

**EDITORIAL**  
**THINGS WE CAN DO**  
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**Just imagine how tightly we can weave the fabric of a peaceful nation if each of us extended ourselves toward better knowing the people in our immediate surroundings.**

The president of the United States has declared war on terrorism around the globe, and already troops are amassing in various strategic locations. On the surface, this may bring comfort to many in our country. And yet, if armed conflict proceeds, there will be loss of life and the spreading of misery far and wide—this is the nature of war, no matter how noble its justification may seem. For us who practice Nichiren Daishonin’s life-affirming Buddhism, it is understandable if we are worried.

So what can we actually do? While present circumstances can shift dramatically, the basics of Buddhism do not. Therefore, some of the suggestions offered below will not be new ones, yet they warrant a fresh revisiting for their potential to help us reach our nation with the timeless wisdom of the Daishonin’s Buddhism.

- **Chanting daimoku:** It is easy to fall into the trap, when we chant for a big idea like world peace, of hoping that somehow the Gohonzon will “take care of things out there.” A more proactive way of looking at it is to chant to become ever-more positive influences in our environment whose presence will bring about a change in the life-condition in those around us. We can chant to “bombard” our lives and our environment continually with positive energy.

- **Encourage our fellow members:** We already have in place this tremendous network for creating peace. And this network can further solidify as we extend our concern to all of our fellow believers, staying on the lookout for anyone who may be suffering. We can do this face to face when possible, and when not, there’s always the power of a caring phone call. In fact, what better time is there to ring up those members we’ve been thinking about but haven’t heard from for a while?

- **Reach out to our neighbors:** After living in my neighborhood for six years, it dawned on me that I hardly knew the people living on my block. So, the weekend after the terrorist attack, I made a point of overcoming my own resistance and went door to door introducing myself, asking how they were doing in light of the current situation, offering to listen if they wanted to talk. While some were apprehensive, especially at first—and, admittedly, I felt awkward at first—most of the people I met were noticeably pleased that I had stopped by. In almost all cases, regardless of how long we spoke or the content of our dialogue, I feel confident that when I encounter these neighbors again, it will be very natural to say hello—a small, yet at the same time, huge enhancement in my living environment.

Just imagine how tightly we can weave the fabric of a peaceful nation if each of us extended ourselves toward better knowing the people in our immediate surroundings. We don’t necessarily need to turn all our exchanges into dialogues about Buddhism and our pacifist view. Often just letting people pour out their hearts and vent their pent-up feelings goes a long way toward building a new and vast array of friendship and peace. Our Muslim and Middle-Eastern neighbors may be particularly struggling right now, and being

welcomed by us as their neighbors can be a great bridge across an otherwise deepening chasm of distrust and even hatred.

- **Study:** Now, more than ever, it is crucial that we expand our understanding of the Daishonin's teachings and President Ikeda's guidance. Not only will this provide nourishment for our own faith but, facing the intensity of our current situation, we can strengthen our courage to extend ourselves to others when we feel inspired about our Buddhist perspective on world peace and the inviolable preciousness of human life.

Amid all the turmoil, there is at least one heartening aspect. Throughout the media, we are hearing many voices from many quarters that echo our SGI perspective on peace. This is a clear signal that our society is thirsty for the expression of our views. Let's take advantage of every opportunity to express them.