

THE NEW HUMAN REVOLUTION
'JEWELLED SWORD'
VOLUME 8, CHAPTER 2, PARTS 29–30

‘Sensei was telling me that all karma, including illness, is a reflection of one’s inner determination, of one’s life,’ a student division member reflects. ‘It may be my karma to suffer this illness, but the fundamental cause for it lies within my own mind. I have to change my attitude!’

Eriko Nakano set up her Gohonzon at her hospital bedside and began to chant daimoku in earnest. As she did, she recalled the guidance President Shin’ichi Yamamoto had given her when he explained the Gosho passage “‘Great Concentration and Insight’ reveals the teaching that T’ien-t’ai Chih-che himself practiced in the depths of his being” (*The Writings of Nichiren Daishonin*, p. 355).

“Sensei was telling me that all karma, including illness, is a reflection of one’s inner determination, of one’s life,” she thought. “I wonder then what could have been my inner determination?” For the first time, she began to think seriously about her life.

As she looked carefully at herself and her actions, it suddenly struck her: “Though I thought I was devoting myself to kosen-rufu and helping others do the same, I was also wishing somewhere in the back of my mind that I could have a break from my Soka Gakkai activities and just rest a little....

“And now my wish has come true. As long as I continue thinking this way, I will never get better. It may be my karma to suffer this illness, but the fundamental cause for it lies within my own mind. I have to change my attitude!”

From this time on, Nakano chanted with increased intensity. Finally, after eight months in the hospital, she decided to leave. Her tuberculosis wasn’t completely cured, but she wanted to have the freedom that being at home would give her to chant daimoku to her heart’s content and to begin participating, even if only a little, in Soka Gakkai activities once again. Understanding now that she had been unaware of her own noble mission, she apologized deeply and prayed to the Gohonzon to become well enough to work for kosen-rufu again.

Her dai-moku was so powerful and focused that it seemed to shake the altar. Three months after she left the hospital, the tubercu-losis disappeared completely. She returned to university and was starting to be her strong and healthy self again. She had overcome the “theoretical” in her life and established the “essential.”

Meanwhile, Yasuo Takigawa, a 33-year-old graduate student, was extremely worried about his wife, Suzuyo. She had been diagnosed with uterine cancer, and the doctor had told them that even with surgery her chances for recovery were only about 50 percent. Having joined the Soka Gakkai a little more than a year earlier, Suzuyo decided to make her illness a test of her faith, and began to chant daimoku fervently. As she chanted, her desire to receive direct guidance from President Yamamoto grew, and she told this to her husband.

Yasuo decided to ask Shin’ichi for guidance on his wife’s behalf after one of the lectures on “One Hun-dred and Six Comparisons.” The day of the lecture, Suzuyo accompanied her husband to the Kansai Headquarters and was waiting in another room. Ya-suo’s shyness, however, made it hard for him to bring up his wife’s situation.

Shin'ichi looked around at the faces of the students attending that day, and asked: "Many of you here today are faced with personal issues, aren't you? I'm here to listen to whatever you have to say, so please speak freely."

With this invitation, Yasuo at last was able to ask about his wife's situation. "My wife has been diagnosed with uterine cancer," he began, "and it seems to be quite serious. She is chanting daimoku and is determined to beat her illness through faith."

Shin'ichi immediately replied: "To uphold the Gohonzon is to uphold the body of the Buddha. Your wife has a mission to fulfill as a Bodhisattva of the Earth, so everything is going to be fine.

"But even if a person who practices this Buddhism should die young, his or her life will not have been in vain. That person's life and death will have profound meaning and will serve to teach something very important to those who remain. No matter what happens, don't give in to fear or panic, but instead keep arousing ever-stronger faith. Let's all chant daimoku. I will pray for her, too. I would also like to present her with some prayer beads."

When Suzuyo heard this guidance from her husband, she thought: "I have a mission. I know I can beat this cancer, and I will!"

As surgery approached, she continued chanting abundant daimoku. In the end, she did indeed triumph over her illness. Her experience also gave her husband tremendous confidence in the power of faith and became fuel for his further development.

One lecture participant Shin'ichi was particularly concerned about was Naomi Takaoka, a medical student. She always wore a gloomy expression, and Shin'ichi imagined that she was struggling each day. Lost in a maze of abstract theory and unable to find her own path in life, she had become withdrawn, and it seemed that she had grown skeptical about life itself. She also appeared loath to do Soka Gakkai activities.

Shin'ichi wanted to teach her about the importance of one's state of life. One day he said to her: "When we are able to break through our outer shell and develop our lives, we begin to see and feel things differently, even though our circumstances remain unchanged. For Einstein, the stars in the night sky no doubt sparkled with the light of the theory of relativity, while for Beethoven they were playing a beautiful symphony. For Goethe, they glimmered with the beautiful poetry of the universe. Each perceived things according to their profound state of being.

"Buddhahood, however, is the deepest, broadest realm of life there is. You mustn't give up your faith before you reach that state."

Daisaku Ikeda appears in the
novel as Shin'ichi Yamamoto.
The events take place in 1963.