

## Januari Discussion Topic – How do I stay motivated if I do not seem to achieve my goals?

No matter what you're going through, it always helps to remember the following essential message of Nichiren Buddhism: Never give up! Many members set goals and do their best to achieve them. There's no reason, however, to feel disappointed about not yet seeing the results you desire. No effort for the sake of Buddhism is ever wasted. In addition, Nichiren Buddhism is based on the simultaneity of cause and effect, which explains that the instant you make a cause, the effect is simultaneously created. When and how that effect manifests varies.

Nichiren Daishonin writes: "If you want to understand the causes that existed in the past, look at the results as they are manifested in the present. And if you want to understand what results will be manifested in the future, look at the causes that exist in the present" (WND-I, 279). This passage teaches us that the present moment is what matters most. The causes we have made in the past are our current circumstances. And our thoughts, words and actions in the present will determine our future. Based on this, Nichiren teaches that our inner resolve, our mindset, at this moment determines our future. He instructs that chanting Nam-myoho-renge-kyo is vital in activating the inherent life state of Buddhahood that enables us to transform our karma and establish peace in society.

President Ikeda says: "Faith is the courage to never give up. It means never giving up on the potential of your own life and that of others. It means never giving up on expanding happiness."<sup>1</sup> By making constant efforts based on faith to achieve seemingly impossible goals, we can overcome our insecurities, fears and problems that hold us back from deepening our conviction in our own abilities. And by challenging and overcoming our weaknesses, we find the power and wisdom to move our lives in the direction we desire. The German philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche (1844–1900) declared: "Let where you are going, not where you come from, henceforth be your honour!"<sup>2</sup>

Setting goals is a means to develop ourselves to take our lives even further than we thought possible. President Ikeda emphasizes, "When we determine to give our all and to win in our goals and endeavors for kosen-rufu, that resolve becomes the cause for expanding our life state and bringing forth the power to achieve the impossible"<sup>3</sup> Rather than lamenting what you have yet to accomplish, resolve to keep moving forward and continue to make unceasing efforts for your own life and for kosen-rufu. This is how you rewrite your destiny and create wonderful dramas of happiness and victory.

- How do you maintain your faith if you don't seem to achieve your goal and do you have an experience with it?
- How can we connect our goals to kosenrufu?

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<sup>1</sup> World Tribune, 20 september 2013, 7.

<sup>2</sup> Nietzsche, Friedrich, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra: A Book for Everyone and No One*, trans. R.J. Hollingdale (London: Penguin Books, 1969), 220.

<sup>3</sup> World Tribune, 15 mei 2009, 5.