

WORLD TRIBUNE MAILBOX

Page One Experiences

Thanks for putting the Reggae Sunsplash experience on the front page! (Aug. 7). I think that's where the experiences should always go. I also think it would attract more non-members. I, like many other members, look for the experience as soon as I open my *World Tribune*. The personal stories of members is what drew me to this practice, and I think that it would for others as well. Keep up the good work!

— VERONICA BAILEY, Jersey City, N.J.

Rubbing Beads

I want to let you know how comfortable I feel with the Tribune. Lately, there have been so many great things. If you have a chance, please relay to Richard Yoshimachi my appreciation for his article on the beads (Aug. 21). It was just exactly the way I want to explain them to my members but can't, because I don't have the historical facts. The balance between not being a necessity for practice and why we continue to use them was really great.

— RALPH E. HICKEN, Omaha, Neb.

Buddhist Terms in Japanese

I know the publications have been avoiding all those wonderful Japanese terms we memorized in the '80s (*shiki shin funi*; *esho funi*, etc.). [Editor's note: We generally use only the English-language equivalent.] This has always bothered me (that they're being phased out), and now I think I know why.

I joined in Switzerland. At my first meeting, the languages were French, Italian, Japanese, Arabic and English (me). I have traveled in a number of non-English-speaking countries as a member since then. While I speak a bit of three foreign languages, communication for me is not easy in those languages. Still, I find often there are always two areas where I can share language with my non-English-speaking SGI friends: when doing gongyo and when referring to Japanese Buddhist terms. You can't even discuss the organization in other countries, because the structure is different and the positions often don't correlate.

The same is true of complex Buddhist theory, as represented so concisely in those wonderful Japanese terms. As anyone with two-plus languages understands, language is not a code that has corresponding equivalent words; it is complex, and ways of expressing ideas and explanations vary dramatically from language to language.

The United States is notoriously isolationist.... Few of us learn foreign languages beyond some schoolroom experience, if that. The United States is our whole universe. But Buddhism sees the world as a much more unified place. It is my feeling that in the interest of international communication, we SHOULD continue to teach, learn and refer to the Japanese Buddhist terms, though an English gloss is, of course, wise.

— LIZ CARTER, Denver

Discontinue the 'Mailbox'

As a reader of a daily newspaper, I get my fill of bad news. Killings, rapes, ethnic cleansing, automobile accidents, arguments pro and con on every conceivable issue. It is there on a daily basis for our pleasure or non-pleasure, depending on our viewpoint on any

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particular subject.

In 1951, the *Seikyo Shimbun* was first published. President Toda wanted it to be the greatest newspaper in Japan. Later, the *World Tribune* was launched, I suspect with the intention of being the best newspaper in the world. Articles about people overcoming obstacles, uplifting experiences, Buddhist wisdom, SGI President Ikeda's speeches — all great reading. In the few years that I have been a subscriber, I have always felt encouraged and refreshed when I finished reading all the articles. Until recently.

Lately, some of the letters in the "Mailbox" section have been very unencouraging. They read like letters to the editor in my daily newspaper: people tossing barbs and insults at one another because they disagree on some topic. In a daily newspaper, that is understandable because most people have no way to express their opinion other than through this medium. I've even written my share. Fortunately, as members of the SGI, we have discussion meetings to work out any differences of opinion. We do it with dialogue.

To avoid censorship of letters, may I suggest this column be discontinued (readers, please don't attack me) and replaced with something encouraging and uplifting, as was the original intent of the distinguished founders of this wonderful newspaper. When this column was started, I thought it was a great idea, but alas, all things do not work out exactly as we hope.

— DALE C. ANDERSON, Portage, Mich.

Appreciation

Logo or no logo, I appreciate the *World Tribune* and our SGI organization more than ever. I have battled depression and challenged hopelessness my entire life (without medication). This despite and often concurrent with wonderful opportunities and benefits. It is my battlefield, where I have chosen to sow the seeds of Buddhahood. Clearly over the past 23 years of consistent practice, my life-condition has changed tremendously and my bouts of depression are significantly shorter in duration. I think the most meaningful shift, however, is that I no longer begrudge even these little "attacks." I am coming to treasure every aspect of my life.

This year two new friends of mine received the Gohonzon, and I bought a beautiful home....

I am determined to chant more quality daimoku and to move through all my fears until I have totally won over myself.

— RICHARD CASSELMAN, Los Angeles

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