

Using the Omamori Gohonzon

The Omamori Gohonzon existed during the time of Nichiren Daishonin. In his writing “Reply to Kyo’o,” Nichiren Daishonin says: “Since I heard from you about Kyo’o, I have been praying to the gods of the sun and the moon for her every moment of the day. Always cherish the Gohonzon that I gave you some time ago for her protection” (WND 412). The Gohonzon the Daishonin refers to here is an Omamori Gohonzon. ‘Omamori’ comes from the Japanese verb *mamoru*, to ‘protect’.

The Omamori Gohonzon has the same significance and power as a larger Gohonzon. This is the most important point about the Omamori Gohonzon. The Omamori Gohonzon and the Gohonzon enshrined in our home the have the same powers of the Buddha and the Law. The Gohonzon is inscribed with the power of an attacking lion.

The same gosho says “But your faith alone will determine all these things. A sword is useless in the hands of a coward. The mighty sword of the Lotus Sutra must be wielded by one courageous in faith” (WND 412). The important thing is faith. Even if we have the Gohonzon, we need to muster strong faith in order to gain benefit. The power and strength of any Gohonzon is manifested in proportion to the strength of our faith and practice. When we sincerely devote ourselves to kosen-rufu we will definitely be able to tap the immeasurable power embodied in the Gohonzon.

If because of special circumstances the Omamori Gohonzon is the only Gohonzon that has been received, one’s daily practice should be carried out in front of it. When not in use, the Omamori Gohonzon should be stored in a safe place.

If we have a normal sized Gohonzon, we should use this for our daily practice, and our Omamori Gohonzon may be kept in the bottom of the altar. The Omamori Gohonzon may be taken with us when we travel etc to chant to when we are away from home. We can open it any time we would like to chant and should use common sense in choosing times and places to chant. If you would like to have the Omamori Gohonzon with you during your normal daily life (based at home), that is fine too.

When we wear/carry the Omamori Gohonzon, the most important thing is that it is safe and secure. Some choose to wear the Omamori Gohonzon on their body (usually around neck and tucked into clothing so it is comfortable). Others choose to carry it in a handbag or briefcase, taking care that the handbag/briefcase is not lost or stolen. The case is made of rigid plastic and tends to be fragile so please be gentle with it. If the plastic case should break, it can be replaced.

When we visit someone who has not yet received a Gohonzon, we can take our Omamori Gohonzon so they have an opportunity to chant in front of a Gohonzon.

Members who do not have a personal Omamori Gohonzon may wish to borrow an Omamori Gohonzon if they are going to be away from home for work or a holiday etc. SGINZ has a small number of Omamori Gohonzons that can be borrowed temporarily for these purposes on a case-by-case basis. Application forms are available at community centres.

Whether we have a personal or a loan Omamori Gohonzon, it should not be lent to others. Both a personal and a loan Omamori Gohonzon are our own responsibility – we are responsible for keeping them safe and protecting them.

It is because of President Ikeda’s compassion that we can receive the Omamori Gohonzon. It is an expression of his desire to support us as we do activities for kosen-rufu. Ultimately the Omamori Gohonzon enables us to extend our activities for kosen-rufu and to be able to do our activities more freely. We can repay our debt of gratitude for receiving the Omamori Gohonzon by deepening our determination to work for the realisation of kosen-rufu with our mentor President Ikeda.