

Do you believe in the possibility of lasting happiness?

Or does this seem like something forever out of reach, a dream on the distant horizon? Would you react skeptically if told that you were born—just as you are—with everything it takes to cultivate an indestructible state of happiness?

According to Aristotle, “**Happiness depends upon ourselves.**” But just what is happiness? Is it the fulfillment of our every wish and desire? Is it the absence of all suffering?

We believe that happiness is being able to experience profound joy that comes from never being defeated by any problems in life. In fact, we use the challenges of our lives as a catalyst to deepen and expand our inner lives. Despite a culture of instant gratification that influences so much of modern living, happiness is not a quick fix attained overnight. Rather, it results from our efforts to manifest life’s highest potentials—wisdom, compassion, courage and vitality—on a daily basis. **Nichiren Buddhism provides a concrete means to tap into these traits that every human being holds in unlimited supply.**

Even amidst the most difficult times, happiness is definitely not out of reach. We can indeed move in the direction of our dreams and face our problems wisely and courageously. We can come to savor the greatest of all joys: the ability to live life with a deeper and stronger sense of confidence, appreciation and hope. **We have the power to take charge of our own destiny** and become a source of positive change in our family, local community and the entire world.

“Before I began my Buddhist practice, I didn’t think religion had any practical application. Now I have developed a whole new perspective on how religion can affect my daily life.”
—CASSANDRA JAMES, Orange, N.J.

“I’m so happy to be practicing Nichiren Buddhism every single day of my life, and to be part of this community of believers. My challenges continue, but I am not a victim. Based on my Buddhist practice, I am in charge and I love my life.”
—ALLIE WOOD, Birmingham, Ala.

“I have learned the power of determination. I have learned to never give up. I have also learned how the correct practice of Buddhism requires us to give the same priority to the happiness of others as to our own.”
—BOBBY EPPSTEINER, Amherst, Mass.

“By challenging financial goals through faith, which I considered impossible, amazing opportunities and experiences have opened up for my career and my life. I have learned that I cannot compromise my dreams; rather, I can show the power of Nichiren Buddhism by achieving them and more.”
—LINSLEY LAMBERT, Culver City, Calif.

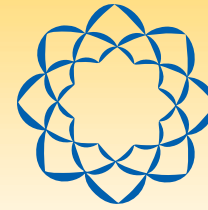
Join us at a Meeting

Location: _____

Date: _____ Time: _____

Contact: _____

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Soka Gakkai
International-USA

What is Happiness?



Buddhism

The notion that every human being is born with the ability to become happy is not new. This is what the Buddha taught more than 2,500 years ago. The word “Buddha” means “one who is fully awake”. It means to ‘awaken’ to the workings of the universal law within our own lives. The Lotus Sutra, the foremost of the Buddha’s teachings, asserts the inherent dignity and equality of all people and indeed of all life. It points to an enduring sense of happiness and compassion that is, in fact, our birthright. However, it wasn’t until Nichiren Daishonin, a 13th century Japanese Buddhist reformer, turned this philosophy into a concrete daily practice that the message of the Lotus Sutra became accessible to all people. In doing so, he established a practice that is both simple and very profound.



The Practice

Nichiren revealed that Nam-myoho-enge-kyo is the law that permeates all life and the universe. This phrase literally translates as: devotion to the Mystic Law of cause and effect through the Buddha’s teaching, or sound. Nichiren describes this phrase by saying, “Nam-myoho-enge-kyo is not only the core of the Buddha’s lifetime teachings, but also the heart, essence, and ultimate principle of the Lotus Sutra (*The Writings of Nichiren Daishonin*, p. 860). By chanting Nam-myoho-enge-kyo with confidence in our innate Buddhahood—or highest human potential—we can dispel self-doubt, challenge our problems courageously and reveal our innate wisdom and compassion. Through chanting, studying Buddhist philosophy and taking action daily for the well being of others, we can establish a state of profound happiness and make each moment of our lives joyful and meaningful while contributing to peace in our families and community.



The Soka Gakkai International

The Soka Gakkai International (SGI) believes that the development of peace, culture and education are essential to building a better world. Under the leadership of its current president, Daisaku Ikeda, the SGI applies the practice of Nichiren Buddhism to modern times, promoting a cultural, educational and religious network of global citizens pursuing nonviolence and dialogue.

The SGI supports practitioners of Nichiren Buddhism and helps them teach others about it on a global scale. Today, there are more than 12 million SGI members practicing in about 190 countries and territories around the world.

At the center of this global movement are neighborhood gatherings where people share experiences, study Buddhism and encourage one another. Everyone is welcome to attend and participate. These interpersonal ties of friendship, dialogue and support are the very heart of the SGI.

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—NICHIREN DAISHONIN

