

## Winning Over Our Lack of Self-Confidence

BY MALINA MOORE  
SGI-USA YOUTH DIVISION STUDY COMMITTEE

**If you wish to free yourself from the sufferings of birth and death you have endured through eternity and attain supreme enlightenment in this lifetime, you must awaken to the mystic truth which has always been within your life. This truth is Myoho-rence-kyo (*The Major Writings of Nichiren Daishonin*, vol. 1, p. 3).**

When I first read this passage, I loved it like I love how-to manuals! I thought, “Finally, we’re getting down to the nitty-gritty — how I can reach enlightenment today!”

As I practiced more, I often referred back to this passage for encouragement when I hit an obstacle. It has become a personal point of reference, a tool with which I put my problems into perspective.

For me, the “sufferings of birth and death” represent my battle with a lack of self-confidence, to know my self-worth.

In speaking with others — particularly other young women — I have found this is a common struggle. Too often we gauge our worth and the value of our accomplishments against external criteria.

And I find that because of this we suffer and experience a deep sense of powerlessness.

However, when I read “you must awaken to the mystic truth which has always been within your life,” I am reminded that I possess the Buddha nature, that I have the power to change any situation and that the responsibility for my happiness is solely my own.

I realize then that I am perfect in the deepest sense. I am no longer lacking. I am neither “not quite...” nor “too....” I just *am* — nothing more, nothing less.

And that is OK. Although the process of knowing this with my life is an ongoing, often difficult process, I feel tremendous joy in going through it.

**WT**