



## 【 Each and Every One of Us is the True Cause】

The full-fledged rigor of winter seems to be right around the corner. This year is the 110<sup>th</sup> year since the Founder was born. This past November 15, the Founder's Birthday Ceremony was held at the Great Sacred Hall in Tokyo.

The sutra recitation for the ceremony was led by Kosho-sama. Chairman of the Board, Rev. Kawabata, followed as the MC for the event, introducing the Founder's life through visual images.

It was as if the exquisitely planned presentation, with the Chairman's personal commentary, invited all of us gathered in the Great Sacred Hall into the Founder's world.

During his Dharma Talk, the President spoke about a person's birthday referring to a book written by Prof. Shigeru Tenmyo. "For us, the fact that we can be grateful of our starting point – that we were born thanks to our parents and raised – is very valuable."

The President continued by introducing the poem by Mitsuo Aida (My Turn ▪ Baton of Life), the poet who is widely loved as the "poet of life."



Father and mother are two people

Parents of the father and mother are 4 people

Their respective parents are 8 people.

When we calculate as such, by the tenth generation, there are 1024 people

How about the 20<sup>th</sup> generation.....?

Oh my goodness! There will be more than 1 million people

By inheriting the baton from innumerable past lives

Now, Here

Living our own turn

That is your life

That is my life

As I listened to this poem the President introduced to us, a thought deeply penetrated my heart – that this is, as always, a subject exhibiting Mitsuo Aida's gentle ways filled with power, allowing us to discover various realizations.

The President said: "It is just as he says, isn't it? We all receive the life as a human being from our parents. I, myself, am presently living my turn in my way. You are also living your turn in your respective ways. And while we are living this life, we were given the opportunity to encounter the Dharma. Through this encounter, we became human beings who understand that 'everything is something for which we can be grateful.' I often introduce this poem because I feel these concepts flow throughout the poem."

Then, the President further added:

"When we think of the life we have received, we normally regard that as result of our father and mother being the cause and condition. However, if we think this on a deeper level, we can consider our own selves as the true cause and our parents as the condition for us to be born into this world. Each and every one of us is the real cause. In other words, true cause is the root source that enables everyone to attain enlightenment. We ourselves are the source that receive the encounter, for we created the cause that we ourselves should attain enlightenment. Each of you have your own guiding parent, but actually this means you were born as a human with the

feeling that you wish to walk the Buddha's Path. How to live our lives is a serious matter and it is important to become aware that we ourselves are the cause." This was his Dharma Guidance.

I was very grateful for each and every one of his words and heartily received the guidance deep in my heart. And, I contemplated on my own will to walk the Buddha's Path as the cause of my encounter with the Dharma as well as on my happiness of living my turn here and now.

What comes to mind is that there might have been more things that did not turn out the way I wanted, than things that did, in my daily life. For example, 'I earnestly worked and finished what was requested, so of course I should be thanked and appreciated' or 'that person should be able to understand my position.' However, when that did not actually happen, the stronger my assumption and preconceived notion were, the larger my suffering became. I was the cause that created my assumption.

In such ways, I saw an ugly self-centered side within my mind when I carried out my daily action. Having received the Dharma, I was taught how to deal with matters at hand. Therefore, I became more capable of switching to accept things calmly and objectively. The other person has his or her own way of thinking and circumstances. Furthermore, when I was able to humbly realize my own way of thinking is not always correct, feeling of respect for the other person simultaneously awakened. Then, I was liberated from my suffering and my new realization helped me to grow. Every day, I try to live my life thinking, as the President had said, "Through that encounter, everything is something for which we can be grateful."

I am filled with gratitude that I can actually experience this day-to-day.

Gassho  
Etsuko Fujita  
Minister of New York Dharma Center

## Topics

To accumulate merit

Since about a month ago, after the 9:00am sutra recitation at the New York Dharma Center, we have been engaged in one of our basic practice of faith, the Toban Practice (duties at the Dojo). We have been wholeheartedly cleaning the area outside the Dharma Center (sidewalk, exterior walls, etc.), the foyer, the elevator, the restrooms, and the altar room. Even Rev. Fujita grabs the broom to briskly clean the litter scattered outside, such as the dead leaves, cigarette buds, and water bottles. This Toban Practice began based on the guidance: "Whenever we are given opportunities to accumulate merit, we should wholeheartedly accumulate it." To start the morning "by doing something that delights others" – sweeping and mopping the floors, cleaning the glass door, windows and mirrors – we can feel our minds and bodies naturally become refreshed.

Yet, sometimes negative thoughts can sprout. At such moments, as I work hard to clean every day, I would listen attentively to what my heart is saying and wonder, "Why do I feel this way?" And instead of deciding whether it is good or bad, I accept it as an opportunity to realize that "I have this tendency in me." While studying for Family Education sessions, I learned "To let go of our ego is the shortcut to happiness. For that, it is important to accumulate merit." Not only during the Toban practice at the Dharma Center, but at any moment wherever we may be, it is important to do things that would delight the people around us. That will allow us to let go of our ego, to calmly see ourselves, and ultimately become the shortcut for us to have the hearts and minds of "others first." Everyone, let us accumulate merit together, and reflect on ourselves (^\_^♪

Yuri Sugino



11/4-6 Leaders Seminar



11/13  
Founder's  
Birthday



11/20 Study session  
By Yasuko



# SCHEDULE FOR NEW YORK CHAPTER

## December 2016

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 9AM First Day of the Month Service President's Dharma Guidance	2 9AM Sutra Recitation 10AM Hoza	3 Closed: Dharma Practices at home  Chicago Missionary
4 1PM Memorial Service for Founder President's Dharma Guidance  Chicago Missionary →	5 9AM Sutra Recitation 10AM Hoza  Chicago Missionary →	6 9AM Sutra Recitation	7 9AM Sutra Recitation 10AM Monthly Memorial Service	8 9AM Enlightenment Day  10AM Guidance for Leaders	9 9AM Memorial Service for Cofounder 10AM Hoza	10 Closed: Dharma Practices at home
11 1PM Enlightenment Day Service	12 9AM Sutra Recitation 10 AM Steering Comittee Missionary Mtg	13 9AM Sutra Recitation 10AM Hoza	14 9AM Sutra Recitation 10AM Reach out day	15 9AM The Eternal Buddha Shakyamuni Day  10AM Guidance for Leaders	16 9AM Sutra Recitation 10AM Hoza  Boston Missionary visit →	17 Closed: Dharma Practices at home
18 12PM Cleaning 1PM Sunday Service Study session End of year party	19 9AM Sutra Recitation 10AM Hoza	20 9AM Sutra Recitation 10AM Hoza 2-4PM Chapter Leaders' Meeting	21 9AM Sutra Recitation 10AM Reach out day	22 9AM Sutra Recitation  10AM Guidance for Leaders	23 9AM Sutra Recitation 10AM Hoza	24 Closed: Dharma Practices at home
25 Closed Christmas Day	26 Closed	27 Closed	28 Closed	29 Closed	30 Preparation for New Year	31 Closed: Dharma Practices at home