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.

4. OTHER DISTRACTIVE BEHAVIORS: COOKING/CLEANING
Mutual Possession of the Ten Worlds

SGI-USA September 2021 Discussion Meeting
Key Points

1. The mutual possession of the Ten Worlds is a revolutionary concept to view the inner workings of life.

2. We bring out the 10th, or highest, world of Buddhahood by chanting Nam-myoho-RENGE-KYO and caring for others.

3. The aim of our Buddhist practice is to make Buddhahood our basic life tendency.
The Mutual Possession of the Ten Worlds

The “Ten Worlds” is a classification of 10 states of life that people inherently possess.

Each of the Ten Worlds possesses the potential for all the other worlds in itself—this is called the “mutual possession of the Ten Worlds.”

We can each experience any of the Ten Worlds at any time. Most important, whatever our life condition, through our Buddhist practice we can bring forth the world of Buddhahood in an instant. So, even in the miserable state of hell, through chanting Nam-myoho-renge-kyo, we can instantly experience the joy of Buddhahood.
The Mutual Possession of the Ten Worlds

The Ten Worlds are ten potential states of life.

Any of the Ten Worlds can emerge in our life at any time.

Even in the lowest state of hell, we can bring forth the highest state of Buddhahood.
Chanting Nam-myoho-renge-kyo Just as We Are

When you’re suffering, when you’re sad, when you’re hurting, just chant Nam-myoho-renge-kyo with an open heart. Keep chanting just as you are, as if sharing your feelings with a caring parent. ...

Most important, as you chant, you will experience courage surging up from within, filling you with the conviction that you can triumph over what’s troubling you. Even if the problem isn’t resolved immediately, the time will come when “the sufferings of hell will vanish instantly” (“Lessening One’s Karmic Retribution,” WND-1, 199).

- Ikeda Sensei, July 2019 Living Buddhism, pp. 57–58
There are countless people in the world whose hearts have been wounded for some reason. We need to extend a healing hand to them all. Through such efforts, we in fact heal ourselves. ...

When we look after and care for others—that is, help others draw forth the strength to live—our own strength to live increases. When we help people expand their state of life, our lives also expand. This is the marvel of the bodhisattva path; actions to benefit others cannot be separated from actions to benefit oneself.

Establishing Buddhahood in Our Lives Means Having Total Peace of Mind

Our daily practice of gongyo ... is a solemn ceremony in which our lives become one with the life of the Buddha. By applying ourselves steadfastly and persistently to this practice for manifesting our inherent Buddhahood, we firmly establish the world of Buddhahood in our lives so that it is solid and unshakable like the earth. ...

When we establish Buddhahood as our basic life tendency, we can move toward a future of hope while creating positive value from all our activities in the nine worlds, both past and present. In fact, all of our hardships and struggles in the nine worlds become the nourishment that strengthens the world of Buddhahood in our lives.

Real Life Example: Aiko Anderson

“I kept working even during the horrible war years of my early 20s, the memories of which scare me even today—fires; air raid sirens and [bombs dropping]; boats exploding; everyone running. Though I worked and worked, my life was asleep.

Daimoku, chanting Nam-myoho-renge-kyo, woke me up. ...

A new, joyful Aiko was waking up. She was saying OK! to chanting, OK! to studying and OK! to doing Soka Gakkai activities. This Aiko rolled up her sleeves for a new kind of work—refreshing, joyful work for the peace of the land.”

- Aug. 13 World Tribune, p. 7
Discussion Questions

1. How has chanting and sharing Buddhism helped you transform your state of life?

2. What does making Buddhahood your basic life tendency look like to you?
Slide 1:

**This slide is NOT part of the discussion meeting presentation. This slide is to outline basic Zoom etiquette. This slide can be shown at the beginning of a discussion meeting as members/guests join the meeting. The presentation starts from slide 2.**

Slide 2:

- Hello everyone! Thank you for listening to today’s topic for discussion!
- Today we will be studying a Buddhist concept called the “mutual possession of the Ten Worlds.”
- Let’s dive in!

Slide 3:

- We will be going over three key points today.
- They are:
  1. The mutual possession of the Ten Worlds is a revolutionary concept to view the inner workings of life.
  2. We bring out the 10th, or highest, world of Buddhahood by chanting Nam-myoho-renge-kyo and caring for others.
  3. The aim of our Buddhist practice is to make Buddhahood our basic life tendency.

Slide 4:

- For our first key point, let’s review the Ten Worlds and the mutual possession of the Ten Worlds.
- The “Ten Worlds” is a classification of 10 states of life that people inherently possess.
- Within each of the Ten Worlds is the potential to bring forth all the other nine worlds—this is called the “mutual possession of the Ten Worlds.”
- Throughout the day, we experience any of the Ten Worlds at any time. This means there’s no such thing as a “purely good” or “purely bad” person.
- The key is: Whatever world we are experiencing now, through Buddhist practice, we can bring forth the world of Buddhahood in an instant. So, for example, even if we’re in the state of hell, by chanting Nam-myoho-renge-kyo, we can instantly experience the joy of Buddhahood.

Slide 5:

- All the Ten Worlds, including Buddhahood, are states of life that we already possess.
- We can experience any of these life states, just as we are.
Here’s an example of what I mean: Let’s say that you wake up one morning with a massive headache, putting you in the world of hell. What’s more, at work, your boss yells at you, and now you’re in the world of anger.

Your friend helps you calm down and you’re in the world of humanity. Later, your significant other takes you out to dinner, and eating your favorite dish brings you to the world of heaven. But then you get into a fight with them, and, all of a sudden, you’re back in the world of hell.

So, we see how easy it is to go from world to world in the course of a day. The 10 Worlds are not a ladder you climb up or down—we jump from one world to another in an instant.

However, the example I shared is of someone reacting to their environment, letting each situation dictate what world they are in.

The mutual possession of the Ten Worlds teaches that we can CHOOSE what world to be in and CHOOSE to bring forth the world of Buddhahood.

How can we do that? We will cover the answer in the next few slides.

Slide 6:

- Our second key point is that we can bring out Buddhahood through chanting Nam-myoho-renge-kyo and taking action for others.
- Ikeda Sensei explains that no matter how we are feeling, we can always chant Nam-myoho-renge-kyo just as we are.
  - “When you’re suffering, when you’re sad, when you’re hurting, just chant Nam-myoho-renge-kyo with an open heart. Keep chanting just as you are, as if sharing your feelings with a caring parent. …
  - “Most important, as you chant, you will experience courage surging up from within, filling you with the conviction that you can triumph over what’s troubling you. Even if the problem isn’t resolved immediately, the time will come when “the sufferings of hell will vanish instantly” (“Lessening One’s Karmic Retribution,” WND-1, 199).”
- Through sincere prayer, we can transform our sufferings into sources of joy and happiness.

Slide 7:

- Coupled with chanting, taking action for others enables us to access the world of bodhisattva, which is the ninth, or second highest, world among the Ten Worlds.
- In addition to Buddhahood, the world of bodhisattva is the only one in which we are aware of and take action for other people.
- It is a noble way of life and, as Buddhism teaches, we attain Buddhahood in this lifetime by engaging in bodhisattva practice.
- Sensei says: “There are countless people in the world whose hearts have been wounded for some reason. We need to extend a healing hand to them all. Through such efforts, we in fact heal ourselves. …
- “When we look after and care for others—that is, help others draw forth the strength to live—our own strength to live increases. When we help people expand their state of life, our lives also
expand. This is the marvel of the bodhisattva path; actions to benefit others cannot be separated from actions to benefit oneself.”

**Slide 8:**

- Our final key point is that we practice Buddhism in order to make Buddhahood our basic life tendency.
- We may know someone who always seems angry about something or others who always try to take advantage of people.
- On the other hand, we may also know those who are always looking out for us and are always there when we need them.
- We also have a life state or one of the Ten Worlds that we default to.
- Those who tend to be in the world of hunger may, for instance, hunger for more money or possessions and, therefore, work hard to earn more. But because of their greed, no matter how much money or possessions they gain, it will never be enough. On the flip side, the world of hunger illuminated by Buddhahood may lead them to constantly seek ways to help others or benefit society.
- Buddhism teaches that we can gradually change our basic life tendency to that of Buddhahood.
- Sensei explains: “Our daily practice of gongyo ... is a solemn ceremony in which our lives become one with the life of the Buddha. By applying ourselves steadfastly and persistently to this practice for manifesting our inherent Buddhahood, we firmly establish the world of Buddhahood in our lives so that it is solid and unshakable like the earth. ...”
- “When we establish Buddhahood as our basic life tendency, we can move toward a future of hope while creating positive value from all our activities in the nine worlds, both past and present. In fact, all of our hardships and struggles in the nine worlds become the nourishment that strengthens the world of Buddhahood in our lives.”
- Isn’t this so wonderful? Earlier, I said that we can choose to live in the world of Buddhahood rather than react to our circumstances. We can decide to chant Nam-myoho-renge-kyo, attend Soka Gakkai activities, just like today’s meeting, and work for others’ happiness. Such actions lead us to bodhisattva and Buddhahood.
- Attaining Buddhahood doesn’t mean denying or denouncing our desires. Rather, it is about being able to create the most value in any circumstance, while enjoying total peace of mind.

**Slide: 9:**

- Now let’s look at a real-life example of someone who brings forth Buddhahood each day.
- Aiko Anderson is longtime member in Texas, who grew up in Japan during the second World War.
- She says: “I kept working even during the horrible war years of my early 20s, the memories of which scare me even today—fires; air raid sirens and the B-29s; boats exploding; everyone running. Though I worked and worked, my life was asleep. Daimoku, chanting Nam-myoho-renge-kyo, woke me up. ... A new, joyful Aiko was waking up. She was saying OK! to chanting,
OK! to studying and OK! to doing Soka Gakkai activities. This Aiko rolled up her sleeves for a new kind of work—refreshing, joyful work for the peace of the land.”

- Through chanting, Aiko decided that she wouldn’t live by reacting to her surroundings anymore. She chose to live in the world of Buddhahood.
- She moved from Japan to Texas, a pretty dramatic change, but never let that keep her from her new “work” of supporting others’ happiness and chanting Nam-myoho-renge-kyo.
- At 100 years old, she’s forever youthful and showing actual proof of happiness. She has remained youthful precisely because of her efforts for kosen-rufu. What a fine example of choosing the life condition of Buddhahood every day.
- (OPTIONAL: please add your own, brief, experience related to how you were able to change the world you were experiencing through this practice.)

Slide 10:

- Thank you all for listening thus far!
- It’s now time to discuss! Here are the questions we can use as a starting point.
  1. How has chanting and sharing Buddhism helped you transform your state of life?
  2. What does making Buddhahood your basic life tendency look like to you?

(Feel free to utilize the Zoom breakout rooms feature.)