

SGI-USA Men's Division Monthly Meetings Suggested Study Material for September 2010
New Human Revolution Volume 9

In 2010, the men's division members are studying "The New Human Revolution", challenging ourselves to study one volume each month. The excerpts provided are the suggested study material for men's division meetings. Every man is encouraged to have his own copy of "The New Human Revolution" which is available at your local SGI-USA bookstore or through the mail order service on the SGI-USA website.

A New Era

This was doubtless the determination of all of Mr. Toda's disciples. Mr. Toda had told them to support the third president, saying that if they did, kosen-rufu would absolutely become a reality. However, this support could only come from genuine disciples.

The mentor-disciple bond in the Soka Gakkai is a unified network of selfless champions who dedicate their lives to the supreme goal of kosen-rufu with the mentor at the center. Without this relationship, kosen-rufu cannot be realized. All efforts would degenerate into a struggle for fame and profit, becoming the epitome of self-interest and power. *Page 11*

In the beginning, Itami threw himself wholeheartedly into his responsibilities as district leader, even cutting back on his favorite pastime, golf. But before long, he became quite busy at work and began to neglect Gakkai activities. Right around that time he made a mistake at work that caused his company a significant loss. This forced him to reflect: "As a district leader, I have a mission to work for kosen-rufu in the Philippines, but I haven't been fulfilling my responsibilities. Buddhism is like the body, while society is like the shadow. This is why I've failed at work. The Buddhist law of cause and effect is strict." *Page 46*

Shin'ichi nodded and continued: "The Daishonin tells us 'not to expect good times, but take the bad times for granted' (WND, 998). It is only to be expected that there will be obstacles along the road of kosen-rufu. We must be prepared for an endless succession of difficulties. The Soka Gakkai faces persecution in some countries, yet our members there are striving with all their might. *Page 51*

"So, how do you gain people's trust and friendship? By reaching out and talking to them with a kind smile. By becoming their friend. And by never putting on airs.

It's also important to be considerate. The basis of consideration is prayer. People always open up to and have good feelings toward those who pray for and care about their happiness." *Page 62*

Young Phoenixes

"Many of the world's leaders discovered the philosophy by which they would live, their beliefs, and their conviction in their teens and twenties, and then went on to accomplish great things in their thirties and forties by living true to their convictions. Building the framework for our lives in our youth and then striving to fill it in is the sure way to live. I therefore hope that all of you will exert yourselves in faith, chant Daimoku in earnest, and make Buddhism-the supreme philosophy of life-the basis of your being." *Page 94*

"How do we achieve this? They will never grow if we sit back and do nothing. They need inspiration. In order to inspire them, we must pray consistently and wholeheartedly for their growth. And we must also continue to rack our brains asking ourselves, moment after moment, 'What can I do to encourage them?' 'What will give them hope and courage?' Our strong and focused prayer takes shape as wisdom, which in turn produces all sorts of ideas. Our sense of responsibility is manifest in the strength of that prayer." *Page 109*

"The relationship between mentor and disciple can be likened to that between needle and thread. The mentor is the needle and the disciple is the thread. When sewing, the needle leads the way through the cloth, but in the end it is unnecessary and it is the thread that remains and holds everything together. I am the needle. You are the ones who will remain on the stage of kosen-rufu after I am gone." *Page 135*

Shin'ichi became more passionate as he spoke: "If one person stands up with earnest faith and shines with strong life force and wisdom, they can transform their family, their community, and even the nation. War is essentially caused by the human mind. It stems from the desire to control and conquer others, to have power, and from hatred and antipathy. That's why human revolution is the foundation for world peace. Even the growing problem of environmental pollution is the product of greed in modern society. The relentless pursuit of convenience and wealth by people who have forgotten the importance of living in harmony with nature is a major cause of this issue. In light of the principle of 'the oneness of life and its environment' it is clear that the destruction of the environment leads directly to the suffering of human beings.

“This is why it is crucial that we establish a correct philosophy of life and strive to transform the way of life and thinking of humanity. This is human revolution.” *Page 142*

Brilliant Light

Shinichi continued: “If the members start heading in a direction that seems contradictory to faith, it is crucial that you take the time to patiently and thoroughly explain where the problem lies. If you treat members as your subordinates or underlings, they will all leave eventually. And if you only surround yourself with people who do whatever you say and who are easy to manipulate, a distorted relationship like that between a gang boss and his henchmen will develop and give rise to factions. This will result in the destruction of our noble organization for kosen-rufu, and your actions will incur negative effects in the end.

I hope you will always be fair and do your utmost to serve the members. That is what a true of the Soka Gakkai should be like. I’m counting on you to take care of Hong Kong and of all Asia. *Page 188*

When a family is united by faith, they can share a fundamental goal. That goal, thus enables them to work together in harmony and to flourish. In addition, the network of kosen-rufu must expand both horizontally and vertically. The horizontal expansion is the spread of an understanding of Buddhism from friend to friend. The vertical expansion is the transmission of faith from parent to child, from one generation to the next. “No matter how far it seems we have advanced kosen-rufu, if the movement stops after one generation it will not survive into the future. The transmission of faith from generation to generation is what ensures the eternal flow of kosen-rufu and is the foundation of a family’s everlasting Prosperity. Family unity based on faith is the key to this. *Page 196*

Dialogue begins with listening in earnest to the opinions and ideas of the other person...”It is a fundamental rule that members living in a given country should be responsible for advancing Gakkai activities in that country. But it is also important to seek guidance from members with more experience in faith. Without the spirit to learn about faith from our seniors and to polish and forge ourselves, we will grow self-centered and complacent. *Page 198*

“The Goshō says: Even though you chant and believe in Myōhō-renge-kyō, if you think the Law is outside yourself, you are embracing not the Mystic Law but any inferior teaching (WND, 3). Concerning yourself with what others are doing and complaining when they don’t live up to your expectations is looking for the Law outside yourself. Such thinking ultimately comes down to spiritual weakness. It results from the lack of a philosophy of independence; a philosophy that teaches that everything starts with us and what we do. That philosophy is none other than Buddhism. *Page 251*

Hope of the People

“An authoritarian leader is someone who looks down on the members, yells at them, and makes them feel uncomfortable. A true leader of the Soka Gakkai, on the other hand, is someone in whose presence people feel completely refreshed and at home, and filled with hope and courage.

“The driving force behind the advancement of kosen-rufu is the harmonious unity of people working together based on mutual respect. Members must never resent, hate, belittle, or be envious of each other. That amounts to great slander of the law. Those who do so will experience negative effects themselves, and will also damage the organization and ultimately destroy kosen-rufu.

“So how is unity among members created?” The key is prayer---- chanting Daimoku earnestly. When we encounter someone we find hard to deal with, we need to pray sincerely for that person. When we argue or fight with another person, it means that both of our life conditions are low. Praying for the happiness of the other person will greatly elevate our own state of life.

“Emotional conflicts are frequently caused by misunderstandings, so it’s important that we talk to each other with an open mind. We need to have the courage to engage each other in dialogue. There is no reason that two of people of faith who share kosen-rufu as their fundamental goal shouldn’t be able to work out their differences.”

No matter how capable they are as individuals, if members are unable to get along with one another, the organization as a whole will not be able to reveal its full potential. A harmonious organization, on the other hand, multiplies the strength of each individual many times over. *Page. 281-282*

Questions for Discussion

1. How do we encourage and explain to the youth division and members of our own division the importance of the oneness of mentor and disciple?
2. How do our actions at work and in other areas of society contribute to kosen-rufu?
3. What actions can we take to create unity among the members?