

Finally, Joy From the Law
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The ocean, even when waves are crashing on its surface, is calm and unchanging in its depths. There is both suffering and joy in life — the point is to develop a profound, indomitable self not influenced by these waves. A person who does so receives the joy derived from the Law.

— SGI President Ikeda

It used to be that I was weak and could not find the courage within to be strong and indomitable. I wasn't happy, and I'm not sure if I wanted to be happy or not. I didn't know if I wanted anything at all. And I couldn't break out of the state that I was in.

I got depressed easily and hated everything and everybody. I had uncontrollable and amazingly wild mood swings — constantly — and would mutilate my body in hopes of releasing my anger and pain.

At the time, I was a very active member in the San Francisco Fife and Drum Corps, which helped me see a lot of things that were important for getting better. As we would study articles and the Gosho, I would pick up little things that really stuck with me. I would hear other people's experiences with this Buddhism, and I would be amazed by everything that I was hearing.

I started to speak out more during practice and try harder in the group and in school. I started doing at least an hour of daimoku and full gongyo every day and began going to district meetings and being as involved with SGI activities as possible.

My whole attitude dramatically changed. Everybody saw it. I became more outgoing, more friendly with everybody. My mood swings stopped, and the self-mutilation lessened slowly but surely. I never got depressed anymore, and I found myself being more optimistic. I started giving advice online to self-mutilators and depressed individuals. My whole life turned around.

Now that I think about it, my enjoyment of life was always there — I just didn't know how to find it.

All of that was always covered by my unhappiness and bad attitude. It's always easier to be negative and unhappy than to have fun; that's how it always was for me.

Now that I have experienced the "joy derived from the Law," I want everyone to. If I can do it, anyone can.

As President Ikeda says:

"Faith in the Mystic Law is the wellspring of value creation. It enables us to turn everything in our lives — both our joys and sufferings — into causes for accumulating the values of beauty, benefit and good in still greater measure. When we base ourselves on this kind of faith, everything that happens to us is a benefit."

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