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Solar panels absorb the sun's energy and it is an environmentally friendly way of using energy for our needs. In our daily lives, we naturally absorb God's light, so let us use His wisdom to manifest happiness and peace on earth.

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Truth of Life

SEICHO-NO-IE (say-choh no ee-yay) is nondenominational, an International Peace by Faith Movement, based on the Truth that all religions emanate from one universal God.

FOUNDER: Dr. Masaharu Taniguchi (1893-1985)

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Fount of Light | Seicho Taniguchi
Rev. Seicho Taniguchi is President of Seicho-No-Ie.

Thank You, Mother Earth

EARTH ACADEMY

We are all born of our father and mother. We often say that we were created through our parents, but while this may hold true for our physical selves, our real, true *life* was created as perfect and harmonious by God. That is why it follows that we are children of God.

However, those who believe that God does not exist and that humans are a physical existence are apt to say that we were born when the physical body was born, that we die when the physical body dies and no longer moves, and that there is no longer any life with us afterward, only turning into ashes.

Then what does it mean to be born? What objective or goal do we have in life? There are probably many people who think that since we are destined eventually to turn into ashes, it's pointless simply to be born and live for a hundred years or so. That means that, if we're going to become ashes anyway, we might as well be ashes, a boulder or dirt from the very beginning.

We in Seicho-No-Ie, however, do not believe that human beings are a physical existence. Thus, our *life* never dies. We believe that we simply take on a temporary physical appearance, enter school on this earth, and are students of this school of life. Elementary school students begin the new school year wearing new uniforms. I think it would be easier for us to understand if we were to refer to our physical bodies as a uniform for this "Earth Academy." The death of the physical self then only means that we have taken off our uniform and have graduated. We then put on a different uniform somewhere else and continue to live on. Our life is immortal and we go on practicing (learning) in different places how to manifest the wonderfulness of the teaching that we are children of God even more.

That is why this earth is a school of sorts. We must think of it as being a very important alma mater. There are many things we

learn here, but they are lessons for us so that we might manifest the power and wisdom that we have within all the more. Tests are given in school, and there are different tests that are given at the Earth Academy as well. Entrance exams are among them, but more than just being born, the fact that we enter this Earth Academy at all means that we have a certain level of ability.

THE EARTH ACADEMY TEACHES US

What happens then if we fail? We can't very well go back into our earth mother's womb. Fortunately, those with a certain amount of knowledge and ability are allowed readmission to the Earth Academy and are born into this world again. That's why "being born" means being admitted to the Earth Academy, so we should be as happy as can be. All things that we see and hear shine brilliantly.

However this "mind of a child" somewhere along the line forgets to be grateful, stops praising others, and starts crying and complaining. There are those who complain of stomachaches, catching colds, or feeling unwell. At times, there may be people who cannot move certain parts of their bodies well and are no longer in a condition to be grateful or praise others.

These circumstances are also a part of what is happening in the Earth Academy and are teaching us something. And, if we overeat or don't listen to what our parents tell us, we are being taught, through physical reactions or repercussions, that we shouldn't always be indulging our own desires or that we need to follow certain rules and regulations.

People are not the only ones that teach us rules and etiquette at the Earth Academy. Plants and other living things all teach us different things. Take, for example, the flowers that grow in gardens and on the hills and fields. They teach us about beauty. And these beautiful flowers show us that beauty for free. In some instances, we are given those flowers, and even the fruits and seeds, in their entirety.

They are teaching us to grow "beautifully," and to give others good things that will make them happy.

Larger plants breathe carbon dioxide and provide us with precious oxygen. People and animals live by breathing that oxygen. In other

words, the forests, woods, trees, and grasses that cover the entire world are all giving us oxygen for free and thereby giving us life. That is why we must take care of the forests, woods, trees, and grasses, and not uproot, cut down, or burn them recklessly.

Unfortunately, however, at some point in time, people started thinking more about their own immediate profits and began cutting down the forests and woods and burning lumber excessively. They destroyed mountains and built golf courses and houses. This has finally resulted in the decrease of the world's forests. People have burnt oil—and in times of war—burned, damaged, trampled, and crushed houses, causing an increase in carbon dioxide gases. They have also polluted the oceans and rivers and killed far too many fish and other living things.

In this way, the earth has really been ravaged recently. When that happens, the climate begins to change and it rains infrequently in some places while in other places heavy rains flood fields and crush homes. There are also various other problems that have arisen. Previously inactive volcanoes have started to erupt and there have been major floods. We can say that all these things are the earth's way of issuing a warning to the people of this planet.

THE LAW OF CAUSE AND EFFECT

In our lives, there is a law of cause and effect. For example, if one were to throw a ball against a wall, that ball would bounce back with the same amount of energy or power. This is a law that proves reaction is equal to the amount of action, but when a person's mind comes into play, we refer to it as the law of cause and effect and more complicated and complex results come about.

For example, if we hurt people or other living things, we will eventually be hurt in return. Therefore, if we damage or kill trees and animals, we will eventually have to pay the price and be hurt by nature in return. This holds true for people as well. A person who hurts another person will ultimately be hurt and become unhappy in one way or another.

On the other hand, if we love, protect, nurture, and help others develop, we will be loved, protected, and blessed in return. People

have hurt plants and other living things on this planet far too much. That is why we suffer from food shortages, climate changes and disasters, which end up in large-scale fighting and killing.

During the Gulf War, the Iraqi troops closed in to get the oil in Kuwait and Saudi Arabia. They shot and fought each other, and when they were withdrawing their troops in defeat, they set fire to the oil fields in Kuwait and poured oil into the Persian Gulf, killing many fish and marine life.

When things like this happen, revenge always comes into play, and not only the people in Iraq, but people in various other countries suffered from this. We were taught a valuable lesson as to the meaning of "thou shall not kill." Due to the smoke from the oil, the amount of sunlight decreased and crops were poor. In other words, many people were affected. The Earth Academy is kind enough to teach us that people should not kill others and that we should not go around recklessly hurting things.

This applies to tortoises, salmon, whales, dolphins, and all animals as well. For example, if we kill a large number of elephants in order to make money from their tusks, that retribution will definitely come back to haunt society in some way. Killing and eating whales may definitely be a source of food and income, but the whales that swim so gracefully in the ocean are a valuable source of study for humans. Whales love one another, have children, and sing and dance together. Of course, their songs are sung in very low tones hardly perceptible to the human ear, but elephants, whales and dolphins all use their own respective voices to talk and sing.



People who willfully kill, eat, and try to make money off of them will eventually have to pay the price in some way, shape, or form. This may come as volcanic eruptions, earthquakes, and on a larger scale, the collisions with planets and drastic changes in temperature. While retribution may not come immediately, negative actions invite negative results. On the other hand, positive actions bring about positive results.

LIVE A LIFE OF THANKS EVERY DAY

We must be more grateful to our planet and express our thanks every day in a prayer-like way, telling it how much we appreciate what it is doing for us. We should be grateful for the sunshine as well as for the rain. Let us be grateful to the water and the air and to the flowers, trees, and mountains. Let's try to reduce exhaust fumes. Let's try to use solar and light energy and begin using electric or hydrogen-powered cars and not pollute the atmosphere.

We also should not spit or throw cigarette butts and gum on the ground either. Let's try not to dirty the Earth Academy. We must train ourselves not to inconvenience anyone or anything.

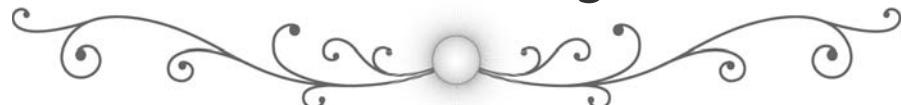
We should try and live life so that not only our own families, but in a broader sense, all living things, the earth and nature are happy as well. Countries should respect and follow the etiquette in communication with other countries, be grateful to one another, and live brightly and cheerfully always with a mind filled with *arigato*, thank you, *obrigado*, and *merci*.

From *Tanoshiku Ikeru Tameni*, "In Order to Live Joyfully," pp 11-20

Muchas gracias
 Merci beaucoup Danke schön
Thank you very much
 Muito obrigado ありがとうございます
 ขอบคุณมาก

The Sundial Way of Life

Is a Movement to Manifest the True Image



MASANOBU TANIGUCHI



The following is a summary of the Congratulatory Address given by Rev. Taniguchi, Vice President of Seicho-No-Ie, at the Fall Festival held at the Seicho-No-Ie Main Temple in Nagasaki, Japan on November 22, 2007 as posted on his blog the same day.

Ladies and Gentlemen, I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks to all of you for attending the Seicho-No-Ie Fall Festival and Commemorative Ceremony today. It's suddenly become very cold in Japan since the middle of this month, and the nights have grown especially cold. In Tokyo, many of us have started to turn on our heaters from about a week ago. The low in Tokyo on the 18th was 6.7°C (approximately 44°F), 2.4° colder than average, but the high was 19.4°C (66.9°F). We arrived here in the afternoon of the 20th, and it seems that the temperature in the morning dropped to 3°C (37.4°F). It's been cold here since then as well.

The fall foliage is beautiful when it gets cold, though. I hope that you have been able to take in the brilliant autumn reds and yellows in and around Kinryuko pond. Here at the Seicho-No-Ie Main Temple, we can experience nature's abundant blessings of both the mountains and the sea. Not only do the clear skies and fall foliage

comfort us visually and emotionally (as those who have participated in Spiritual Training Seminars at the Main Temple know), but nature satisfies our palates as well. The oranges here are delicious now, and I understand we can also pick chestnuts. The persimmons are plentiful and ripe, and when we watch the birds that come to eat them, our minds and hearts are also fulfilled and content. I believe this is by nature the true relationship between nature and people.

As you are all aware, global warming is progressing rapidly in the world today, primarily because of what humans have been doing, and this has conversely begun to threaten our lives. Recently we have had disasters that caused widespread damage, such as the powerful cyclone that struck Bangladesh resulting in thousands of deaths. Situations in which nature is destroyed and becomes poorer while humans prosper have existed since long ago. We know this well from actual things we've experienced since the days of pollution to current modern-day city life. The problems of today, however, stretch beyond that. When nature is destroyed because of what people do, nature is reduced and conditions become grave and serious for all people. That means that our own lives are slowly destroyed as a result and become poorer. Humankind in the 21st century has become aware of this and realizes that something *must* be done, but they don't know *where or how to begin*. This is what's happening now.

On November 17, 2007, the United Nations' Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) finalized and published its Synthesis Report, the fourth and final in a series. This report indicates the findings of meteorologists



Autumn leaves on the Seicho-No-Ie Main Temple grounds



The passage to the Main Temple with celebratory lanterns



Ladies and sacred water trough for rinsing mouth and hands (purification) for Temple visitors

tax. It also includes all of the following possible measures: nuclear power generation, use of renewable energy, underground carbon sequestration, hybrid cars, and increased usage of biofuels, growth of energy conservation technology, etc. That is how urgent and critical the situation is.

This year, we in the Seicho-No-Ie movement have begun “A Movement That Grows With Nature—Phase 1 Five-Year Plan.” “Phase One” means that we are also thinking about a “Phase Two” to follow, and that within the next ten years, we will have realized a “Movement That Grows With Nature.” This is not simply an environmental movement. What I would like to ask you to keep in mind is that ours is a Movement to manifest the True-Image World here on this earth, based upon the Truth that “the God-created True-Image World is only goodness and Grand Harmony.”

“Growing with nature” means that we cannot carry on a movement that disseminates the Truth that “each person is a child of God” and destroy nature while we are doing so. We must conduct our movement within the regenerative limitations of nature and nurture nature as well as the awareness of all people. That is why our goal is not only to live together with nature but also to grow and evolve with it. This movement is not one that goes against or defies anything but is one that stands in the forefront of and leads society, and it is based on the biological truth that “people are a part of nature.” Therefore, it is the natural responsibility of people

worldwide who agreed that every possible countermeasure against global warming must be implemented immediately in order to keep the growth of further damage and disasters in check. This does not refer to only one specific measure but to execute any and all countermeasures that we can think of, including emissions trading and carbon

worldwide to protect against global warming. If this lifestyle and mindset is not actually practiced in our daily life, there will be no future for humankind.

I believe that at the root of the environmental problems that confront us today lies anthropocentrism, particularly as it applies to human desires and needs. Each person is a child of God, so we need to revere and respect one another. That does not mean, however, to value human desires or needs. Instead we must value the “God-nature” that lies within, beyond those desires. Unfortunately, through advertising and the media’s emphasis not on what we have been given but what we lack, we try to raise demands to stimulate the market. We purposely shorten products’ life-cycle and models of products frequently. If we continue to do this, there will never be enough for our planet. In the East, there is an adage that emphasizes being content with what you have. This thinking, however, was criticized as trying to justify the feudal system, so it was considered for a long while to be “old-fashioned.” However, now in the 21st century, feudal systems do not exist anywhere within the developed countries. Liberalism or democracy superseded that, but unfortunately, it would seem that we are instead heading towards a system that emphasizes human desires.

In the 21st century in which global warming is progressing, there is a need for a new movement with religious fervor that emphasizes being content with what you have, which comes, not from the top-down, but swells up from the grassroots. The Kenyan environmentalist, Wangari Maathai, advocated introducing the traditional Japanese concept of *mottainai* (Editor’s Note: Roughly translated, this word means “it is so wasteful that things are not fully used.”) Maathai



Kinryuko Pond with the curved bridge and Main Temple

equates it to the English phrase, “Reduce, Reuse, Recycle.”). I think this is a wonderful idea, but I’d like to tell you about the more original way of thinking that Seicho-No-Ie has had, and that is the “sundial way of life.”

The sundial way of life looks at all the bright and positive aspects of life. Unlike the system that holds human desires in highest regard, this way of thinking looks, not at what is lacking, but recognizes and gives thanks for all that we have been given, what we have been blessed with, and the fact that we are alive. This is something that is shared with the spirit of *mottainai*, and at the same time, is based on the faith in a world of only goodness and is a way to practice concretely drawing out the True Image into the phenomenal world. I wrote about this in detail in the book, *Hidokei Shugi towa Nanika?* (“What is the Sundial Way of Life?” Seicho-No-Ie Publications) which was published to commemorate this Fall Festival. I would like to ask that you all read this book and better understand that the sundial way of life is a new movement to manifest the True Image.

I would like to use a portion of this book and talk to you about how wonderful the sundial way of life is. It begins on page 101, with the chapter entitled, “Advanced Movement to Increase Happiness.” This is the talk I gave at the Spring Festival two years ago, but since I believe there are many here that did not attend that event, I would like to reintroduce the content of that lecture here:

Advanced Movement to Increase Happiness

I believe there will be many people here who will, when they hear “Sundial Diary,” “Laughing Practice,” or “Sundial Way of Life,” say that they’ve known about this for a long time. However, I learned recently that what is written in this inaugural issue (of the *Seicho-No-Ie* magazine) is not in the least bit old. I have here a copy of the February 28, 2005 issue of *Time* magazine. It’s the most recent issue that just hit the stands the other day and it includes a Special Feature. The cover has the title, “The Science of Happiness”

on it, but if we were to translate this into Japanese, it would be something that many of us have heard before.

In this issue, there is a 17-page article on the results of a study of a new kind of psychology, different from what has existed until now. I cannot introduce all of this information at this time, but if I were to summarize parts of it, it says that the goal of psychologists used to be to bring patients “to zero,” if we were to think of the condition of our minds as a number scale with the worst condition (i.e. suicidal) being a “minus five.” In other words, the goal was to treat and bring the patient from a neurotic ailing state to a neutral normal one. It seems, however, that the trend amongst psychologists today is “positive psychology.” Positive psychology has a very proactive and positive goal and is studying ways to bring someone in a normal state of mind, “zero,” to a “plus three,” or “plus five.”

There are different things written in the article, but to share a portion of it with you, there are various study results regarding what makes us happy. Ordinarily, we might think the answer would be “having money” or “additional income,” but researchers found that there was no data supporting this. “Additional income” did little to raise people’s sense of satisfaction or happiness, nor did “a good education” or “a high IQ.” Then is “youth” the source of happiness? No, that isn’t it either. On the contrary, it seems that older people are more consistently satisfied with their lives than the young. How about not having to work frantically and being able to sit leisurely in front of a TV not thinking about anything? That doesn’t seem to be it either because findings state that when watching TV, those who watch it for more than three hours a day feel less happy than those who watch it for fewer hours a day. The studies show that there is “less sense of happiness.”

What does lift the spirit and make one feel happier is “religious faith.” So, too, do “warm, loving relationships with friends and family.” Moreover, studies have found

that people feel happy when they have a job that allows a certain degree of freedom and not having to do the same thing in the same way every day.

Additionally, what do we need to do in order to implement the findings of this study in our daily lives? There are different methods described regarding that, too. This is something very interesting—It mentions a “gratitude journal” or “gratitude exercise” is important. This means that “being grateful leads to an increased sense of happiness”—this is something that we’ve heard somewhere before, isn’t it? It is the exact same way of thinking that we have been advocating and practicing since long ago. Looking for and making note of the good, positive points in people is the starting point in a life of increased happiness. And, to expand happiness, this article describes “performing acts of altruism.” When it comes down to this, it’s difficult to determine whether we’re talking about psychology or religion, but we have come to find that those things are very effective in realizing a life of happiness.

One of the psychologists conducting these kinds of studies is Martin Seligman. According to Dr. Seligman, one way towards an increased sense of happiness is a “gratitude visit.” These are a little different than the gratitude visits that are made when we are promoting attendance at Grand Lectures. It works like this: you think of a person

in your life who has been kind to you but whom you’ve never properly thanked—for example a supervisor, grandfather,



The altar and attendees at the Fall Festival in the Main Temple

your father, a relative or a friend—and write a “gratitude letter” to that person. You explain in detail how the words of that person at a certain time were very helpful and how you are now living a very happy life thanks to his advice or encouragement. Then you visit that person and read that letter in front of him. According to Dr. Seligman, when you pay a “gratitude visit” you can feel a sense of happiness throughout the following month . . .

In this way, the “sundial way of life” is a leading way of thinking and living life today.

One more thing I would like to talk about is the way in which we will be conducting our Movement in the future. As I mentioned earlier, our movement must be one that “grows with nature.” In other words, there is a need to: 1. minimize greenhouse gas emissions as much as possible and 2. disseminate the teaching that each person is a child of God on a large scale, deepening the sense of oneness between a human being and nature. In order to do this, we must try to avoid air and auto long-distance travel, assembling large numbers of people in a large venue, and wasting energy and resources. It becomes important to put our energy into seeking the Truth and propagating activities that we practice here in our daily lives. That is, we must make the small group gatherings of Readers’ Meetings, etc., that are at the frontline of our movement, important bases of propagation. It is from that perspective that we have included an item in the Movement Policy for this year that describes “a high quality organizational movement.”

It is difficult for us to tell from Tokyo or the Main Temple what is happening in the other areas. We therefore need the ideas of those

(Continued on page 20)



The vast, serene scenery with the seven lighthouses, the Truth light

in the frontline who are familiar with what is happening locally. Our movement must also be an effective one that reflects and contributes to the needs of the area. It cannot be one set form but must be diverse. On the other hand, we must not forget the core of the Seicho-No-Ie faith. We have been taught that Seicho-No-Ie refers to the “Grand Universe,” so while it must be diverse, at the same time our goal is a bright and cheerful movement that embodies God’s will. The development and expansion of the sundial way of life is the development and expansion of the will of God. So it is my hope that you will understand that our “Zero Carbon” movement is a variation of the spirit of the sundial way of life and is a creative, original movement closely related to your local communities, and that you will go forward to display your self-reliance brightly and cheerfully and unfold our movement.

If you look at nature, which is a reflection of the True-Image World, you will find that it is filled with an infinite number of ideas. Let us praise them, implement them in our lives and in our movement, and develop and expand our activities based on the divine will of God. This concludes my talk on this anniversary day that is overflowing with the blessings of nature. Thank you very much for listening.

GLOSSARY

GASSHO: hands in prayer.

PHENOMENAL WORLD: the inconstant world of appearance as perceived through our physical and spiritual senses.

SHINSOKAN (shin-SOH-kahn): a prayerful meditation to visualize God. For detailed information, see *Truth of Life*, Volume 8 by Masa-haru Taniguchi, and/or *Shinsokan Is Wonderful* by Seicho Taniguchi.

TRUE IMAGE: the perfect and harmonious essence of all things—the ultimate reality; a child of God, one’s divine essence, the true self.

TRUE-IMAGE WORLD: the world of God where your perfect and harmonious True Image, or your child-of-God nature, exists eternally.