PART TWO: MEMBER CARE

= QUICK REFERENCE GUIDE =

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THE SPIRIT OF LEADERSHIP

When discussing leadership, the most significant question to answer is what are leaders' goals and objectives. Where are they leading people? Among the many possible objectives, SGI-USA leaders strive to guide people to happiness, to the Gohonzon, to overcoming their problems, to accomplishing their human revolution; ultimately to kosen-rufu.

A central theme in President Ikeda's perspectives has been contrasting leadership built on authority and power with leadership aimed at inspiring people and leading by example. The former method uses force to make people follow, even against their will, while the latter motivates people to naturally move forward on their own free will and desire.

Since kosen-rufu is an objective that all people naturally yearn for from the depths of their lives, President Ikeda repeatedly points to leadership that releases natural self-motivation within each individual as the model we cherish within the SGI.

Leaders who are focussed on the members' happiness work to plan meetings that will benefit those who come. Such efforts are an expression of their concern for those attending the meeting. Ideally, feedback and input from members add to a more fulfilling activity. This fundamental care about the members' happiness and desire for their inspiration in faith is the most important element in leadership."

Fred Zaitsu April 9, 99 W.T. (excerpts)

* * *

Spirit means inner state of life, or one's heart. It decides what we devote our lives to. It is the fundamental prayer on which we base our existence. A person's spirit is invisible but becomes manifest at a crucial moment. Not only that, it also controls everything about a person, each moment of every day - it is the fundamental determinant of one's life.

The Kegon Sutra says, "The heart is like a skilled painter." Like a great painter, the heart freely creates representations of all things. One's heart is the designer, the painter, the sculptor and the architect of his or her being. The Great Teacher Tien-t'ai cites this sutra passage in explaining the doctrine of a life moment possessing three thousand realms. He uses the image of a great painter to explain that the heart manifests in the three thousand realms of all phenomena. It is our spirit, our life-moment that counts. Our spirit can also be identified with the subconscious.

"What kind of future do I envision?" we may ask ourselves "What kind of self am I trying to develop? What do I want to accomplish in my life?" We should paint this vision of our lives in our hearts as specifically as possible. This "painting' becomes the design for our future. The power of the heart enables us to actually execute a wonderful masterpiece in accordance with that design. This is the doctrine of a life-moment possessing three thousand realms. The more specific and detailed the blueprint we have in our hearts, the better. The point is to continue vividly painting the target we have and to advance toward that goal single-mindedly. Then, at each instant, the reality of our lives will gradually approach the painting that is our aspiration.

Everything depends on what is in our hearts. Heartfelt prayers will definitely be answered. If we decide that something is impossible, then, consistent with our minds in thinking so, even things possible will become impossible. On the other hand, if we have the confidence that we can definitely do something, we are already one step closer to achieving it.

In accordance with the principle of a life-moment possessing three thousand realms, pessimistic thoughts or feelings take form, just as they are, in reality, producing negative results. People who have negative thoughts create effects for themselves that perfectly match their thinking. So it is important to be optimistic, There is no such thing as pessimism in Buddhism. The Lotus Sutra gives us the key that enables us to possess great confidence and burn with hope even amid circumstances that appear despairing. Nichiren Daishonin proved this with his life."

Daisaku Ikeda, Learning From the Gosho, pg 128

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE GROUP LEADER

What ARE the responsibilities of the Group Leader? Guidance to leaders is plentiful and varied. Frequent references are made to "taking care of members," "taking responsibility for kosen-rufu" and "having sincere faith."

Group Leaders are the leaders who work most directly with the members. Therefore, the relationships that Group Leaders have with their members, the example they demonstrate of their own faith/practice/study, and the causes they make to enable the members to participate in the kosen-rufu movement are crucial.

This "member care" chapter focuses on some of the nuts and bolts of fulfilling those important responsibilities.

"All disciples and believers of Nichiren should chant Nam-myoho-renge-kyo with one mind (itai doshin), transcending all differences among themselves to become as inseparable as fish and the water in which they swim. This spiritual bond is the basis for the universal transmission of the ultimate law of life and death. Herein lies the true goal of Nichiren's propagation. When you are so united, even the great hope for kosen-rufu can be fulfilled without fail. But if any of Nichiren's disciples should disrupt the unity of itai doshin, he will destroy his own castle from within."

Nichiren Daishonin Heritage of the Ultimate Law of Life

COMMUNICATION

Along with maintaining your own sincere personal practice, good communication is the foundation of a Group Leader's responsibility.

Complete, accurate and timely communication is absolutely necessary for the success of any organizational unit, at any level. In a volunteer organization such as ours, it serves as a lifeline for us and all of our members. Communication problems can sabotage other efforts to achieve success. The communication responsibility of ALL leadership positions is an important one.

Informational communication is one aspect of this process and will be addressed next.

COMMUNICATION WITH MEMBERS

- Communicate regularly with your members, co-leader(s) and district leaders, even if it's just to touch base.
- Communicate the monthly schedule of activities to every single member on your list as quickly as possible. [Please refer to Part 1: Discussion Mtgs, pq. 11 of this book for remarks re monthly schedules]
- Communicate any schedule changes, new activities or other news to your members as quickly as possible.
- Giving your members a monthly schedule in advance has MANY advantages! For one, it enables members to plan ahead which is an opportunity for them to take more responsibility for their own practice.

COMMUNICATION WITH DISTRICT LEADERS

- Let your district leader know if you can (or cannot) communicate the information quickly; ask for help if you need it.
- Let your district leader know that you did (or did not) reach everyone on your list.
- This feedback to your district leader is very important. It is an important safeguard to ensure success.
 - It ensures that a back-up communication system can be used if necessary.
 - It may reveal the need to revise the current communication plan for better efficiency and/or less stress in the future.
- Let your district leader know how your members are doing. This contributes to closer relationships between them.

COMMUNICATION WITH CO-LEADERS

Having a co-leader can be a wonderful experience! Sharing your goals and worries, discussing strategies and chanting together for the sake of your group will be a source of encouragement, joy and strength. Your group will definitely benefit from your unity.

How you and your co-leader choose to share various group responsibilities is something you should discuss together. Whatever your consensus, be sure that each of you is clear as to the details of your plan. Good communication and periodic review of your plan will ensure the continued effectiveness of your efforts, given both the changing needs of your group and your personal circumstances.

Sometimes however, it just seems much easier, quicker and more efficient to do things yourself than to work with your co-leader. And there will be times when that is the appropriate thing to do. However, no matter how difficult, your ichinen to work WITH your co-leader is an important cause for your group's success and for your personal benefit.

If your co-leader is not able to participate in activities or decision making, then you will have to go ahead and do things without him/her for the welfare of your group. In that case, keep your co-leader informed of what's going on with the attitude that he/she is doing the best they can given their personal circumstances at the moment.

If YOU are not able to fulfill your responsibility for any reason, be SURE to communicate that to your co-leader, and work out a plan together to get the job done. At the very least, express your confidence that your co-leader will make a great decision (or whatever is needed) on your group's behalf.

Failure to communicate with your co-leader can easily be interpreted as thoughtlessness, lack of confidence in him/her or even intentional disrespect. The simple act of letting your co-leader know what's going on and what to expect from you contributes to unity and friendship. Your group will be directly affected by the relationship between you and your co-leader.

- If you are fortunate enough to have a co-leader, please make sure that he/she gets all the information you do.
- If a decision needs to be made (example: date/place/topic of a discussion meeting), please communicate with your co-leader before the deadline.
 - If you cannot participate in the decision making by the deadline for any reason, be sure to let your co-leader know in advance.
 - Discuss the issue together and ask him/her to report for your group, or to go ahead and make the necessary decisions on your behalf.
 - Make every effort not to leave your co-leader or district leader hanging, wondering what to do, or what your intention is, or when they will hear from you.

TROUBLESHOOTING

Giving your members a monthly schedule in advance has MANY advantages! For one, it enables members to plan ahead which is an opportunity for them to take more responsibility for their own practice.

There may be occasions when you don't receive timely, accurate or complete scheduling information yourself. Here are some tips:

- Be aware of the date by which you need to have the monthly scheduling information in order to get it all out to your members.
- If you have had difficulty getting information in the past, call your leaders early enough to ensure plenty of time to deal with obstacles.
- Identify a leader whose strength is good communication and ask for help getting the information you need.
- Keep a list of standard monthly activities. Checking this list will help you make sure you get everything you need. Locally and currently, these usually or may include:

World Peace Gongyo

A Study Activity

General Lecture

Culture Department Activities History of the Fuji School

Monthly Planning Meeting

Boys/Girls Group

Chorus Practice

Temple Committee Daimoku

Basics of Buddhism

Intro to Buddhism

Monthly Discussion Meeting

Community Center Cleanup or Telephone Duty Men's/Women's/Youth Division Activities

The more complete the activity schedule you provide to your members, the more opportunities they will have to practice with others. This is an important function of *Group* Leaders.

■ THOROUGH COMMUNICATION WITH YOUR MEMBERS AND LEADERS IS A POWERFUL CAUSE FOR UNITY AND SUCCESS.

HEART TO HEART COMMUNICATION: BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS

Heart to heart communication is both the cause and effect of building relationships. It is through our relationships with friends in faith that we learn so much about the true practice of Nichiren Daishonin's Buddhism and how to apply it to our daily lives. It is often a close faith relationship that helps us get through a crisis.

Developing close relationships with members is a source of tremendous joy for SGI leaders. Sometimes the effort required is arduous, but the result is ALWAYS great benefit.

Building faith relationships does not mean that you must do personal favors for your members. Nor does it mean that you must do social activities with them, though of course you may if you wish. It is based on your sincere concern for your members' happiness, your respect, recognition of their inherent Buddhahood, and of the fact that they each have a unique mission for kosen-rufu.

Helping members practice joyfully is being a good friend in faith. In your group there will be members who need different kinds of help.

* * *

NEW MEMBERS

New members need much care. Even if they seem to be wildly enthusiastic and independent in their practice, they are highly vulnerable to obstacles. Therefore it is very important that they develop a network of relationships with leaders who can support them in faith. Group Leaders who create and maintain these connections are fulfilling an important responsibility.

Of course, new members have many additional needs. The Group Leader does not have to meet each one directly, but should be aware of the new member's condition and recruit others to help the new member to:

- Set up and maintain an appropriate altar
- Learn gongyo correctly
- Do gongyo regularly
- Develop the discipline of chanting daimoku
- Subscribe to SGI publications
- Study
- Participate in activities
- Learn the basic concepts of Nichiren Daishonin's Buddhism
- Develop good relationships with leaders and members
- Deepen his/her faith through discussions on applying faith to daily life.
- Help his/her family members understand the SGI and Nichiren Daishonin's Buddhism in an appropriate manner.

EXPERIENCED MEMBERS

You may have long-time members in your group who look like they don't need any help. This is a dangerous assumption. Members who have an established practice sometimes struggle to keep their spirit fresh. Acknowledge their contributions to kosen-rufu and invite them to fulfill some kind of responsibility in your group. Ask him or her to accompany you on a home home visit, to share an experience, to read or present something at a meeting or one of a variety of things. Ask your district leader for advice as to what would be appropriate.

INACTIVE MEMBERS

There are many reasons that members become inactive. It is important to remember that people change their minds! They often respond when you make an effort to connect with them.

- Someone who was angry about something may respond to a sympathetic ear.
- Someone who was too busy may respond to a series of home visits and receiving the monthly schedule.

- Someone who wasn't able to establish a consistent practice may be willing to try again.
- Someone who was lost in the shuffle may be delighted to reconnect!
- Some are simply caught up in daily life and need a path back to faith.

Send each one of them the monthly schedule with a short, warm personal note. Even if you have never met the member you can find something sincere to say. This has been enough to reactivate some members who had not been out for years.

Develop whatever kind of a relationship you can with inactive members. Your consistent caring may become the way for them to come back when they are ready. Your sincere respect for them and your daimoku for their happiness will have an effect.

This does not mean that you have to constantly keep after each inactive member. Get guidance and/or assistance from your senior leaders if you are unsure.

LEADERS

Your own faith relationships with your leaders, at the district, chapter and senior levels, play a big part in your group's success. You will need encouragement as you strive to raise your members in faith. Your leaders' experience can often be a source of wisdom and support. Your relationships with them will serve as a model and cause for be the for your members' relationships with leaders. The best time to start developing those relationships is now. If you currently have difficulty with your leaders, chant sincere daimoku to resolve the difficulties and chant to find a senior in faith with whom you can develop a close relationship. Your prayer will be answered.

HOME VISITS

I want you to take good care of all the members who have given you their confidence. Everyone who embraces the Gohonzon and chants daimoku in the Latter Day of the Law is a precious child of Nichiren Daishonin. Never treat them lightly or belittle them. Go out and meet them, every one. Listen to everything they have to say. Then talk with them sincerely and kindly until thoroughly convinced that by continuing their faith they can solve their agonizing problems without fail. Teach them that the key for them is to strengthen their own faith and encourage others to do the same.

The Human Revolution, Vol. 10

In the above passage, President Ikeda is clear on the necessity and purpose for visiting members. There are many ways to encourage members to strengthen their faith.

HOME VISIT TIPS:

If you are not sure how to encourage a member, the following suggestions are always appropriate.

- Bring something for the altar: fruit, greens, candles, duster.
- Bring someone with you on a visit; a senior leader or another member if appropriate. The more relationships members have, the better.
- Converse briefly with family members/roommates if appropriate.
- Be aware of and follow the social norms of the member and his/her family if possible.
- Reconfirm how much time the member has for the visit and honor it.

- If at all possible, chant and do gongyo together. A strong, joyful gongyo will help the member well up his/her own life condition and the courage to challenge obstacles. Oftentimes the gongyo of members who are suffering is weak.
- Bring a World Tribune or Living Buddhism in which you have marked a passage that encouraged you and talk about why. This not only provides wonderful guidance, but encourages the member to study.
- Bring study materials used in a recent meeting that the member was not able to attend. This also promotes study and lets the member feel more connected to activities.
- Talk about some encouraging aspect of an activity the member could not attend.
- Tell about a benefit you or another member had.
- If a member has not been active, try to learn why and give encouragement based on his/her circumstances without being judgmental.
- If a member does not want to chant daimoku, say that you would like to chant for his/her happiness for a few minutes sometime during the visit.
- Encourage the member to talk about what's going on in his/her life these days; struggles, hopes, goals etc.
- If the member goes on and on repeating the same complaints over and over, you may need to interrupt with a sympathetic remark, followed by one such as, "Well. Let's see what we can do about all that!"
- If the member is negative or very discouraged, do not be influenced by his/her life condition. Remain confident and positive.
- Let the member know that you have absolute confidence that he/she can overcome his/her obstacles and achieve happiness.
- Try to encourage the member to make a new determination to win, with a new determination in faith.
- If possible, come up with a specific first step of an action plan. This could be to chant more, to come to an activity, to subscribe to & read the W.T., to connect with a senior leader, to improve gongyo:
- There are many different first steps which can be a great cause for ultimate success. Sometimes it is best to start with a small, specific first step.

- Promise the member your support in their effort. You could chant together, offer a ride to an activity, schedule a visit with a senior leader (among many possibilities). Your continued warm support and confidence, whether or not the member is able to follow through right away, is a powerful cause to enable that member to stand up in faith.
- Tell the member that your co-leader and/or district leader will be happy that you were able to get together. Indicate that you will communicate to them how the member is.
- Ask if there is anything that the member would like you to keep confidential and promise to do so.

AFTER THE HOME VISIT

- Let your co-leader and district leader know how the visit went. Do not reveal any information the member asked you to keep confidential. Discuss a next step in encouraging the member.
- Letting your leaders know how your members are doing contributes to building bonds between them.
- Follow up with another visit, call or send a note to encourage the member to renew his/her determination. Confirm your continued support and confidence in his/her ultimate success.
- Chant daimoku for that member and renew your own determination for his/her happiness.

CAMPAIGNS

CAMPAIGNS ARE VALUABLE BUT OPTIONAL

An informal campaign can be just the thing to refresh one's practice or energize your entire group.

- A campaign can be targeted to achieve a specific result.
- It can also create unity and a sense of group identity.
- It can be the source of tremendous benefit.
- AND IT CAN BE A LOT OF FUN!!

Optimally, everyone in your group will design a campaign together and then participate enthusiastically as planned.

However, if that doesn't describe your group at the moment, here are some thoughts on creating success from your campaign no matter what!

- Design your campaign with one other strong member. Announce your plan to your group and invite them to participate if they wish.
- Be sure to explain why you think the campaign will be valuable.
- If you don't even have one other person to start with, choose your own campaign and invite the group to join you if they wish.
- Get another supportive leader involved to encourage both you and your members to keep going.
- Report regularly to your group about the campaign. Always be positive, and thank whoever is participating (in any way), and thank the others for their support, (no matter what).
- If you are really campaigning, you will definitely have results to share.
- Your enthusiasm and confident understanding of your campaign's ultimate value will be an encouraging model and lesson in faith about effort and results.

Member Care

- Your fierce ichinen for the happiness of your group will be rewarded.
- Even if few people actively participate this time, you will gain fortune and benefit from your effort. The results will be manifested in time.
- You will also have planted the seed for amazing future results in your group.

GENERAL TIPS FOR CAMPAIGNS:

- Set a finite period of time for your campaign. It can always be extended.
- If you or your group is inexperienced with campaigns, make your goals short term and achievable. Extended consistency will be a challenge in itself.
- If possible, set up a system for reporting and mutual encouragement.
- Make your targets specific enough for members to know exactly what to do, but flexible enough to accommodate peoples' different capacities.

CAMPAIGN IDEAS

A campaign can be anything that you determine to do for a period of time. It can be a part of faith/practice/study that is already established, but with some new element that requires more effort. That could be improved quality, consistency or attitude. Remember that no effort is ever wasted in your Buddhist practice!

Below are some campaign ideas. Change them to suit your own needs and style. Enjoy them! Remember, you are doing this for your own personal benefit and for the benefit of your group.

GONGYO/DAIMOKU CAMPAIGNS

- Make a daimoku goal (total hours per week) to which group members
 contribute and report. This daimoku can be focussed on a chosen target.
 Participating members can make a pledge to devote a certain amount of
 daimoku each day toward that goal if they wish.
- Chant together for a specific purpose.
- At a daimoku session, each attendee writes several personal goals on a card. Cards are distributed randomly to attending members who will chant for those goals. Cards can be redistributed every 15-20 minutes or members can chant about the same goals the entire time.
- Participating members can pledge to chant every day (at least a little bit)
 about an issue or goal they find difficult to face. Something they may be
 afraid to chant about.
- Participating members pledge to chant with appreciation every day.
- Participating members pledge to focus on doing as perfect a Gongyo as possible at least once a day.
- Members form teaching teams to help others learn/improve Gongyo.
- Get up ten minutes earlier in the morning to chant more daimoku.

STUDY CAMPAIGNS

- Choose study buddies. Buddies will communicate (by phone/email/in person) on a chosen day and read short passages to each other. Or study buddies can mail/email a short passage to each other twice weekly.
- Participating members pledge to study at least a LITTLE bit every day. They may request a reminder call if they wish.
- Choose a Gosho or guidance passage and read it before Gongyo at every activity for a month. Make cards with the passage on them for each member's altar. When members talk to each other, read or recite the passage together.
- Members pledge to study about the discussion meeting topic before the meeting.

MAKING CONNECTIONS CAMPAIGNS

- Connection campaign; Each participating member calls a senior leader to develop their relationship or report or ask a question or for guidance.
- Connection campaign each member calls another member just as a friend.
- Participating members make a pledge to do 2 home visits a month, or to call or write to 2 members a week.
- Secret Buddies: Members' names go in a hat. Participating members randomly pick names, and for one month (or for the chosen period of time) do secret nice things: send a card, drop off a small gift, or chant for the person's happiness.

FAITH CAMPAIGNS

- Positive Attitude Campaign: In the face of daily obstacles, pledge to say,
 "there's a benefit in this" or "I will create value from this".
- No complaining for any reason for a week.
- Keep a gratitude journal. Every night, write down 5 things which you appreciate about that day.
- Write down as many benefits as you can think of.
- Each participating member writes his/her experience, with help from a buddy if they like.

KEEPING RECORDS, STAYING ORGANIZED

Being a Group Leader is not a secretarial job, but keeping good records will contribute to your group's success. Establishing an organizational system that works for you will help you take care of your members better while and save time and energy in the long run.

* * *

MEMBERSHIP LISTS

An accurate, up-to-date membership list is crucial. If you cannot use a computer, perhaps one of your reliable members can fulfill this important responsibility.

- The membership list should include the name, address and home phone number of each individual member.
- Make every effort to confirm the accuracy of the information you are printing. If you cannot confirm something, and have any reason to doubt its accuracy, include a note such as "* unconfirmed info." Or "*last known address"
- Date your membership list.
- Make sure your district leaders have an updated copy.
- Giving a group membership list to each of your group members can be a very good idea. It fosters a sense of group identity and closer communication between members
- Email addresses, work phones, birthdays, divisions, dates of membership are optional. When including birthdays, work phone numbers and email addresses (especially at work), confirm with the member that they have no objection to the inclusion of this info on the membership list.
- You may want to make 2 versions of your membership list.
 - If members ask that work numbers (for example) only be given to leaders, a separate list for general distribution can be made.
 - Be sure to name these two lists in such a way that they won't get confused.
 - Or, make one list and pencil in work phone numbers on leaders' copies.

- It is also a good idea to include the names and phone numbers of your district and chapter leaders. This makes it easier for members to connect with and contact leaders when needed.
- If you meet a member who lives in your location but who is not on your list, check with your district leader about including him/her in your group records.

ATTENDANCE RECORDS

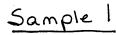
The quality or value of an activity is neither dependent on, nor determined by the number of participants. Nor is a member's faith dependent on or determined by the number of activities he/she does. There are many variables which affect activity attendance.

But it is also true that continued low attendance (either at meetings or by an individual member) could indicate a problem which needs to be addressed. To determine the cause, chant daimoku, talk to your members & leaders and chant daimoku.

Keeping accurate attendance records is a good way to spot the presence of potential problems before they go too far. It is also a good indicator of your group's growth and progress.

Any system that works for you is fine. Here are some sample formats currently in use.

WHITE OAK CHAPTER



BURTONSVILLE DISTRICT

BURTONSVILLE GROUP

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=: TIPS FOR CONSENSUS BUILDING :=

Taken from W.T., April 9, 1999, pg. C

Consensus or unity building is an essential aspect of effective leadership in any arena of life. This is especially true for Buddhist leaders. Nichiren Daishonin writes, "This spiritual bond (many in body, one in mind) is the basis for the universal transmission of the ultimate law of life and death. Herein lies the true goal of Nichiren's propagation."

(Major Writings of Nichiren Daishonin, vol. 1, p. 23).

"Similarly, you should also reconfirm the fundamental path of faith, practice and study," notes SGI President Ikeda during his historic visit to the United States in 1990, "and make a fresh departure based on the unity of many in body, one in mind – the starting point of our movement. This is the key to the reconstruction of [SGI-USA] as model organization." (March 1990, S.T. p. 51).

As essential as it is, building a clear and solid consensus is not an easy thing. The following are some practical tips for making the process work in your organization.

1. BEGIN WITH A CLEAR PURPOSE

The prime point or purpose of our activities should always be the Major Writings and the practical guidance of President Ikeda. Confirming the purpose and objectives of each activity or event at the beginning of the planning process sets the foundation for effective planning and action.

DO:

- Determine the purpose and the expected outcome.
- Determine what needs to be done to achieve these goals.

DON'T:

- Confuse actions or means with the goal or purpose.
- Lose sight of the objective.

2. CREATE AN OPEN DIALOGUE

"Discussing thing openly as siblings or members of a family, please proceed hand in hand, step by step, toward construction and growth."

(Daisaku Ikeda, March 1990 S.T.)

DO:

- Keep facts separate from assumptions.
- Discuss the situation from various perspectives.
- Take time to discuss alternative proposals.

DON'T:

- Assume your proposal is best.
- Confuse opinions or assumptions with facts.
- Dismiss alternatives too easily, focussing on only one idea.

3. BE AN ACTIVE LISTENER

"It is important for leaders to be fair and impartial and to hear out opinions that differ from their own. By giving sincere consideration to diverse opinions, you can develop a broad, flexible outlook and make stable progress." (ibid., p 49.)

DO:

- Pay attention to each speaker.
- Summarize what you believe the person has said.
- Ask for further clarification is what's being said is not clear.

DON'T:

- Interrupt each other.
- Engage in more than one conversation at a time.
- Jump from one subject to another.

4. CREATE AN ATMOSPHERE SUPPORTIVE OF DIALOGUE.

"I would like to emphasize the importance of fostering an atmosphere where members feel free to speak their minds to leaders and say what they feel has to be said." (ibid, p. 50)

DO:

- Give positive, warm and friendly acknowledgement to others' ideas.
- Actively invite others to express different views.

DON'T

- Get defensive, angry or frustrated, debate or attempt to control others.
- Focus only on what's wrong with an idea.

5. HANDLE DIFFERENCES OF OPINION OR CONFRONTATION

"Although to criticize and censure someone out of petty emotionalism is of course incorrect, it is necessary that constructive and valuable opinions be aired. If a leader is broad-minded enough to listen with a sense of appreciation, both he/she and the person sharing his opinion can expand their state of life." (ibid, p. 51)

DO:

- Focus on the problem, not on the person.
- Question your own assumptions.

DON'T

- Retreat rather than try to understand differences.
- Don't agree simply to reduce conflict.

6. PARTICIPATE IN DIALOGUE.

"From the standpoint of faith, to keep silent when one sees something amiss is tantamount to lacking mercy." (ibid, p. 51)

DO:

- Try to involve the quieter members, giving all an equal chance.
- Protect others from being interrupted or attacked.

DON'T:

- Be dominated by one or two people or allow two people to argue while others watch.
- Withdraw from the discussion or defer to more aggressive people.

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