Spreading Trust and Friendship in Our Communities

SGI-USA District Discussion Meeting January 2020
A 2018 Cigna study found that nearly half of Americans report sometimes or always feeling alone (46 percent) or left out (47 percent).
How often do you interact with your neighbors?
“Shin’ichi believed that forming strong community ties through which fellow residents could assist one another was especially crucial to protect the fabric of society . . . Living in a place without any human interaction creates a cold and unfriendly atmosphere—a sort of spiritual desert in which flowers of genuine happiness cannot bloom. Lively contact among people fosters happy and prosperous communities.”

“I entrust you with the propagation of Buddhism in your province. It is stated that ‘the seeds of Buddhahood sprout through causation, and for this reason they [the Buddhas] preach the single vehicle [the Lotus Sutra]’” [The Lotus Sutra and Its Opening and Closing Sutras, p. 75].

- Nichiren Daishonin, “The Properties of Rice” (The Writings of Nichiren Daishonin, vol. 1, p. 1117).
“Don’t make the excuse that you can’t achieve kosen-rufu in your community because the old customs run too deep. That attitude itself will lead to failure. Nichiren Daishonin stood up alone to undertake the struggle for kosen-rufu in the Latter Day of the Law, didn’t he? And we are his disciples.”

“If one lights a fire for others, one will brighten one’s own way.”

- Nichiren Daishonin, “On the Three Virtues of Food,” WND-2, 1060
Brief Experience in Faith
Kosen-rufu Depends on Trust and Respect

“The key to realizing kosen-rufu actually lies within the realm of your daily lives. It all comes down to how much you can foster ties of friendship with your neighbors and become liked and trusted by them. Kosen-rufu really depends on the trust and respect we cultivate in our environment.”

- Daisaku Ikeda, NHR-13, 233–34
“When we determine to work for kosen-rufu where we are, our attitude toward the people we encounter and to whom we are connected changes. As our prayers deepen, we see a change in them as well as in our circumstances. If we avoid practicing in this way, the place where we are will never become the true stage of our mission.

Treating those around us as friends with whom we share profound ties and transforming our community into a realm of happiness through the light of the Mystic Law constitute the great path to realizing the Daishonin’s ideal of ‘establishing the correct teaching for the peace of the land.’”

- Daisaku Ikeda, April 5, 2019, World Tribune, p. 2
Discussion Questions

1. Can you share a time when you were able to have a meaningful dialogue with someone in your community who was not part of your immediate family?

2. What are some barriers that people have that prevent them from reaching out to people in their immediate environment?

3. What positive impact can sharing Buddhism have on our communities?