

Words to the Wise: CARING FOR OTHERS

Friends enjoy the cherry blossoms together on spring mornings and then they are gone, carried away like the blossoms by the winds of impermanence, leaving nothing but their names. Although the blossoms have scattered, the cherry trees will bloom again with the coming of spring, but when will those people be reborn? ("Letter to Niike," *The Major Writings of Nichiren Daishonin*, vol. 1, p. 255)

From SGI President Ikeda:

* Even just a few words spoken with honesty by a person of pure faith can deeply penetrate another's heart. On the other hand, if one's words are vague and uncertain, they will lack the freshness and the power to move others. (Sept. 19, 1997, *World Tribune*, p. 13)

* True concern for others manifests itself as unconditional friendship. To be considerate means that the more someone is suffering, the more love you show them. It gives you the courage to help another stand up. And it means recognizing another person's unhappiness for what it is, trying to understand and share his or her suffering. This will enable you to grow and at the same time help the other person become strong. *Consideration* is training ourselves in the art of encouraging others. (Aug. 15, 1997, *World Tribune*, p. 10)

* Let us make each day and each year one of growth and fresh, exciting possibilities. One important way to do this is by meeting with our fellow members, speaking with and encouraging as many people as we can. Our spirits are lifted when we do so; we are invigorated and rejuvenated. Limitless benefit and good fortune adorn those who cherish the members above all, who, rather than meeting the famous or powerful, would happily meet sincere members. (July 4, 1997, *World Tribune*, p. 8)

* Our movement's history is one of extending a helping hand to those suffering, those lost and forgotten. To people exhausted by sickness and poverty; people devastated by destructive relationships; people alienated and forlorn as a result of family discord or broken homes. We have shared people's sufferings and risen together with them. (Oct. 17, 1997, *World Tribune*, p. 12)

* Genuine leaders work with tireless devotion to support and encourage the members, make regular efforts to visit others and engage them in dialogue. This is a point I want you to clearly understand. (Sept. 19, 1997, *World Tribune*, p. 14)

* If only large meetings were held, it would be difficult for all members to gain heartfelt understanding and make a deep determination in faith. The importance of giving detailed consideration to the situation of each person through one-on-one dialogue cannot be emphasized too strongly; giving individual encouragement should be our primary concern. The SGI has developed to the extent it has because we have steadfastly adhered to this principle. (August 1997 *Living Buddhism*, p. 36)

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