

For the SGI, **discussion meetings are a key element to further empowerment «of the people, by the people and for the people».** The shared commitment by mentors Makiguchi, Toda and Ikeda has consolidated this tradition, whose origin dates back to the foundation of the Soka movement in 1930. The discussions based on experiences had in these meetings are the best proof that «faith is reflected in daily life» and that «Buddhism is brought into play in society». **In this section we offer some resources** for the preparatory meetings, as well as **for a brief and inspiring introduction to those experiential dialogues** during the discussion meetings themselves: a quote that sheds light on the relevance of all of these efforts («Globally»), a presentation of one of the groups or districts that sustain them («Locally»), a passage from the writings of Nichiren Daishonin commented by Daisaku Ikeda («Advancing with the Goshō»), a «Perspective» and some «Key Topics».

GLOBALLY

Simply put, the ethos of dialogue needs to be widely shared and carefully nurtured... Society has to cultivate a cultural empathy, that is, a deep curiosity for and interest in the “other”... Dialogical citizenship is the great challenge of our time.

Passages from «Dialogical Citizenship», an article by Joseph A. Camilleri published in SGI Quarterly, no. 87, January 2017, pages 18-19..

LOCALLY

Aluche Group: This discussion group is named after the popular neighbourhood of Madrid, which in turn was named after a brook that used to run there. The statement «No one can stop the impetuous current of this river» of human values (see page 9) is likewise applied to this group, in which attendants range from third generation practitioners to those who have just discovered Buddhism, all of them showing the same earnestness.



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ADVANCING WITH THE GOSHŌ

Activating the Positive Functions of the Universe Through Strong Prayer

◇ The neighing of the white horses [in the story of King Rinda] is the sound of our voices chanting Nam-myoho-enge-kyo. When Brahma, Shakra, the gods of the sun and moon, the four heavenly kings, and the others hear this sound, how could they fail to take on a healthy colour and shine with a brilliant light? How could they fail to guard and protect us?

From “King Rinda” (WND-1, 989–90)



Just as King Rinda thrived upon hearing the sound of white horses neighing, our strong and vibrant chanting of *Nam-myoho-enge-kyo* is what enhances the vitality and power of the Buddhas and heavenly deities throughout the universe.

Through earnest prayer, we can transform anyone and everything around us into positive functions that will definitely support and protect us.

The wise and courageous champions of Soka who strive for kosen-rufu aligned with the Mystic Law have nothing to fear. Chanting Nam-myoho-enge-kyo is the driving force for making the impossible possible. »

Translated from the June 30, 2016, issue of the Seikyo Shimbun.

PERSPECTIVE Blaming external elements for our own problems and suffering is a human tendency, be it other people or circumstances which seem to escape from our control. However, the Buddhist principle of «the oneness of life and its environment» expounds that the causes for our happiness and our grief are originated in us. When we base our behaviour on this principle and we realize that our environment is a reflection of our inner life, we are able to assume the whole responsibility of our existence and empower ourselves to solve our difficulties and to generate positive results whatever our situation may be. If we change, then our environment will inevitable change. In Ortega y Gasset’s words, «I am I and my circumstances».¹

KEY TOPICS Prayer · Change in our environment · Responsibility and empowerment

1. ORTEGA, José: «Meditaciones del Quijote», en *Obras completas*, Tomo I, Madrid: Revista de Occidente, 1957, pág. 322.