

## April Discussion Topic - Creating Hope

President Ikeda writes the following about hope: “There may be times when, confronted by cruel reality, we verge on losing all hope. If we cannot feel hope, it is time to create some. We can do this by digging deeper within, searching for even a small glimmer of light, for the possibility of a way to begin to break through the impasse before us. Our capacity for hope can actually be expanded and strengthened by difficult circumstances. Hope that has not been tested is nothing more than a fragile dream. Hope begins from this challenge, this effort to strive toward an ideal, however distant it may seem.

It is far better to pursue a remote, even seemingly impossible goal than to cheat ourselves of the forward motion that such goals can provide. I believe that the ultimate tragedy in life is not physical death. Rather, it is the spiritual death of losing hope, giving up on our own possibilities for growth.”<sup>1</sup>

The problems that face our world are daunting in their depth and complexity. Sometimes, it may be hard to see where—or how to begin. But we cannot be paralyzed by despair. We must each take action toward the goals we have set and in which we believe. Rather than passively accepting things as they are, we must embark on the challenge of creating a new reality. It is in this effort that true, undying hope is to be found.”<sup>2</sup>

“When we change our inner determination, everything begins to move in a new direction. The moment we make a powerful resolve, every nerve and fibre of our being will immediately orient itself towards the fulfilment of this goal or desire. On the other hand, if we think, ‘This is never going to work out’, then every cell in our body will be deflated and give up the fight. Hope, in this sense, is a decision. It is the most important decision we can make. Hope changes everything, starting with our lives. Hope is the force that enables us to take action to make our dreams come true. It has the power to change winter into summer, barrenness to creativity, agony to joy. As long as we have hope, there is nothing we cannot achieve. When we possess the treasure of hope, we can draw forth our inner potential and strength. A person of hope can always advance.”<sup>3</sup>

\* What does hope mean to you?

\* How does your practice helps you to create hope?

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<sup>1</sup> Daisaku Ikeda, *Hope is a decision*, 6.

<sup>2</sup> Idem, 8.

<sup>3</sup> Idem, 4-5.