

SIGN POSTS: Enjoying It!
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Suffer what there is to suffer, enjoy what there is to enjoy. Regard both suffering and joy as facts of life and continue chanting Nam-myoho-renge-kyo, no matter what happens. (*The Major Writings of Nichiren Daishonin*, vol. 1, p.161)

I have always liked this passage and often turn to it when I am suffering. I am reassured by Nichiren Daishonin's encouragement to challenge my life by overcoming my sufferings with continuous practice.

However, I recently found myself drawing on this quote in regards to happiness — “Enjoy what there is to enjoy.”

I spoke with a member who had challenged a difficult work situation and was now enjoying a great new job. But it was with some hesitation that she shared her new happy situation with me. She seemed to be looking for more suffering at her job instead of appreciating the fortune she had worked so hard for. Through our conversation it became clear that because she deeply believes facing challenges is the way to change karma, it was difficult for her to appreciate the benefit that she had created.

This made me really stop and think. I know I have sometimes had this same feeling, looking for obstacles to motivate my practice instead of appreciating what I have accomplished — and using that appreciation and joy as the motivation to advance.

A period without major obstacles can be the most challenging time to progress in my practice and create fortune. It is difficult to have the self-motivation to continue practicing with the same focus as when I am motivated by a desperate challenge. But I feel that taking the opportunity to appreciate and enjoy my benefits — while continuing to advance — also deepens my faith and practice.

I have always found it easier to practice when I am “suffering what there is to suffer” than when I am “enjoying what there is to enjoy.” Nichiren Daishonin makes clear in this passage, though, the importance of chanting throughout our lives, in all circumstances — both those of suffering and joy.

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