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

SI ZOOM MEETINGS

"ZOOM BEST PRACTICES"
The Four Powers

SGI-USA October 2021 Discussion Meeting
Key Points

1. When it comes to our prayer, it is our heart that matters most.
2. The concept of the “four powers” teaches that the benefit we receive from chanting to the Gohonzon (which represents the powers of the Buddha and the Law) depends on the powers of our faith and practice.
3. We gain the greatest benefits by continuing to chant Nam-myoho-renge-kyo, study Buddhism and share this practice with others.
What Faith Means in Nichiren Buddhism

There is nothing extraordinary about prayer—it is simply wishing for something with all our heart.
And our heart is what matters most. It is important to chant with deep faith, reverence and love in the Gohonzon in our heart.

- Ikeda Sensei, *Discussions on Youth*, p. 303
The Four Powers

• **The power of faith:** Our conviction in the Gohonzon, the object of devotion that represents the power of the Buddha and the power of the Law.

• **The power of practice:** Chanting Nam-myoho-renge-kyo for ourselves and others, taking action to share this Buddhism and working for the progress and prosperity of all those around us.

• **The power of the Buddha:** The Buddha’s compassion and wish for the happiness of all people, which manifests as our limitless inner wisdom, courage, compassion and more.

• **The power of the Law:** The Mystic Law—the fundamental Law of the universe that is inherent in our lives and permeates all our surroundings—with its immeasurable capacity to lead all people to enlightenment.
Increasing Our Powers of Faith and Practice Brings Benefits

Second Soka Gakkai president Josei Toda used to say: “Obviously, when you strike a bell, you’re going to get a vastly different sound depending on whether you use a toothpick, a chopstick or a bell striker. The bell is the same, but if you hit it powerfully, it rings loudly. If you hit it weakly, it rings softly.” “The same is true of the Gohonzon,” he said. “The benefit we receive depends entirely on the power of our faith and practice.”

- Ikeda Sensei, *Discussions on Youth*, p. 298
The Power of Practice: Chanting and Sharing Buddhism With Others

No matter how strong your power of faith, without the power of practice, the power of the Buddha and the power of the Law will not manifest. If you summon the great power of faith and apply great power in your practice of chanting and making efforts to share Buddhism with others, the power of the Buddha and the power of the Law cannot fail to appear.

- Josei Toda, June 2021 Living Buddhism, p. 54
Brief Experience Related to the Four Powers
Discussion Questions

1. Can you share a brief experience of having a breakthrough due to strengthening your faith in the Gohonzon or taking more action for kosen-rufu?

2. What are some ways that help you strengthen or deepen your powers of faith and practice?
October 2021 Discussion Meeting Presentation Script

Topic: “The Four Powers”

*This material can also be found in the Sept. 17, 2021 World Tribune insert*

Slide 1: (Not in 9/17/21 WT insert)

**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: (9/17/21 WT Insert: The Four Powers [title slide])

- Hello and thank you, everyone, for allowing me to present today’s topic of discussion.
- Today we will be studying the four powers!

Slide 3: (9/17/21 WT Insert: Key Points)

- Today’s presentation will cover three key points.
- They are:
  1. When it comes to our prayer, it is our heart that matters most.
  2. The concept of the “four powers” teaches that the benefit we receive from chanting to the Gohonzon (which represents the powers of the Buddha and the Law) depends on the powers of our faith and practice.
  3. We gain the greatest benefits by continuing to chant Nam-myoho-renge-kyo, study Buddhism and share this practice with others.
- Now, let’s get started!

Slide 4: (9/17/21 WT Insert: What Faith Means in Nichiren Buddhism)

- As we get into the four powers and study how we can maximize the results we see from our Buddhist practice, we will come to see that everything comes down to the power of our faith and our practice.
- Everything begins with our prayer to the Gohonzon.
- Ikeda Sensei explains: “There is nothing extraordinary about prayer—it is simply wishing for something with all our heart. And our heart is what matters most. It is important to chant with deep faith, reverence and love for the Gohonzon in our heart.”
- Let’s keep this in mind as we study about the four powers.
Slide 5: (9/17/21 WT Insert: The Four Powers)

- What exactly are the four powers?
- The four powers are the key components that function to realize our prayers in Nichiren Buddhism.
- They are the power of faith, the power of practice, the power of the Buddha, the power of the Law.
- The power of faith points to consistently chanting Nam-myoho-renge-kyo—with the resolve that our prayers will be fulfilled—to the Gohonzon, which is our object of devotion that embodies the power of the Buddha and the power of the Law.
- The power of practice is chanting Nam-myoho-renge-kyo for ourselves and others and taking action to share this Buddhism with and working for the progress and prosperity of, those around us.
- The power of the Buddha is the Buddha’s compassion and wish for the happiness of all people, which emerges in our own lives as limitless wisdom, courage, compassion and more.
- The power of the Law means the power of the Mystic Law—Nam-myoho-renge-kyo—the fundamental Law of the universe that is inherent in our lives and permeates all our surroundings. It has the immeasurable capacity to lead all people to enlightenment.
- Important to keep in mind is that the Gohonzon is the object of devotion that, just as Sensei says in the previous slide, also exists in our heart.
- So, the stronger our faith in the Gohonzon and the more action we take for kosen-rufu, the more strongly the powers of the Buddha and the Law will emerge within our lives.

Slide 6: (9/17/21 WT Insert: Increasing Our Powers of Faith and Practice Brings Benefits)

- Nichiren Buddhism teaches that when it comes to our individual practice, the more we put into it, the more we will get out of it.
- Second Soka Gakkai President Josei Toda used to say: “Obviously, when you strike a bell, you’re going to get a vastly different sound depending on whether you use a toothpick, a chopstick or a bell striker. The bell is the same, but if you hit it powerfully, it rings loudly. If you hit it weakly, it rings softly. The same is true of the Gohonzon. The benefit we receive depends entirely on the power of our faith and practice.”
- No matter what we pursue in life, the results are entirely up to us. In sports or fitness, the harder we train and exercise, the more visible our progress. In school, the more we study and put effort into our assignments, the better our grades. Consistently working hard leads to trust on the job, promotions and raises.
- It is the same with Buddhism, where our goal is genuine happiness. What we put into our faith and practice will determine the results we enjoy.

Slide 7: (9/17/21 WT Insert: The Power of Practice: Chanting and Sharing Buddhism With Others)

- As we strengthen our power of faith, we must also take action for the powers of the Buddha and the Law to emerge.
• Josei Toda also says: “No matter how strong your power of faith, without the power of practice, the power of the Buddha and the power of the Law will not manifest. If you summon the great power of faith and apply great power in your practice of chanting and making efforts to share Buddhism with others, the power of the Buddha and the power of the Law cannot fail to appear.”
• Together with faith, making efforts to chant and share Buddhism with others, brings about the full benefits of Nichiren Buddhism in our lives.

Slide 8: (Not in 9/17/21 WT insert)

*Optional Slide* (Please share a brief experience related to the four powers.)

Slide 9: (9/17/21 WT Insert: Discussion Questions)

• Thank you all for listening thus far.
• Now, let’s discuss!
• We can use these questions as a starting point, they are:
  1. Can you share a brief experience of having a breakthrough due to strengthening your faith in the Gohonzon or taking more action for kosen-rufu?
  2. What are some ways that help you strengthen or deepen your powers of faith and practice?