

**SGI-UK Study Department
Introductory Study Programme**

Human Revolution and Obstacles

NOTES

Aims of the meeting

In this session you have the opportunity to explain the process of human revolution, and the spirit with which to approach it. You can also explain that human revolution is about transforming the self and living the teachings of Nichiren Daishonin. It is also important to explain that doing human revolution naturally invites obstacles, and that Nichiren Daishonin explains that the wise will rejoice at this!

More specifically you may want to focus on:

- Believing that a person's inner change, human revolution, really does change the environment
- Changing the tendency to blame others or seek change outside ourselves
- Examples where individuals have challenged their weaknesses/negative karma
- Examples where we have been opposed by the 'three obstacles and four devils'.

Other Materials to support the meeting

Gosho

In the Writings of Nichiren Daishonin, *On Attaining Buddhahood* teaches us the spirit of human revolution: 'Your practice of the Buddhist teachings will not relieve you of the sufferings of birth and death in the least unless you perceive the true nature of your life. If you seek enlightenment outside yourself, then your performing even ten thousand practices and ten thousand good deeds will be in vain.' [WND p3]

The explanations of the three obstacles and four devils by the Daishonin are in *The Difficulty of Sustaining Faith* [WND p471], *The Letter to the Brothers* [see especially WND p501], *The Three Obstacles and Four Devils* [WND p637] and for a graphic description of the Devil King of the Sixth Heaven see *Letter to Misawa* [WND p894].

The World of Nichiren Daishonin's Writings

Here are some extracts from the World of Nichiren Daishonin's Writings series where President Ikeda talks about human revolution:

When one person carries out his or her human revolution, it gives others courage and hope. It gives them confidence. Inspiration gives rise to inspiration, setting off a chain reaction that generates tremendous energy for change.

Saito: If we strive together for kosen-rufu to the very end, by the time we arrive at Eagle Peak, we will have done so much human revolution together that all our interpersonal conflicts will be resolved! (nl5251)

President Ikeda: That's right. It is by squarely facing our karma just as it is, by confronting it head-on, that we can bring forth the state of Buddhahood. By thoroughly plumbing the depths of our lives, we build the "palace of the ninth consciousness, the unchanging reality that reigns over all of life's functions" (WND, 832). Only in this way can we achieve the purification of our six sense organs and carry out our human revolution, that is to say, deepen our humanity.

President Ikeda: That is why the concept and practical pursuit of human revolution, or inner transformation, is extremely important. If we neglect to deepen ourselves as human beings, then when faced with some huge obstacle we will tend to feel sorry for ourselves and angry and resentful toward those around us. It may simply be human nature to react this way. However, to prevent this from happening, we need to reflect deeply on ourselves, and strive continuously to further our personal growth. (nl5534xd)

The Buddhism of sowing teaches the supreme dignity of human beings and reveals the cosmic greatness of the human being here and now. And it does not stop at simply giving an explanation; rather, it urges that we actually base our lives on this teaching. This is the "religion of human revolution" that transcends the limitations of modern humanism and that awakens people to the greatness of the human being. (nl5885xd)

Other sources

See Faith into Action [eg pp 140 – 144]

'In the "Record of the Orally Transmitted Teachings," the Daishonin says, "One should regard meeting obstacles as true peace and comfort" (*Gosho Zenshu*, p750). You may wonder how encountering obstacles could be a source of peace and comfort. But the truth of the matter is that by struggling against and overcoming difficulties we transform our destiny and attain Buddhahood. Confronting adversity, therefore, ultimately represents peace and comfort.'

'Life has the capacity, like flames reaching toward heaven, to transform suffering and pain into the energy needed for value-creation, into light that illuminates darkness. Like wind traversing vast spaces unhindered, life has the power to uproot and overturn all obstacles and difficulties. Like clear flowing water, it can wash away all stains and impurities. And finally, life, like the great earth that sustains all vegetation, impartially protects all people with its compassionate, nurturing force.'

You may also want to refer to the chapter in President Ikeda's book *Seven Paths to Peace* which is about self mastery.

Richard Causton's *The Buddha in Daily Life* has a section on the Power of the Negative Force of Life on page 252.