

WORLD TRIBUNE MAILBOX

Lessons Learned

I am a new member of the SGI-USA, having received the Gohonzon on Sept. 21, 1997.... I am also very competitive in academics, so when I was informed about the Entrance Exam on April 19, back in January, this was something I wanted to be a part of....

I read the material, on my own, and just couldn't get it. I talked to other members and was constantly encouraged with the advice of stop studying as if for a test. Rather, apply the knowledge to your life, learn how this will help your life-condition. Right, tell a competitor like me something like that is like telling an athlete not to go for the gold!...

I reverted to my old ways and took the entire Friday before the exam to cram. I did much better studying this time, in spite of myself. I DID find examples from the study material to apply to my growth in this Buddhism....

[After the exam] I started bugging members about when I would get my test results.... After I interrogated the fifth or sixth member about this, a member spoke up and said: "You don't get it, do you?... [T]his exam is about studying. It's not about your score, it is to help in your seeking knowledge."... I finally understood what...others had tried to get me to see. I was so concerned about my boastful spirit that I almost missed the benefit. I was both humbled and elated!

Taking the Entrance Exam was more than a test of memory, it was a life's lesson for me. I grew and was rewarded with a new, wonderful outlook and understanding of my life and the importance of lessons of the Daishonin's Buddhism.

— EULAINÉ RANDOLPH, Southfield, Mich.

Grabbing the Dream Again

I just read Robyn Thaw's experience in the April 3 *World Tribune*. I want to thank you for this experience. It has been very encouraging to me. As a single woman who has never married, it has been difficult to keep the determination alive to keep chanting for this dream of mine. I've been practicing for 11 years and as of last year decided to let this dream go. After reading Robyn's experience, I have renewed my determination to find and marry my soul mate. I needed the encouragement.

— RAMONA WILLIAMS, St. Charles, Mo.

Thanks for the Letters

The *World Tribune* is here! I flipped open its "mystic" pages seeking the nourishment it never fails to produce and WHAMO! There was my name splattered all about the "Mailbox" section (April 10 *World Tribune*). Two members I have never met, from across the country, opened fire on me in response to a letter I wrote (March 6 "Mailbox") in response to guidance I read from SGI President Ikeda.

How encouraged I was to read the words of fellow members who disagree with me, who want me to re-think what I felt about President Ikeda's guidance on reading literature. I didn't sense their anger or their self-righteousness about the subject; what came shining through for me was their compassion for a fellow member whom they perhaps didn't agree with, but nonetheless, through their heartfelt words, have become my good friends. I have taken some time to reflect on what you have written and thank you for your insight. Let the healing begin for a man whose younger years with books may have been a painful time.

— LARRY TISH, Cambridge, Mass.

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