

How does chanting work.

Chanting, or as I like to call it, active meditation, is very effective in the goals of meditation. I should say that this is true for meditation with the goal of awakening the Buddha mind as opposed to simple relaxation or quietude is most affected here. The reason is that in awakening or enlightenment training, the objective is to become aware of the mind's constant state of agitation and to learn to intercept its stream of thoughts, individuate their kind and eventually to subdue those thoughts to gain control over one's tendencies. When using a mantra, it is important to achieve these thought goals in three ways that provide an easier path to that state where your concentration is least distracted and becomes so focused as to be in a trance-like state. First the mantra of NaMuMyoHoRenGeKyo achieves this state quickly by providing a strong and focused distraction of repetition orally and physically. That repetition works best to a steady rhythm, and that mental as well as physical commitment can bring focus and a trance state very quickly. Secondly, in Nichiren or Lotus Sutra Buddhism, the goal of enlightenment is an awakening of the Buddha mind for as long as possible while in this life. To do this, the exhortation from Shakyamuni to study is primary. With study comes awareness of the teachings 5 periods of training and development to deepen understanding of the fundamentals of awakening and practice. These 5 periods or path to understanding are represented in the 5 characters of Myo, Ho, Ren, Ge, Kyo. As the student deepens understanding of these teachings, the mantra of repeating those characters takes on continuous development and mental focus. So the mind of thoughts is usurped as earthly mundane streams of thoughts are subdued by the trance-like state of chanting. Thirdly, our very influential vision consciousness is a constant source of distraction, and while focused on the Gohonzon mandala, the concepts of our fundamental innate Buddha state represented in calligraphic form provides a conceptual "mirror" to reflect our Buddha mind of experience.

The mantra of NaMuMyoHoRenGeKyo then becomes an immersion into the Buddha state itself, and the state of awakening can be experienced during the chanting. To maintain this state after chanting ceases becomes the goal of the practice.

Get your own authentic digitized Nichiren inscribed final Gohonzon (the Gohonzon Nichiren was buried with) at <https://www.cafepress.com/gohonzon>