

# The Proper Directions and Practical Ways for Character Education in the Korean Elementary School

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The purpose of this paper is to develop the proper directions and practical ways for Character Education in the Elementary School. To this end, this paper presents an accurate definition of Character Education so as not to create confusion in using and understanding the term, analyses the present obstructive causes of Character Education practice in our elementary schools, and suggests effective strategies for Character Education that are both practical and suitable. To develop a good character, a person has to try hard for his or her lifetime, and the circumstance he survives also has to be moral to contribute to his moral life. Schools can play a central role in this process of exertion because schools in modern society are poised to be the backbone in Character Education and thus need to propel it with apparent purpose, and effective strategies. An organic cooperation system is also needed because raising good character cannot be completed with one single element of character. It is connected with both the formal curriculum and informal curriculum. A harmonized partnership of school-home-community is urgently needed. It is the teacher who takes the very core role in this process.

## Introduction

How can we guide children through life in such a way that they will develop into adults with good moral characters capable of leading mature lives both personally and socially? This is one of the major questions facing educators involved in character education (hereafter referred to as CE) today. In recent history, most countries including Korea have focused on character education policies and practices in schools. In general, these diverse countries have the same stated purposes for CE. However, there are variations from country to country in the meaning of CE according to the context in which it is used, its core contents, and

the methods used to assess it. Since the 1990's, the United States has become known as one of the leading countries practicing CE. The rise of CE in American schools stemmed from the realization that there must not be barriers to the development of students' moral character, because such barriers only have the opposite effect: the decay and deterioration of moral development as opposed to the nurturing and strengthening of it. Consequently, American educators have pursued effective ways of teaching children good values through systematic cooperation between the school, home and community. As a result of this systematic approach, the positive effects of CE are evident.

In Korea, on May 31st, 1995, the concept of CE was made public via a written report, "The Agenda of Education Reform for the Establishment of New Educational System". It was produced by an "Ad Hoc Committee of Education Reform" and basically states that education needs to change in such a way that it positively enhances the development of a sound moral character and creativeness in students. To this end, "Practical CE" needs to be strengthened throughout all

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educational activities in the school.

At this point one might ask why the development of students' character has become one of the most important issues in education today. Essentially, CE has become such a prominent issue in education because it has become obvious that our current educational system is not helping our students develop sound moral characters. Problems such as peer violence, stealing, cheating, lying, problems with interpersonal relationships, and many other kinds of unethical behavior clearly indicate that CE in its current form is not playing the same fundamental role as it appears to have done over the past fifty years. The fact that students today are smarter than students of the past but engage in a lot more unethical behavior is further evidence to support the claim that current CE in schools has not been very effective in helping students develop a sound moral character.

Through CE programs in schools, we must deal with "the lack of good character in children" actively rather than passively. Thus, the purpose of the present discussion is to help move us toward effective strategies for CE in the elementary school. To this end, this paper presents an accurate definition of CE, and outlines effective strategies for CE that are both practical and suitable.

### CE in the Elementary School, How Can We Understand It Better?

Although the concept of CE had been around in Korea for many years, it wasn't until 1995 when an "Ad Hoc Committee of Education Reform" introduced the plan of "Reinforcement Practicable CE" that the term "Character Education" became widely known and part of active discussion. Shortly after being introduced to the public in 1995, CE programs were started in every school throughout the country. Unfortunately, these programs have not been effective for a variety of reasons. First, although CE programs have been in effect for the past five years, there still is not a clear understanding among educators as to what actually CE is. This situation is largely due to the fact that CE wasn't clearly defined when it was first put into effect. The conceptual chaos that ensued as a result has hindered the effectiveness of CE programs. The fact that CE programs were introduced to elementary schools on

a fragmented and sporadic basis has also played a role in the ineffectiveness of such programs because the lack of continuity and substance in the programs essentially caused them to be a matter of show. As a result, educators made many mistakes and those mistakes led the educators themselves to develop skeptical attitudes towards CE.

The reasons above can be seen from various perspectives. For example, from one point of view, confusion surrounding the meaning of CE was caused by an excessively open attitude towards CE and its assessment, "No Shortcut to CE". From another perspective, the confusion was because the Board of Educational Reformation didn't clearly define CE or its goals as it was introduced - "Each class of school is asked to enforce systematic CE according to one's level compatible with one's development." Due to the obscurity of this statement, the implementation of CE in elementary schools was destined to suffer problems.

Thus, at this point, it is necessary to develop a clear and precise definition of CE. The term "humanity", when used to describe an individual, refers to one's nature, which is considered as the essential qualities or properties that make up one's personality and character. If we define humanity (human nature) as one's personality, it means the personal quality that makes a person act differently from others. Therefore, at this point, some may conclude that CE is the same as personality education because personality means "one's style concerned with thinking, sentiment, and conduct which lasts through all the time and situations throughout one's life". In general, personality education means helping students develop an adjustable attitude toward their environment and personal relationships, and it means correcting an "irregular" personality into a "regular" personality (Seo Myung Won et al., 1989). However, even if educating students in personality effectively helps to achieve the purpose of CE in some respects, personality education can't be considered as totally equal to CE. We can see this by looking at someone who is known as a man of good personality. This person may have a great personality, but that doesn't necessarily mean that he is above engaging in moral-behavior or demonstrating good attitudes. From the point of view of CE, such a person would be a work-in-progress toward being a man of character.

From a second perspective, CE is said to be mind education because it includes the meaning of mind or heart. Therefore, students have usually been taught to

change their mental framework so that it is warm-hearted and tolerant through experiencing active programs for it by themselves (Korea Educational Society, 1997:16). Until now, education in Korea hasn't been concerned with the emotional aspects of educational development like motivation, attitude, interest, value, emotion, personality, and heart. Consequently, students often are not in harmony with each other and have difficulty communicating well in a social community. Recently, different types of programs have been developed for mind or heart education in connection with CE. Be that as it may, however, mind or heart education alone cannot cover all aspects of CE.

A third position would be to consider that, since human nature in part refers to those qualities of humankind that focus on morality, its education could be called CE. We can say that character is a word that qualifies a human being because it shows the value of 'what he or she is' and expresses virtue in people. Actually, we usually use the "character" to refer to the tendency to act in ways that are consistent with what one understands to be morally right. Character, then, includes the integration of social norms and moral values with the value-neutral aspects of personality to form a personal system with commitment and focus upon moral virtues and ethical behavior. Therefore, CE means all educational acts for fostering the ethical heart by nature, with character building as its main object. As before, if we look at a specific aspect of a man of character, morality from the view of human nature is considered the same as character. Hence, we can conclude that CE is one of many aspects of moral education.

Fourth, if we think of character as a process of socialization of social rules and values, CE can be seen in the following way. "A course that children try to regulate their behavior suitable for particular types of cultural situations and are eager to be internally affected by its values, belief systems, and types of behavior on their thinking and acting (Lee Won Hui et al., 1999, pp. 105-106)".

As shown above, character includes a variety of meanings. The meaning of CE is dependent on how it is defined. How CE is defined will easily cause misunderstanding if the definition is too narrow and not considered from various points of view. Hence, to understand CE exactly, we have to consider CE as central to personality education, mind (heart) education, moral (ethics) education, and socialization.

The current situation in Korea is that CE is regarded as part of Moral Subject Education (hereafter referred to as MSE). This is natural because the purpose of CE is the same as that of MSE, which is to pursue helping students to develop high levels of moral knowledge, and moral emotion, to live upon the good or rightness which one knows. This being the case, why has so much attention been devoted recently to developing and strengthening of practical CE? Largely, it is because of a desire to find suitable strategies for practical CE beyond self-examination. This doesn't mean, however, that MSE in school is useless or not necessary because if we disregard its role and values, we surely can't achieve the goal of CE. In other words, we are in need of particular and original methods of MSE that will motivate students to move from habitual attitudes towards moral virtue.

CE, then, refers to educational activities that cause students to internalize fundamental living habits and virtues such as honesty, reverence for parents, sincerity, respect for oneself and others, and a sense of community. In view of this content, CE refers to the development of a positive and strong moral character. As we see from a review of both contents and methods, CE takes on various forms including extra CE programs, regular instruction, special education, modeling and guidance, as well as the creation of class and school moral climate and management (Jo Nan Sim, 2000, p. 114). Of course, we can achieve the purpose of MSE too, when it covers various curriculum activities and extra-curriculum activities, cooperative activities with home and local community. MSE focuses on the moral subject class itself while CE focuses on various environments in which moral activities happen. In this way, CE supports MSE because CE provides opportunities to experience moral situations practically, which the moral subject class cannot provide, and this in turn gives students the opportunity to try to practice and to utilize various methods of MSE right then and there. Hence, if both CE and MSE complement each other in such a way that moral education or MSE is included, as part of the core contents and methods for CE, the goals of CE will be realized.

In this paper, the concept of character and CE which I advance is as follows; Character, a kind of destiny, is the manifestation of who he or she fundamentally is. In other words, it represents the sum total of a person's actions in the past and is a predictor of actions in the

future. CE is a comprehensive and practical approach in enhancing and improving the moral life of children. It is the long term process of helping children develop knowing, caring about, and acting upon core ethical values. To this end, we must raise our children in the right way and train them in the right habits. In the moral class of the elementary school, CE especially means the direct and intentional teaching of ethical reasoning, the nurturing of moral emotions, and the encouragement of, and insistence upon, moral action.

### The Present Condition and Obstacles to Implementing CE in the Elementary School

It can't reasonably be said that CE in the Korean education system has not contributed to the development of students' character until now. It also cannot be said that nothing has been done regarding CE in Korean elementary schools. When one looks at the current state of CE in the Korean education system, however, it's easy to see that a more effective system of practical CE is needed. Students today, and people in general, are being faced with more moral behavior problems - both in quantity and degree of seriousness. This has happened because in the past CE was not implemented very well. Poor implementation led to results that were not as good as expected. There are several reasons for the problems surrounding CE.

1. In Korea, CE hasn't been managed well because educational policy has always been geared towards students doing well on S. A. T's (Scholastic Aptitude Tests). It has been this way for a long time and elementary education has not gone unaffected. Even in elementary schools the atmosphere is such that, students are always in competition to get high grades so that they can attend a famous, middle school, high school and then university. It is impossible to achieve true education and to raise desirable human beings in this situation because there is no time or importance given for self-realization and character development. If a student gets a high score on tests, he or she is easily forgiven for inappropriate behavior such as lying, rudeness, demonstrating narrow mindedness towards others or simply breaking rules. Parents and school officials consistently urge students to greater efforts but only so far as it helps them to get higher scores.

Unfortunately, such excessive competition in education, particularly at the elementary school level, will seriously inhibit the positive development of their moral character.

2. Our education has shown disdain towards CE. While educators talk about the necessity of CE, the fact is that much of this is just idle talk. There is very little will or desire to put their words into effect. Additionally, most schools were forced to enact CE programs by the Ministry of Education so spontaneously that the management of it disguised its purpose. As a result, it turned out that the implementation of CE was more about exhibition than about the positive development of students' moral character. Here are some examples that support this claim.

"What makes teachers participate in CE? Nothing except the opportunity for promotion! Unfortunately, after a demonstration or publication they forget about it. As a result, little if anything is gained."

"Current CE programs, imitated and mixed with already used programs, are applied. Surely, it is impossible to develop a creative program of one's own making according to a specialty at each school."

"It has been made by just a small group of teachers and the principal and a vice master of a school so far. Most teachers were not asked to participate in the development of the program. We were just told to do this, do that, plan here, and practice there. As a result teachers don't want to participate voluntarily. Some teachers had to create false reports."

"To be excessively attached to practicable CE lets teachers focus on developing a good heart in the misunderstanding of that, to foster desirable personality and heart comes to develop a great character. On the other hand, teachers are asked to do the moral subject class normally to help CE."

3. Because the elementary school teachers do not have a clear understanding of CE, they easily run into trouble when teaching it. Hence, teachers tend to pay attention to other work that allows them to see the results of their efforts. Because the rewards of their effort in teaching CE are not immediately obvious, teachers tend not to invest effort in it. The head master of the school plays a big part in the success or failure of CE in schools because no matter how hard teachers work to plan creative ideas for CE if he doesn't support

it, it's impossible to succeed. In this regard, the head master's role in the development of CE programs is more important than the teacher's role.

4. Regular curriculum and extra-curriculum also influence the visible success or failure of CE. Until recently, these two have not cooperated with each other. In fact, they are treated separately. MSE is one curriculum that has an important role in CE in that it is directly connected to whether it succeeds or fails. Even though this is true, MSE is regarded as an indifferent subject relative to other intellectual subjects because there is a lack of faith in it. One cannot realistically expect to see tangible results from a one-hour moral subject class held once a week. In addition, MSE has been run with little or no effect because there is little understanding of the characteristics and methods of the moral subject class. Therefore, it is very difficult for students to get chances to learn and develop the sound judgment ability for moral behavior and moral emotion. It is widely believed that the MSE is too difficult to prepare for a class or that it isn't that important. Consequently, it's often taught haphazardly and isn't available to students willing to take time to pursue it through classes. Guidance of extra classes is the only road for student's to express what they have learned from all curriculums, as well as their understanding of values and rules and motives for practicing. However, the amount of extra administration work for teachers usually prevents this.

5. The non-supportive surroundings or climate of a school is also one of the reasons CE has not been as successful as expected.

First, home education in Korea does exactly the opposite of what is expected. Korean parents overact while taking care of their children and seem to misunderstand true love for their kids. True love is not giving material satisfaction to children or overlooking their inappropriate behavior because they think their own children are too precious to scold. When parents do not scold their children, the children come to think only of themselves in all types of life situations and act selfishly. The thought that "I'm the best" usually prevents children from being kind and respectful to others and this is potentially dangerous behavior. Parents have a responsibility to help their children distinguish between what they should do and what they shouldn't do from childhood. Today's problem for Korean families is not a shortage of affection but rather excessive or

deviant love towards their kids. "Overuse of medicine is poisonous." This tells us that over caring for our children could be more dangerous than carelessness with respect to the educational development of our children. Parents are asked that they should remember that they are the first teacher their children meet. So care must be taken in the way they are trained (Lee, In-Jae, 2000, pp. 134-135).

How about are our social situations? Egoism for individual or group, slight regard for human life, illegal deeds, absurdity, violent and corruptive dilettantism of the mass-media, have all spread to adults and adolescence. People have increasingly more difficulty distinguishing between right and wrong. The generally accepted idea is that the standard between justice and injustice is a "yes" or "no" according to some monetary profit. People just think about whatever is good for money. A matter of human conscience, moral shame, or reprimand for a fault can't act their roles by themselves in front of shallow commercialism, materialism, unlimited hedonism, decadence, dreaming of success. We can't expect any substantial effects from CE in school if people don't sincerely follow rules that are respected in society. When students feel satisfied with reactions to practicing what they learned about morality in real life, they feel good and want to continue to act positively in that kind of righteous and democratic community. This is why CE in school is proportional to the moral spirit of its society.

## Directions and Practical Ways for CE in the Elementary School

### *The Goal of CE*

What is the appropriate right goal to pursue for CE in the elementary school? No one can deny that it is to foster the good character of children. As an integrated character education emphasizes, the one who has good character is a person possessing the moral virtues rather than the virtues themselves as abstract qualities, and who acts on the basis of them. A person of good character is someone who attends to the moral implications of actions and acts in accordance with what is moral in all but the most extreme of circumstance (L. Nucci, 2000). In other words, we can say a person of good character is the "morally mature person". A

"morally mature person" is the whole person that has equal development in moral judgment, moral emotion, and moral behavior. It means that a "morally mature person" is correctly able to understand and judge what is the right thing or value and signifies this understanding with enthusiasm by putting the right principles into practice. Because being a good person is more than a matter of understanding what is morally right.

The concept of a "morally mature person" is in accordance with the concept of T. Lickona's "a good character". According to him, character is composed of active value, and it is constituted by values that can be seen through one's behavior. If one value became a virtue, - a reliable inner inclination that acts to the situation in a moral way - then his character can be developed (T. Lickona, 1991, p. 50). In conclusion, a good character is constructed of moral knowing, moral feeling, and moral behavior that are co-related with one another. Moral knowing means to know the right precisely (habit of mind). Moral feeling means to desire the good, or to value the good (habit of heart). Moral behavior means to act by the good (habit of behavior). These three things are really necessary means to lead a moral life, and eventually it allows a

person to be mature. Lickona said, "CE in elementary school education has to be intended, proactive education to develop good character", and he put an emphasis on a comprehensive approach.

To achieve the success of CE in elementary school, we have to realize that good character is not constructed by just one element. At least, we must consider the fact that good character is composed of the following three elements: moral knowing, moral feeling, and moral behavior all acting in harmony. Thus, CE in elementary schools needs to properly understand the framework for the integrated development of these three things, and on the basis of it, it has to be planned precisely, equipped carefully, and performed continuously.

Then, what do we have to consider in order to foster good character (which is already mentioned as a goal of CE)? Maybe it is to grasp the natural tendencies of CE, confirm the organic cooperation of it, practice it continuously, and reinforce activity with feedback of adequate evaluation.

*The Proper Direction of CE*

This figure described above indicates the components

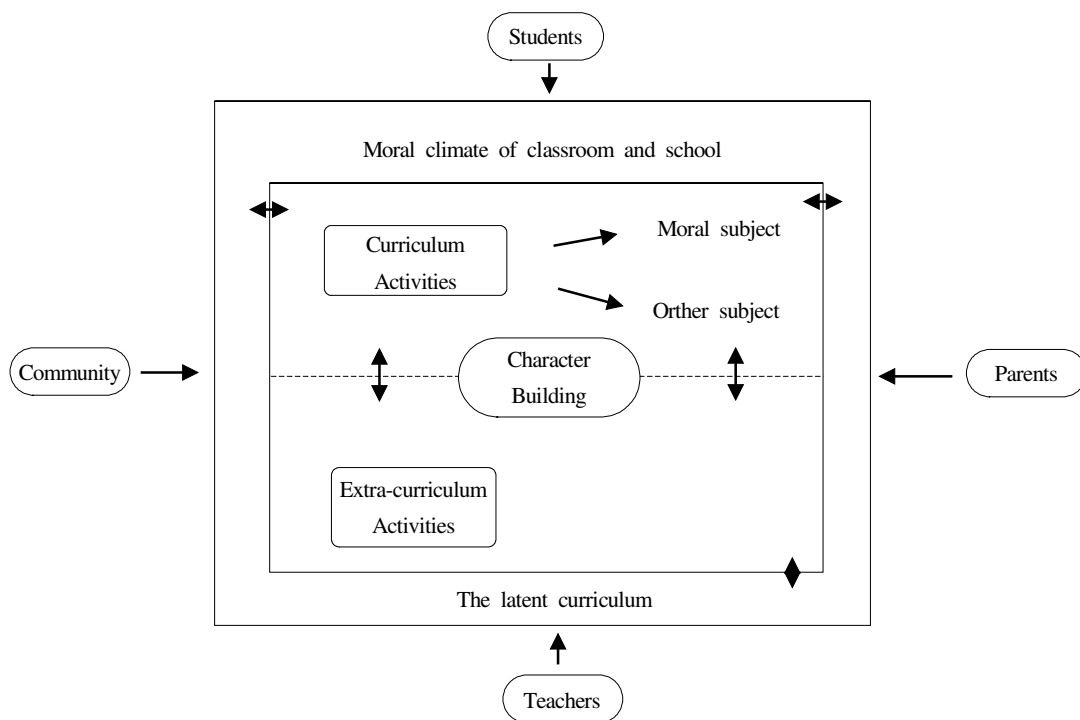


Figure: The Proper Directions of CE in the Elementary School

of a comprehensive CE framework. It implies that those who are involved in CE must take into consideration these components of this frame in order to enhance moral virtues and moral behaviors. Next I will elucidate some ideas for promoting the effects of CE in the elementary school site.

#### *a. CE by moral subject education*

The way that CE is implemented varies slightly between countries. In Korea it is implemented by curriculum. "CE by Moral Subject Education (hereafter referred to as MSE)" means that we have an independent and special subject in the school's formal education activities, has mutual feedback between teacher and students, and leads the students to live a moral life deliberately. In the sixth revised curriculum, "Proper Life" is in first to second grade, and "Moral Education" is in third to sixth grade. In the seventh revised curriculum, "Proper Life" is in first to second grade and "Moral Education" is in third to tenth grade. It is generally known that all of this is a core-subject designed to help CE in elementary school. On the basis of the seventh revised curriculum, we can summarize the features and the characteristics of MSE as follows (Department of Education, 1997, pp.176-206). Moral Education, a required subject for elementary school students is intended to help students to understand the roles and responsibilities as a member of Korean society and, to learn the core moral norms and various forms of etiquette that Koreans should observe in order to lead a desirable life. This subject has an emphasis on the internalization of moral norms and values that are considered as not only universal values across cultures, but also specific ones in our society. Besides, it has an emphasis on the development of value-judgment capacities that are necessary for a rational solution of moral problems in contemporary social life.

CE by MSE aims to foster the fundamental ability of virtuous man by the moral subject class (the course of moral study). Thus CE by MSE is effective when the course of moral study developed is interesting and meaningful. For this, a deep understanding of the characteristics of MSE, its core principles and methods to access to it have to be preceded. The fundamental object of MSE in the elementary school is to foster a virtuous man who is able to judge and make appropriate choices in the face of moral problems well, and to

behave rightly. Thus, to develop sound morality or good character as a good citizen in the long run, CE has to teach fundamental living habits, manners of life, and basic moral etiquette etc. To this end, it is beneficial to use integrated or comprehensive CE and a virtue-oriented approach to organically harmonize cognitive, affective, and conductive parts of morality. This approach also reinforces directive practice and activity, active participation, and experience-oriented teaching-learning methods by maximizing the student's interest and concern. It is made to expand beyond the superficial understanding of ethical standards, or education based on cramming common knowledge. It positively uses practice and activity and experience-oriented teaching methods to change moral behavior. Therefore, according to the seventh revised curriculum, the course of moral study has been developed so as to foster students moral values, to motivate them emotionally to have interest, enthusiasm, devotion, and to behave in an appropriate fashion with strong conviction. On the whole, one main value or core moral norm has to be taught based on three dimensions - cognitive, affective, and conductive. These three dimensions must then be integrated organically in harmony with each other.

It is true that the fruit of "CE by MSE" in Korea was suspected, but it is merit of CE in Korea that the course of moral study is established in an independent curriculum, because it is strongly related with our educational and cultural background, and it is an adequate form of education in Korea's situation (Jo Nan-Sim, 1999, p. 131). To put it concretely, "CE by MSE" means to teach the moral textbook. In Korea's contemporary moral textbook, the concept of moral behavior is spotlighted as a whole accumulation of a human being's life, and also the standard of virtuous man that everyone pursues is presented. "CE by MSE" primarily teaches moral concepts and how to apply them into practical life. Its object is to utilize the main concepts, which are used in ethics, and to lead the student to understand moral behaviors as a whole. Thus, although the ultimate object of MSE is to put the value and the rule that is taught in courses of moral study or other classes into practice, it basically focuses on the understanding of the moral meaning of behavior (Lim Byung-Duck et al., 1998, p. 30). This standpoint regards keeping and cultivating moral character as one part of ethical thinking and presents the right direction to becoming a mature man.

Then what do we have to teach in a course of moral study to get over the immorality and non-existence of character that can easily be seen among elementary school students?

First, we have to help students understand their reasonability to lead an ethical and desirable life. Human beings have both reason and emotion. Although they choose to live a valuable life by rational decision sometimes they behave worse than animals from time to time by indulging in many kinds of impulses and desires. This is called the limitation and fate of humans and at some point, is inevitable that ethics and morality cannot overcome the limitation of mankind to live a humane life. Thus ethics and morality in man is not an option that can be observed or not by personal choice, but rather is a natural responsibility essential for leading a humane life. Recently, teenagers have been inclined to decide observance of ethical norms according to their interest. If moral behavior is not advantageous to their happiness or profit, they do not think it is something that they have to follow. The worst thing is, they regard moral behavior as something that will work against their profit. Is this true? We can easily agree with it if we exaggerate the part of experience, just like making a mountain out of a molehill. However, if you look over the history of human life, of course there is no rule without an exception. You will find that the people who lived ethical lives were the ones who were happy, and the ones who realized their own ideals. If one considers an immoral life to be one of happiness, it must be a prejudice, or perhaps of placing rare exceptions into general principles. Through CE in school, especially the course of moral study, we have to teach teenagers this.

Second, we have to educate them to have the ability to control their desires. Although human desires are sometimes negative in nature, they sometimes go ahead with life. Even though humans have uncountable desires, they cannot all be satisfied sufficiently, and some desires are better left unsatisfied. To enrich human life, a matter to be desired has to be satisfied, and also an undesirable matter has to be controlled and restricted. The lack of good character in teenagers usually happens when they cannot control their desires. What kinds of desire to have, and how to satisfy them is a very important matter because immoral behavior originates in the conflict between rules (duty) and desires (impulse). So, how should we deal with the conflict between rules and desires? This is a matter that we have to

deal with carefully in the course of a school's moral study. It is important to make moral behavior habitual by behaving appropriately on a continual basis. Thus, as cognition develops, autonomous faith has to be supported through habitual moral behavior, to live an ethical life.

#### *b. CE by other curricula*

The key point of the school's CE is accomplished by the course of moral study that is part of the core curriculum in Korea. However, this alone is not sufficient to attain the ultimate goal of CE. Organic cooperation has to be prepared in such a way that it supports and repeats the contents of MSE. All subjects in school are somewhat related with CE, so if the teacher believes that CE only takes place during the course of moral study, he is narrow-minded. The speed and quality of character development are diversified according to a consistent and continuous emphasis and conduct. Thus, even though we have to try to achieve the object of other subjects, we have to implement the contents or activity of its class in such a way that it reinforces values and rules that are emphasized in MSE.

#### *c. CE by extra curriculum*

Values and rules that are known by the course of moral study and other curricula have to be realized and experienced naturally in a person's normal life. No matter how much knowledge is gained about moral values and rules, no matter how much we are impressed or touched, no matter how much one will get after class, it is useless when it is not conducted in everyday life. The ultimate goal of CE does not exist in knowing or judging, but rather in acting, so it is vitally important that values and rules that are fostered by curriculum be revealed in everything such as lunch time, break time, coming to school or going home, training activity, public service, student council, club activity and not just regular class. The reason to put such importance on extra curriculum and latent curriculum (humane curriculum) in school's CE is two-fold: On the one hand, it is the significant way to behave and to experience the value which is learned in class, especially a course of moral study. On the other hand, the experience and atmosphere of the extra curriculum and

potential curriculum play an important role in fostering student's character.

*d. Extension of CE by cooperation with the home and the society*

CE in school has to set up a system of cooperation that is organically co-related with the home and society. The main reason for this is that student's formation of character is evenly influenced by life at home, life at school, and life in the community. Another reason is because students give up easily if the contents of learning do not coincide with the existing values or rules of community and home. When the values and the rules that are learned in school support and corresponded with those in homes and communities, they are internalized in students' long-term behavior and consciousness. Thus, for the success of the school's CE, we have to utilize home and local community as a significant cooperator in CE.

### Ways of Practice for the Effective CE

*a. It can be more effective when it is carried out by a "committee of CE", organization, which is responsible to the school's CE.*

This committee is obliged to settle the long term and mid-term plan of CE, to develop concrete ways of practice, and implementation. For instance, establishing a project which is aimed at cultivating a student's moral and responsible behavior, setting up a care giving community which can be a good way to mold student's character, and offering opportunities to experience moral values by cooperation between home and local community. This kind of committee can take various roles according to projects they want to carry out. In such a committee, it is not only teachers who brainstorm to gather the wisdom necessary for the effective establishment and practice of CE, but also students, the school principal, the educational leader in the region, and members of the community.

This committee has to try and set up a system of accommodation and cooperation for CE by the regular evaluation of CE. They have to try to achieve better results in the feedback of object, process, and methods

of CE. For satisfactory results in evaluation, organic cooperation is needed from all the people who are responsible for CE. Evaluation has to be fulfilled under an elaborate plan, and has to be integrated with everyone concerned with CE. If needed, they can establish a "committee of evaluation" separately under the "committee of CE". Then what do we have to do and how do we evaluate CE? As a whole, it must consider the following matters for evaluation (T. Licking, 1996; Lee In-Jade, 1998, p. 41).

- \* Does the school have a sufficient and relevant environment for CE? (Is the school a care-giving or just/moral community?)
- \* Evaluation of faculty members as character educators. (Does the staff of the school have a high sense of calling for CE? Do they understand the basic principles and practices of CE?)
- \* Degree of practice of student's good behavior. Various materials related with students should be evaluated based on the materials of authentic evaluation e.g., do the students understand and appreciate core ethical value right? Do they act upon their faith?)

*b. CE has to be propelled with a strong leadership.*

Leaders such as the minister of education, a superintendent of educational affairs, a government school inspector, principals, and so on must be committed to CE to ensure that it's not a matter of show in schools. Teachers' and faculty members' passion and spontaneous participation also have to be added to ensure the success of any CE program. After all, CE is not a trivial thing that can be done by only one individual, but rather it is a matter of course that requires the positive aid and response of parents and local communities.

*c. More than anything else, the most important character educator is a teacher.*

Students are willing to decide their faith and behavior by the behavior of the teacher, and atmosphere of school rather than by the lecture of a teacher, or a textbook. If the teacher and the student associate with each other intimately, and the teacher demonstrates good moral behavior repeatedly, the effect of CE increases. If

the teacher and the student share a personal rapport in a positive atmosphere, the result of CE will be affirmative. Teachers have to back up their words with actions because if they don't, their words will be hollow and devoid of meaning to the students. Consequently, students' moral development will not be affected in a positive way. Furthermore, it will cause students to lose respect and trust for their teacher. There is a saying that "Education can't surpass the quality of teacher" and "the teacher is a walking textbook for students". In this regard, the success of CE is greatly influenced by the teacher's thought and attitude toward class. Thus, what kind of concrete role do teachers need to take?

First, the teacher must present a model of good character. We can think about three roles at this point.

1) Teachers can move the students by exemplifying themselves as a model through consistency of speech and action. Such modeling is not just imitating the great men's lives, but revealing that his real character has been formed in this way. This is the most important role of the teacher. Lickona mentioned the role of the teacher like this (T. Lickona, 1991:67-70); the one who looks after and carefully considers the students (caregiver), the one who shows standards of moral life (modeling), the one who gives ethical inspiration (ethical mentor). The role of a teacher as a caregiver is to love and to respect the students, to help them to live a successful school life, to foster self-respect, and to treat them in a moral way. The meaning of "modeling" is to be a good example of moral concern and moral inference by responding to the significant matters of school and community. An "Ethical mentor" is one who explains moral life, leads homeroom class, gives instructions, didactic stories, motivates and encourages, and helps cure bad habits.

The character of the teacher is an educational environment and educational system of value. Teachers must trust and respect the value and preciousness of students; think of them as a qualified human not a receiver of their teaching. Students apprehend and practice the value when the teacher trusts and loves students completely. Thus a teacher with a true sense of the word can inspire the student by cultivating his mind endlessly, and fostering him to have a generous, virtuous, and humble mind. There is no better way of CE than a good teacher. As a potential (latent) curriculum, the teacher is a crucial key of school guidance.

2) We can help students meet community leaders that put the standards in action, because there is always a good example of character in any society. These examples can be friendly, because they are from our neighborhood, and they can motivate students to live like them. So we can utilize the resource persons as a living model.

3) We can show them the great men's lives in history and stories. Stories provide good examples of virtue, and can instill wisdom and strong will. Stories also provide students with examples of how to live by showing vivid examples of obstacles and how to overcome them. Furthermore, a good story can awaken children's moral imagination and teach them not to fall into the dark (Lee In-Jae, 1999, p. 11). Instructional moral stories expose students to many examples that are hard to see in normal life, and develop inferential processes in the mind. The moral power of storytelling is the force of standardized example that is concrete, clear, and precise. If the ethic is superficial, the power of morality to move us to good actions decreases, and the feeling and the will power that is one of the great elements of morality can be neglected. Stories help to overcome moral laziness by giving moral examples that can guide students in real life situations. Moral stories and key documents are great expectation of morality. Teachers can help students to perceive and evaluate the significance of the moral dimension in human life by exposing students to this great expectation. Students can identify indirectly with the main character who is in dilemma, tension, chaos, and resolution. Materials, such as literature and stories of great men, are a very effective way to make students follow the "moral map".

Second, the teacher has to foster the students' ability to understand and empathize with another's life, and their position, or feeling. They have to make the most of a possible method to cultivate consideration of others, and put themselves in another's shoes. To understand another person's position is what America's recent CE emphasizes. Especially, it will be nice when we refer to the application of literature, discussion, and personal experience, which is presented by CDP (Child Development Project, 1989). It is important to utilize victim-oriented discipline positively in a course of moral study; it is also a good way to apply cooperative learning to acknowledge the significance of others, and to foster an altruistic mind. Cooperative learning is a

good way to master the social, human-relational ability. Students learn to make decisions through a democratic decision making process, to share their point of view with other students, to apply fairness to his or her development in a non-compulsive environment, and to consider another's standpoint.

Third, teachers have to encourage a positive and moral climate where ethical value is welcomed. Making class or school as a moral community means running the class as a moral and democratic system and structure, coordinating the atmosphere of life in class, educational activities, traditional customs, and personal guidance until moral behavior is made into a habit of nature (Lee Tack-Whee, Lyu Byung-yeoll, 2000, p. 301). This includes teaching students to respect and trust each other, to make and keep class' rules spontaneously, and to feel solidarity and pride. When students feel value and rules what they learned (for example, be honest and kind, be good to others, help and consider others) are supported and valid, they in the end internalize it as a precious value that they will to practice the rest of their lives. If the space that the student is living in is a justcaring community, the core ethical values, such as kindness, honesty, responsibility, fairness, respect to other, caring etc., which is taught in class can be spread.

The school must not be a desolate place that fosters extreme competition. School has to be "a warm and caring community where students want to stay longer between lots of friends. Everyone's individuality should be respected; various abilities should be demonstrated and admitted." Here again, the teacher's role is central in the development of such an atmosphere. When the school performs its own role as a moral and just community, students can keep the moral values firmly even if the standard of morality is lowered, because they are already accustomed to moral life. Furthermore, they can fight against the expanded chaos of values, double-faced norm culture that is wide spread in our society.

Fourth, teachers have to provide various activities which core values and basic norms that are learned in formal curriculum, including MSE, can be realized in school- home- community by latent curriculum or guidance. Even though the students know much about good or rightness, have been moved greatly, and have the desire to live on it by the curriculum, it will not be effective if it is not revealed through everyday life.

Various programs that have been implemented in elementary schools in our country recently can be introduced like managing the time of meditation; student's various club activities; illumination of special talent, extra curriculum activities after school; learning manners in the etiquette room; running a self-service stand; utilizing cards of rules and practice; conducting ceremonies of awarding prizes; running a mailbox of friendship; camping or training; presenting one's special talent; keeping a diary (about self-reflection, loyalty to parents, good behavior etc.); using a family newspaper; using NIE(Newspaper in education); guiding of reading; guiding by school's broadcasting; making the best use of instructional stories; rotation of class' president; caring for a flowerpot; spreading fair play; running a traditional culture class; writing a letter(to friends, teachers, and parents); angel game-making secret mate by anonymous voting; utilizing a student council; giving service to the society; environment-protection activities, would all be good examples (Lee In-Jae, 1998, p. 40; Jo Nan-Sim, 2000, p. 118).

These kinds of activities are all excellent for checking the effectiveness of moral education or CE in the latent curriculum, which is a major field of moral experience, and running practical programs, but it would be worthless if it is managed too formally, or to show-off like an exhibition. Thus, it is important to put things into practice steadily even if it seems a trifle.

#### *d. Building effective school-home-community partnership*

For CE to be effective in school, schools have to utilize parents and local community members as important partners of CE because students grow and learn at school, at home, and in the community. For this ideal to be realized, a high level system of communication system has to be in place. Looking at it from the communication side, a two-way symmetric form - in which the school uses all kinds of communication channels to reflect the cooperation or opinion of parents or community - is most suitable (Chu Byung-Wan, 1999, p. 521-522).

How then can we interact with each other, specifically? To begin with, the school can support the home to form a good atmosphere of family that is not contrary to the school's CE program. Thus, the school can advise parents by recommending a method of education to parents that is suitable and authentic to the student's

developmental characteristics. Additionally, schools can offer information to parents such as learning methods for specific subjects, and confirmation and guidance for homework. All of this is helpful in self-study. Second, schools can ask for cooperation by giving parents and community members exact information about the purpose, contents, and methods of CE. To connect with home education, schools maintain consistency in student guidance at home by collecting parents' opinions on students' life at home and by giving and receiving information about students. Third, schools can make use of the spontaneous participation of parents and the local community. This means they have to be interested in the school's CE and induce their positive cooperation. For student's CE, parents can take a role of helper, and community leaders who put the standards in action can be a resource person. Finally, schools can cooperate with the local community. This means providing services or resources to stimulate student's development of character.

If there exist "a home like school", "a school like home", and "a community like home", students can internalize and practice moral values well. For this ideal world to be realized, the problems of the Korean home and the immorality of Korean society have to be uprooted. For the product of CE is often diminished by the immoral environment of school and society. Thus schools have to make a concerted effort to get involved in positively setting up a moral climate at home and in society.

### Conclusion

According to Aristotle, humans cannot be morally mature nor can they have practical wisdom by nature. To be equipped with a good character, a person has to try hard for his or her lifetime, and the circumstance he survives also has to be moral to contribute to his moral life.

Schools can play a central role in this process of exertion because schools in modern society are poised to be the backbone in CE and thus need to propel it with apparent purpose, and effective strategies. An organic cooperation system is also needed because raising good character cannot be completed with one single element of character. It is connected with formal curricula and informal curricula. A harmonized partnership of

school-home-community is urgently needed. It is the teacher who takes the very core role in this process, and it is a school principal who positively supports and encourages the teacher. School's CE programs have to be carried out continuously by making detailed programs on the basis of authentic visions from all the school's staff members. CE can be truly effective when it is combined with the school character educator's enthusiasm and a sense of calling, well-planned schedule, sincere exposition, and an organic partnership of school-home-community.

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