



1. REFRAIN from eating meals, as an SGI Zoom meeting constitutes a faith activity.

2. TURN CAMERA ON DURING ACTIVITIES which involve discussion and engagement.



3. MUTE WHEN NOT SPEAKING.



"ZOOM BEST PRACTICES"

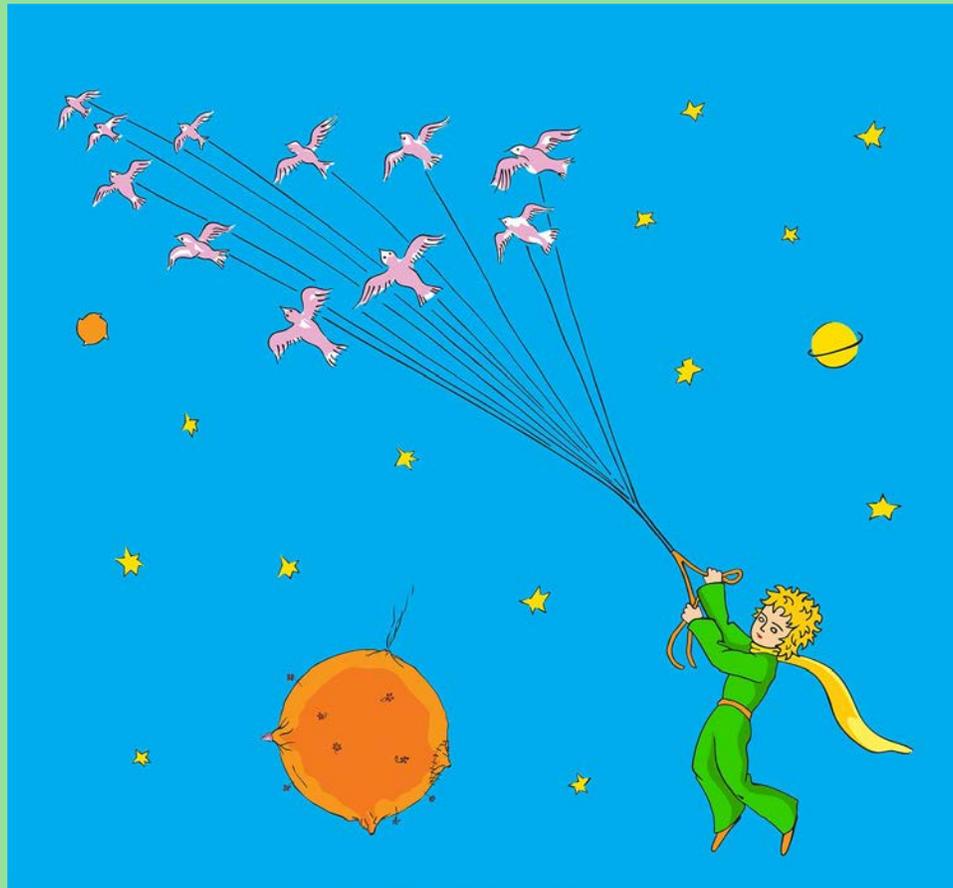
4. OTHER DISTRACTIVE BEHAVIORS: COOKING/CLEANING





Accumulating Treasures of the Heart

SGI-USA April 2021 Discussion Meetings



It is only with the heart that one can see rightly; what is essential is invisible to the eye.

- Antoine de Saint-Exupéry, *The Little Prince*

What Are Treasures of the Heart?

They include:

- Having an invincible and vigorous life force
- Living with integrity and respect
- Expanding our compassion for others
- Having conviction in our faith

Key to developing our hearts:

- Putting faith first in our daily lives



More valuable than treasures in a storehouse are the treasures of the body, and the treasures of the heart are the most valuable of all. From the time you read this letter on, strive to accumulate the treasures of the heart!

- "The Three Kinds of Treasure," *The Writings of Nichiren Daishonin*, vol. 1, p. 851

The purpose of the appearance in this world of Shakyamuni Buddha, the lord of teachings, lies in his behavior as a human being.

- "The Three Kinds of Treasure," WND-1, 852



Uncovering the True Worth of All Aspects of Our Lives

When we base ourselves on the treasures of the heart, the true value and worth of treasures of the storehouse and the body also become apparent in our lives. In short, we need to make accumulating the treasures of the heart our fundamental purpose in life.

- Ikeda Sensei, *The Teachings for Victory*, vol. 1, p. 196





The Power of the Mystic Law Is Demonstrated Through Our Behavior

The treasures of the heart may be invisible to the eye. But when these inner treasures are given concrete expression as respectful actions toward others, they demonstrate and prove to others the power of the Mystic Law and the Buddha nature. ...

Showing respect to others in our actions, meanwhile, constitutes the standard for our behavior as Buddhists based on this sense of values.

- Sensei, *The Teachings for Victory*, vol. 1, p. 198

Shijo Kingo's Example of Putting Faith First

[Nichiren Daishonin teaches Shijo Kingo] the essential criteria he should follow as a practitioner—that faith (a treasure of the heart) is far more important than his estate (a treasure of the storehouse) or his position as a samurai (a treasure of the body). And, indeed, when Kingo practiced in accord with this guidance—putting faith first—his adverse situation began to brighten.

- Sensei, *The Teachings for Victory*, vol. 1, p. 191





Discussion Question

Can you share about a time when you overcame an obstacle through transforming your attitude (developing treasures of the heart)?

April 2021 Discussion Meeting Presentation Notes

Topic: "Accumulating Treasures of the Heart"

Slide 1:

- Thank you for the opportunity to present today's topic!
- Today, we will be studying the topic of "Accumulating Treasures of the Heart."

Slide 2:

- Before we dive in, let's take a look at this quote from the famous children's novella, *The Little Prince*.
- The author writes: "It is only with the heart that one can see rightly; what is essential is invisible to the eye."
- As we get into the Nichiren Buddhist view on treasures of the heart, we will see the relevance of this quote.

Slide 3:

- So what are treasures of the heart?
- In Nichiren Buddhism, treasures of the heart include having an invincible and vigorous life force, living with integrity and respect, no matter what's going on around us, and expanding our compassion toward others and having conviction in our own faith.
- The key to accumulating these treasures of the heart comes down to putting faith first in our daily lives.
- Now, let's study how we can do just that.

Slide 4:

- Nichiren Daishonin describes three kinds of treasures.
- The treasures of the storehouse, which refers to money and material wealth.
- The treasures of the body, which refers to our health and social status.
- And finally, the treasures of the heart, which we described in the previous slide.
- Commenting on these three kinds of treasure, Nichiren writes: **More valuable than treasures in a storehouse are the treasures of the body, and the treasures of the heart are the most valuable of all. From the time you read this letter on, strive to accumulate the treasures of the heart!**
- Instead of basing our happiness on materialism, our social standing or our physical health, the Daishonin encourages us to strive to accumulate treasures of the heart and become wiser, more compassionate and more courageous in order to attain Buddhahood.
- So how do we go about doing that? Nichiren writes, **The purpose of the appearance in this world of Shakyamuni Buddha, the lord of teachings, lies in his behavior as a human being.**
- It is through our own day-to-day actions that we can accumulate the treasures of the heart.

Slide 5:

- However, we do not need to avoid or deny the treasures of the storehouse and body.
- Of course, we need money to pay for our necessities, and most of us want to live healthy lives and be thought of positively by those around us.
- But there is a difference between having those things and thinking that we can only be happy if we have those things.
- Ikeda Sensei explains that everything starts from our hearts. Developing our ability to care for and respect others, finding hope amid difficulties and strengthening our self-confidence—the kinds of treasures of the heart Buddhism emphasizes—will in fact enrich all the other areas of our lives.
- **“When we base ourselves on these treasures of the heart, the true value and worth of the treasures of the storehouse and body will also become apparent. In short, we need to make accumulating the treasures of the heart our fundamental purpose in life.”**
- Losing sight of this will only give rise to more attachments. For instance, fear of losing money, material objects, good health or status would then cause us to suffer even more.
- By basing our lives on our faith, we can be confident that, even if we were to lose all of our possessions, the treasures of the heart can never be destroyed.

Slide 6:

- It is through our behavior and interactions with others that we forge an invincible heart and spirit.
- Sensei says: “The treasures of the heart may be invisible to the eye. But when these inner treasures are given concrete expression as respectful actions toward others, they demonstrate and prove to others the power of the Mystic Law and the Buddha nature. ... Showing respect to others in our actions, meanwhile, constitutes the standard for our behavior as Buddhists based on this sense of values.”
- No matter what we are going through ourselves—financial difficulties, illness, loss of a loved one—we can always show the power of our lives and this Buddhism through our attitude and day-to-day actions.
- Furthermore, by contributing to something that is greater than ourselves, we are able to manifest the strength and courage to overcome our difficulties. In our case as Buddhists, greater purpose is found contributing to the betterment of humanity through spreading Buddhist ideals.
- So how do we make this internal shift in our daily lives? Sharing Buddhism with others and working for the happiness of the people in our environment are ways that we can actively challenge our attachments and develop a life state of Buddhahood.
- In other words, accumulating treasures of the heart enables us to use all aspects of our life to create value for both ourselves and others. It enables us to live the loftiest kind of life.

Slide 7:

- Now, let’s take a look at a real-life example of someone who overcame incredible adversity while striving to accumulate treasures of the heart.

- Shijo Kingo was one of Nichiren's trusted disciples. He was a skilled samurai and physician living in Kamakura. During the Tatsunokuchi Persecution, the most intense of Nichiren's persecutions, Kingo accompanied Nichiren, ready to give his life to protect his teacher and this Buddhism.
- However, Kingo had negative tendencies just like all of us. He had a hot temper and was self-righteous, and was misunderstood and sanctioned by his lord, Ema Mitsutoki—who in today's terms would be like his boss.
- For example, when Kingo tried to convert his boss to Nichiren's teachings, Lord Ema responded quite negatively.
- This was compounded by his fellow samurai—who today would be like his coworkers—spreading lies and rumors about Kingo. As a result, Kingo faced the potential loss of all of his land and his status—in other words, his treasures of the storehouse and the body.
- It was around this time that Nichiren wrote to Kingo about the three kinds of treasure.
- Sensei explains: **“[Nichiren Daishonin teaches Shijo Kingo] the essential criteria he should follow as a practitioner—that faith (a treasure of the heart) is far more important than his estate (a treasure of the storehouse) or his position as a samurai (a treasure of the body). And, indeed, when Kingo practiced in accord with this guidance—putting faith first—his adverse situation began to brighten.”**
- Along with this Sensei says: **“The key to victory lies in aligning our hearts with the heart of our mentor who faithfully embodies and propagates the Law.”** (*Teachings for Victory*, vol. 1 p. 193)
- Despite his tendency to react emotionally to things, Kingo diligently took his mentor's guidance to heart, striving each day to transform his situation based on improving his own behavior and efforts to care for others.
- A couple months after receiving Nichiren's letter, Lord Ema became sick and Kingo was able to help him overcome his illness, thus regaining Ema's trust.
- As a result, Ema awarded Kingo three times the amount of land he had previously owned. By putting faith first (treasure of the heart), Kingo gained more land (treasure of the storehouse) and respect from his boss (treasure of the body).
- Shijo Kingo remains a wonderful model of faith for us today.

Slide 8:

- Now, for the best part: Discussion!
- Let's break up into small groups and use this question as a starting point!
- (please feel free to utilize the Zoom breakout groups feature)