

No Results, Develop Faith & Help Others

We know that results occur from the inside out – oneness of self and environment. So, if we are not getting results from our chanting, its time to reflect on the following:

What is My Attitude?

What's your attitude towards practicing. Ask yourself, "Have I been practicing seriously, or has practicing become routine and easy going?" Have I become careless in faith and started to take things for granted?

The Clear Mirror Guidance says, "The gohonzon is a clear mirror. It perfectly reveals our state of faith and projects this out into the universe." If you have become careless and easy going, then you will be attracting less than desirable results. The guidance continues, "One's mind of faith has a subtle and far-reaching influence." "If you practice faith while doubting its effects, you will get results that are at best unsatisfactory. This is the reflection of your own weak faith on the mirror of the universe."

If you find your faith isn't where it needs to be, correct your attitude wherever necessary and renew your resolve to deepen your faith.

Strategizing First?

Have you been trying to resolve your problems without chanting about them and instead trying to strategize and to get advice from other people? How do you ever expect to get benefits from the practice if you don't go to the Gohonzon as your first action, no matter what the difficulty. This is just ignoring the great power of the Gohonzon.

Wrestling with Doubts?

Do I have absolute confidence in the Gohonzon or am I dwelling in doubts?" President Ikeda discusses this in *The Wisdom of the Lotus Sutra*, Vol V, p. 153. He refers to Nichikan, the 26th high priest who reflected on the fact that there is an important distinction between the "daimoku of practice" and the "daimoku of faith". The act of chanting Nam-myoho-renge-kyo is the daimoku of practice but, he says, the results of our efforts may vary widely depending on whether we have true confidence in the benefit of the gohonzon. Offering the "daimoku of faith" "makes the difference."

If we look at this from the ways the natural laws of the universe work, we know that what we are thinking goes out to the universe and is then attracted back to us. So we need to ask ourselves – "What am I projecting to the universe?"

If, after reflection, you discovered you have little faith, then its time to take the steps to rebuild your faith.

Ask yourself why did I take faith to begin with? Wasn't it because you had proved to yourself that the practice works and received benefit? It seems that when faced with a difficult obstacle,

people can forget the benefit they received in the past. Make a list of the benefits you have received and ask your significant others to remind you of others.

If you have unresolved questions or doubts, do some serious study or go to a leader or advanced practitioner and discuss your questions with them. It's very important that you have them resolved. Doubts, allowed to fester, could result in losing your practice.

Chanting with Doubts versus Chanting with Resolution

The following story, which can be found in the *Wisdom of the Lotus Sutra*, vol 5, pg 154 shows the importance of resolving doubts, in order to chant with full resolution and focus.

“In autumn of 1996, Mr T., who was in his forties and working for a construction company, underwent surgery for a tumor in his brain stem. It was not impossible to remove all of the tumor. Mrs. T. was praying for his recovery. But from the summer of 1997, Mr T's headaches and nausea worsened and he began having consistent convulsions. He could only walk with a great deal of assistance and communicate through grunts and moans. The Doctors told Mrs T. the tumor had not metastasized or spread, but water had built up in the brain and surgery to remove this fluid would be necessary.

Mrs. T. told her district leader that although she had been chanting for her husbands' recovery for a year, she couldn't see any improvement in his condition. The leader discussed her situation with Mrs. H, a nurse and experienced practitioner, who gave the following advice. “The fact the tumor has not metastasized is the benefit of the daimoku and is really remarkable. Mrs. T's questions about whether her husband will recover, or whether her prayers will be effective, are simply barriers she has created in her own life. But there is no barrier no limit to the great power of daimoku. Now is the time when she needs to offer strong prayers. It's a matter of overcoming any feelings of confusion or doubt and offering whole hearted prayer with the strongest possible determination and focus.”

After receiving this guidance Mrs. T's prayers became all the more earnest. That very evening there was a change in Mr T's condition. He started producing more urine and a continuous stream of tears and mucus began flowing from his eyes and nose – so much so that his pillow became soaked. This continued for 3 days. On the fourth day he showed startling signs of recovery. He could carry on ordinary conversations with his family and could walk about without any help. When the doctors brought him in for more tests, they discovered he was fully recovered and would not require the surgery. “

This story illustrates how much stronger our prayers become when we resolve confusion and doubt. It also shows that when we project strong conviction to the universe, the response reflects that.

Chanting Both for Self and Others?

Ask yourself am I taking both steps of the practice? I am doing daimoku but am I also helping and teaching others. If taking only one step, you won't get the full benefit of the practice. Doing the work for kosen-rufu to bring others out of suffering is the vital second step, the second leg of

the practice. As President Makaguichi said, “There is no such thing as a self-centered Buddha, who simply accumulates personal benefit and doesn’t work for the well-being of others. Unless we carry out Bodhisattva practice, we cannot attain Buddhahood.” Heritage of the Ultimate Law of Life P.107.

In The wisdom of the Lotus Sutra, book V, President Ikeda says that we receive benefit *because* we work for kosen-rufu and says that those who are doing the work of the Buddhas cannot fail to have their prayers answered. So we have to ask ourselves, do I have as Josei Toda says “beggar’s faith,” where I just have a laundry list of things I am chanting for? Or, am I doing my best to help eliminate suffering in this world.

Summary:

Today we discussed areas for reflection when you are not getting results in your practice.

1. Examine your attitude. Have you been practicing seriously or have you become careless and easy going?
2. Are you focusing on strategizing rather than first going to the Gohonzon with your problem?
3. Do you have full confidence in the Gohonzon or are you dwelling in doubts?
4. How to rebuild your faith if you are dealing with doubts.
5. Are you doing both legs of the practice, daimoku but also teaching and helping others to the best of your ability?

Some Other Articles You Might Like.

1. Do You Know How You Set Up Barriers to What You Want? <https://wp.me/p3V1J9-XK>
2. Faith slipped/ 6Ways to Get Back on Track. <https://wp.me/p3V1J9-UA>
3. Get the Results in Life that You Want <https://wp.me/p3V1J9-Sj>

Comments

As always I am always interested to hear what you are thinking about. I try to answer every comment and maybe someone else will too.