

**Excerpts From
SGI President Ikeda's Guidance
The Spirit of Propagating Buddhism**

You don't have to be impatient at all in promoting our movement of worldwide kosen-rufu. I sincerely hope that you will steadily advance with common sense and with strong confidence in the glorious progress of our movement in the United States. (April 1987 *Seikyo Times*, p. 63)



Now is an age when it is vital to communicate an understanding of Buddhism deeply and broadly among all classes of people. For that reason, in the propagation of the Mystic Law, clear logic and persuasive power marked by abundant good sense are indispensable. I hope you will develop a state of life so profound that you can cause those with whom you speak to feel convinced from the bottom of their hearts, thus winning greater understanding of the Daishonin's teaching. (April 1987 *Seikyo Times*, p. 77)



[First Soka Gakkai president Tsunesaburo] Makiguchi said, "Nichiren Shoshu may be small at present, but in the future, the time of kosen-rufu will surely come." As this statement indicates, even though there may be few people at present, if there is someone of courageous faith, then the great task of kosen-rufu can be achieved. In this sense, first of all, I want all of you to become lions of kosen-rufu. Your own growth is like a single wave that will bring about the 10,000 waves of others' development, eventually forming a great river of kosen-rufu. (April 1987 *Seikyo Times*, p. 82)



In the natural course of events, you may have occasion to talk about the Buddhism of sowing. However, you should never get into emotional arguments with anyone about religion. Your sincere desire to lead them to faith is itself respectable, but it is a mistake to be impatient or inflexible in discussing Buddhism. Once you have brought someone into contact with Buddhism, without fail, in due course his or her ties with the religion will begin to develop and eventually bear fruit. (July 1989 *Seikyo Times*, p. 32)



The Gohonzon is the concrete manifestation of the very existence of Nichiren Daishonin, who taught kosen-rufu. Because of that, if you only practice gongyo and chant daimoku and don't take any other action for the sake of kosen-rufu or improving your own life, the Gohonzon will not have its true, full effect.

If, however, you take actions to achieve kosen-rufu, they will serve as that extra push for your own life and help you leap to higher states of mind in your gongyo and chanting as well. (March 1990 *Seikyo Times*, p. 39)



Propagation is a practice that we carry out on the direction of Nichiren Daishonin. Whether people to whom you explain Nichiren Daishonin's Buddhism decide to take faith depends mainly upon their life tendency and their capacity to understand and believe in Buddhism. In any case, whether a person determines to take faith in Buddhism after listening to an

explanation (*hosshin geshu*) or listens to the teaching and does not decide to take faith in it (*monpo geshu*), the benefit that the believer receives is the same. (March 1990 *Seikyo Times*, p. 70)



Propagation includes all Buddhist practices; and nothing is more beneficial for promoting human growth. Therefore, if you desist in this fundamental practice, you cannot train yourself. Unless leaders themselves grow, they will come to depend solely on the power of the organization; and this type or situation will give rise to many organizational evils. Propagation is the lifeblood of Buddhism. This is what Shakyamuni taught, and moreover, this is the direct path to attaining Buddhahood that Nichiren Daishonin risked his life to follow as a model for his disciples. (July 1990 *Seikyo Times*, p. 15)



To proceed through your life without an objective — just going along aimlessly until you encounter some resistance and then stopping and changing direction — is simply living by instinct. In any situation, it is important to have goals. Just as we have targets in promoting kosen-rufu activities, such as in propagation efforts and in the Friends of the SGI campaign, children may have targets for their grades in school, and you may have targets for personal or family savings. Progress lies in setting a goal and then making steady efforts toward its realization. (January 1994 *Seikyo Times*, pp. 20–21)



It is a great mistake to suppose that *shakubuku* means trying to force someone to take faith. Doing *shakubuku* essentially means speaking the truth. Since the Lotus Sutra explains the truth, it is called the “sutra of *shakubuku*.”

Now, in the Latter Day of the Law, all our efforts to tell people about and spread Nam-myoho-renge-kyo — the essence of the Lotus Sutra — constitute *shakubuku*. In house-cleaning, for example, it doesn’t matter whether one cleans vigorously or at a leisurely pace as long as the main objective of the house becoming clean is realized. (February 1997 *Living Buddhism*, p. 28)



[President Toda once said:] “It is important to share Buddhism with a spirit of compassion. It’s almost like being in love.”

President Toda certainly had a way of putting things! When people are in love, they go all out. They waste many sheets of stationery writing and rewriting letters. They stay up all night thinking about the words they will use to invite the other person out on their next day off. If everything goes well, they might decide to get married. However, unlike marriage sometimes, *shakubuku* will never cause one to have regrets! (February 1997 *Living Buddhism*, p. 28)



We invite a friend into a compassionate life-space and warmly embrace them; we sit down in the same room and discuss life as equals. We discuss things and learn from one another as fellow human beings, and together we strive to improve our lives. Creating such a warm and welcoming space for dialogue and exchange is in itself *shakubuku*. (February 1997 *Living Buddhism*, p. 30)



Title: The Spirit of Propagating Buddhism
Subject: World Tribune 08/14/98 n.3204 p.5 WT980814p05
Author: Daisaku Ikeda
Keywords: Features Guidance Others Ourselves Practice Propagating Propagation Special Spirit

In seeking to propagate Buddhism after the Buddha's passing, difficulties are inevitable. Therefore, it is necessary that we have a spirit of forbearance and patience. We need a spirit to endure. Enduring is neither retreating nor conceding defeat. We have to persevere and win. No matter what happens, we must not become disheartened. Kosen-rufu is a struggle of the spirit. Those who allow themselves to be inwardly defeated cannot be said to possess forbearance. (February 1997 *Living Buddhism*, p. 31)



A person of selfless dedication is one who can help others. I once asked President Toda, "When we do *shakubuku*, are we in a sense doing *shakubuku* to ourselves?" He replied: "The point is that Nam-myoho-renge-kyo is the very wellspring of our lives. Unless we have that realization, we cannot do true *shakubuku*. There isn't any special technique or method for doing *shakubuku*. In the Latter Day, *shakubuku* is a matter of determining: 'Nam-myoho-renge-kyo is the sum and essence of my being!'" (February 1997 *Living Buddhism*, p. 33–34)



It comes down to authenticity. Eloquence is not what matters. The important thing in propagation is genuine sincerity. President Toda often said, "When you do *shakubuku* you create lasting trust." (February 1997 *Living Buddhism*, p. 35)



"Basically," replied Shin'ichi, "all of society, all phenomena and events are Buddhism, so that whether discussing history, politics or life in general, I can't help expressing the Buddhist point of view.

If you really make Buddhism and faith the bases of your life and have pride and confidence in that, your discussions will just naturally become dialogues on Buddhism. If you find yourself unable to do so, it is because you have somehow built a fence around Buddhism in your mind. It hasn't permeated every aspect of your life and thought.

If every time you talk about Buddhism you become defensive, tense up and look severe, people won't be receptive to what you say. For us, Buddhist dialogue is the most natural, effortless expression of our humanity." (July 4, 1997, *World Tribune*, p. 5)



Even when we are spreading the Law "without concern for our lives," we absolutely must not do anything that would reflect badly on the Law. Because we have the highest concern for the Law, we need to fully exercise our wisdom in propagating it... While teaching his followers the *shakubuku* spirit of not begrudging one's life, the Daishonin emphasized the importance of showing people genuine courtesy and respect, and of conducting oneself with wisdom. (September 1997 *Living Buddhism*, p. 34)

WT