

Honesty

Oyasama took three unhulled grains of rice in Her hand and then placed them one at a time in the palm of Izo Iburi's hand, saying:

"This is early rising, this is honesty and this is work."

Anecdotes of Oyasama, no. 29

Let us think about honesty. The importance of honesty is easy to understand even for children. Yet it is not easy to be always honest even for adults. Or is it perhaps more difficult for adults than for children?

There may be times when we are laughed at after saying something true as opposed to telling a lie. It may sometimes seem as if being honest needlessly puts us at a disadvantage. It takes considerable courage and strength to be consistently honest.



Nonetheless, a long-range perspective should convince us that honesty is an important aspect of living a joyous life. Life can become stifling if a lie is brought in. It will hinder a true feeling of joy and happiness. People lie in order to hide something that is inconvenient to them, yet lying can compound the situation.

In contrast, a life without a lie, a life of honesty, allows for a greater sense of freedom. It is a life in which joy arises spontaneously.

Oyasama's teachings may seem disappointingly simple if we only scratch the surface. Yet each word is actually filled with the truth about this world and about humankind. If we stop to savor the teachings deeply, we can realize the abundance of nourishment they contain.

We can just picture Oyasama putting the three grains, one by one, in Izo's palm and saying gently: "Hold on to them firmly. You must try not to lose sight of them." We can also imagine Izo accepting them in humble reverence. The image of the scene warms our heart.

