

SIGN POSTS: It's Up to Me
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Whether or not your prayer is answered depends upon your faith; [if it is not,] the fault in no way lies with me, Nichiren. (*The Major Writings of Nichiren Daishonin*, vol. 5, p. 305)

This quote contains one of the concepts I find both most exciting and challenging about this practice. In this brief letter, Nichiren Daishonin is not only telling Nichigon-ama that he is not responsible for her prayer being answered but that no one outside herself is responsible.

Nichiren Daishonin stresses that we are responsible for our lives, our successes and failures. Sometimes it is hard to appreciate this point.

I like the success part. I can take credit for my successes and it feels good. But the failure, the NOT attaining of goals — I prefer to give this responsibility to others. My tendency has always been to blame others (parents, teachers, peers, co-workers, etc.) when my life is not what I desire.

A few days ago, I had the opportunity to apply this Gosho passage to my life. Within a single day, I had three people, all of whom I respect and value the opinion of, say things to me that really bothered me. Their comments made me feel that they did not respect my opinion or have confidence in me.

When telling a friend about the three interactions she kept asking me, “What did you do then?” My answer: “Nothing.”

I blamed the other people. What is wrong with THEM, I thought, that they can't see I deserve to be treated better? Yet I didn't say or do anything to change the negative feelings I had about them and myself.

As this Gosho makes clear, the real issue was not what they thought about me but what I did in those situations.

I am praying to become a solid, confident, happy person. Because I had these three instances in one day — where I could see my hesitancy to take responsibility and change what was causing me suffering — I became more determined to change this tendency.

IT'S UP TO ME!

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