

**MESSAGE FOR COMMEMORATIVE WOMEN'S MEETINGS FROM SGI-USA
WOMEN'S LEADER MATILDA BUCK
HOPE IS REAL POWER**

Warmest greetings to all the women who have gathered to celebrate SGI-USA Women's Day!

It is so inspiring that thousands of women all over America are meeting to affirm one great truth: We are here on this earth to become happy. It is every woman's right and within every woman's power. And there is nothing selfish in this proclamation. That's because women are so closely connected to others that our happiness enriches the lives of all.

An important key to real happiness is to live with hope, with optimism. Mahatma Gandhi once said that he was an optimist not because of any evidence that he saw, but because it was how he wished to live his life. He saw optimism as a cause rather than an effect. Cynics might call it denial, but a posture of creating hope, no matter what the circumstance, has real power.

Our SGI President Daisaku Ikeda explains: "Hope draws forth our inner potential and strength. It is a magic weapon that enables us to make our dreams come true" (Aug. 13, 1999, *World Tribune*, p. 1).

I think hope is magical because it is invisible, yet it can move mountains. It costs nothing, yet it makes us rich. It is a renewable resource that never runs out. No one can steal it from us. To chant Nam-myoho-renge-kyo is to bring forth hope.

For the newcomers who have joined us, I hope you experiment with this practice, and see what it will do for you. You have the right to become supremely happy.

I send my most profound respect and affection to you all. Because you make efforts to polish your lives and because you work to support the lives of others, you are the most respectable women in America. This is the solidarity of women who are creating a spiritual civilization.

President Ikeda describes this movement in his New Year's poem:

*A commitment to treasure each person—
In that daily, unceasing practice
Lies the dynamism
To transform the entire planet.
(Jan. 1 World Tribune, p. 2)*

I salute you all.