

Yours Truly, Betty B.

DEAR BETTY: I've been chanting for almost 15 years, and I still don't have the relationship or the career I want. I know all about the concept of human revolution but, hey, I can't be someone I'm not.
— GOTTA BE ME

DEAR DON'T GET IT: No one's suggesting a total personality makeover. But if each date becomes your Un-Significant Other, it's time to get real. Charming as you no doubt are, there may be some aspects of your character that are sidelining a trip to the altar — or even the movies.

Same thing at your job. Could there be some teeny-weeny weaknesses preventing your climb up the corporate ladder?

Sure, change can be painful, but unless we have the guts to look at our lives — and the stamina to keep hammering out those inevitable flaws — we end up going around in circles. For ultimate success, we must undergo our human revolution. Our purpose is not to change who we really are but rather to make that true self shine. After all, just because you've always been a certain way doesn't mean it's helped you get where you want to go.

SGI President Ikeda has said many times that only when we awaken to our mission can we get real benefit. Even if you're not Tom Cruise on an impossible assignment, there's still a unique way for you to contribute to our kosen-rufu movement, both within the SGI and in daily life. Are your daimoku and action focused that way?

Well, nobody ever said it was easy. But your seniors in faith are there to support you: Seek out their guidance and act on it. Take your shot at happiness — and remember, daimoku is a lethal weapon.

DEAR BETTY: The other day

I came across a tattered daimoku chart with a list of goals encompassing marriage, home and career. After 15 years of practice, I've accomplished all of them! So how come I'm not blissfully happy?
— CINDERELLA

DEAR CINDY: Surprise! Even when our dreams come true, we don't necessarily live happily ever after. Yes, what everyone has always told us is true: Money causes problems, possessions tie us down, fame is fleeting, and relationships can get bumpy even with the handsomest of princes. So what's the point? Should we forget about all the things we want?

The answer is a big fat (or, in your case, size six) NO! What is so delightful as residing in a palatial home with your adoring spouse and 2.5 kids? Or whatever. Maybe you prefer a sixth-floor walkup in New York's East Village or a shack in Venice Beach.

Nichiren Daishonin said, "The true way lies in the affairs of this world." We live in this world and we are meant to enjoy it. The problem arises when we expect these momentary pleasures to provide lasting joy. Rich or poor—all right, rich is better—life-condition is the key.

Desire usually just breeds more desire: You get a diamond necklace, you want a bracelet to match; buy a brand-new Honda, soon you're dreaming of a Porsche. Whatever you get, it's never enough — if acquiring wealth or fame is your ultimate goal.

Once you work toward others' happiness — *kosen-rufu* — those diamonds will sparkle even more brightly as your benefits become a way to inspire others. It's true that for profound satisfaction in the depths of life, you need to go to the Gohonzon. Still, there's no reason you shouldn't go in a Porsche.

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Title: Yours Truly, Betty B.

Subject: World Tribune 06/06/97 n.3142 p.4 WT970606p04

Author:

Keywords: Behavior Betty Bodhisattva Guidance Practice Relationships Tribune Truly World Yours