SOKA SPIRIT
CHANTING SESSIONS

► PURPOSE

1) Chant Nam-myoho-rengyoho to establish the correct teaching for the peace of the land.
2) Hone our abilities to recognize devilish functions internally and externally.
3) Learn the essential spirit of President Ikeda and the SGI.
4) Unite around the current SGI-USA direction and focus.

► SUGGESTED AGENDA

- Daimoku and gongyo led by central figure (1 hour)
- Study presentation by youth member (5 min)
- Encouragement by region–national line leader (7–10 min)

► RESPONSIBILITIES

- **Fukudoshi**
  
  Two–three youth should be assigned to support daimoku as fukudoshi for 20–30 minutes each. For tips on being fukudoshi, please see p. 2.

- **MC**
  
  One youth emcee, with the support of seniors in faith, should be assigned to welcome the members and move the meeting along. For tips on being emcee, please see p. 2.

- **Study Presentation**
  
  One youth, with the support of seniors in faith, should give a well-prepared study presentation (5 min) based on the Soka Spirit curriculum. Please see the Soka Spirit study guide.

- **Encouragement**
  
  A region–national line leader of any division should share encouragement related to the current organizational focus and convey the spirit of the week or month.

**Note:** The Soka Spirit toso is a wonderful training opportunity for the youth. If there are no youth for the responsibilities above, please work with the region or zone to find youth support.
TIPS ON BEING EMCEE

- The emcee’s voice should be stirring, powerful and brimming with life force.
  “Emcees must have the determination to bear full responsibility for the meeting and use their voices to transform the atmosphere into a place of joy in seeking the Law, a true Buddhist assembly” (The New Human Revolution, vol. 25, p. 187).

- Get a good night’s sleep and eat a proper meal.
  “An emcee needs to enunciate, so that everyone can hear and understand what is said. Facial expressions are also important. An emcee mustn’t look tired or unwell. When you’re going to take on the crucial role of emcee, you need to get a good night’s sleep the day before” (NHR-25, 189–90).

- Pay special attention to timing during the meeting and be able to respond quickly.
  “There are times when you need to jump right in and speak to keep the tempo upbeat, and times when you need to take a breath and pause. If you lack that crucial sense of timing, you can possibly ruin the meeting’s mood” (NHR-25, 191).

- Chant Nam-myoho-RENge-Kyo prior to the meeting.
  “It’s vital that you chant with strong determination to make the meeting you’re moderating a success. The purpose of Soka Gakkai meetings is to advance kosen-rufu, and they are the contemporary versions of the assembly of the Lotus Sutra. As such, serving as an emcee at a meeting is to carry out the noble work of the Buddha” (NHR-25, 192).

TIPS ON BEING FUKUDOSHI

- Maintain a consistent and dynamic rhythm together with the person leading.
  “You must first listen carefully to the voice of the person leading gongyo and stay in rhythm with it. It’s important to neither get ahead nor fall behind. In addition, you should try to ensure that the rhythm of gongyo is dynamic and exhilarating like a fine steed galloping across the open plains” (The New Human Revolution, vol. 25, pp. 192–93).

- Avoid slowing down.
  “When a large number of people are participating, both the sutra recitation and chanting tend to gradually slow down, but you mustn’t allow yourself to be dragged along. You should try to lead everyone at a lively tempo” (NHR-25, 193).

- Pronounce the words in the sutra clearly.
  “It’s also necessary to pronounce the words in the sutra recitation clearly. You should strive during your own daily gongyo to do your very best at all times, making sure you aren’t slipping into sloppy pronunciation habits, and that you’re breathing in the appropriate places” (NHR-25, 193).

- Strive for a resonant, clear, powerful, refreshing gongyo. (NHR-25, 193)
December 5th Kosen-rufu Gongyo Meeting Suggested Agenda
(both virtual and in-person)

Suggested Agenda:
- Faith Experience
- Gohonzon Conferrals (in-person only)
- Leadership Announcements
- *Video: “Let’s Scale the Highest Peak of Our Lives Together With Our Mentor!” (12 min with skip)
- **SGI-USA Youth Chorus Video
- Words of Encouragement

*Please coordinate with your region SVP (Soka Video Player) handler to prepare the video in advance. The video can be found under the following:

> Archive Videos
> Select “English” for language
> Under Category, select “Special Collection”
> Scroll down to “Let’s scale the highest peak of our lives together with our mentor!”
> Click the image
> Please start from the beginning, but skip the portion with the choral performance and resume with Sensei’s speech. (0:00 to 9:28, then skip to 15:25)

Reminder: The following disclaimer is required to be read aloud before showing the video: “This video has been approved to show at this meeting. We ask that you do not make any video or audio recordings. Duplication and rebroadcast of this video in any way is prohibited. We appreciate your support and understanding. Please enjoy!”

** For the SGI-USA Youth Chorus Video, you can find the link in the Org Memo, or please contact your local youth leader. Please show the chorus video after the SVP video.
December Curriculum: Week 2 (Dec. 12)

**Preparation:** Please read the material, seek from seniors in faith about it and chant abundantly throughout the preparation.

**Intro:** Today, we will review an excerpt from the afterword to *The New Human Revolution* in the December 2021 *Living Buddhism*, page 41.

**Context:** On August 6, 2018, after 28 years, Ikeda Sensei completed the *The New Human Revolution*, which spans 30 volumes. The novel is an expression of his commitment to transmit to future generations and to leave an eternal record of the vow he inherited from his mentor, second Soka Gakkai President Josei Toda. In this excerpt from the afterword, Sensei discusses the meaning of the phrase “human revolution.”

**Ikeda Sensei writes in *The New Human Revolution*, vol. 30, pp. 839–40:**

*The New Human Revolution* unfolds as a story of changing karma or destiny into mission. The quintessential teaching of Nichiren Buddhism does not view life and its phenomena as fixed or static but elucidates life’s dynamism, in which everything is changing and open to change, as is seen in such principles as earthly desires are enlightenment, the sufferings of birth and death are nirvana and changing poison into medicine. It also perceives the potential for Buddhahood in the depths of the life of each suffering human being and teaches the way to awaken and manifest that life state—in other words, the supreme positive potential, creativity and autonomy of human beings. This process of changing our lives, or inner transformation, we call human revolution.

Human beings are the builders and shapers of the societies, nations, and the world in which they live. Hatred and trust, disdain and respect, war and peace—all are the products of the human heart and mind. As a result, without human revolution, there can be no true personal happiness, social prosperity or lasting world peace. Without this crucial element, any attempts to effect enduring change will be in vain. The philosophy of human revolution based on the principles of Nichiren Buddhism is certain to become a new guide for humanity as we set forth into this third millennium.

**Presentation (5 minutes):** For the presentation, please read all the sections above, starting with the Intro. To close the presentation, please respond to the prompt below.

- **Based on how Ikeda Sensei defines human revolution in this passage, what kind of human revolution have you been able to do through your Buddhist practice?**

**Reminder:** The Soka Spirit curriculum can be found at [www.sgi-usa.org/monthly-downloads/](http://www.sgi-usa.org/monthly-downloads/)
December Curriculum: Week 3 (Dec. 19)

We will view the video titled “Offering Praise to Dedicated Friends in Faith” (Voice-over) (11 minutes).

Since this video is a speech from Ikeda Sensei, words of encouragement should come before the video on the meeting agenda.

Please coordinate with your region SVP (Soka Video Player) handler to prepare the video in advance. The video can be found under the following:

> Archive Videos

> Select “English” for language

> Under Category, select “Speech”

> Scroll down to (Voice-over) “Offering Praise to Dedicated Friends in Faith”

> Click the blue Voice-Over image

Reminder: The following disclaimer is required to be read aloud before showing the video:

“This video has been approved to show at this meeting. We ask that you do not make any video or audio recordings. Duplication and rebroadcast of this video in any way is prohibited. We appreciate your support and understanding. Please enjoy!”