

FROM SGI-USA WOMEN'S LEADER MATILDA BUCK'S SPEECH EMPOWERING OTHERS WITH HOPE

‘Genuine dialogue is founded on listening— not trying to convince someone by a barrage of words. As we listen, we empower others toward hope and revitalization.’

First of all, I want to praise and thank everyone for their tremendous accomplishments this year. It is only because of your daily efforts that your CEC representatives could report such growth in every area, especially the districts that are taking such good care of their new members.

If I could condense all our shared experiences, questions, requests and conclusions this weekend, it would come down to sharing our faith with others. What can we do in this time of great peril and of great opportunity? I say opportunity because right now, many people are re-examining their lives and their values.

We can do what we were put on this earth to do. What we do best. What no one else can do. *Shakubuku*. No other peace movement offers the fundamental key of self-transformation or human revolution.

“Unless we can achieve a fundamental transformation within our own lives,” says SGI President Ikeda, “so that we are able to perceive our intimate connection with our fellow human beings and feel their suffering as our own, we will never be free of conflict and war. I believe that dialogue holds the key to any lasting solution. Words spoken from the heart have the power to change a person’s life. They can even melt the icy wall of mistrust that separate people and nations” (Oct. 19 *World Tribune*, p. 1).

Genuine dialogue is founded on listening— not trying to convince someone by a barrage of words. Doctors are finding that listening has a healing power. As we truly listen with openness and respect for another, we cleanse and heal our own lives of pettiness and egotism. As we listen to another, we help to heal the pain of separation that many of us carry. As we listen, we empower others toward hope and revitalization.

At our concluding meeting this weekend, we promised one another when we meet again in April that we will have introduced one person to the Gohonzon. This is also the women’s focus this year—to expand the force for peace by helping one person change their life with this great practice. As leaders, let us be the first to share our practice with others and to inspire our members to feel the joy of this action of the Bodhisattvas of the Earth.

Happy New Year of Expanding Dialogue! Please enjoy the holiday time. Take time to listen to your own heart and to others.