

YOUTH STUDY DECEMBER 2000
FINDING YOUR MISSION
LIVING YOUR DREAMS
BY THE SGI-USA YOUTH STUDY COMMITTEE

Goethe writes, “The moment alone is decisive; Fixes the life of man, and his future destiny settles.” “That time” is the moment you resolve from the depths of your heart: “Now I will stand up and fight!” From that instant your destiny changes. Your life develops. History begins. (Daisaku Ikeda, *Lectures on the “Expedient Means” and “Life Span” Chapters of the Lotus Sutra*, vol. 1, p. 33)

INTRODUCTION

While working on this study page, we on the youth study committee talked about the strong connection between a person’s happiness and life’s mission. We recognized that a person’s outward success was meaningless without a mission or an attempt to find a mission. From our collective experience we have learned that to live towards our mission or discovery of our mission is a way of creating happy lives. Yet to realize our mission can at times feel daunting and unattainable. Therefore we decided to begin a dialogue about “mission” with the youth of SGI-USA.

After reading our thoughts, please write your personal responses about how you view “mission.”

These responses can be emailed to seize@sgi-usa.org or mailed to: SGI-USA, Attn: Kim Herrmann, Seize the Day, 606 Wilshire Blvd., Santa Monica, CA 90401. Our next *Seize the Day* study page will be a collection of these responses.

Thank you!

Surisa Langbell, Bellmawr, N.J.

A person’s mission is intimately connected to her dreams. When I stop and deliberately think about what my mission is, I first think about my dreams. In the past I knew what my dreams were, but when I inevitably encountered disappointments or a harsh reality, I would forget my vision or my dream. But when I began chanting Nam- myoho-renge-kyo, I could see my dreams again! My hold on my vision became stronger.

I began to understand that this dream was my mission. My dream wasn’t just something private that might or might not actually come true. As I began to feel that it was my mission to pursue my dreams, it became more important and more worthwhile to take the action to make my dreams into reality. I developed strength and conviction to root my dream in reality. Each day my thoughts and words began to protect my dream and mission.

Recently two close friends told me they feel a lack of mission. I have chanted for them to discover their missions and I continue to think of how to encourage them. And I am learning that this is not an easy task. SGI President Ikeda’s hard work has creatively and unceasingly encouraged millions of people to find their individual missions. His hard work encourages me to strengthen my belief in myself while

remaining aware of my mission. His efforts also create a strong desire within me to find my own way of encouraging my friends.

As President Ikeda wrote in his new poem, “Soar—Into the Skies of Victory! Into the New Century!”:

*I have embraced the source
of energy and power
to ponder deeply
the significance of my own life and death,
to review the days that have passed
while living fully into the future.
From now on I will no longer
be pushed and tossed by
the fickle winds,
for I can now look into the
precious depths of my own life.
(Songs for America, p. 18)*

Adam Gamble, Cape Cod, Mass.

I think the most challenging aspect of having a mission is simply knowing what one’s mission is. What an awesome question!

For the past few years, I have run a small business, never thinking of it as my mission. Then, recently I went to the FNCC, where I determined to have a financial breakthrough in my business. What a shock it was to call home that very weekend and learn that an incredible world peace organization was inviting me to apply for what I thought was my “dream job.” I chanted, threw myself into applying, and actually received the position!

The people were great, and the opportunities were wonderful. But after just a few weeks on the job, guess what? It just didn’t feel right.

I chanted, sought guidance and ultimately challenged the question “What is my mission?” Finally, I concluded I should return to my little business. Surprisingly enough, this was where I felt in my heart that I could create the most value, for myself and even for world peace.

Of course, I sometimes doubt my decision, especially when things aren’t going well. But, what I ultimately concluded is that I need to have faith in my Buddhist practice.

President Ikeda says, “Your future self does not exist in some far-off place; it exists in the heart and mind of your present self.”

Likewise, Walt Whitman states, “There is no trade or employment but the young man following it may become a hero.”

Let’s face it, no matter where we are or what we are doing, that is our mission at that time. Being aware of this and having faith that we can be victorious, I think, are the keys.