

# The Human Bond

**“[At all times I think to myself]: How can I cause living beings to gain entry into the unsurpassed way?” These words express the Buddha’s deepest wish to enable both those who accept the Lotus Sutra and those who oppose it to attain Buddhahood. Because this is his ultimate purpose, those who embrace the Lotus Sutra for even a short while are acting in accordance with his will...**”

*“Questions and Answers about Embracing the Lotus Sutra” (WND) page 63.*

**T**o embrace faith in the Gohonzon means to live with the spirit of the Buddha and dedicate our life to accomplishing the great desire of the Buddha, to attain enlightenment and lead all people onto the path towards enlightenment; that’s to say, trying to inherit the heart of the Buddha and make this compassionate love manifest in our own life and in all human beings.

Sharing the teachings of Nichiren Daishonin’s Buddhism with other people is an act of the greatest compassion which means, basically, to “tell the truth.” It also means to venerate the Buddha nature in the lives of others and to maintain an attitude of supreme respect towards the other person.

Compassion, from the point of view of Buddhism, is profound love, a supportive and benevolent affec-

tion. To feel compassion towards others implies sharing our sense of belonging to humankind, it means to feel the bond that connects us to all people. We use the word “love,” but not as an expression of the spiritual and selfish sentiment that can easily turn into hatred. It is a love of humanity, rooted in a profound understanding of human nature and existence. We can also think of this compassion as a kind of authentic and legitimate solidarity, borne out of the common aspiration for our mutual growth and happiness.

Compassion is also the attitude of sharing the sufferings of others, to show our solidarity towards other people’s sorrows. If we see someone suffering, this love makes us reach out a hand to alleviate the burden of unhappiness. In this sense, it is a noble and profound emotion.

Shakyamuni in the Lotus Sutra uses the expression “the space of compassion” to illustrate the compassionate attitude of the Buddha in expounding the Lotus Sutra.

From the point of view of our attitude towards others, to have compassion doesn't mean looking down at others from up high. It is not a vertical bond. Compassion involves a certain amount of empathy for our fellow human beings, as equals, coming from the same place, and based on respect.

From this comes the expression, "space of compassion." We invite a friend into a kind, caring, revitalizing space and we embrace him or her in our warmth; we sit down together in the same place and we deepen our lives and relationship as equals. We talk and learn from each other as comrades, trying to improve

our lives together. In Buddhism, manifesting compassionate love, in itself, means to create a warm and open space, where dialogue and exchange can flourish.

In his writing "On Establishing the Correct Teaching for the Peace of the Land," Nichiren Daishonin talks



about the importance of transforming our own life in order to create a peaceful society and identifies a “host” who has a discussion with a “guest” as “a friend in the orchid room”. When someone spends time in a place full of orchids, his clothes absorb the fragrance of the flowers. In the same way, we ought to start a dialogue with the attitude that the other person will be left with “the fragrance of supportive compassion”. The term “space of compassion” conjures up an image of warmth and openness.

The key to manifesting this compassion is to pray that our sincerity will be understood by the other person. Prayer generates wisdom and opens up a wealth of conviction and joy.

In those moments when we find it difficult to manifest compassion, we should always try to remember that this compassionate love creates an immeasurable joy and that through our actions, ourselves, as much as the other person, will gain immense happiness and benefits.

And, precisely because it is not easy to carry out a compassionate practice, it gives us the opportunity to grow and connect with our innate wisdom. If we plant a seed, with time it will flower. The key lies in talking to others with a sincere and joyful attitude, happy to carry out the function of an emissary of the Buddha.

Those who have the attitude of praising others accumulate strength and good fortune. As a result they can lead many people to happiness.

The members of the Soka Gakkai, motivated by the sincere wish to make the Buddha’s desire a reality, are carrying out small meetings in their homes and one-to-one dialogues with the aim of manifesting this “compassionate love”.

A human being can help others when he is dedicated and selfless. Everything comes down to authenticity. When it comes to transmitting this teaching, it is not eloquence that counts so much as genuine sincerity. Living a compassionate life creates lasting trust.

### **Bibliographical references**

The Wisdom of the Lotus Sutra – Volume 3, p22-41.