeda. We have this most wonderful opportunity to usher in the new century shining with the true benefit of our practice.



Building on the momentum we created last year, let's enjoy dynamic introductory activities by sharing the greatness of this Gohonzon and the SGI with our friends.

Renu Jiandani, SGI-USA YWD Leader
James Herrmann, SGI-USA YMD Leader

Marion's **EXPERIENCE**

When I found out that I was going on this year's Fall Training Course in Nagoya — my first official training course in Japan — I assumed that it would be much like the Youth Summer Training Course that just took place this past September — study sessions, coupled with some study sessions, followed by more study sessions (smile)!! I went

fully prepared with pen and pad. Well, I am happy to report that we were able to join SGI President Ikeda at the 24th SGI General Meeting and the incredible 18th World Peace Youth Culture Festival, but to my surprise, we discovered upon our arrival that the bulk of our activities was to consist of exchange meetings with the local membership.

Again, I thought I knew what to expect. I've been on the giving end of many such exchanges with Soka Gakkai members visiting the United States. But nothing prepared me for the kind of embrace that we received from the members of Chubu. They had prepared ENTIRE days of activities for us, literally from 9 a.m. until 9 p.m.,

(Continued on page B)



Marion Wheeler (top 3rd from left) with Chubu members.

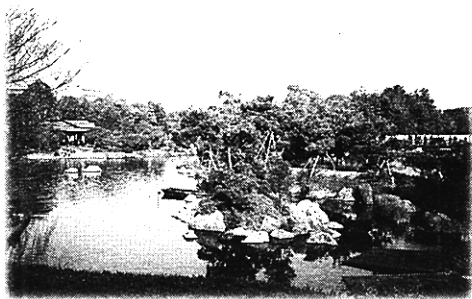


Marion Wheeler, SGI-USA Vice YWD Leader

which included strolling through beautiful gardens, touring majestic castles, shopping, and eating at what had to be some of THE finest restaurants in the city. Then, just when you thought you couldn't take another moment of pleasure,

you would arrive at the local community center where anywhere from 500 to 1,000 members were lined up outside the building, BURSTING out of their SKIN, they were so happy to see you! Walking through that sea of people who were simply GLOWING with UNBELIEVABLE joy and life-force, singing, smiling — many with tears in their eyes — all the worry and heaviness that I had brought to Japan evaporated into thin air. And it hit me. "This is what Sensei means when he talks about treasuring others." "THIS is how it feels to be treasured."

During the exchange meetings, we were sitting in the front facing the members, so I had the opportunity to really get a good look at them. I swear, I had NEVER in my LIFE seen such a joyful and harmonious group of people. EVERYONE — and I mean

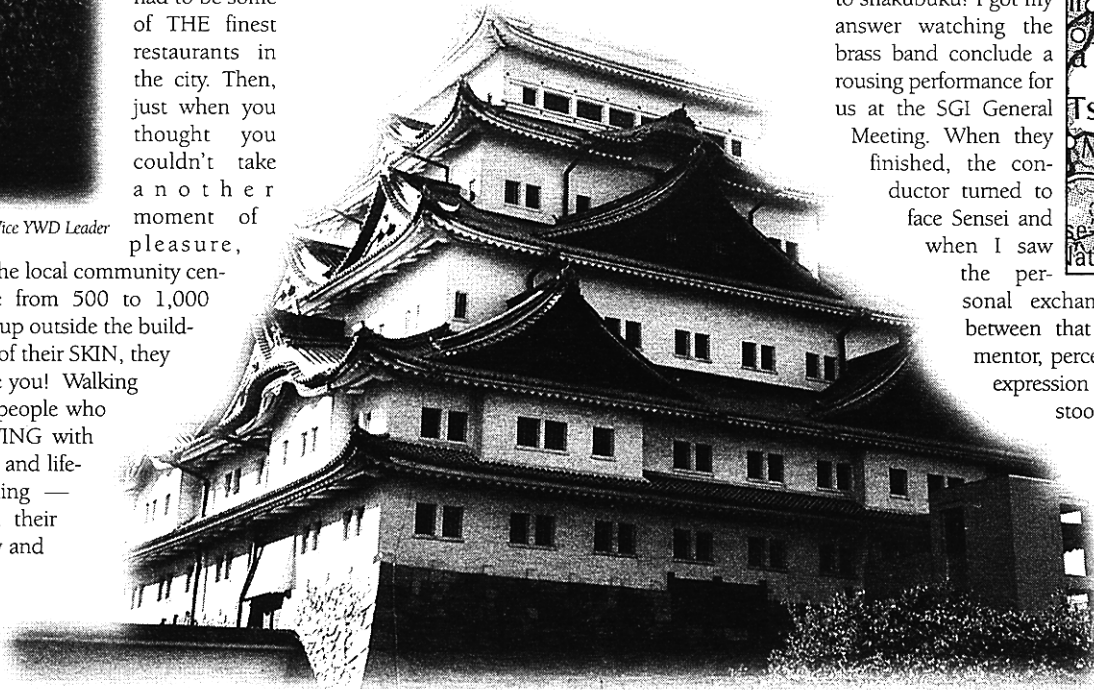


A lovely Japanese garden.

EVERYONE — was just brimming with joy. I also observed that they exuded such confidence and hope. Just in their body language alone, you could sense their rock-solid conviction in faith. Their collective power was mind-boggling.

On the way back to the hotel after the first exchange meeting, we were all talking to our translator about how moved we were by the incredible warm welcome from these members we'd never met before. She then explained to us that earlier in the year, President Ikeda, via one of those live telecasts, had told the Chubu members that he had some very important friends coming to their region

in the fall and he asked them to please take excellent care of us. Apparently, from that moment, the Chubu members sprang to action. First of all, our translator explained, since most of the SGI Training Courses take place in Tokyo or Kansai, the Chubu members considered this a rare honor that they could host such an important global training course. They then began the process of selecting which



The famous Nagoya Castle.

chapters would get the privilege of hosting the actual exchange meetings. Get this. They actually held faith competitions, *shakubuku*, publication promotion and daimoku campaigns — to determine who the lucky winners would be. When the top chapters were chosen, they immediately began making preparations at least 3 to 4 months in advance!

Learning the "behind-the-scenes" details about how these exchange meetings came about made us feel even deeper appreciation for the sincerity of these members. We thought to ourselves, "They went through all of that for us?"

I continued to reflect on the selflessness of these members' actions, the purity of their spirit to joyfully and willingly do whatever was humanly possible to ensure that we left there completely transformed. I finally concluded that I simply had no scale with which to measure this level of sincerity. My own capacity to embrace others was too small.

But I wanted to understand. What was the key to



Marion with members from U.S. and Japan in front of Nagoya Castle.

NO ARTICLE VIEW AVAILABLE

the joyous, uninhibited freedom that they possessed? What was the source of their strength? Why did they score victory after victory in every campaign, from publication promotion to *shakubuku*? I got my answer watching the brass band conclude a rousing performance for us at the SGI General Meeting. When they finished, the conductor turned to face Sensei and when I saw the per-



personal exchange that took place between that young man and his mentor, perceived only through the expression in their eyes, I understood. Those Chubu members were completely one with President Ikeda! There was NOTHING separating the two. That was the reason why they could embrace us that way. They were so connected to their mentor and his vision for

world peace that they would gladly do ANYTHING to play a role in realizing his dream, (now "their" dream) for *kosen-rufu*. This bond was also the key to their incredible blend of humble modesty and invincible confidence.



Japanese carp in a feeding frenzy.

The Chubu members proved to me that the mentor-disciple relationship is nothing other than a humble, seeking spirit to learn and grow into a better human being. As a result of this training course, my personal determination is to begin climbing the mountain towards developing this kind of life-condition within myself. I pray that I will win in the daily battle against myself to grasp this essence of faith and that I will continue until the last moment of my life. ♪

YOUTH *Study* FEBRUARY



"REPLY TO KYO'O" part II

A sword will be useless in the hands of a coward. The mighty sword of the Lotus Sutra must be wielded by one courageous in faith. Then he will be as strong as a demon armed with an iron staff. I, Nichiren, have inscribed my life in *sumi*, so believe in the Gohonzon with your whole heart. (MW-1, 120)



COURAGE

By David Tempest, Los Angeles

Courage is one of the most common themes found throughout the letters of Nichiren Daishonin. Whether encouraging a disciple, expressing his determination, or retelling an ancient parable to clarify Buddhism, the Daishonin uses many different expressions of courage to embolden his followers.

The noun *courage* comes from the Latin *cor* meaning heart. A coward is someone who is weak-hearted, whereas a person of courage is brave-hearted. In this selected passage, the Daishonin is encouraging his followers to persevere in their faith with a resolute heart. He uses the wonderful analogy that by being courageous, they will be as strong as a demon armed with an iron staff. For me, this line conjures up the image of a hero who is immovable in the face of any and all obstacles.

It is a struggle to have courage when faced with difficulties. We often have doubts, feel fear, and are swayed when our circumstances become adverse. Fortunately, we have access to many resources to help us manifest courage in these times. We have our friends in faith who can offer us advice and encouragement. We have President Ikeda's speeches and books, and we have the Daishonin's writings. As the Daishonin says, we must be courageous in faith when we chant to the Gohonzon. Therefore, whenever we face difficulties, let's use all the resources we can so that when we pray, we have a courageous and determined prayer to overcome our difficulties.

President Ikeda writes: "Attaining Buddhahood, that is, establishing a life-condition of absolute happiness, depends entirely on the strength of our faith. Therefore, our heart must not be swayed. We must not allow our heart to be affected by envy and cowardice, but should develop a heart of faith that is strong and magnanimous. For herein lies happiness."

HOPE

By Naoko Miyauchi, Atlanta

An excellent sword is of no use to a person who has no courage to fight his or her battle. Faith is the same, too. We must be courageous in order to receive benefit from the Gohonzon. So, what kind of person is a person with courage? A person who always challenges to advance in their practice of faith with a spirit of hope.

It is very important to have hope to advance joyfully when we face obstacles.

This summer, a student from Kansai Soka High School stayed in Atlanta for one month to go to a language school. I asked him why he came to the U.S. to learn English. He said that his determination is to eventually work for NASA, so he needs to learn English as early as possible. Just before he left for Japan, he made a speech in fluent English at our kosen-rufu gongyo meeting about his hope to work for NASA and his strong determination to devote himself to studying the nature and workings of the universe. His speech was filled with hope for the future.

President Ikeda talks about hope:

A life filled with hope is strong, while a life without hope leads to defeat. Hope is the power to live. A happy person is one who continues to cherish a beautiful dream. Being old is not just a matter of physical age. Old age begins when one loses his ideals. A person with faith is young, while one filled with doubt is old. One who has confidence is young, while he who is plagued by fear is old. One is young to the extent that he possesses hope, and old to the extent that he has lost it.

FAITH

By Patricia Ford, Kansas City, Mo.

Faith. What does this word mean? Does it mean to believe blindly? Is the word *faith* just another word for religion?

Perhaps we can look at faith as trust. Just as trust in *friends* grows with interaction, trust in the Gohonzon grows through practice. In this regard, President Ikeda states, "The stronger your faith, the more powerfully the Gohonzon, the Mystic Law, responds to your prayer" (Dec. 11, 1998, *World Tribune*, p. 8).

Trusting the Gohonzon can often be quite difficult, especially in the midst of hardship. However, overcoming hardship through our practice will ultimately deepen our trust. Having an experience in faith is one of the greatest ways to develop trust in the Gohonzon.

To overcome our problems, we need strength in our lives. To build our strength, we practice daily (akin to building muscle by lifting weights). We chant, do gongyo, support youth activities, and our lives thus become strong — strong enough to overcome any obstacle.

To get to this point we begin with our trust in the Gohonzon, however small it may be. Try out this practice with some expectation that your prayer will be answered. In the end, you'll never be disappointed; the Gohonzon's power (i.e. your own power) is limitless.

QUESTIONS TO STIMULATE DIALOGUE:

1. How does having faith relate to having courage?
2. How do you manifest courage when things aren't going well?
3. Why do we consider the Daishonin to be a courageous person, and what example does he set for all of us?

MATERIAL REQUEST

SEND IN YOUR STUFF

Our youth publication is only as strong as what you bring us.

Poems
Articles
Picture stories
Commentaries
Pulitzer Prize insight

...whatever you got, get it to us.

HOW?

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PO Box 1427
Los Angeles, CA 90406-1427
Email:
seize@sgi-usa.org

GET REAL



WHAT IF I'M NOT MEETING MY GOALS?

By Colleen Bachman
SGI-USA High School Division Leader

As the new year comes around again, I'm sure many people are thinking about their goals for the future. Many times in my life I've been hesitant to set goals, afraid that I could not fulfill them. If any of you have ever felt that way, President Ikeda says to us: "That's all right. Most people have this problem! Still, resolving to do something in the first place is proof that you are progressing. Even if you have the tendency to make a determination but only stick to it for two or three days, it is OK as long as you keep refreshing that determination. Those who can keep renewing their resolution have great patience" (*Discussions On Youth*, vol. 1, pp. 50-51).

I have tried to maintain that spirit throughout the course of my practice and I am proud to say that I've accomplished many goals this year that I have had for a long, long time. Although at one point many things seemed impossible, I just kept re-determining again and again, year after year. It's great to know that I can accomplish even what seems impossible if I just stick to it. I'm sure you can do the same!

Of course one of my goals is always to chant more daimoku; for as President Ikeda also says: "No one can hold back a person who assiduously chants daimoku, the essence of Buddhism. Remember this point and put it into practice until the last moment of your life" (*Youth Scale the Mountain of Kosen-Rufu of the 21st Century*). ♪

BE TRUE TO YOURSELF and WYSIWYG

By Shan Serafin, Los Angeles

First thing you're wondering is "huh."

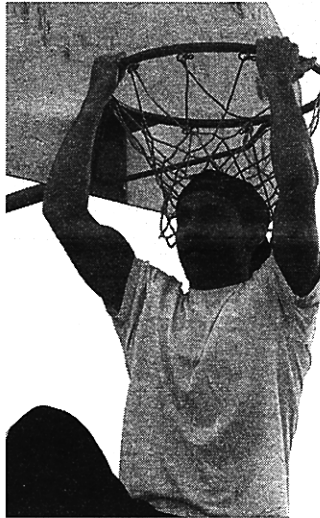
WYSIWYG?

What's that?

It's an acronym. It stands for What You See Is What You Get. OK. Seems simple enough. What you see is what you get.

Sounds great...if you're a box of laundry detergent. But most of us are not boxes of detergent. Most of us are people. And people have a tough time being themselves.

But why bring this up? Why dwell on what is, perhaps, obvious?



Some folks try too hard to look cool...

This year, one of our SGI-USA guidelines involves the community, specifically, to widen our network of trust and friendship in the community.

Interpreting this can be difficult. Being involved with the community does not necessarily mean you have to organize wide-scale events with your entire neighborhood. It can mean simply dealing with the immediate community of your own circle of friends. This could be school. This could be you and a couple of best buds. Community can be the term for any interaction with people.

So how do we succeed in our interactions with people?

To answer this, let's first ask

another question: What is President Ikeda's approach to relating with people (*people from incredibly diverse backgrounds and perspectives*)?

And to answer that, let's refer to insight shared by Vice President Hasegawa. Regarding interactions with people President Ikeda has three points:

- 1 put prayer first
- 2 follow the example of the mentor
- 3 be sincere

Consider point number three, being sincere. There are several components of the nature of sincerity, one of which is intention (for example, the intention to be kind-hearted), another of which is frankness (being honest and not manipulative), and yet still another is...

WYSIWYG - What you see is what you get. Being yourself.

For most of us this is a weighty challenge. People feel the need to be accepted and this often involves being "in" (a.k.a. "cool") within a circle of peers. To do so, to be accepted, we often abandon our real personality.

The workplace. School. Both are battlegrounds for the individual to be accepted. School is especially tough, because being cool with the crowd seems to require obeying a million "rules": wear this, wear that, comb your hair, sag your pants, have a cell phone, dunk a b-ball, look rich, be rich, hang with who's cool, avoid who's not, set the grade curve, nail the S.A.T., drive a sport utility, and blah, blah, blah.

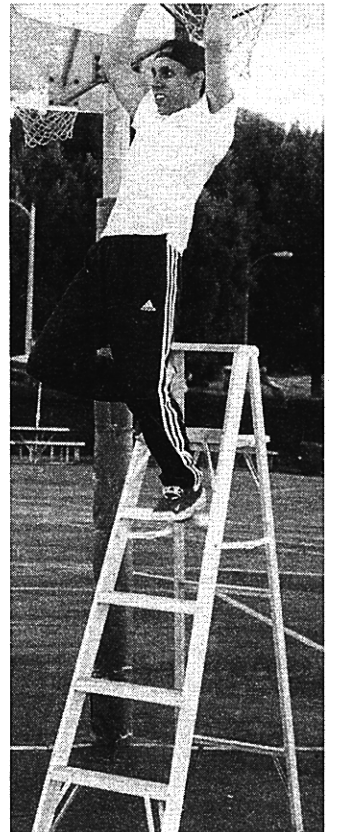
Observing these "rules" may make you popular, but they will never be enough to allow you to truly relate to someone. Not only that, any cool status that you achieve by observing the so-called "rules" will only be temporary. As soon as you deviate from the "code" you no longer find yourself on the lat-

est Cool People List. Thus, for a lasting coolness we need to dig a little deeper.

We need to be ourselves. Be sincere. This is where our highest power comes from. People with a solid sense of self, who don't pretend to be what they're not, have the greatest potential to influence others.

Acceptance is a wonderful thing. But the shortcut, sacrificing your real identity to follow the trend, will never make you truly welcome in anyone's heart. Being sincere, though more difficult (and not as instantly gratifying as having the Red Range Rover) is the harder, but only guaranteed, way of being accepted by other human beings.

Read *Discussions on Youth* (vol. 1, p. 182) where President Ikeda says: "Each person is endowed with special qualities... We should live in a way that is true to ourselves. That is the purpose of Buddhism." ♪



...people eventually see what's going on.