

September Discussion Topic – Faith for Triumphant over Illness

Falling ill is not defeat. No one can escape the sufferings of birth, aging, sickness and death. But Nichiren Buddhism teaches the path to overcoming these sufferings. Nothing is more noble than living out our lives to the fullest, even in the face of serious illness. Illness isn't something to be feared; being defeated by the "devil¹ of illness" is. This negative function uses illness to discourage and dishearten us. If this happens, then even curable illnesses can become incurable.

When we fall ill, that is the time to rouse an invincible spirit and challenge the situation with our Buddhist practice—to defeat the "devil of illness" with the lion's roar of Nam-myoho-renge-kyo. When we do so, we will bring forth a strong life force that can turn even illness into a springboard for our lives. Through the power of the Mystic Law we can change poison into medicine and become healthier and stronger than before. As Nichiren Daishonin says: "Nam-myoho-renge-kyo is like the roar of a lion. What sickness can therefore be an obstacle?" (WND-I, 412)

Buddhism is a struggle between the Buddha and devilish functions. When we advance in the life state of Buddhahood, devilish functions always arise to try to obstruct our way forward. We must therefore never doubt or falter. Just as an airplane takes off because of air resistance, we realize great progress when we confront and resolutely surmount obstacles.

Nichiren Buddhism is a great philosophy of hope teaching that those who suffer the most can become the happiest. Chanting Nam-myoho-renge-kyo even once has the immense power to move the universe, and its reverberations will definitely reach our precious family members and friends. Facing difficulty is an opportunity to achieve a significant transformation in our lives. Our Buddhist faith enables us to triumph over illness, surmount obstacles, and realize absolute victory, guarantees that we can do so.

* How can we encourage someone who is ill based on our faith?

* Do you have an experience with overcoming illness through your faith?

¹ The word devil has nothing to do with a creature with horns. It represent all the negative functions that hinder our enlightenment.