



## 【Accepting everything as the workings of the Dharma...】

We are now deep into autumn and the changes of the trees, which transform the landscape in various ways, are showering our eyes and hearts with moments of joy. Little by little, the wind will cause the leaves that changed color to red and yellow to eventually flutter down. Recently, as we see the dry leaves that have fallen, we start to feel the pleasant arrival of winter. How are you, everyone?

As for our family, my second daughter who lives in Japan gave birth to her third child (baby boy) early morning on September 21<sup>st</sup>. He was born a month before the due date and weighed only 1995 grams (about 4.4 lbs.). The baby was born with pulmonic insufficiency.

As I recall, it was shortly after 12 noon on June 12<sup>th</sup> of this year. I received a call at my apartment from my second daughter, Yoko. In Japan, that was past 1:00 am in the morning. I felt, "It is so late, something must have happened." What I heard on the phone was Yoko's voice as she desperately fought back her tears. She said, "Today, at the six month prenatal checkup, we were told the baby has an abnormal heart condition."

More and more, as I heard the explanation, I was truly astonished by the development of modern medical science. The heart of the baby still in the womb was so accurately pictured in the sonogram. I just wanted to embrace and share Yoko's pain as I said, "Yes. It's so~ painful! Yes, it is." "We will go through this together." But to be honest, I was incredibly shocked, myself.

Because I did not want my daughter Yoko to suffer in pain any further, I caught myself feeling somewhere in my heart, "Please, Buddha, let it be a misdiagnosis..." or "If this is supposed to be a life not meant to be, while the parents' memory is still not as painful..." I found myself holding such selfish wishes.

The next day, I received an e-mail from my elder daughter, Masako. She wrote, "Mama, when I heard from you about the baby, I thought, 'Baby, thank you for choosing Yoko and her family.' The baby may be ill, but I am sure he is doing his best to keep alive in Yoko's womb. I think there is only one way for us to welcome this baby – to say, 'Thank you, dear baby' – since everything is caused to live. I have an urge to go immediately to Sendai to see Yoko. For now, however, I will do my morning and evening sutra recitation and pray that Yoko will be able to overcome her pain and sorrow. Mama, please focus on your duties in New York and don't worry about Yoko."

I felt as if I was hit with a hammer and snapped back to reality.

President Niwano teaches us the importance of "faithfully following the wishes of the Buddha." We understand that to mean; everything that appears in our life is the Buddha's arrangement, and therefore, we should accept that – as is – with gratitude. Everything is a gift from the Buddha.

Yet, my prayers were based on such lame and foolish ideas!

Since then, many tests were done and everything became clear. The valve of the pulmonary artery which connects the heart and the lung is closed. However, the baby does not know that the valve to which the blood is supposed to flow is closed, and is thus working hard to send the blood toward that valve. The doctor explained: because of the excessive effort, the muscle on the inside of the right ventricle is overly developed. I felt I was witnessing the workings of a mystical life.

I recalled how in *Buddhism for Today* (pages 208-209), Founder Niwano taught us about





the microscopic one-celled living creatures. “Just consider that billions of years ago, the earth had no life; volcanoes poured forth torrents of lava, and vapor and gas filled the sky. However, when the earth (gradually) cooled... microscopic one-celled living creatures were produced.”

“...everything has the power of desiring to ‘exist and to live.’ Two billion years ago, even (on this earth where only) lava, gas, and vapor (existed, there somehow was a place where the ‘power,’ or shall we say, the ‘mind to live’ transpired.) That is why one-celled living creatures were generated from them when the conditions were right. These infinitesimal creatures (with an astounding urge to live) endured all kinds of trials, including extreme heat (over hundreds of degrees) and cold (below hundreds of degrees)...for about two billion years, and continued to live. Moreover, they gradually evolved into more sophisticated forms, culminating in man.”

Our Founder said: the power • will to live exist in everything in the universe. Furthermore, he stated, that mind and will to live should be no different for us, the mankind of today.

That overlapped with the heartbeat of the baby in my daughter’s womb as he tries to live. Just single-mindedly with the will “to live,” “to want to live,” he bravely continues to perform his activity to live.

That is the will that is trying so hard to live. I thought that, indeed, is the workings of the Dharma. And I, who exist as merely a minute part in this universe, foolishly disregarded such workings of the Dharma and suffered by being attached to my own selfish desires. When I realized this, I even started to see the folly of my ways. At the same time, my heart started to feel liberated from our suffering.

Then, the presence of the baby who is trying so hard to live – the workings of the Dharma, as is – resonated in my heart. “Thank you, dear baby! I will be waiting for the day you are born! Please know everything will be fine.” No matter what happens, I wish to weather it together. At present, each member of my family believes that, within our effort in dealing with the situation, is our effort to become a buddha.

During my present return to Japan, I met the baby who was born one month before the due date. He received the name Yukio.

I spontaneously said to him, “Yukio, thank you for being born into our lives! Thanks to you I was able to receive a great treasure.”

Yoko and her husband determinedly accepted from the doctor the plan of treatment hereafter. They are bright and cheerful • grateful and delighted with the birth of their son. They live daily, full of gratitude for the blessings they are already receiving.

Gassho  
New York Church Minister  
Etsuko Fujita

### ***NY Branch topics discussed in October***

#### **President’s Guidance (Kosei – October issue)**

“Eat in Moderation for a Healthy Body and Mind” “Know the Right Amount to Eat”

After having eaten until his stomach felt completely full, a king of a certain country experienced some discomfort and heaved a great sigh. Seeing this, a wise man gave him these words of advice:

“People who always keep their hearts and minds calm and know the right amount to eat experience few pains, age gracefully, and live long lives.”

This teaches us the importance of viewing things based on wisdom and from a broader perspective.

#### **Rev. Fujita’s guidance:**

Here, the President is speaking about eating. However, it is about the world of always keeping our hearts and minds calm and understanding moderation and what is appropriate, so it thus applies to everything, and not only eating.

By using an example that is easy to understand, I believe he is talking about how moderation is important for everything, including maintaining a healthy condition and developing a healthy heart and mind. Furthermore, valuing each and every moment, and paying careful attention are also included in this guidance.



The first condition for maintaining our life is to eat. Through this fact, I think he is also saying that we should think about the fundamental way to live.

As we age, our metabolism will decrease. Thus, if we eat the same amount of food, the portion which does not metabolize will accumulate in your body and become toxic.

Everything goes through a process of change (metabolizes), including our hearts and minds. When our hearts become pure, our soul will transform, and we will be more wholesome and honest.

★Through this teaching, we can learn about our hearts and minds. Just as when we eat, we learned the importance doing anything with a calm heart and mind, without rushing or panicking.

By reciting our grace before meals aloud, "For what we are about to eat and drink, we are grateful to the Buddha, to nature, and to many people," we will be able put our hearts and minds in good order, and enjoy our meals. Let us put this into practice together.



10/3-5 Leader Seminar at Chicago Branch



10/12 Study Session by Yasuko



Happy Halloween  
Cleaning overflow water at basement



Lounge room for study and relaxing on first floor

# SCHEDULE FOR NEW YORK BRANCH

## November 2014

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1 First Day of Month President Dharma Talk
2 Closed	3	4 9am Memorial Svc For Founder 2-4PM Branch Leader Meeting 6pm	5 10AM Monthly Memorial Service	6	7	8 Closed
9 1PM Merorial svc For Co-Founder Study Session(E,J)	10	11	12 10am Steering Committee	13	14	15 1PM Founder's Birthday The Eternal Buddha Shakya-
16 Closed	17	18 2-4PM Branch Leader Meeting 6pm	19	20	21	22 Closed
23 1PM Sunday Service Hoza	24	25	26 6pm Thanksgiving Dinner	27 Thanksgiving Day	28 Closed	29 Closed
30 Closed						

Rev.Fujita  
Japan 11/10-24