

TRAILBLAZERS
ENGRAVING THE GOSHO IN MY LIFE
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When I was in college, I asked myself: “What is my life-condition? What are my life-tendencies?” I had always learned that the purpose of our Buddhist practice is to elevate our basic life-tendency and establish Buddhahood as a fundamental state. I looked to the writings of Nichiren Daishonin for answers in manifesting this life state. I began reading the Gosho from the very first page.

I wanted to be of the same mind as Nichiren Daishonin. At first, I could not understand what he was saying. My mind was blank and my eyes were only following the sentences. But I believed, deep within my heart, that I would come to understand his spirit.

I continued to read the Daishonin’s writings almost every day. After three years, I was able to finish reading the entire Gosho. Through this experience, I felt I had established a solid foundation in my life that nobody could destroy. I also gained confidence in my practice and courage to share this Buddhism with friends. I loved this feeling so much I challenged myself to read his writings again.

The second time, I tried to understand more about the Daishonin’s spirit by carefully reading each passage. Even though I could not always fully understand what he was saying, I got a taste of what the state of Buddhahood was through the joy I experienced after finishing the second time.

Second Soka Gakkai president Josei Toda emphasized that young women should be passionate for study. And in his writings, the Daishonin taught us the importance of study: “Exert yourself in the two ways of practice and study. Without practice and study, there can be no Buddhism. You must not only persevere yourself; you must also teach others. Both practice and study arise from faith. Teach others to the best of your ability, even if it is only a single sentence or phrase” (*The Writings of Nichiren Daishonin*, p. 386).

At the same time, the Daishonin explains what attitude we should have when we study. “‘Knowledge without faith’ describes those who are knowledgeable about the Buddhist doctrines but lack faith. Those people will never attain Buddhahood. Those of ‘faith without knowledge’ may lack knowledge but have faith and can attain Buddhahood” (WND, 1030).

As a young woman, I am constantly challenging myself to keep in mind what true happiness is. SGI President Ikeda stated: “What is important for happiness is character, good fortune and a sound philosophy. And the ultimate philosophy is faith. Faith is the true foundation for happiness” (Dec. 15, 2000, *World Tribune*, p. 8).

I am still challenging myself to read the Gosho every day. I feel the more I study, the more I am able to perceive life’s truth.

The following passage sums up my determination. The Daishonin said: “This body of ours in the end will become nothing more than the soil of the hills and fields. Therefore, it is useless to begrudge your life, for though you may wish to, you cannot cling to it forever. Even people who live a long time rarely live beyond the age of one hundred. And all the events of a lifetime are like the dream one dreams in a brief nap. Though a person may have been fortunate enough to be born as a human being and may have even entered the priesthood, if he fails to study the Buddha’s teaching and to refute its slanderers but simply spends his time in idleness and chatter, then he is no better than an animal dressed in priestly robes” (WND, 760).