

The Self-examination of Dr. Chikuro Hiroike and its Application to Counseling

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Introduction

The purpose of this article is threefold: the first is to describe the model of self-examination presented by Dr. Chikuro Hiroike (1866-1938); the second is to present its application to counseling; the third is to illustrate Dr. Hiroike's model by several narrative accounts of how it has been applied to a variety of human problems.

Dr. Chikuro Hiroike founded a new field in scientific study of morality and the human psyche, which he called *Morality*. He also founded Reitaku University and the Institute of Moralogy.

At the age of nineteen, Hiroike became a teacher in an elementary school in his home town of *Nakatsu, Kyuushu*, the southern island of Japan. He got married at the age of twenty-three, and three years later he and his wife moved to Kyoto, the ancient capital of Japan, where he published several books on Japanese history. Hiroike had a great desire to become an historian. In 1895, his scholarly talent was recognized and he was able to join the editorial team of the *Kojirin*, the greatest encyclopedia published to that date, whose remit was to include source materials concerning liter-

ature in Japan from the mythological age up to 1868, the Meiji Restoration.

In 1907, Hiroike became a professor at *Jingukogakkan* College. In 1912, at the age of 46, he was awarded the degree of Doctor of Law from the Imperial University of Tokyo for his work on the study of ancient kinship laws in China. He was regarded as a pioneer historian of oriental law. It was an exceptional honor for someone like Hiroike, who had not had a higher education, to obtain a doctor's degree from the Imperial University.

However, at the prime of his scholarly success, he was stricken with a serious nervous disease, a crisis so severe that it effected a complete change in his thinking. Hiroike wrote,

I was born poor in a far corner of this country and I have reached my present status. What I am today I owe to God, to the virtue of the stages and to the favour of several senior scholars. If I rise further to higher rank or office and obtain more wealth or honour, it will be too good for me and ill-boding. Fortunately, I am now suffering from this serious illness and hovering between life and death; this must be a warning from God. (*Towards Supreme Morality*, Vol. III, p. 300)

In 1913, Hiroike miraculously recovered from the acute stage of his illness. Declining invitations from several universities, he committed himself to a new life. He came to believe in *Tenrikyo*, a new Shinto sect, and took up a full-time executive post at the headquarters of the Tenrikyo sect.

At that time, Shintoism was the government sanctioned religion of Japan and every Shinto sect, including Tenrikyo, had to alter some of its original teachings to conform to the government sanctioned Shintoism at that time. Hiroike's reform plan addressed the importance of preserving the essence of the original teachings of the founder of Tenrikyo.

Two years later he had no choice but to resign his post, because his reform plan was severely criticized by some

members of Tenrikyo.

He wrote in his journal,

I have absolutely no savings and no house to live in, and all my books that were my munitions as a scholar are gone. All I have left is a very frail, sick body Hence, from a state of pennilessness I must establish a foundation for my great enterprise of human salvation and world peace.

For this reason, the only way I have left is to erase the self completely, enter the mind of God, and embody His benevolence according to the divine laws. (*Memoirs*, p. 63)

Although he resigned his executive post, he did not leave the Tenrikyo sect for the time being. However, Hiroike had lost everything, including his personal library and professorship. At this time he was socially isolated and had nothing to sustain him but his own feeble body.

Through his experience and his study, he then wrote *The Ise Shrine and Japanese Polity* (1915), in which he discovered the fundamental principles of morality, namely, benevolence, tolerance, and self-examination.

In 1926, Hiroike completed his major work: *A treaty on moral science: A first attempt at establishing Moralogy as a new science*. In spite of chronic illness and failing health, Hiroike did his best to steer Japan away from getting involved in war.

In 1938, at the age of seventy-two, Hiroike died.

Hiroike's other works include:

An Outline of Classical Chinese Grammar (1905)

An Introduction to the History of Oriental Law (1905)

A Study of Ancient Kinship Laws in China (1912)

The Origin of the Japanese Constitution (1916)

A Scientific Study of Filial Piety (1929)

1. Hiroke's Self-examination of 1915

The example of self-examination was provided by Hiroike himself when he resigned from a religious sect. He did not blame anybody, and regarded his hardship as a chance to devote himself to the study of moral science.

Hiroike wrote the following at the time of his self-examination of 1915:

Similarly, there are two kinds of self-examination. Even in the old traditional morality, a man of intelligence may, after self-examination for his own benefit, avoid competing with others and sacrifice his own honor in order to yield to others.
(*Towards Supreme Morality III*, p. 412)

When he experienced this critical moment of life, instead of feeling downtrodden, he used it as a springboard to a new life. Hiroike felt the true courage to move forward arise in him when he became aware of what had created his present life, and when he was ready to take responsibility for his life. Hiroike felt gratitude towards his destiny, and believed that we are given chances to improve our character. In other words, Hiroike became able to assume responsibility for his own life with gratitude.

Hiroike described this attitude as follows:

Self-examination is to recognize that the cause of an incident is due to one's own lack of virtue and to reflect on oneself in the face of oppression by others, not only when one is at fault, but also when one is neither wrong nor guilty. (*Chikuro Hiroike: Father of Moralogy*, p. 317)

2. The Process of Self-examination

Hiroike's model of self-examination is found in *A Record of Ancient Matter* (古事記), the story of Amaterasu Omikami shutting herself in the Celestial Rock Cave.

The author of this paper proposed that the process of this self-examination can be divided into six phases as follows.

Phase One: Efforts towards the Realization of Justice

When Amaterasu Omikami (the Heaven-Shining-Great-August Deity) became alarmed at the noise made by her brother, Susano-ono Mikoto, from his earth country, and thought that he might invade her country, she stood on the opposite bank of the Tranquil River of Heaven and confronted him.

Phase Two: Reframing the Incidents

Susano-ono Mikoto repeatedly revolted against Amaterasu Omikami, including acts like urinating and defecating inside the holy shrine. She reframed the incidents along the lines that her brother was drunk, and so she did not repudiate him.

Phase Three: Decision to Assume Responsibilities and Start Self-examination

Amaterasu Omikami assumed the whole responsibility for Susano-ono Mikoto's behavior on the grounds of her own lack of moral virtue. Therefore she decided to resume self-examination in order to enhance her moral virtue.

Phase Four: Continuation of Self-Examination

Amaterasu Omikami continued her self-examination. The process of this self-examination is discussed in section 3 of this paper.

Phase Five: Attainment of Security of Mind

Amaterasu Omikami attained a state of mind described as "Benevolence, Tolerance, and Self-examination," and security of mind.

Phase Six: Exerting Moral Influence on Others

Amaterasu Omikami, instead of rebuking his brother and fighting against him to realize justice, engaged in serious self-examination. As a result she attained a higher moral char-

acter and exerted a moral influence upon others, including her mischievous brother.

Dr. Hiroike interpreted Amateraru Omikami's conduct in shutting herself in the cave as a true example of benevolence. She was neither frightened by his brother's conduct nor did she get angry with him. She acted in a spirit of profound benevolence, (*kashikomi* in Japanese, meaning pious, penitent or respectful). Upon the completion of her self-examination, she gained supreme character. Then she forgave her brother in the spirit of benevolence and tolerance.

This self-examination is characterized by the following.

- a. It is a static attitude, not imbued with vehement passion, but with static appreciation.
- b. It is not fighting over right or wrong. Justice cannot always be attained by just means alone. Instead of seeking justice by just means, one should work toward the perfection of one's moral character.
- c. The process of benevolence, tolerance, and self-examination can be applied to the principles of a peaceful society.
- d. Following this process we will be empowered in the face of difficulties, humiliation, and injury.
- e. This can influence others and can enhance the practitioner's moral character.

3. The Essence of Self-examination.

Examples of benevolence, tolerance, and self-examination are to be found in the practices of the world sages. This spirit is based on impartial love for the human race and an earnest desire to bring happiness to all people. If people live this way, they will always maintain serenity in their minds, and they will continually improve their character. Hiroike

believed that in this way people can gain eventually great social trust and peace.

Hiroike's analysis was that the self-examination of the world sages has the following three characteristics.

First, this model of self-examination is very much concerned with the mental attitudes behind one's conduct, while the conventional practice of self-examination pays more attention to the outward form of conduct.

Second, this model of self-examination derives from the teachings of the sages of the world, and is based on impartial love and true self-interest. This model of self-examination is not merely an intellectual understanding or a belief, but a way of life that people are expected to lead. The conventional model of self-examination, on the other hand, was based on the instinct of preservation and the fulfillment of self-interest. Such mental attitudes are manifested in lust, arrogance, unwillingness ever to accept defeat, excessively strong pride, and extreme depression at failure or disappointment.

Third, this model of self-examination should be the model for both the West and the East. Conventional self-examination, on the other hand, being based on mere formality and self-interest, remains only partially true.

According to Hiroike, his model of self-examination has the following six characteristics.

1. Mastery of true self-interest

Man has the primary need to preserve and develop himself/herself and the group to which he/she belongs. However, the self-preservation instinct often goes beyond the degree needed for our own existence and development. Our attempt to do anything beyond our needs is often an expression of our arrogant selfishness which, contrary to our expectations, harms us and others.

Hiroike quoted from Buddhism on this matter. According to Buddhism, three poisons make up the illusory self, which is similar to the egoistic self. They are “covetousness, meaning boundless desires for material gain and worldly fame; anger, meaning indignation and hate; and delusion meaning being blind to the truth and holding illusions in the mind.” (*An Outline of Moralogy*, p. 78). Buddha stated that the cause of human anxiety and suffering is attachment which is hidden in the deepest area of the mind. This attachment is an illusion. We should eliminate illusion and cut ourselves off from the bondage of attachment in order to realize true self-interest.

2. Benevolence

Hiroike used the neutral term ‘benevolence’ for ‘love.’ He did not use the term love to express the quintessence of morality practiced by world sages (which he called supreme morality) because he considered the term love to entail passionate emotion.

According to Hiroike, the greatest and the highest benevolence is to become the ‘spiritual parents’ of people. Benevolence refers to the mental attitudes and conduct accomplished by the world sages, and its origin is derived from the spirit of nature, which creates and nourishes everything.

Hiroike described ten aspects of benevolence as follows:

- a. Benevolence toward human beings, placing money, material things, and mundane business in a secondary position.
- b. An unbiased and universal benevolence toward humanity.
- c. Parental benevolence toward children.
- d. Respect for our benefactors and willingness to pay back our debts to our benefactors.
- e. Thoughtful consideration toward all people based on

- the harmony between reason and feeling.
- f. Willingness to share with others the fruits of one's toil.
 - g. Tendency to avoid monopolization.
 - h. Constructiveness.
 - i. Compassion for others.
 - j. Continuous examination of ourselves.

3. Moral Responsibility

Hiroike contended that man has responsibility for himself/herself, society, history, and a higher being (whether it is called 'God', the 'law of nature', or 'Reality').

Man is born on Earth as part of the phenomena of life in the Universe and should live according to the laws of nature. Hiroike believed that man is responsible for the maintenance of the harmonious functioning of the Universe. Thus, man is responsible for inheriting the history and culture brought into existence by his predecessors and for enriching and transmitting these things to future generations.

Second, man must perform his/her individual responsibilities as a member of society. For example, as an individual, one has a responsibility to make sincere efforts in one's job, to increase not only one's own happiness but that of others, but also to build the moral society.

Finally, man is responsible for raising the quality of his/her character, which becomes possible by repaying the moral debts to his/her predecessors.

4. Understanding the True Meaning of Existence

According to Hiroike, one first has to gain a deep understanding that one's existence has become possible through parents, ancestors, and the benefactors of family life. Man has a series of benefactors of life at the national level, and at the spiritual level. Man is taught the importance of familial,

national, and material benefactors by spiritual benefactors such as the sages of the world.

In order to gain a deeper understanding of one's existence, one needs to feel grateful to this series of benefactors, and one also needs to become aware that one's life is connected with these benefactors. Hiroike called these benefactors our "root of existence", because they have made our existence possible.

5. Attainment of a Truly Rich Humanity

In order to realize a truly joyful life, man needs to convert from self-centeredness to the spirit of supreme morality. Conversion, here, means a radical reform of mind from selfishness (animal like nature or self-preserving instinct) to the spirit of supreme morality (benevolent mindedness).

We suffer from illusion and agony, "because we are in thrall to our desires, arrogance, and prejudice", (*An Outline of Moralogy*, p. 125). Because we live with such faulty mental attitudes, we fail to achieve individual happiness as well as the well-being of society.

6. Belief in Effectiveness of Self-examination

Hiroike tried to demonstrate the causal relationships between mental attitudes, conduct, and their outcomes. Hiroike concluded that the practice of supreme morality was effective for the realization of the higher well-being of a person. Hiroike implied that in order to gain good results we should practice morality with a just motive as well as a correct purpose in a proper manner. He established nine conditions to examine when practicing morality; (1) motive, (2) goal, (3) quality, (4) quantity, (5) period, (6) time, (7) place, (8) circumstance, (9) method.

The process of self-examination will lead one to the

practice of supreme morality and the practice of supreme morality will orient one to the attainment of higher moral character.

4. The Implication for Counseling

It should be noted that although Hiroike read psychology and sociology extensively, he did not read Freud, Rogers, and other psychotherapists. In his time, counseling and psychotherapy were not available to the general public in Japan.

Hiroike's model of counseling was based on education. His methods of establishing relationships of trust can be applied to counseling situations.

This paper will attempt to develop a counseling model based on Hiroike's education model.

1. Conception of the human being

The human being has two basic instincts: the self-preservation instinct and the moral instinct. The instinct of self-preservation leads towards selfishness and therefore is considered imperfect or deficient in itself. Hiroike proposed eliminating or purifying, as much as possible, these imperfect elements, and developing the moral instinct.

2. Conception of mental well-being

Hiroike discovered that moral character is the most important element in human life. Character refers to "moral capacity through the continuous practice of moral attitudes and conduct." (*An Outline of Moralogy*, p. 54). This character lies at the center of our personality and has some control over our mind and body. Our personality will be uplifted by the advancement of this moral character which unites human powers.

According to Hiroike, a mentally healthy person has the following characteristics:

- a. Deep understanding of what we are now.

Hiroike explained that what we are now derives from what we have done so far, as well as from what our parents and ancestors did in the past. We should be aware that environmental factors also have considerable influence.

- b. Realization of the fact that we are living not merely for ourselves and that our everyday life is sustained by some other existences.

From this awareness we can become grateful to our benefactors, and we will appreciate and take in as part of our character their living and nourishing spirit.

- c. Realization that our destiny is not fixed.

We can improve our destiny by changing our attitudes towards the world, and ourselves toward the world in accordance with the principles of supreme morality. When we are successful in this conversation of our minds, we become able to gain new courage to face our destiny, regarding hardships as tests for improvement.

- d. Relationship

Counselors are regarded as the source of influence and agents of change for their clients. Counselors guide clients with the spirit of benevolence. While counselors cannot always be neutral in their moral standards, they must take great care not to interfere too much with the daily lives of the clients. Counselors ought to refrain from imposing their own values upon people forcibly or from pointing out faults or deficiencies. Counselors, too, have faults, so that they too must engage in self-examination in a spirit of benevolence and try to repay their indebtedness with gratitude towards their benefactors.

The clients, too, need to make sincere efforts in their

own search for the betterment of their own well-being. For only when we are making a constant effort to improve our own moral character will we be likely to meet a person of noble character and be positively influenced by that person.

3. Diagnosis

The problems in life are considered to come from faulty mental attitudes. Social problems, also, chiefly derive from the acceptance and indulgence of our human desires.

Hiroike quoted several passages from Eastern as well as Western classics to support his idea of moral causality (*An Outline of Moralogy*, pp. 140-141).

“The family that accumulates good is sure to enjoy additional happy results, while the family that accumulates evil is sure to suffer additional unhappy results therefrom.” (Book of Changes).

“Mind is the base of laws, and thought is the essence of mind. If a man thinks ill in his mind when he speaks, or acts, sin and pain will follow, as the wheels follow the draft ox.” (Dhammapada).

“Those that were sown upon the good soil are the ones who hear the word and accept it and bear fruit thirty fold and sixty fold and a hundred fold.” (Mark 4: 20).

“What comes out of a man is what defiles a man. For from within, out of the heart of man, come evil thoughts, fornication, theft, murder, adultery, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, licentiousness and evil eye, slander, pride, foolishness. All these evil things come from within and they defile a man.” (Mark 7: 20-23).

Finally, he mentioned the Japanese Shinto purification prayer which considers the causes of human diseases, misfortunes, calamities, and unhappiness to be the result of defects

in human mental attitudes and conduct.

4. Methods for Counseling

Counselors, with their learning and experience, and appealing to the reason of others, lead them towards an intellectual understanding of supreme morality.

Counselors endeavor, through warm consideration of others and devotional practice, to move them emotionally by their own spirit of benevolence and supreme morality.

Counselors appeal to the consciousness of others through their own experience of moral practice and inspire the spirits of others to move towards a life of supreme morality.

Hiroike recommended educators to embody the spirit of supreme morality and direct their every thought and deed towards the well-being not only of their benefactors but also of every other person.

Whatever difficulties counselors may meet, they should neither bear a grudge against others, nor feel resentment towards others. They should accept with gratitude the ups and downs of life and show they are ready to make efforts to use the fruits of their labor for promoting the happiness of others. In this way educators as well as counselors, too, can attain their own well-being. Thus, Hiroike emphasized moral influence through excellence of character in an educational way.

5. Approach

Hiroike believed that the development of personal virtue (the acquisition of moral character) was equal in importance to the acquisition of knowledge. Moral character involves knowledge, virtue, sincerity and benevolence, which lie at the center of one's character, and is an integrating power for the various higher moral qualities. Only those who master this

true self-interest can live out a vital creative life.

This position of Hiroike's is characterized by the moral view of the human being. Hiroike implied that shortcomings of morality create many critical issues for individuals as well as societies. Gaining self-knowledge includes not only self-knowledge about the present self but also self-knowledge about the historical self. In short, self-knowledge involves one's relations to the past and to the future, as well as a deep awareness of the present self. Hence, one's individual existence can be conceptualized as a point in the continuing spiritual and biological line of one's existence.

Self-education entails not only the moral development of an individual from birth to death but also the gradual increasing of the moral abilities of the next generation. This awareness makes one responsible for one's development as an individual from birth to death, but also responsible for the gradual increase of the moral abilities of succeeding generations. This awareness makes one responsible for historical and social existence as well as for one's own life.

5. Narratives of Self-examination

To illustrate how Hiroike's model of self-examination can be applied to everyday issues in human life, the following four cases will now be examined. These four cases were originally introduced in Mizuno S. (2004). Here these stories were retold from the perspective of self-examination.

Case 1 Taking Full Responsibility for the Present Self

Mr. Ito was struck with tuberculosis when he was forty-one. He was really shocked at contracting this disease despite having taken very good care of his health. He wanted to deny having TB, but unfortunately the disease had

been getting worse and he had begun losing weight.

Mr. Ito engaged in self-examination in search of the causes of the disease. He thought he must have some deficient quality in his character. He thought that his mind was not resilient enough to accept the differences and deficiencies of others. He used to blame others for what happened to him.

After a series of self-examinations and conversations with students of Dr. Hiroke, he decided that he must take this opportunity to accept what he was at the moment and engage in self-examination.

Mr. Ito imagined himself as running water, which always runs from a higher place to a lower place. Running water never decays and never becomes muddy, it stays clear all the time. Running water does not have its own selfish mind, it just follows the laws of nature.

Having reached this state of mind, he regained a certain calmness. He no longer had a grudge against anyone and his mind became as clear as pure water.

He was even grateful for the disease and thought he could live with it. He believed that humans were originally healthy. If they temporarily lost their balance, there was a natural tendency to regain that balance and return to their original healthy state.

As he gained this state of calmness in his mind, he began to get better day by day.

Although traces of disease remained in his lung, he was able to return to his former job after a year of medical treatment.

Case 2 Disciplined Self-examination

After being the captain of a large merchant ship, Mr. Idaka established his own freight company. In the beginning he had several good years of business. But gradually his busi-

ness began getting worse, and he started having family trouble as well.

Mr. Idaka was an avid student of Dr. Hiroike and had been educating young people with what he had learned from him. However, his wife complained that his attitude to his own son were quite contradictory to what he was preaching.

Mr. Idaka was sometimes asked for advice by fathers who had trouble educating their sons. In one instance, he spoke to them as follows. "Your son is a reflection of yourself in the mirror. You have made what your son is now. It is time that you know what makes up your life and accept what it really is. You have to embrace your son with gratitude and love. By doing this you can repay your indebtedness to your benefactors and work hard to better your character." However, when it came to his own son, he was at a loss what to do.

One day, his son was involved in a terrible accident. Mr. Idaka and his wife meditated deeply and started self-examination. Then the insight came to Mr. Idaka that he was not a good son either.

First, Mr. Idaka had become a sailor against the will of his parents. Second, he usually returned home very late at night, as did his own son. Third, when he was young he had several girl friends as well.

Despite all this bad behavior of his own, Mr. Idaka's mother had prayed for his health and well-being and was even willing to risk her own life to save her son. But Mr. Idaka used to criticize the bad conduct of his son and constantly blamed him for his misdeeds.

He realized that he had to change his attitudes to his son and that he should feel grateful to his son for providing him and his wife with such an opportunity for self-examination. Mr. Idaka vowed that he would dedicate everything he had to repay his indebtedness to his parents and other benefactors.

After his decision, his attitudes to his troublesome son changed totally. Following this conversion of the parents' minds, their attitude toward their son changed to one of gratitude, and they also worked harder toward the betterment of their characters.

A month after they made this serious decision, their son wrote a long letter to them, apologizing for his bad attitude and expressing a desire to succeed to his father's business.

Case 3 Despite Many Hardships Live Life with the Spirit of Benevolence

Mr. Hasegawa was a young executive of a medium-size textile company when Japan was struck with the Great Depression in 1930. He wondered why his company was suffering so seriously while major textile companies remained intact.

Mr. Hasegawa put this question to one of the students of Dr. Hiroike, and the answer he received was that his mind and behavior should conform to the model of self-examination taught by Hiroike. He realized that he could open up his own destiny if he followed those principles and enhanced his character.

Mr. Hasegawa's company survived even during the war and prospered until 1977 when one of his factories was completely burnt down. He took this incident as an opportunity to better himself still further and was even thankful for this hardship.

His company miraculously recovered from the hardship because Mr. Hasegawa was trusted by his business associates. Thanks to the trust that he built up over many years, within a month Mr. Hasegawa successfully imported two big textile machines from the United States to replace the machines that he lost in the fire. Usually such an express import cost a lot,

but he was able to get the machines at the regular price.

Mr. Hasegawa had been practicing the teaching of Dr. Hiroike, that is, 'Deeds should be good from three directions.' He believed, "Your business will prosper when you think three-directionally, that is, towards yourself, towards the party with whom you are dealing with, and towards the others or the public. You can give a certain benefit and happiness to the person that you are directly dealing with, as well as the public, and the nation in which you live, and your deeds should add happiness to yourself."

Case 4 Dealing With the Issues of Life Stages

Mrs. Hashimoto got married at the age of 30. She had an established business as a beautician in a large city. One day she thought, "Am I happy with this life? I feel unsafe living alone, thinking of getting old." She met a man who ran a restaurant in the same urban area and they decided to get married.

However, her married life did not proceed very well for the first several years. She had enjoyed a single life and its freedom for a long time, and found it very hard to live with her husband and his mother. Although during the first few years Mrs. Hashimoto continued her own business as a beautician, she and her husband eventually began to run the restaurant jointly, and she closed her own business.

Although the relationships in the family were not good, their restaurant business started to prosper. One day, her husband happened to ask for a consultation with someone who had been a student of Dr. Hiroike for a long time. He decided to take a four week seminar about Hiroike's teaching at the Kashiwa campus.

To Mrs. Hashimoto's surprise, her husband's attitude completely changed after taking the seminar. He started to care

for her very much and even apologized for his previously arrogant attitudes.

A short while after, Mrs. Hashimoto took the same seminar as her husband. During the seminar, she realized that she had been complaining of many things and had never showed gratitude to her husband. Her teacher said to her that it would be better for her not to get angry with other people, nor to make excuses, but to take everything that happened to her as a sign of the deficiencies in her character and to work hard to better herself.

Strangely enough, when she decided to follow this advice, she gained peace of mind for the first time since her marriage.

Until then, she had been complaining of her husband's way of running the restaurant. Now they worked together as a team and practiced Hiroike's model of self-examination, being ready to listen to the opinions of others.

Even the quality of her husband's friends and business associates changed. Dishonest and cunning friends and business associates started to distance themselves from him.

Their employees were now all hardworking and willing to study the teachings of Hiroike. Mr. and Mrs. Hashimoto had no children, but they and their employees were now members of one big family. They enjoy working, serving good food and creating positive relationships with their customers and the community.

Conclusion

Dr. Hiroike's model of self-examination, based on the story of Amaterasu-Omikami, has been applied to the many different kinds of life problems presented in this paper. Hiroike's model of self-examination should be understood as a process, for the following reasons.

First, self-examination is oriented toward to the perfection of one's moral character. It is an orientation rather than the goal of a final stage. Dr. Hiroke repeatedly worked hard to orient his mental activities toward self-examination in accordance with the principles of supreme morality. He wrote in his journal, when he was stricken with severe illness, "Even if kicked or trodden or scorned by others, my body is at the will of God, therefore I would think those as nothing ... (February 31, 1915).

Second, self-examination is characterized by acceptance of one's responsibility. Therefore, what is being experienced here and now is important. In other word, self-examination avoids simple interpretations or easy judgments about incidents.

Third, self-examination is narrative in nature. The story of self-examination is told from the inside out. That means one's experiences unfold from the inside, with pain or suffering and how one experiences them. The importance of narratives lies in meaning of the story they tell.

Fourth, this model of self-examination is other person oriented. That is, self-examination does not necessarily engage in searching for the deeper layers of experience or one's mental existence. The key for self-examination is the relationship with others, including the past, the present, and future relationships. Only in the reflection of true self in the mirror called the other person can we see the true nature of our experiences.

Fifth, self-examination is not necessarily just for the person who feels the importance of practicing it. If applied to social problems, everyone can practice this model of self-examination. It can be the guiding principle not only of an individual's life but also of social life.

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