

Tenrikyo

newsletter



Seminar for Church, Fellowships, and Mission Center Heads and Spouses

On February 15th, a training session was held for leaders and spouses of churches, fellowships, and mission centers. The session featured Ayumi Omoto, Clinical Director of Little Tokyo Service Center, who led a discussion on mental health. A total of 68 participants attended, in person and via Zoom.

Tenrikyo Mission Headquarters in America

www.tenrikyoamericacanada.org

March 2025

“A Work in Progress” by Bishop Fukaya

- Sales and “Missionary Work” -

(part 4)

Before I knew it, it was already March! How time flies!

We will be holding our spring memorial service this month. I would like for us to use our predecessors’ accomplishments as the foundation as we press forward with our activities and convey those accomplishments to the next generation of followers. I ask for your cooperation.

Also, there is less than a year until the 140th Anniversary of Oyasama. With that in mind, I would like for us to use this remaining time to spiritedly work on accomplishing our respective activity goals. One part of these activities is the Hinokishin Day events that will be held in our respective districts during the months of April and May. Let us make it a point for all of us to participate.

In addition, the “Action Day for All Yoboku” will take place around the end of May and early June as part of our pre-anniversary activities. I ask that we work together within each region and area to come together and make each other spirited as we spend some important time with each other while participating in these activities.

Also, on March 16th, we will conclude our relief fund to support the victims of the Los Angeles-area wildfire disaster. Hopefully we will be able to amass even more funds this last week. I ask for your cooperation.

So, as we last left off in part three, I have been using the recently published book, *Lessons Learned from the Business Diary of the Man who Sold the Most Coca-Cola in Japan*, (by author Akihiko Yamaoka,

published by Kodansha) as the theme for these my Work in Progress articles. While I could go on talking about this book for months on end, this month will be the final part of this series.

- Do not imitate what you were until yesterday (p. 86)

In sales, your job is to sell things, but this is not easy to do.

One day at a morning assembly, an accomplished senior employee said, “I bet you all think that I’ve been selling our products very easily. But, as you can see, my small stature lacks visual or physical impact. I am not a good speaker either. When I get rejected harshly by a client, I feel terrible and I no longer feel like visiting my client’s store anymore. However, there is one thing that separates me from the rest of you. It’s that I don’t imitate what I was until yesterday.” He continued, “Don’t imitate what you were until yesterday. Don’t repeat the same things over and over. That is what I think will make you successful in sales.”

In terms of door-to-door missionary work, many times we are repeating the same things over and over again. I, also, was one of those people. Doing the same monotonous routine day in and day out, over and over again, would make me want to do it less and less until, finally, I stopped doing it altogether. One day while I was walking around doing missionary work, I couldn’t get myself to do it and ended up sitting at a bench in the park the entire day. I lost all motivation to do any-

(continued on page 14)

Coming Up

* Oyasama’s Birthday 4/18

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February Monthly Service Prayer

February 16, 2025

Before You, God the Parent, Tenri-O-no-Mikoto, who is enshrined in this altar, I, Hiroshi Alexander Fukaya, Bishop of the Tenrikyo Mission Headquarters in America, invoke with reverence.

Dear God the Parent, looking forward to the Joyous Life of all humankind, You provide us with Your constant protection, which allows us to live each day safely and securely. We are grateful and humbled by Your blessings. Along with giving gratitude every morning and evening, we, in America and Canada, walk joyously on the path of single-heartedly helping others be saved.

With that in mind, today is our February monthly service. Receiving the Truth of Jiba, we service performers shall unite our minds and joyously perform the Seated Service and Teodori service dance.

We Yoboku and followers, gathered here today, have looked forward to this day to express our utmost gratitude, to pledge our spiritual growth, and to ask for Your unchanging blessings. Please witness our spirited singing of the service songs and become spirited as well.

Yesterday, many leaders of our diocese gathered here for a seminar, which served as an opportunity to elevate our spirits as we enter the final year of our pre-anniversary activities towards the 140th Anniversary of Oyasama. As we approach Oyasama's Anniversary, please continue to nurture our leaders so that they may take the initiative and wholeheartedly engage in missionary and salvation work with unwavering enthusiasm.

Reflecting upon last month's wildfires around the Los Angeles area, and the disasters, wars, and conflicts shown to us throughout the world, we pledge to become even more active during this three-year pre-anniversary period leading up to the 140th Anniversary of Oyasama, as we aim for and spiritedly strive toward the Joyous Life. Furthermore, we will convey these wonderful teachings to the next generation.

Dear God the Parent, please accept our sincerity, guide us where our efforts may be lacking, and bless us to be able to, even one day sooner, realize a world of the Joyous Life in which all people help one another. In unison with the whole congregation, I humbly pray that You bless us so.

February Monthly Service Sermon

by Rev. Robert Kokuryo

~Guideposts~

It is with great pleasure that I am able to join you all today for the monthly service. I have not been able to attend as many services in person recently and though we are able to connect through modern technology, I think nothing beats the in-person experience and hug. It would be very much appreciated if you could allow me to share my thoughts about what's been going on with me for the next little while.

In mentioning modern technology, I am sure that many people may chuckle at my wonderment even now, of connecting through Zoom or Microsoft Teams, etc. To some people, this is nothing to get too excited about, but in the context of my experience and knowledge, I am constantly amazed at what becomes available around us and my awareness and adaptation of some of these amazing tools and perspectives is very lagging. When those in the know try their best to explain to me, I am sure they can hear the whooshing sound of their words whizzing by. I certainly do not blame those who are trying their best to relate their message to others, but I think especially those of us who make efforts to help others, we should remind ourselves of the importance of trying to gain an understanding their perspective and the context in which they view their situation. Yesterday, we held a wonderful workshop about mental health

and I am very happy that we as a church and organization are delving into matters that are so prevalent around us. Through engaging with those in our communities and diving into what I feel is a relatively openly under discussed subject within our church and organization, we can gain so much and potentially be of help and support for people currently not only outside our faith, but I also believe for many of us currently walking this path.

I do not know if it was by the Bishop's design to assign me to speak following yesterday's workshop, but I cannot help but feel the gentle Parental guidance of God the Parent and Oyasama, as I had planned to talk a little about my mental health today before learning of this workshop.

Speaking about context, in the latter part of my late father's life, he stayed mostly indoors and used a walker to help him get around. Once day, I received a letter from one of his specialist that included the phrase, "patient says he walks 20 minutes a day" and the specialist encouraged him to continue to do so. When I read this, I thought to myself, I have never seen him take a walk unless it's necessary and especially not for 20 minutes. When I asked my father about this, he explained that it took him at least 10 minutes to walk from his room to our church sanctuary and put on his happi coat and about another 10 minutes to return to his room after the service and in fact, my father emphasized,



Rev. Robert Kokuryo, head minister of Grandville Church in Vancouver Canada

that it actually took him longer, but he “didn’t want to give the doctor the wrong impression that he was working out”, so he used a lower estimate. I think the doctor did not recommend any further exercise for my father partly because he was already in his 90’s, but also because ‘he was already walking 20 minutes a day.’ I am not complaining and want to say clearly that the doctor(s) did a wonderful job of treating my father, but had they understood the context from where my father was coming from, it may have changed the doctor’s recommendations.

Repeating myself, understanding the context and ‘reading the signs’ of the person you are communicating with including those you are trying to help and support is one of the keys towards that end. When traveling our path, we are often trying to understand the context of what we are being shown and taught through Oyasama and the occurrences and signs, the guideposts that appear around us.

Speaking about guideposts and as we will be

welcoming the 140th Anniversary of Oyasama next year, I would like to share with you something the Third Shinbashira mentioned In the preface of the publication, ‘Guideposts’. He stated,

“For us, the history of past anniversaries is not merely a record of events. The way in which our seniors progressed from one anniversary to the next is rather like our personal guide.”

And,

“... is indispensable not only as a guide for our daily lives but for the attainment of our goals, the establishment of the joyous life.”

Guideposts (Michishirube) (for translator’s reference: p. ix preface)

“In order for us to make the best use of the path left to us by our seniors by their great efforts and trials, and not to repeat the same mistakes in driving forward to the joyous life, we must take care not to misinterpret the guideposts. We must not mar them either. After having compiled the guideposts, I shall do my best to read them correctly and fulfill the responsibilities which have been placed on me.”

Guideposts (Michishirube) (for translator’s reference p. xi preface)

Now, yesterday’s workshop about mental health covered a subject that is personal.

A number of years ago, I was diagnosed

with severe burnout, with low mood and anxiety. Prior to that, I had been experiencing and probably displaying symptoms and signs of mental health issues but to put it simply, I did not deal with it very much, let alone talk to others about my conditions and feelings at that time. As I began to struggle more and more, it began to obviously affect me in various facets of my life. There are many people, perhaps some of you here, who have to deal with a much more higher level of mental duress than what I was going through, but when my mental health started to affect me quite significantly especially in my late fifties, I wasn't able to properly deal with it. While I believe the younger generations may be more accustomed to talking about the subject of mental health, I think people in my generation don't really talk too openly about anxiety, burnout and depression and may be a little reluctant to deal with it openly.

I would like to share with you some information about mental health and just how prevalent it is.

It's a Global Problem, and We Are Not Immune

According to the World Health Organization, around 450 million people currently struggle with mental illness, making it the leading cause of disability worldwide. In my home country of Canada, it affects more than 6.7 million of us. In fact, one in two Canadians have—or have had—a mental illness by the time they reach 40 years of age.

The Human Cost Is Even Greater

Most people don't think of mental illness as something you can die from. At least not in

the same way that people die from cancer or heart disease. Yet the inter-relationship between addictions and other forms of mental illness, and their connection to physical health, is undeniable. Here again, the numbers are all too real.

- Opioid overdoses now account for more deaths in Canada than automobile accidents.
- The World Health Organization estimates one person dies by suicide every 40 seconds.
- Over 4,000 Canadians die by suicide every year—an average of 11 per day.
- People with mood disorders are at much higher risk of developing a long-term medical condition.
- People with mental illness are two times more likely to have a substance use problem versus the general population.
- People with mental illness and addiction are more likely to die prematurely versus the general population.

Center for Addiction and Mental Health (Canada)

Some more information from the United States.

Prevalence of Any Mental Disorder Among Adolescents

- An estimated 49.5% of adolescents have / had a mental disorder.
- Of adolescents with any mental disorder, an estimated 22.2% had severe impairment and/or distress.

National Institute of Mental Health (USA)

Harvard Medical School Research

One out of every two people in the world will develop a mental health disorder in their lifetime, according to a large-scale study co-led

by researchers from Harvard Medical School and the University of Queensland. The findings are based on structured, face-to-face surveys of more than 150,000 adults across 29 countries of varying wealth from all of the regions of the world.

Understanding how and when disorders arise

The researchers also found that mental health disorders typically first emerge in childhood, adolescence, or young adulthood. The peak age of first onset was 15 years old, with a median age of onset of 19 for men and 20 for women, the study found.

<https://hms.harvard.edu/news/half-worlds-population-will-experience-mental-health-disorder>

I was not aware of just how many people around us have to deal with the issues related to mental health. Based on these statistics, it is highly probable that we all know or will run into someone who may be struggling with related issues. Discussions like the one we had yesterday are important and provide learning opportunities and more insight to help us understand and connect. As we become more aware of what is happening around us, we as a Tenrikyo community can think about how we can reach out to those who are undergoing these challenges and situations.

I have been dealing with some physical ailments as is often the case when one gets older, but my mental state was and still is the most challenging condition, situation for me. I can say that I feel I am currently in a better place though I imagine it is probably a delicate state.

After a prolonged period of struggling, I finally had a conversation with my doctor who became concerned and had me undergo a number of tests, both biological and psychological. I also shared my condition with my family for the first time and I must say it was amazing in that when my wife and children listened to me and though they may not have fully understood 100% of what I was going through, I felt accepted and supported. I am not sure why I did not talk with them about this earlier. An interesting side note is that my doctor told me that she would not be recommending any medicine at that time. Through our discussions, she felt I was supported by my family and my church. I must say that as I did the service and had the Sazuke administered to me and sought to continue exploring the teachings further, I did feel that I would be shown a pathway of some kind towards a settling of my situation. My doctor did recommend that I take time off from work as she knew I was not going to take time off from my church activities. When I told her I could take 2 weeks off, she said “Oh no, I recommend you take at least 3 to 6 months off”. As soon as I heard at least 3 months, I felt this was a sign from God the Parent and Oyasama pointing me towards the Spiritual Development Course in Jiba.

Some background information. Quite a few years earlier, the Bishop had asked me if I would be willing to fill the role of an instructor for the three months course in Jiba. At that time, I did not readily commit and said I would like to do so but probably later, perhaps when I retire from my work.

After my diagnosis and perceiving my current situation to be guidance and an opportunity, I made arrangements to take on the role of being an instructor. My work understood my commitment to the church and supported my decision to take on the role and permitted me to take an extended leave. But soon afterwards, the Covid pandemic occurred and so no non-Japanese language instructors for the Spiritual Development Course in Jiba from outside of Japan were able to participate. I was then asked if I could commit to the following year pending the Covid pandemic situation and again committed. My family and church and my work were again supportive of this decision. But the following year before the course was to start, I was advised that instructors for the non-Japanese language Spiritual Development Courses would no longer be drawn from outside of Japan and that this policy would be in effect from then on. It seemed that I would no longer have the opportunity to be an instructor. I was contemplating what to do when I returned to Jiba to settle my father's ashes in Tenri. On the day I was to return to Canada and just as I was about to get on the vehicle to leave Tenri, I was suddenly advised by a church headquarters staff member that things had changed and was asked if I could take on the role of an instructor for the upcoming Spiritual Development English Course the following year. I felt that as this was the 'voice of Jiba', especially during this precious season of the Three Years, One Thousand Day period before the 140th Anniversary of Oyasama, I would accept on the spot. But since I thought it would be prudent to let my wife, my family,



my church and work as well as my upper church minister and the Bishop know, I responded that I would discuss first discuss and respond. Of course, after my discussions, I responded that I would indeed like to accept the offer.

As I mentioned earlier, being able to share concerns and feelings and being listened to was very important and gave me hope. To be honest, I don't think I would have very much welcomed advise like 'lean on god', 'do the service' in the moments when I first shared my concerns and feelings. It's not like I would not respect the advice but I would have probably felt that I am already trying to do those things. The fact that when I first shared what I was going through, my family, church friends, my mentor at work all did something similar. They initially all actively listened.

In Instruction Four,

"If we find people who are suffering from illnesses or other problems, let us reach out to them with love and care and pray for a solution through performing the service."

I am sure many people were and may still be

keeping me in their prayers.

Another thing that helped me throughout all this, was my continuing to make efforts to connect with God the Parent and Oyasama and our church. Though to be honest, at times, taking part in some Tenrikyo activities required some extra effort. I think it is important to try to continually make efforts to seek the Parental Heart and put the teachings into practice, even when you feel somewhat lost or feel a certain sense of hopelessness, as I experienced being shown and becoming aware of a path to follow. As I mentioned, I may not be totally free of struggling with my health, both mental and physical, but this situation also helps me to channel my efforts and move forward and hopefully, to work on the root of my issues.

Nothing should be called illness.

Should your body be afflicted, it is God's call for your service.

*This call for your service might not easily be understood,
for the thoughts of God are mountainous.*

*If all the thoughts of God about everything are taught to you,
your minds will be spirited.*

*When I have taught you all of My thoughts step by step,
your bodies, too, will be refreshed.*

Ofudesaki, Part IV, verses 25 – 28

I am able to look at my mental health situation as a blessing. I was probably wandering in a concerning or perhaps dangerous direction and this guidepost was placed in my path at the most opportune time to show me a way towards a more safer, favorable direction. I am a big believer in seasons and in this season of the Three Years, One Thousand Day period before the 140th Anniversary of Oyasama, there are some exciting things being done by various people of the path, such as the mental health workshop and working and connecting with others and our community. I am always impressed with the variety of knowledge, experiences, interests and expertise that the people in our diocese have and very much hope and urge all of you to use that, to connect with others and contribute to the greater good of our families and friends, our church and our communities and take steps forward towards the construction of joyous life world.

If there is anything I want to share with you today, it is that there are probably many people around us who may need someone to extend a helping hand with love and care, and regardless of how deeply we follow the path, everyone one of us has something that we can offer, even if it is, just listening.

At various points in our journey, we will probably be shown various guideposts and it is hoped we will be able to see the Parental Heart and respond positively.

Thank you very much for your time and kind attention. Take care everyone.

10 News and Announcements

1) MARCH MONTHLY SERVICE (3/16)

Officiant: Bishop Assistants: Kazumi Kawakami, Dairei
Attendants: Mitsuharu Ito, Paul Tomizawa Director: Kuniaki Hasegawa
Offerings Officiant: Steven Yukimoto Sermon: Takahiko Hayashi (E)

2) CHURCH & FELLOWSHIP AFFAIRS

* Divine Sanctions:

Terminal Church: Church Roof Replacement, Temporary Transfer of the Medo (2 cases), Request for Special Service

Divine Sanction (Scheduled): End of March, 2025

Enshrinement Ceremony: May 30, 2025 Enshrinement Service: May 31, 2025

3) MISSION HQ AMERICA PERSONNEL (AS OF JANUARY 18, 2025)

Board of Directors (13 members)

Toshikiyo Yukimoto	Toru Yamamoto	Tomoyoshi Tanaka	Masahito Kimura
Robert Kokuryo	Marlon Okazaki	Satoru Onishi	Raymond Okura
Junjiro Nakatomi	Kazumi Kawakami	Yoichi Fukui	Zen Yukimoto

Takahiko Hayashi

Committee Chairpersons

Construction: Robert Shimizu	Rituals: Tomoyoshi Tanaka
Missionary: Junjiro Nakatomi	Translation: Marlon Okazaki
Public Relations: Kazumi Kawakami	Future Path: Zen Yukimoto

Nurturing & Educational Development: Robert Kokuryo

Association Chairpersons

TWAA: Hiromi Fukaya	TYMANA: Ryo Wong	BGAA: Motohiro Iwahashi
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4) ALL YOBOKU ACTIVITY DAY

We ask all District Representatives to submit their All Yoboku Activity Day plan for the fourth event to the Mission Headquarters Secretaries (c/o Masuno) by the end of March 2025.

5) SPRING MEMORIAL SERVICE

The spring memorial service was held at the Mission Headquarters on March 15 (Sat), from 7 PM PT. On this occasion, we have enshrined the spirit of the late Mr. George Blesch, the first head of the Cupertino Fellowship.

6) 85TH AMERICA SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT COURSE (SHUYOKAI)

The 85th Spiritual Development Course at the Mission Headquarters is currently scheduled to be held from June 15 (Sun) to July 12 (Sat). These courses will be held if there are at least two applicants for the English or Japanese course, or five applicants for the Spanish course, as of one month prior (May 18).

TENRIKYO LANGUAGE INSTITUTE (TLI) APPLICATION

We would like to communicate a few major updates to the TLI application for the Japanese Language Department in 2026.

Eligibility:

1. Those who completed formal education for a minimum of 12 years.
2. Those who have passed N5 in the Japanese Language Proficiency Test.

When applying for the Japanese Language Department, the Certificate of Japanese-Language Proficiency must be submitted with the application.

- For those who have not passed N5, applicants will be given study materials from the Japanese

Language Department in May of the application year, in order to prepare for skill certification test, to be taken by the end of August.

- Depending on the results of this skill certification test, should TLI certify that the applicant's proficiency is equivalent to that of N5, the application will be accepted, and accommodations should be made so that the application process itself will not be hindered.

Regarding application distribution:

- We plan to make downloadable application forms available from April 25.

- Details should be released regarding the study requirements for the skill certification test.

8) SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA WILDFIRES RELIEF FUND

The Mission Headquarters has set up a box in the office to collect donations for the wildfire disaster that affected Southern California, until March 16 (Sun). Please write checks to "Tenrikyo Mission Headquarters in America" and write "SoCal Wildfires Disaster Relief" on the memo line. Please do not send cash by mail. If you require a receipt for tax purposes, please write your name, address, donation amount, and "SoCal Wildfires Disaster Relief" on a slip, and place your donation in the box. Thank-you letters will be sent out from the Mission Headquarters at a later date.

The Tenrikyo International Tasukeai Net plans to send a donation of \$15,000. We will donate these funds, along with the funds collected from our congregation members, to the Emergency Network Los Angeles (ENLA).

9) MISSION HEADQUARTERS PERSONNEL CHANGES

Mr. Chisei Nakabayashi (Ohara GC), who served as judo instructor since December 21, 2022, will return to Japan on March 24, 2025.

COMMITTEE & ASSOCIATION REPORTS

CONSTRUCTION COMMITTEE

- * We repaired a clogged drain in the MP Hall second floor northside men's restroom.
- * The skylight in the Hinomoto Learning Center was replaced.

MISSIONARY COMMITTEE

- * On February 15, the Seminar for Heads of Churches, Fellowships, and Mission Centers and their Spouses was held, centered around the topic of mental health. 68 persons attended, including Zoom participants.
- * We will conduct Corridor-Cleaning Hinokishin on April 17. If you are returning to Jiba, please join us in the rear eastside of the South Worship Hall 45 minutes before Morning Service (5AM).
- * Starting from the middle of 2025, we would like to begin monthly service duty at the Mission Headquarters for church, fellowship, and mission center heads. One of our members will reach out for the purposes of compiling a duty roster.

Nurturing & Educational Committee

- * We have received permission from the head minister of Myodo Grand Church for use of their dormitory by Oyasato Seminar students up until the seminar. This year, Amy Morishita will be in charge.
- * We held a Joy Workshop on February 22, for the three applicants of the Three Day Course.
- * The TSA Spring Conference is scheduled for May 24 (Sat) ~ 26 (Mon).
- * Due to an insufficient number of applicants, this year's Three Day Course was canceled. The New

York Center will hold their Three Day Course from March 28 ~ 30.

PUBLIC RELATIONS COMMITTEE

* We have incorporated an ongoing section in the Ichiretsu/Newsletter to highlight everyone's efforts and activities leading up to the 140th anniversary of Oyasama so that we can share our events & ideas with all of our congregation members. Therefore, we would like to request churches, fellowships, districts, and individuals to submit your activity reports & pictures to us (Kawakami: kamishuyo@hotmail.com or Hayashi: takhayashi@gmail.com).

* The Mission HQ Homepage has been updated with new content, including monthly service sermons, "SoulFire" reflection videos, and "Stories Inspired by Oyasama," along with slideshows for "A Ninety-Year Path' Photo Exhibit" and for the "TWA America 70th Anniversary Commemorative Photo Album." Please visit our homepage to view these videos, and let those around you know as well. Also, the domain name has been changed from Tenrikyo.com to TenrikyoAmericaCanada.org .

TRANSLATION COMMITTEE

* Tenrikyo Translator's Workshop on March 15, 2025 (Sat) - 1:00 ~ 3:00pm

* SDM Core Member Translation Conference March 28 ~ April 4, 2025 (final review of Songs 5, 6, & 7)

FUTURE PATH

* The Tenrikyo Sacred Scripture study seminar is being planned for August 30~31, 2025.

WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION

* TWA Convention: April 19, 2025 (Sat) @ Church HQ Inner Courtyard

* TWA America Convention: May 17, 2025 (Sat) @ Mission HQ

* Kokan Gathering: May 17, 2025 (Sat) @ Mission HQ

BOYS & GIRLS ASSOCIATION

* The 2025 BGA Service Convention will be held on August 16 (Sat). The sign-up sheet for prospective attendees will close on March 16 (Sun), so please continue to reach out to your BGA members.

* The BGA Camp will be held from June 20 (Fri) ~ June 22 (Sun). We can accommodate a maximum of 56 children, on a first come, first serve basis.

Registration form link: <https://forms.gle/3Wn58k7brDhhLuyi9>

* We are recruiting female counselors for the BGA Hinokishin Corps. Please send an email to [moto1884@icloud.com] if there is anyone who is interested.

* Please send an email to the address above if there are any new BGA members, newborn or new to the North America congregation.

* Let's share stories about Oyasama with BGA members! Visit your churches as a family and engage in hinokishin together.

TYMANA

* We will hold our TYMANA Convention on June 14 (Sat).

* The 99th TYMA Convention will be held in the Inner Courtyard of Church Headquarters on October 25 (Sat), from 1 PM.

NY CENTER

* 3/28 Three Day Course scheduled (28th~30th)

* 3/23 Shinichiro Mitsuishi (Nanki GC) TYMA Personnel returns to Japan

* 3/24 Ami Okano (Koshinokuni GC) TWA Personnel returns to Japan

The Tenrikyo Mission Headquarters in America wishes all people like you to be able to change your life for the better, to become more joyous and satisfied with your life. We have a powerful tool to assist you to do so. This tool is the teachings of Oyasama, whom we adore as our Foundress. We are pleased to present this tool as a key to living a contented, joyous life for everyone. This tool can be yours and you can set out on your journey with a whole new perspective towards living a more richer and fuller life.

TENRIKYO SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT COURSE

WHEN:

Sunday, June 15, 2025 *through*
Saturday, July 12, 2025

WHERE:

TENRIKYO MISSION HEADQUARTERS
IN AMERICA
2727 East First Street, Los Angeles, CA 90033
(323) 261-3379

ELIGIBILITY:

All people who are 17 years of age or over.
Seeking to live a more satisfying, "Joyous Life"

PROGRAM:

Lectures and Discussions on The Doctrine of Tenrikyo
The Life of Oyasama, the Foundress of Tenrikyo
Hinokishin Activities
Practice of the hand movements and musical instruments

DONATION: \$200 for the whole month, including
tuition, room & board. (Books are not included.)

Would you like to live a happier, more joyous life?

thing and just sat there staring blankly into space.

While there is merit to doing the same things over and over again, it is crucial that you have a mind that is willing to save others or to carry yourself with optimism while working toward the realization of the Joyous Life.

As stated previously, doing door-to-door missionary work requires a certain amount of innovation. Whether it is changing your spiel, the order of what you will be talking about or simplifying the expression of the teachings, I think that it is important to adjust your approach on a case-by-case basis. While the end goal of the Joyous Life is the same, by coming up with new ways of using your mind, each new way will bring something different and may aid you in taking a fresh step forward.

- It's not that things can't change, it's just that you're not doing anything to change them (p. 90)

After changing his sales region, the author asked the previous person in charge about a store that the author had inherited. The former person in charge told him, "This store will start to grow," but in reality, this was not the case. He also gave some advice to the author, saying, "The owner of that store is a difficult one," but contrary to that, the owner seemed to be easy going and easy to talk to.

There was a store that had an ideal location in the center of town. Being in such a great area should have meant that it would have great sales, however, this store was deemed as an "unprofitable store." The reason behind the bad sales was that the store owner was a very strict and rules oriented former middle school teacher, and as such, he spoke harshly to his customers. In other words, his strict nature had an adverse effect on store sales. So when the author took responsibility for this store, it was already being labeled as "going out of business soon," so the author didn't really put much sales effort into that store.

However, one day his boss just happened to drive by the store in question and asked who was in charge of sales for this store. The author replied that he was in charge, and his boss reprimanded him saying, "From the outside, it isn't very clear that this store sells our product. Whoever is in charge of this account should have already noticed this."

When the author started to explain about the circumstances of this store, his boss gave him this advice:

"Because we are human, sometimes you will have to deal with difficult people. However, if you do nothing, it shows that your priorities are not correct.

The store owner being too difficult to deal with is not the main problem. It's your preconceived notion that there is nothing that can be done, due to the store owner. Have you not already thrown in the towel?"

Then, a week after this, when the author visited the store owner, he mustered up the courage and said, "I brought you some new advertisements. What do you think? Since I'm already here, why don't we try to make the storefront look more appealing?" The store owner replied, "This is the first time any salesperson has said anything like this..." With this encounter, he was more willing to listen to the author's proposals and it soon became "an unbelievably profitable store."

With missionary work, "preconceived notions" and "compatibility" are things to account for, which may also hinder nioigake and salvation efforts. Even for those who may be considered "difficult" people by the former head minister, if you actually try and have a conversation with them, they could turn out to be someone who you can talk to normally. If you have "preconceived notions" that someone is hard to get along with, this might be just your imagination talking. Then this can lead to a lack of enough effort to connect with the person to make things more amicable.

- Proper etiquette and listening closely are your greatest weapons (p.112)

The author, who was part of the Sales Department for beverage glass and plastic bottles, and cans to retail stores, was then moved to the food service department, which dealt with electronic self-serve soda fountains that were commonplace in family restaurants and fast food joints. The business focus shifted from retail to restaurants.

One day, there was a hotel within the city that wanted to start their own beer garden. Soon after calling to set up an appointment, the front desk connected the author with the head chef.

Once he got the business appointment set up, he went to the hotel at the agreed upon time. After waiting a decent amount of time without the chef showing up, he was suddenly beckoned by the head chef.

Promptly beginning their negotiations, the first thing the author did was to become the listener and attentively listened to what the head chef had to say.

Time passed by while proposing ideas according to the head chef's requests and comments, getting out the product and explaining the machine and its parts, and jotting down key points of what the head chef talked about. After a while, the chef told the author, "OK, got it. I'm counting on you. Let's proceed by making arrangements with the person in charge." Then he said, "Oh, maybe you could also make an appearance at our next gathering. You might be able to get your foot in the door with all the other companies that will be there."

This head chef holds a key position in the All Japan Chefs Association, an organization that was established for cooks who specialize in Western cuisine. The members of this association are all connected to restaurants, hotels, and large amusement spots selling food. This gathering with this association was a novel way of getting new clients.

One day, during a meeting, the author asked the head chef, "During our negotiations, what lead to you inviting an unaccomplished businessman like me to your gathering?" He replied, "You say you are a failure in business? Not at all! . . . there are many sales people who come to me, but they merely talk about how good their product or business terms are... They come not to learn what we would want them to do, but rather to have us do what they want us to do. They need to listen intently to what we, the customers, have to say.

You intently listened to what I had to say and pondered together with me on how we could implement my ideas and this is the most important thing about being a salesperson. You also spoke very politelyhaving proper etiquette and being able to carefully listen to others, do not take these two skills lightly."

I think this equally applies to missionary work. It is important that you first lend an ear and earnestly listen to people. Once you do so, carefully selecting the right words to communicate the teachings is crucial.

For the last four months, I have taken excerpts from the book "Lessons Learned from the Business Diary of the Man who Sold the Most Coca-Cola in Japan," to write these pieces. While the subject matter was about sales, I wrote these articles because I thought that the lessons learned also apply to nioigake, as well as nurturing others. There are various other things written in the book, so for those who are curious, please buy a copy of the book and read them for yourself (unfortunately, it is only published in Japanese).

Of course, as followers of the Tenrikyo faith, we do activities that promote the realization of the Joyous Life World. However, "Sales" is done to make profits for the company. Fundamentally, "nioigake" and "sales" are different. Please keep this point in mind as you draw inspiration from this book.

(translation by Y. Kimura)



New Staff Member Announcement **Welcome Chikai Nakabayashi**

We are excited to introduce Chikai, who arrived at the Mission Headquarters in America on 2/13 and is now serving as our Judo staff. Chikai is the younger brother of Chisei Nakabayashi, and under Chisei's guidance, he is receiving dedicated training to become a valuable member of our Dendocho team.

Chikai is eager to meet and get to know everyone in our congregation, so please be sure to introduce yourself and welcome him warmly to our community!

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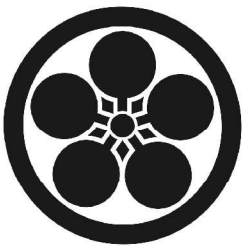
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TOWARD THE JOYOUS LIFE

TENRIKYO came into existence on October 26, 1838, when God the Parent, Tenri-O-no-Mikoto, became revealed through Oyasama, Miki Nakayama, to save all humankind. God the Parent is God of Origin and God of Truth who created this world and has nurtured and protected us ever since.



God the Parent created human beings so that by seeing us lead the Joyous Life, God could share in our joy. Leading the Joyous Life is, therefore, the purpose of our existence. Since God is our Parent, we are all God's children; thus, we should realize that we are all brothers and sisters.

“With human beings : the body is a thing lent by God, a thing borrowed. The mind alone is yours.”
Osashizu : June 1, 1889

We are taught that we borrow our bodies from God the Parent and only our minds truly belong to us; further, through the proper use of our minds, we will be able to lead the Joyous Life.