

GET REAL!
DETERMINING VICTORY
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Thursday, December 28, 1950. Fine and Clear.

“Life is a succession of struggles. But I think the important thing is what we struggle for and what foundation underlies our striving. The purpose of my own battle being sublime, as long as I have not the slightest particle of regret, it will be a battle of supreme happiness. Now I realize there will be no regrets. Therefore, I have only to march ahead with a smile. I wish to adorn the final battle with splendid efforts that are truly worthy of me. Whether I win or lose is secondary. I must make it my first priority, however, to display ability, power of action, firmness and responsibility in this struggle.... Ultimately, there is no other way but to base one’s life to the end upon daimoku.” Home at 11:30 to bed at 1:30. (*A Youthful Diary*, p. 69)

Recently I was flipping through *A Youthful Diary*, a book that compiles SGI President Ikeda’s diary entries when he was a young man. The above entry was made in 1950 when he was only 22 years old. That meant that President Ikeda had only been practicing this Buddhism for three years when it was written.

When I read this, I could not help but be overwhelmed with the depth of wisdom and conviction that he displayed at such a young age and for someone so new to this practice.

I recently visited a high school senior who had applied to Soka University of America, Aliso Viejo through the early admissions process. This student was notified that his application was deferred to regular admissions. Naturally, this was very disappointing to him. This student worked so hard on all of his admissions requirements and did everything possible to get in early. Yet, when I visited this person, he was in the highest of spirits. I was so impressed by his attitude and determination.

Through our dialogue, I found that he was very positive and very active in his schoolwork, school clubs and his SGI activities despite his apparent setback. He may have been discouraged at the beginning, but it was not apparent any more.

After talking to this student, I immediately felt that he had no regrets in his life. He knew he did his best and that he had already won his battle, just as President Ikeda mentioned in the quote above.

Through this student and President Ikeda, I was able to learn a very valuable lesson—the outcome of a goal or endeavor is not what determines victory, but it is the process and the foundation that it is based on that will determine whether there is victory or not.