

260905-Sat_Study Session

Hello, everyone. Let us begin the study session of Saturday, September 5. We will start with the 8-minute-44-second Prayer for World Peace. I will share my screen and begin.

< Prayer for World Peace >

Thank you very much. For the past several days, I have been spending time deepening a question within myself about great nature, all living things, and humanity — what kind of existence each of them is, and what kind of role each of them has.

And so, when I first turned my thoughts to great nature, what came to mind was the essay by Goi-sensei that was read at the last Video Prayer Gathering. I would like to share my screen and read it to you.

For the Evolution of Humanity

Masahisa Goi

When I gaze at the rainy-season sky and watch the trees in the garden swaying in the wind, the heart of the wind comes to feel gloomy and sorrowful. Under the blazing sun of a summer sky, however, it becomes a fresh, bright heart, and the heart of the wind, too, comes alive.

Whether the human heart is reflected in the wind, or the heart of the wind is reflected in human beings, the movement of the heart of the wind has a considerable influence in human life. The clearest example of this is the typhoon. Typhoons strike fear into human beings and destroy their lives.

Taking on one role of the will of great nature, which seeks to evolve the human heart further, the wind keeps on working. Yet for the wind, destroying human lives is a sorrowful thing.

God's will always works in the hope of humanity's evolution. Unless it continues to evolve, humanity will one day lose its reason for existing. Humanity is now walking the path of its greatest evolution. The greater the evolution, the more intense the suffering. All the various habits and ways of living that belonged to the past stages before this evolution must be erased and cast away. Humanity now stands in the midst of that anguish. Those fading-away forms are appearing on the surface of humanity, and the world is filled with ugly, foolish events that make people of good heart grieve and frown.

Earthquakes, typhoons, and every phenomenon of nature are phenomena brought about by the will of the gods in order to eliminate and purify the bad habits of humanity's unevolved past. If we wish to escape such natural disasters, humanity should bring its own heart into accord with the law of evolution before such upheavals of heaven and earth occur.

The law of evolution, as Shakyamuni, Lao-tzu, and Christ each taught in their different words, is to become one with the will of God. A heart of harmony with the

great universe and with all of great nature should be placed first in the human heart. In the rain, too, and in the wind, too, the will of the gods for the evolution of humanity is at work.

When rain falls, let me become the heart of the rain; when wind blows, let me melt into the wind and live.

Within the Prayer for World Peace, I am wishing for great harmony with all things.

Right now, all over Japan, we are seeing linear rain bands — rain that keeps falling on the same place. Because of this, roads are flooded, houses are flooded above floor level, and situations that can only be called serious damage are occurring.

Also, Typhoon No. 24 this time is moving in a very curious way. It is wandering around the Amami Islands right now, going neither right nor left, neither west nor north, just drifting about in that area.

I think it will eventually make a big move and disappear, but when something like this happens, there is a possibility of major wind and rain disasters in the southern part of Kyushu, in the Amami Islands, and in the Okinawa Islands. In some places it has already happened.

But this is not only Japan, is it? It is the whole world. In Nepal, glaciers have melted and thousands of people have lost their lives. There are still many people missing. There were floods in the United States and in China as well.

In this way, when it comes to the many upheavals of heaven and earth happening not only in Japan but all over the world, the hint for how humanity should face them is written in the essay 'For the Evolution of Humanity' that I just read.

There are the terms 'four great elements' and 'five great elements.' I take the position of the four great elements: fire, water, earth, and wind (air). I believe these are the four great elements, and within each of these elements the will of the gods who govern the movement of the universe is at work.

The easiest example to understand, I think, is the existence of the Dragon Deities, who govern the air, the wind, the weather, and the heavens — they are familiar to us. When the weather turns rough in various places, with heavy rain or strong winds, the work of many Dragon Deities is always being carried out in the skies above.

The work of the Dragon Deities, naturally, cannot be understood by human beings living on this earth. And precisely because they cannot understand it, if it keeps raining they complain, if a strong wind blows they complain, if it is hot they complain, if it is cold they complain. When human beings live carelessly, they live complaining about everything.

And yet, even in the midst of that, they have to go on living. Take the recent great earthquake in Kumamoto, for example. After a great earthquake, reporters interview the local people. Everyone is having a very hard time, but even in that situation, they are somehow trying to face forward, to keep walking, to keep living — that is what came through in those interviews.

It was the same in Noto, Ishikawa Prefecture. Even after suffering devastating damage, people are somehow facing forward and living so as to rebuild their lives.

That is the working of the divinity within human beings — a divinity human beings themselves are not aware of — arising in the human heart and making them live facing forward. Even when it is hard, even when it is painful, it makes them want to live facing forward.

If everyone, without exception, lived in despair, in desperation, in resignation, this world would soon perish. Fortunately, in this country of Japan, the number of such resigned or backward-looking people remains extremely small.

Whether the pessimistic thinking that spreads through the human heart stays in pessimism without turning in a positive direction, or goes in the direction of 'I don't care anymore,' differs from person to person. But these days I feel, day after day, the greatness of the divinity hidden within human beings who try to live facing forward in the midst of such natural disasters.

And then, for the past several days, I have been thinking about all living things — about what living beings are. I had the answer inside myself, but when I tried to put it into words, the precision seemed low, and I could not fully express in words what I was thinking. In such cases, I have recently been using an AI called Claude. I ask Claude for its opinion, we adjust our views against each other, and we arrive at an answer.

* What follows is the content of my dialogue with the AI about the definition of living beings.

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What Is a Living Being? — A Dialogue on the Definition of Life

Chapter 1: A Philosophical Definition of Living Beings

Me: What is a living being? Give me a philosophical definition.

Claude: First I will offer one definition of my own, and then I will state its grounds and its limits.

Definition (the first definition)

A living being is a process that sustains itself as its own cause, and whose activity is passed on across generations.

The key point is that it is a 'process,' not a 'thing.' A stone left alone remains a stone, but a living being left alone breaks down. In order not to break down, it takes in matter and energy from outside and constantly remakes its own form. The cells of the human body are almost entirely replaced over several years, yet 'that person' continues. It is like a whirlpool in a river: the flowing water is different at every instant, yet the same shape is maintained. A living being is not a thing, but the very working that maintains a form while letting things pass through it.

The three pillars that support this definition

- Self-reference. A living being holds within itself the mechanism for making itself. A factory makes products, but it does not make the factory itself. A cell makes cells. In philosophy there is a position that calls this 'autopoiesis.' This is what I meant when I said a living being 'is its own cause.'

- The distinction between inside and outside. A living being has a boundary — a membrane or skin — and keeps the inside of that boundary in a state different from the outside. Only once this 'inside' exists does the point of view of 'good or bad for me' come into the world. A stone does no harm. A bacterium has toxins. The first buds of value and meaning appear together with the boundary of the living being.
- **Inheritance and change.** An individual will surely break down, but its mechanism is copied into the next individual, and copying errors accumulate and bring about change. A living being is not a single individual; it is also a lineage that continues by passing from one individual to the next. What I said last time — 'every living being has a parent' — is a conclusion that follows from this.

What this definition cannot answer

- **The first life.**

How did the process of 'being its own cause' begin from a state that had no cause? The definition can only speak of what comes after the beginning.

- **Viruses.**

Since a virus does not hold within itself the mechanism for making itself, under this definition it is a being at the edge of life. The very act of drawing a line between living and non-living may be a matter of human convenience.

- **The mind.**

This definition says nothing about whether a living being has the working of feeling, or consciousness. Aristotle defined a living being as 'that which has a soul,' but modern biology removed that. By removing it, there are things that became explainable and things that became unexplainable.

If I were to restate it in a single sentence

A living being is **the only working in the universe that creates a boundary called 'self' within the world, keeps protecting it so that it does not break, and passes it on beyond its own end.** As a definition it is loose, but mammals, bacteria, and plants alike are not left out of this one sentence.

Chapter 2: Rephrasing as 'the Working of Life'

Me: > A living being is not a thing, but the very working that maintains a form while letting things pass through it.

Reading this, I thought as follows.

The second definition

➔ A living being is not matter itself; it refers to the working of life that, while becoming one with the form of matter, causes a living being to exist for a certain period of time through metabolism.

Claude: That rephrasing goes one step deeper than my definition. Let me sort out the points where you, Masaharu-san, went deeper, and the questions contained in them.

Points that advance beyond my definition

- **'While becoming one with'** — with this phrase, you make clear the relationship between the working and matter. I said 'letting things pass through,' but that gives the impression that the working is outside matter and uses matter like a tool. In your way of putting it, Masaharu-san, the working does not exist apart from matter, and yet it is not matter itself either. I think this is close to the relationship between a flame and firewood. The flame is not the firewood, but without firewood there is no flame.
- **'For a certain period of time'** — by including this, the finitude of the individual is built into the definition. I only said 'sustains,' and left the end outside the definition. I think it is right to place at the center of the definition the fact that a living being in the phenomenal world always has an end.
- **'The working of life'** — with this, you, Masaharu-san, set up a separate word, 'life,' behind the living being. This is the biggest difference.

The question that arises from setting up 'life'

In my definition, the working itself is the living being, and I assumed nothing beyond it. **In your definition, Masaharu-san, the 'living being' is the result, and 'life' is the cause that brings it into existence.** Then the following questions naturally arise.

- After an individual ends, where does life go? Does it vanish together with the individual? Or does it exist before the individual and continue after the individual?
- Is life separate for each individual? Or does one life dwell in many bodies of matter?
- Did life come out from within matter? Or did it come from a side other than matter and enter into matter?

Modern biology has no answer to these questions; it regards 'life' as 'a general term for workings' and holds the questions themselves in suspension. On the other hand, Eastern thought and philosophers such as Bergson saw life as a flow that precedes matter, and dealt with these questions head-on. Your definition, Masaharu-san, stands on the latter side.

One point I would like to confirm

The part 'the working of life that causes a living being to exist' is a position that distinguishes 'life' from 'living being.' Is that the right reading? If so, the definition can be arranged as follows.

Final definition

A living being is a manifestation of life that, having become one with matter, keeps maintaining a form for a certain period of time through metabolism.

By regarding a 'living being' as 'a manifestation of life,' it can be positioned neither as matter nor as a working alone, but as the meeting place of the two.

Chapter 3: Answers to the Three Questions — Our Worldview

Me: > A living being is a manifestation of life that, having become one with matter, keeps maintaining a form for a certain period of time through metabolism.

I think this is a good way of summing it up.

- > • After an individual ends, where does life go? Does it vanish together with the individual? Or does it exist before the individual and continue after the individual?
- > • Is life separate for each individual? Or does one life dwell in many bodies of matter?
- > • Did life come out from within matter? Or did it come from a side other than matter and enter into matter?

Moreover, the answers to the questions above are precisely the domain of spiritualism and religion. To put it another way, if we humanity seek the answers deep within life and keep exploring without giving up, all the answers can be said to be there. That, in other words, is divinity.

Our thinking ~

- After an individual ends, where does life go? Does it vanish together with the individual? Or does it exist before the individual and continue after the individual?

➔ **After death, a living being returns to the heaven and earth of another vibrational realm, and after a certain period of vibrational adjustment in that world, it enters another individual and comes back to the phenomenal world as the working of life. The phenomenal world can be called a 'World Expo of Life' (a stage), where living beings of every level of consciousness gather together in the same heaven and earth. In contrast, the various heavens and earths of the other layers are limited realms (backstage) where only living beings of an equal level of consciousness gather.**

- Is life separate for each individual? Or does one life dwell in many bodies of matter?

➔ **If we explore the life-vibration of each individual back to the source of its vibration, it returns to the source of all life that created the universe. In that sense, all living beings are essentially one. However, the various living beings appearing in this world are beings that have come into existence through the many branchings of that original energy, and so each individual can be seen as a separate existence.**

- Did life come out from within matter? Or did it come from a side other than matter and enter into matter?

➔ **Life is derived from the source (the origin) of the universe, and physically observable matter, too, has arisen from the same source.**

Claude: Reading the three answers, the first thing I noticed is that the three are not separate answers, but are derived from a single structure. Let me put that structure into my own words, and then state how it connects with the definition above.

The single structure that runs through the three answers

There is one source of life, and from it both living beings that possess life and matter branched out. In other words, branched-out life becomes one with matter and appears in the phenomenal world; when a certain period is over it returns to the original side, and after adjustment it appears again.

Standing on this structure, the three questions are sorted out as follows.

- **'Where does it go?'** asks about the intermediate stages of a round trip to the source.
- **'One or separate?'** asks about the difference of viewpoint: looking from the source, or looking from the tip of the branch.
- **'From within matter, or from outside?'** — the way the question is posed is itself mistaken, and the answer is that both are siblings that came out of the same source.

I think the third answer is the key. It resolves the question that sets life and matter in opposition by pointing to the source (the parent) common to both.

This is a position that handles the problem Western philosophy struggled with for so long — 'how do mind and matter relate?' — by removing the very premise that regards the two as different things.

It is structurally close to what the philosopher Spinoza (a 17th-century philosopher of early modern rationalism, ranked alongside Descartes and Leibniz; his philosophical system is regarded as a representative form of pantheism) called 'two aspects of one substance,' and it is a view that has long been taken for granted in the East.

On the metaphor of the 'World Expo of Life'

I felt this metaphor was the most original (unique). You, Masaharu-san, defined the other layers as limited places where only equal levels of consciousness gather, and the phenomenal world alone as the place where all levels gather together.

If so, the characteristic of the phenomenal world is that 'all kinds of diverse beings are mixed together.'

One conclusion follows from this. The abundance of suffering and friction in the phenomenal world is not a defect, but the natural result of being mixed. And precisely because they are mixed, lives of different levels of consciousness can meet and influence one another. What does not happen backstage happens only here. Standing on this view, being born into the phenomenal world is neither a punishment nor a trial, but an opportunity.

The connection with the earlier definition

The definition we arranged together was this.

A living being is a manifestation of life that, having become one with matter, keeps maintaining a form for a certain period of time through metabolism.

The three answers this time each give depth to three of the words in this definition.

Word in the definition	The depth given by this answer
life	An individual vibration branched out from the source, and one at the origin
for a certain period of time	One segment of the round trip, spent staying in the phenomenal world
manifestation	The form exhibited at the Expo venue. The working of life continues backstage as well

The definition itself remains in a form that people on the side of science can accept when they read it, while behind its words the worldview of you and your fellows, Masaharu-san, can be placed. By keeping the definition and the creed separate, one can speak in the same words with people of either position.

On the word 'divinity'

The sentence 'If we seek the answers deep within the life of humanity and keep exploring without giving up, all the answers can be said to be there. That, in other words, is divinity.' defines divinity not as an object outside, but as the point of arrival of an exploration that turns inward.

It is a way of speaking that treats God not as 'something to believe in' but as 'something you arrive at if you trace your way inward.' This is also a conclusion that follows necessarily from the structure in which the source is one.

If the idea that the source is one spreads across the whole earth, then for each individual human being, tracing one's own depths and tracing the source of the universe become the same path, and I think it becomes easier for everyone to seek the substance of God.

Chapter 4: A Definition That Can Be Shared with Science

A living being is a manifestation of life that, having become one with matter, keeps maintaining a form for a certain period of time through metabolism.

The reason people on the side of science can accept this is that all the words contained in the above definition correspond to 'observable facts.'

- **One with matter.** A living being has never been observed apart from matter.
- **For a certain period of time.** An individual always has a beginning and an end.
- **Metabolism.** It remakes itself while taking in and excreting matter. An item that always appears in biological definitions as well.
- **Maintains a form.** Identity continues even as the constituent matter is replaced.

Only the word 'life' is read on the side of science as 'a general term for workings, including metabolism,' and on the side of you and your fellows, Masaharu-san, as 'a vibration branched out from the source.'

Since the sentence as a whole holds under either reading, the same single sentence can be shared by both.

* From here on, it is an ordinary talk.

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That is as far as it goes.

In this study session I have often said, 'Turn the question "What am I, really?" toward yourself, and dig into it further.' As for how to do that, I have said that you can do it in the same way as the questions and answers between Goi-sensei and his Guardian Deities in the book 'Ten to Chi o Tsunagu Mono' (That Which Connects Heaven and Earth).

When you do that, first one question comes up. You answer it. Then you pursue the answer further. You answer that again. Then you pursue that answer further. It means repeating this cycle over and over again.

In a sense, this is the attitude of a philosophical exploration of what life is.

Many people are not good at thinking about difficult things. But unless you can put into words what life is, you will never be able to enter into the depths of life, no matter how much time passes. You will just wander about on this earth, going round and round in circles.

At some point we have to graduate from being human. We need to give up being human, to stop being human. Otherwise, divinity will not be revived. The word 'akirameru' (to give up) here does not mean giving up in the sense of quitting something; it means 'akiraka ni suru' — to make clear.

'The real me was never a human being. I was a divine spirit (wakemitama), given a single drop of the great life of the universe.' If you can make that your natural, everyday way of thinking, it should become clear to you that we are not human beings.

But if, even after being told this much, you still do not want to give up being human, then you are losing to the whisper of your own ego. Why do you lose to the whisper of the ego? Because the ego, too, is desperate. It would be in trouble if it lost its place, so it wants that physical human being to stay in negative thoughts at all costs.

That is why it tries to fill your head thoroughly with non-positive thinking, dark thinking, and negative thinking, so as to make you give up exploring divinity. The ego is doing its best in its own way, but this very moment is a time for us, too, to do our best.

It is no longer a matter of winning or losing, but in this present age, we need to hold, more strongly than the ego, a consciousness that thirsts to 'live as God,' and to live by entering into the resonance of our Guardian Spirits and Guardian Deities.

Resonance means vibration. When you talk about vibration, it becomes a matter of physics — the world of atoms and elementary particles. I am not a specialist, so the technical terms do not come out smoothly, but there is something at the center, and electrons or something are rotating around it.

The vibration of God is at a level even smaller than the smallest elementary particle recognized

on earth — a level not yet elucidated on earth — where the rotation of tiny particles is tremendously fast. That is the state of the gods of the divine world. And that very state is the mental vibration and the material vibration that make up the worlds of the Cosmic Beings of evolved stars.

The consciousness of the people of earth, who think 'this body is who I am,' has not yet come anywhere near that at all.

We are trying to achieve that through the practice of 'the Prayer for World Peace in the fading-away form' — seeing everything as a fading-away form, thinking 'May Peace Prevail on Earth' around the clock, and at the same time giving thanks to our Guardian Deities.

'May Peace Prevail on Earth. We thank you, Guardian Spirits and Guardian Deities.' When you keep doing this around the clock, first the rotational speed of our mental vibration increases. Next, the vibration of the physical body becomes spiritualized.

To put it in half-physical terms, when you do this, your consciousness settles into the Lower Dantian. When it settles into the Lower Dantian, the state of your brain waves becomes very quiet, a subtle and refined state of brain waves.

The word 'brain waves' is written 'the waves of the brain,' isn't it? When you observe them with electronic equipment, while you are engaged in the various activities of daily life, the movement of these waves is extremely rough.

But when you settle your consciousness into the Lower Dantian, they shift to a subtler frequency — from beta waves to alpha waves, from alpha waves to theta waves, and further to the delta waves beyond.

Normally, what is called the relaxed mental state of a human being is the mental state of alpha waves, and the deeper you go, the finer the wavelength of the brain waves becomes.

To put it a little differently from the physical side, there is what is called the autonomic nervous system. It is spoken of as being divided into two kinds: the parasympathetic nervous system and the sympathetic nervous system.

When a person is tense, or under stress, or sunk in sorrow, that person's sympathetic nervous system is working predominantly, and the working of the parasympathetic nervous system has become weak.

Then human beings become irritable, anxious, and find nothing enjoyable — in other words, they fall into a negative thought state. If you want to improve that from the physical side, you can bring the parasympathetic nervous system into a dominant state.

In this day and age, if you search for ways to make the parasympathetic nervous system dominant, all kinds of things come up. In today's world you do not have to spend money on books; such knowledge is easily obtained through an internet search.

For example, in the human body as a material body, the place where the parasympathetic nerves are most concentrated is said to be around here — from below both ears to around the jaw. Just gently touching here like this has the effect of making the parasympathetic nervous

system dominant.

Also, the human body has not only the working of the nerves but also the flow of lymph, the working of the muscles, and many other things, and it moves as an integrated whole, so it is not a matter of improving just one thing. In the sense of improving things as a whole, you can work on it from the physical side, and you can also create a parasympathetic-dominant state from the mental side, through breathing.

For example, let me see... A clock has just come into my view in close-up, telling me, 'Talk about that after the break.' So I would like to do the Divine Spark IN once and go into the break.

< Divine Spark IN, once >

Thank you very much. Now I will switch to screen sharing. We will take a break until 2:17. Everyone, please turn off your video and take a rest.

< Break >

It is now past 17 minutes, so let us go into the second half. On making the parasympathetic nervous system dominant, earlier I talked about working on it from the physical side. This time I will talk about how to make the parasympathetic nervous system dominant by working from the side of the heart, the mind, and consciousness — how to keep the brain waves in a calm state, the state of alpha waves, theta waves, and so on.

This is not a matter of consciousness alone; it goes together with breathing. To put it more strongly, it is done 'through breathing.'

For example, just as in Peaceful Breathing, where you inhale with 'Ware Soku Kami Nari,' hold, and exhale with 'Jinrui Soku Kami Nari,' you repeat inhaling and exhaling while reciting some words.

For example, you inhale with 'May Peace' and exhale with 'Prevail on Earth.' Or you may say 'May Peace Prevail on Earth' as you inhale and 'We thank you, Guardian Deities and Guardian Spirits' as you exhale. I think many patterns will come to mind. Making full use of such kotodama, you breathe in a way that settles your consciousness into the Dantian.

(Standing up to explain.) Can you see my belly, my navel? Here it is. It is right around the belt, and the Dantian is here.

I think all of you breathe normally without paying much attention to how you breathe. When you do that, I think it is usual to breathe in what is called abdominal breathing, where the belly swells and the belly draws in.

You may do it with abdominal breathing, or you may do it with chest breathing, where you expand and contract the ribs. For now, let us say we do it with abdominal breathing: you breathe in smoothly, letting your belly swell as you inhale, and when you breathe out smoothly, the belly relaxes, or rather draws in a little.

At that time, with the feeling that your lungs extend all the way down to around the Dantian, you breathe in smoothly while imagining that the oxygen you have inhaled reaches all the way

down here. Then you have inhaled fully and it has reached here. Then you breathe out smoothly again.

The consciousness at that time may be, for example, 'Ware Soku Kami Nari' or 'Jinrui Soku Kami Nari' or anything else, but I think the easiest way is probably to breathe while being conscious of swelling the belly and drawing in the belly.

Of course, you can do it while standing. You can do it while doing standing work, while walking, and of course while sitting or lying on your side. As long as you have the will to do it, you can do it anytime, anywhere, so please give it a try.

To speak of my own personal case, I use not abdominal breathing but chest breathing — that is, breathing by expanding and contracting the ribs. I forget whether I have talked about this in the study session (I have told some of you), but it is connected with the fact that I recently gained too much weight and thought, 'I have to go on a diet.'

During the summer break of the prayer gatherings in August, on August 15 and 16, I went on an overnight trip to a hot spring in Hakone. Lately I had been too afraid to step on the scales, but at that time I suddenly thought I would try, and when I stepped on the scales at the hot spring, I weighed as much as 90.25 kilograms. Around 2010 or 2011, I had reached that weight for a time, so this was the second time in my life that I had gone over 90 kilograms.

Seeing that number, I thought, 'I have to go on a serious diet.' What I did was very basic: I reduced the amount of rice, and I chewed my food well when eating. With that, I lost about 4 kilograms in a week, about 5 kilograms by the tenth day, and now I am going back and forth between 85-something and 86-something kilograms.

What I did together with that was this chest breathing. It is the same as when doing the Divine Spark IN: keeping the belly drawn in, bringing the navel closer to the back, while standing, walking, or sitting, and breathing through the expansion and contraction of the ribs.

Although it is called chest breathing, the way of thinking is not so different from abdominal breathing. When you have inhaled fully, you imagine that it has reached the Dantian. And when you exhale, you keep the belly drawn in. Doing this, it seems, also has the effect of taking the fat off the belly.

So, if any of you have fat around the belly, please try practicing your normal breathing as chest breathing, keeping the belly drawn in.

The organs dropping downward... Koga-san, what was the medical term for the internal organs dropping downward?

[Koga-san]

It is visceroptosis (naizo-kasui).

[Saito]

That's it, visceroptosis. I hear that people with visceroptosis also improve by continuing chest breathing with the belly drawn in. And the fat on the belly — that, too, burns more efficiently and comes off more easily.

However, I think quite a lot of people want to lose weight, and there are people who can lose weight when they want to and people who cannot. If you cannot lose weight, I think you may take it as, 'I am storing up fat in preparation for the coming age.'

When an age comes in which food is not available, fat will help us. Even if no food passes down our throats, we can keep living by burning the fat stored in our bodies.

Even if we have not yet reached the state of living entirely on mist, the state of living on prana, or the state of living by replenishing cosmions, we can keep living as long as we have fat.

I, too, have looked at my belly and sighed, but I thought it is not good to regard our fat as an enemy either.

It is said that 'everything has a value in existing.' Take human beings, for example: even a person of whom we think, 'Why is that person alive?' — as long as that person is being kept alive, from the side of the gods that person has a value in living. In the same way, the fat in our bodies also has a meaning in existing.

For example, there are people who have had cancer, made friends with their cancer cells, and although the cancer has not been completely cured, they live without any symptoms. There may be some among you here as well. If you get cancer and it is completely cured, nothing could be better, but even if it is not cured, there is also the way and the way of thinking of getting along with your cancer cells and living together with them in the same body.

In that way, from now on — I think we have been doing so up to now as well — I believe we need to live with an ever broader heart.

Looking at the behavior of the people of Japan, the tendency to criticize others immediately and to find fault with them, when you compare with ten, twenty, thirty, forty, and fifty years ago, has been moving more and more in the direction of quickly blaming people, and people's hearts have come to a state with no room in them.

Of course, I think part of the influence is that, with the spread of the internet, ordinary people who could not raise their voices before have gained the opportunity to convey their thoughts to the world.

But a narrow-hearted state is, after all, a mental state that does not accord with God's will. So, as it says in 'the Declaration of Jinrui Soku Kami Nari,' I want to use my consciousness in such a way that I see 'every event that arises on this earth, and every human deed, as an event on the way to the Divine Spark,' watching everything while loving and forgiving it all.

When I talk about this, I feel that our relationship with the natural environment and the way we face it, which came up at the beginning of today's talk, is also an important part where we have to put our consciousness in order.

Complaining when it is hot, complaining when it is cold, complaining when a strong wind blows, complaining when heavy rain falls, complaining when heavy snow falls — that kind of mental state, too, is a way of using consciousness that has strayed from the divine point of view.

When talking with people in the world, if someone says, 'What nasty rain,' I think it is fine to go

along with them casually. But in your heart, you are thinking, 'Thank you, rain.' That way of doing things is fine.

However, just because you yourself are grateful for the rain, forcing gratitude on someone who cannot be grateful for the rain also strays from the way of divine consciousness. So it is also necessary to respond to people who cannot be grateful in a way that suits them.

And while doing so, in our hearts we remain unwavering, living with feelings of gratitude — 'Thank you, rain,' 'Thank you, wind.' And if a great earthquake comes, I hope we will be people who do not forget the feeling of 'Thank you, earth,' 'Thank you, planet Earth.'

When we are careless, we tend to voice complaints, dissatisfaction, and a sense of lack, don't we? So I think it would be good if we go on always, always remembering to use our consciousness in such a way that we nestle into the bosom of our Guardian Spirits.

I am always the only one talking. Is there anyone who would like to speak? It can be an experience or anything at all. It is hard to raise your hand on your own, isn't it? Well then, does anyone have a question?

Just a moment, please. Right now there are 49 people on my screen, and there are about eight more behind them. I will make it so you can turn on your own microphones. That way you can speak even if I cannot see you. All right, you can now turn on your own microphones, so please go ahead.

[Shinoda-san]

My name is Junichi Shinoda, from Fukuoka Prefecture. Thank you for everything. Is it all right to ask a question?

[Saito]

Of course.

[Shinoda-san]

I have been making a point of reciting what you gave us before, 'All is perfect and complete. Nothing is lacking. Perfect Attainment.' I also do 'We thank you, Guardian Spirits. We thank you, Guardian Deities.' For me, 'Thank you, Goi-sensei' is easier to say, so I am doing that now as well.

My question is, as a knack for this — sometimes when I forget, a bit of attachment comes up — what kind of changes of heart generally come up along the way as things change? Right now a considerable sense of security has come up.

(* Even when you forget, your Guardian Spirits are praying in your place!)

One more thing. When I think 'All is perfect and complete. Nothing is lacking. Perfect Attainment,' I cannot feel that way in my physical body, so I am reciting it now with the feeling of God's perspective, as if seen from God: 'Everything in this world is perfect and complete, nothing is lacking, Perfect Attainment.' I raised my hand thinking I would be grateful for any advice.

[Saito]

Well, let me see. I think the question is what kind of changes come about when you spend each day in gratitude like this. This really differs from person to person, so I cannot generalize, and I can only speak from my own experience.

What I experienced included, of course, the sense of security that Shinoda-san just mentioned.

In my case, my starting point was not feeling grateful at all, so I think I started from a considerably lower level than Shinoda-san. I started from saying 'thank you' without feeling grateful, and after about three years there came a stage where I found myself feeling 'how grateful I am' even without particularly thinking 'thank you.' That was the first thing.

Then I had the experience of the objects of my gratitude widening. At first, the object of gratitude was something specific — the Guardian Spirits, say, or a person I disliked — gratitude toward a particular object. But then a feeling of 'how grateful I am' began to arise even toward things I was not particularly conscious of.

Through the accumulation of such small experiences, after many, many, many years, there was something I noticed. It was this: what I am thinking coincides with what my Guardian Spirits are thinking. The words that come naturally out of my mouth coincide with the words of my Guardian Spirits. My actions, my conduct, my behavior coincide with what my Guardian Spirits wish. There came a time when I accumulated small experiences that gave me this conviction.

Actually, that was after 2020. And what I thought, having experienced that state, was the real feeling, 'My Guardian Spirits have truly become completely one with me.'

Going further, since January of this year there has been a Saturday-night special program called 'A Day to Overlook the World with the Divine Eyes,' and just as its title says, the times when I can hold the viewpoint 'So this is what the divine perspective is' have increased. Over the past few years, such times have become clearer and clearer.

I have not yet reached the completed form. I am still on the way. I am the same as Shinoda-san.

In a previous study session, I talked about what happens when you walk from a station about one kilometer from the sea toward the shoreline. The actual place I named in that talk was Zushi Station in Kanagawa Prefecture.

You leave Zushi Station, walk through the shopping street, turn slightly left, and soon there is a road turning right; when you turn right you enter a residential area. From there it is a single straight road out to Zushi Beach on the Pacific Ocean.

As you keep walking along that road, I cannot say exactly at how many hundred meters, but a faint scent of the sea begins to reach you. As you walk further, that scent of the sea becomes clearer and clearer. As you go further still, you catch a glimpse of the sea in the distance. As you get closer, you know clearly, 'The sea is right there.'

As you walk on, National Route 139 runs along the shoreline, and you pass under Route 139 and reach the sand — the shoreline itself.

On the question of what it means to become one with our Guardian Spirits and Guardian Deities, or to achieve the Divine Spark, I often use this analogy.

A person in a place where the sea cannot be seen does not know what the sea is like. But if you walk toward the sea, at first you sense the sea in the form of its scent, and if you walk further, the sea spreads out before your very eyes. That is the state of 'This is the sea,' 'This is divinity,' 'This is the heart that is one with my Guardian Spirits and Guardian Deities.'

There are individual differences, so I cannot generalize, but I believe this is an age in which everyone is about to set sail for the great ocean of divinity, or has already put out to sea. Shinoda-san, is that all right as an answer?

[Shinoda-san]

Thank you very much. Oneness with the Divine Self and the Divine Spark — the state of having completely revived is Oneness with the Divine Self, isn't it? And that state is the state of 'ku' (emptiness), isn't it? Does it mean a state like Goi-sensei's?

[Saito]

I think you can understand the difference in words as a difference in the position from which the state is viewed. For example, I think the phrase 'attaining enlightenment' is the same. In that sense, the 'Divine Spark' is the same, and 'Oneness with the Divine Self' is the same. But because the angle of viewing is different, they are expressed in different words.

[Shinoda-san]

Thank you very much. I will keep working at it. Thank you in advance. Just one more thing. In the end, Goi-sensei said, I believe, that when one comes into Oneness with the Divine Self, spiritual power — that is, the state of enlightenment and spiritual abilities — are two different things.

There may be people who are enlightened but have no spiritual power, and so on — is it all right to think of it that way? Spiritual abilities are something given, not something to seek for oneself, is that right?

[Saito]

I think that is right. The reason is that among the things Goi-sensei spoke of — probably not to the general membership, but to Hideo Saito, who was right beside him — he used the Buddhist teaching of the six supernatural powers (rokujinzu) as an illustration: seeing what cannot be seen, hearing sounds that cannot be heard, walking on water, and so on. Beyond such abilities, as the very highest power, Goi-sensei taught Hideo Saito the term 'Rojintsu.'

This Rojintsu is the state of living with God's heart as one's own heart, in which one's very self has become completely one with God. The words one speaks naturally are the words of God; the deeds one does naturally are deeds in accord with God's will. Goi-sensei explained to Hideo Saito that this is the state in which the very highest power has manifested.

Why did Goi-sensei tell this to Hideo Saito? It seems there were several people around him with tremendous spiritual abilities — Masao Murata, and perhaps someone named Katsuyama, I do

not know for sure. Hideo Saito was working together with those people, and since no such power came out in him at all, he consulted Goi-sensei. And Goi-sensei said, 'You don't need any of that.' He first removed the attachment to such things from Hideo Saito's heart, and later gave him spiritual abilities.

[Shinoda-san]

I understand. That was very helpful. I am sorry for taking up your time. Thank you all very much. I am grateful.

[Saito]

If any of you, too, find that Oneness with the Divine Self, attaining enlightenment, or the Divine Spark inevitably seem linked in your mind with spiritual abilities or supernatural powers, then as long as you hold the understanding, as Shinoda-san just said, that such powers are 'something given, not something to wish for,' I believe we will never stray onto a wrong path. Then we can walk with dignity right down the middle of the great road that Goi-sensei left for us.

It does not matter if you cannot see spiritually. It does not matter if you cannot hear. But I believe we have now come to the stage of deepening the awareness that 'what I think is one with my Guardian Spirits and Guardian Deities; the words I speak are one with my Guardian Spirits and Guardian Deities; and the deeds I perform and express are one with my Guardian Spirits and Guardian Deities.'

Of course, some of you may feel that you cannot be aware of this. But there is also the way of living of the myokonin — the enlightened old country grandfathers and grandmothers of the Shin school of Buddhism in former times — so it is not the case that you are no good just because you cannot be clearly aware of it.

However, once you become able to be aware of it, the power of divinity appears ever more clearly and strongly in your thoughts, words, and deeds.

Without saying to others, 'Right now I am exercising supernatural power,' just by looking you give divine energy through the power of your eyes; just by speaking you emit the breath of divinity. The Great Deity Goi is guiding us so that we naturally come to be in such a state.

As for that guidance, of course there are times when it comes from Goi-sensei directly, but the everyday guidance is handled by our Guardian Spirits and Guardian Deities. The Guardian Spirits and Guardian Deities are like the individual cells within the great halo of light that is the Great Deity Goi. Goi-sensei and the Guardian Spirits and Guardian Deities are not separate. They are one.

Such workings of the deities come forth from the Great Deity Goi — for example, the Guardian Spirits in charge of Masaharu SAITO, the Guardian Spirits in charge of Ikue KOGA, and so on. If you observe the Guardian Spirits and Guardian Deities deeply, everything leads to the Great Deity Goi.

Therefore, simply by practicing living without anxiety or fear whatever happens, thinking 'how grateful I am, how grateful I am' whether anything happens or not, when something does happen, infinite wisdom will well up — 'this is what to do,' 'let's do this.' And with it we help the

people around us. We save them.

Ordinarily we are ordinary uncles and aunts, ordinary grandfathers and grandmothers, with nothing special about us. But when something happens, superhuman power is activated in us. Doing the work of two, three, or four people with one body is a piece of cake. Depending on the person, there will come a time to act with the power of five or ten people.

Someone who thinks 'I can't walk' may become able to walk. Even when you think 'What shall I do, I can't get any food,' you become able to live. To someone who is starving beyond endurance, you may give the food you have. You may teach them, 'To keep from feeling hungry, you do it like this.' You may take a rice ball out of thin air and feed them.

All of that, our Guardian Spirits and Guardian Deities will do skillfully, using our bodies. So the best thing is not to think 'What shall I do? Let's do this' with the physical head, out of self-centered thought.

We have been told for decades to 'live a life of leaving everything to God' and 'live a life of total entrustment,' and when we truly leave everything to them (total entrustment), the 'we' who work as one with our Guardian Spirits and Guardian Deities appear right here. Even now, as you listen to this talk, there are some of you who have already become like that, aren't there?

It may be embarrassing to nod and say 'Yes,' but feeling embarrassed is also the ego (the self), so in truth you do not need the thought of embarrassment either...

The thought of 'I, my, by me, to me' — 'me, me, me, me' — is something unnecessary; that is what I am always told from deep within.

The more that unnecessary thing falls away, the more we let it go... to put it another way, the more we surrender to our Guardian Spirits, the more we let them turn it into a fading-away form, the more we can live as beings who express the words, thoughts, and deeds of God Itself, perfectly one with our Guardian Spirits and Guardian Deities.

I think it would be wonderful if everyone attending this study session could truly come into Oneness with the Divine Self within these one or two years, and could work as embodiments and extensions of Goi-sensei — little Goi-senseis, mini Goi-senseis — at times when such help is truly needed. So I ask for your cooperation.

Now, finally, I would like to do the Divine Spark IN once and bring this to a close.

< Divine Spark IN, once >

Thank you very much. There is one thing I may not have mentioned in my talk earlier, so let me add it.

About Rojintsu among the six supernatural powers, there is a very important point in what Goi-sensei said.

He said, 'Steadily, steadily continuing "the Prayer for World Peace in the fading-away form" is the very shortest path to developing Rojintsu, the highest power.'

So it is not a matter of us doing something new at this late stage. What we aim for is 'to perfect what we have been continuing to do.'

With this, today's study session comes to an end. The next session will be 'Saturday, September 19.' Now I will turn on everyone's microphones. Thank you very much.

< Bye-Bye Time >

Thank you very much. Thank you very much. With this, today's study session comes to an end. Thank you very much.

That's all.