

How to Teach Morality

Promoting Deliberation and Discussion,
Reducing Violence and Deceit

GEORG LIND

λογος

“Dr. Lind’s experimental and educational approach to morality is unique world-wide.”

— Dr. Ewa Nowak, Professor of Philosophy, University of Poznan, Poland. Author of “Experimental ethics.”

“Whoever is interested in the training of students, teachers and educators of all kinds will find appropriate information for primary, secondary and post-secondary education and beyond.”

—Dr. Wilhelm Peterßen, Professor emeritus of Education, University of Education in Weingarten, Germany.

“Dr. Lind’s threefold combination of theory, practice, and empirical research might become the standard for pedagogical developments which do not only claim, but demonstrate hands-on, and show proof for effects.”

—Dr. Sibylle Reinhardt, Professor emeritus of Social Studies, University of Halle, Germany. Author of “Teaching Civics.”

The book

What is morality? How can it be measured? What is its nature and origin? And, most importantly, how can it be taught? These age-old yet still unanswered questions cannot be addressed, Georg Lind argues, unless we develop a new science of moral behavior and education. He does just that in his book, invoking related contributions by eminent philosophers, psychologists and educators. The first part presents a new way of studying morality, and a great amount of Lind’s own research and the work of other scholars which back it up.

The second part shows how to teach morality effectively and sustainably with Lind’s Konstanz Method of Dilemma Discussion (KMDD), which can be used in all age groups and cultures. On the basis of many years of practical international experience with the KMDD in different institutions of education, professional schools, armed forces, and prisons, Lind provides advice on how educators can learn, implement and improve the method. Lind also presents the related Just Community method of democratic community building.

Pre-publication chapter – please do not quote

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This book contains parts of my German book
"Moral ist lehrbar: Handbuch zur Theorie und Praxis moralisch-demokratischer
bildung. München: Oldenbourg, 2003.

Dedicated to the people of our one and only world.

Do not

Socrates: But if this be affirmed, then the desire of good is common to all, and one man is no better than another in that respect?

Menon: True

Socrates: And if one man is not better than another in desiring good, he must be better in the power of attaining it?

Menon: Exactly.

Socrates: Then according to your definition virtue would appear to be the power of attaining good.

Socrates (469 – 399 BC)

Quoted from Plato: Menon
Source: Project Gutenberg.

And say, finally, whether peace is best preserved by giving energy to the government or information to the people. This last is the most certain and the most legitimate engine of government. Educate and inform the whole mass of the people. Enable them to see that it is their interest to preserve peace and order, and they will preserve them. And it requires no very high degree of education to convince them of this. They are the only sure reliance for the preservation of our liberty.

Thomas Jefferson (1787)

Letters to James Madison,
(Forrest version) ME 6:392

This book was written as a source of information and *not* as a replacement for actually taking part in the KMDD Events and the KMDD[®] training program described in this book.

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First English edition

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This edition uses the text of the third revised and extended German edition (Lind 2015) published by Logos, Berlin. The first edition of the German book (Lind 2003) is also available in Greek and Spanish.

The *Konstanzer Methode der Dilemma-Diskussion (KMDD)*[®] is a registered trade mark in China, the European Union, Switzerland and Turkey. Registration in more countries is pending.

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Konstanz, June 2016

Georg Lind

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Preface

Are humans inherently good or bad, or do they only become good or evil through society? Regardless of this question, which has interested moral philosophers so much across time, pedagogues have continually tried – often with unsurpassed optimism – to find ways to provide effective moral education, and to make them readily available to educators. While morality constitutes their legitimate subject matter, educators provide justification with a double thesis: humans are dependent upon education for their morality, and they are certainly morally educable. In the history of education, one of the most fundamental, optimistic and thoughtful approaches is the notion of the moral education of ‘The People’ presented in the vision of Johann Friedrich Herbart (1776–1841). This lofty concept had its origin in the specific educational goal of *strengthening the fibers of morality* (“Charakterstärke der Sittlichkeit”), which for Herbart meant wanting good and abhorring evil. Herbart considered such a state to be attainable by all people through education, and to this end he designed a complex system of educational interventions in the lives of adolescents. A further development of comparable importance for educational thought and action can be found in Lawrence Kohlberg’s conception of moral education, which Georg Lind constructively adapts in developing his own theoretical position. Kohlberg considers education for moral behavior through cognitive-intellectual learning to be quite possible. However, his conception applies not just to the moral behavior of adolescents, but also to the particular expression of behavior based on antecedent reasoning, that is, on moral competence.

Moral competence is part of the special ability of individuals to make their life intentional – whether they choose to do so or not. Instead of blindly reacting to external stimuli or inner impulses, people are first of all able to develop their thoughts and to create a blueprint for reasoned action. Such anticipatory behavioral schemas must be morally justifiable in social coexistence before they can be revised in light of their outcomes. This is precisely why moral competence is required, in such a way that the ability to identify important moral principles and to arrive at a good decision, – even in the face of contradictory principles in the case of a moral dilemma – improves the quality of life for an individual and the collective. Kohlberg submitted two didactic proposals – the *Dilemma Discussion* which plunges adolescents into cognitive-moral conflicts calling upon them to reach a decision, and the *Just Community*, in which the construction of a relatively lifelike community setting allows adolescents to become familiar with the constraints involved in making moral decisions. Georg Lind has not only developed a *Moral Competence Test* (MCT) for the measurement and verification of moral competence which is vital for essential learning planning in schools and education. He has also compiled aids for the everyday work of teachers in schools and education for both didactic approaches through international pilot projects, especially for his new method of dilemma discussion, the Konstanz Method of Dilemma Discussion (KMDD).

Morality can be taught! This is the present book’s message. Whoever is interested in the training of students, teachers and educators of all kinds will find appropriate information for primary, secondary and post-secondary (e.g., college, university) seminars and beyond.

Dr. Wilhelm Peterßen

Professor Emeritus and former President of the University of Education Weingarten

Do not quote

We must foster moral competence!

“Teacher, this is a sin. We must not discuss this.” For a minute or two there was an awkward silence. I had asked a class of doctoral students of education to discuss a case of organ transplantation. I had told a story about a woman with a 3rd degree skin burn who could only be saved by grafting skin from the corpse of a victim of another accident. The student who rejected any discussion about this case was a 50-year old priest. While he spoke he looked intense. Keeping to the rules of such sessions, which I will describe later, I remained quiet because using my authority to encourage a discussion would have meant that I myself distrusted the participants’ reason and morality. “John,”¹ a woman tried to break the silence, “if the beneficiary of the transplant was your own mother...” “No way,” John interrupted her in a harsh voice, “my mother would never agree to be saved by sinning.” Many, including myself, thought “That was it.” Awkward silence again. In Chapter 11, I will tell you how this story unfolded.

How can we have a conversation when difficult moral issues are at stake? The political scientist Benjamin Barber defines what he calls a “strong democrat” as someone who is able to really listen to others: “‘I will listen’ means to the strong democrat not that I will scan my adversary’s position for weaknesses and potential trade-offs, nor even (as a minimalist might think) that I will tolerantly permit him to say whatever he chooses. It means, rather, ‘I will put myself in his place, I will try to understand, I will strain to hear what makes us alike. I will listen for a common rhetoric evocative of a common purpose or a common good.’” (Barber 1984, p. 175) A strong democrat, I wish to add, is also someone who is able to speak up and raise issues in a reasonable way or, to put it more generally, someone who possesses moral competence.

Moral competence is the ability to resolve problems and conflicts on the basis of inner moral principles through deliberation and discussion instead of violence and deceit.

In this book I argue that we can, and should, only teach the competence aspect of morality, for which I have developed a powerful method, the *Konstanz Method of Dilemma Discussion* (KMDD). I have developed the KMDD over a period of two decades on the basis of well-tested theories of moral development (to which many scholars have contributed in the course of centuries), and as the product of more than twenty years of my own research and field testing. The crux of this method is that we do not teach the content directly; rather we provide opportunities for learning. That is, we do not enforce learning but instead design a favorable learning environment to feed students’ natural hunger for learning.

My first book on the KMDD (Lind 2003) stimulated much application and research that confirmed its original theoretical and empirical framework. Aside from some minor corrections discussed below, neither the theory nor the method described in that book needed revision. Indeed, as I will show, research and practical experience provide even more evidence in support of Socrates’ observation on which the KMDD is grounded: All people desire the good, but vary greatly in regard to their ability to attain the good (Chapter 1 and 2), which Socrates call-

¹ Name changed.

ed *virtue*, and we today call moral competence² (Chapter 3 and 4). Research also confirms our claim that *moral competence* is not innate and does not develop of its own accord. Rather, it must be learned and this learning can be fostered effectively (Lind 2002).

All of this provided a good reason for publishing a new, revised and expanded edition of my earlier book, and for publishing it in English in order to make it available to a wider audience. A second motivation for this new edition resides in the position that if we want to preserve and develop peace and democracy, moral competence *must* be fostered, as we increasingly come to realize in the light of current events. In our modern multi-cultural, industrialized, rapidly changing globalized societies, the amount of moral challenges is steadily growing while the “natural” opportunities for moral learning are becoming scarce (Lind 2006b). If we wish to push back violence, deceit and the misuse of power, then we, as members of society, must create adequate opportunities for moral learning in our schools and other institutions of education.

Readers who are familiar with Kohlberg’s verdict against the method of dilemma discussion after some years of use may be surprised and ask why exactly I continue to propose it, albeit in a completely refurbished form. He stated: “Our research results indicated the operation was a success in the sense that ordinary classroom teachers [...] reproduced the Blatt effect without being elaborately trained [...] However, while the intervention was a success, the patient died: that is, we went back a year later and found that not a single teacher continued to do moral discussion after the commitment to the research had ended, even though it did lead to a one-third stage³ change.” (Kohlberg 1985, p. 33)

I believe that Kohlberg and his disciples threw out the proverbial baby with the bathwater. His conclusion was premature. With the modifications we made to the Blatt-Kohlberg method of dilemma discussion, this method has become even more effective, and the teachers are so fond of it that they adhere to the (KMDD) protocol without any external incentives. Teachers who use the KMDD tell me that it had such a positive impact on their students’ learning motivation and the learning climate in the classroom that they would continue using it for this reason alone. When I went back ten years later to the school in which we first introduced the method of dilemma discussion, I found that the teachers were still using it (Chapter 10.3).

In order to improve the acceptance, effectiveness, and teachability of this method, I modified the Blatt-Kohlberg method in several ways. Specifically our new method allows the participants a more active role in their learning process. KMDD sessions now last longer (90 minutes instead of 45), the participants discuss only one instead of several stories, and the teacher talks less and gives the participants more time to think through and discuss the protagonist’s decision. And, most importantly, the KMDD teacher encourages and supports participants’ endeavors to put their moral feelings about the decision into their own words, rather than to mimic the teacher’s exemplary arguments (e.g., the “plus 1-convention” in the Blatt-Kohlberg method). No doubt, such teaching requires elaborate training. Otherwise teachers will have little success and may even harm the participants or prompt them to abandon the method as soon as the external support is withdrawn.

With the KMDD, fostering moral-democratic competence can be achieved more effectively and with less investment of costs or time than is often thought. KMDD sessions take up only 90 minutes in their entirety, and can be offered for people of all ages (from age eight upward)

² See Chapter 4 for a discussion of the concept of moral competence.

³ According to the Kohlbergian Stage Theory of moral development.

and all cultures. After just one or two sessions, a measurable and sustainable effect is produced not only in regard to participants' moral competence but also to their learning motivation and social interaction. Moreover, we saw that students and teachers alike are fond of KMDD sessions and do them without extra motivation.

Many teachers worldwide have used the KMDD, me included during my professorship and later. My colleagues and I have experimented with several modifications. As a result of this experimental process, we now better understand how and why this method works, what is essential for the method, and what can be changed to adapt it to special target groups and curricular goals. At present we can also more thoroughly grasp what it takes to train teachers to use the KMDD effectively and responsibly (Chapter 11). However, most modifications did not improve the method. The original method which I described in the first edition of this book (Lind, 2003) remains the best one, standing strong against the test of time.

In this book I also discuss the "Just Community" method that was introduced by Lawrence Kohlberg, Clark Power, Ann Higgins, and others. In contrast to the dilemma stories, in which the participants discuss the problems and conflicts of a fictional protagonist, in Just Community sessions participants try to solve their own problems and conflicts. Obviously, this prepares young and old for an active role as citizens. But does the Just Community meeting also enhance their moral competence and can it thus replace the dilemma discussion method, as Kohlberg and his affiliates believed? (Althof 2015; Kohlberg 1985; Oser et al. 2008; Power et al. 1989; Power 1986; 2013; Zizek et al 2015)

Although I am very fond of the JC method and indeed have helped to make it popular in Europe (see Section 10.3), I have found little evidence that supports this claim (Lind 2002). I think it may be best to use both methods together as Heidi Gehrig suggests (Chapter 10.6). KMDD sessions can be used to foster students' moral-democratic competence, which they need for Just Community meetings.

The meaning of morality

Whereas in poetry and postmodern literature our audience might applaud when we use words in a new, creative way and play with synonyms, in education we need to clearly state how we understand central terminology such as morality and use it in a consistent way. This occasionally makes texts boring. But otherwise educators confuse people – and sometimes even themselves.

There is hardly any term in use which is more confusing than the notion of morality. Many of the disagreements about the nature and teaching of moral competence are tied to the fact that people understand the term often very differently in everyday life and in science alike. Authors frequently fail to include a definition, as they believe all readers share their own understanding. In the absence of self-declaration of one's understanding and usage of the term, and even when a definition is provided, the only reliable way to find out what authors mean is to study how they make use of and measure moral competence and other core terms.

In order to follow my own imperative, I have included in the appendix a glossary with the definitions of the technical terms used in this book and my other publications. I refrained from adding a subject index because there is no generally accepted use of these words. My terminology follows by and large the definitions in mainstream psychology and Kohlbergian moral psychology. However, in some instances I deviate from Kohlbergian understanding, as I think

that his conceptualization is wrong in some respects and a hindrance to the progress of moral science:

- In this book I use the term “moral” to mean the conformity of one’s behavior with *internal* rules, standards, principles or conscience. Conscience, as Kant described it in his important *Lectures on Ethics*, represents “an instinct, an involuntary and irresistible impulse in our nature, which compels us to pass a judgment with the force of law upon our actions, visiting us with an inner pain when we do evil and an inner pleasure when we do good. [...] This is the conscience, the instinct to judge and pass sentence upon our actions.” (Kant 1775-80/1961; see also Wren 1991)

In contrast, many researchers and educators define and judge the morality of a person’s behavior by *external* standards (that is, whether or not a person complies with social expectations, norms, and laws). How education teaches morality from an external point of view is exemplified by the so-called “plus 1 convention,” which I mentioned above. More examples can be found in those ethics curricula that seek to instill into students the ethical values and principles of society. I will discuss this external definition of morality in Section 2.1.

Of course, rule-conforming social behavior also forms an important part of moral education. In Section 4.6, I investigate how moral competence is related to norm conformity such as upholding the law, helping other people, decision-making, and learning.

- Morality is an aspect of behavior: it is not a component. The fact that we use the word “morality” as a noun leads people to falsely believe that it has to do with a certain thing or *component* of behavior which one can separate from other components of behavior. However, morality means neither a thing, nor an object, nor a component, nor can it be separated from behavior. Hence, I have adopted and elaborated an *aspect model* of moral behavior advanced by Socrates and Piaget (Chapter 3).
- This book is about morality, not ethics. Although the two words are often used interchangeably, they mean quite different things. Morality denotes the moral orientations which actually determine and manifest themselves in a person’s behavior, regardless of whether the person is fully aware of them or not, and whether the person can give an account of them or not. Ethics, however, involves philosophizing about morality: What are our moral principles? What kind of behavior follows from them? How can we justify certain kinds of decisions? Ethical reflection may or may not influence our moral behavior. But this is an empirical question. In Chapter 3, I discuss this relationship in more detail.
- There is not *one* moral aspect but *two*, namely moral orientations and moral competence. The best way to introduce these two different aspects would be to ask you two questions. The first question is: “Do I desire to be good?” What would be your answer? I am sure your answer would be “Yes I do”, unless you find it embarrassing to be considered a “moralist.” Well, nearly 100 percent of the participants of my workshops and lectures worldwide also answer “yes.” What is your answer to the second question: “Do I always act as I would expect of myself?” In my informal surveys, all participants – except a few would-be saints – answer in the negative. I presume that your answer would be no different from that of the majority.

The importance of this distinction can hardly be overestimated because the two aspects differ not only in nature, but also in their origin, in their relevance for behavior and in their teachability. Moral orientations, comprising the first aspect, seem to be innate. They are our common heritage. People all over the world share the same basic moral ideals. Thus moral orientations cannot and need not be taught. In contrast, moral competence, the second aspect, needs to be learned. It is not as high as we would wish it to be on the whole. Therefore it needs to be fostered through parents, schools and other institutions of education (Chapters 3 to 5).

Who needs moral competence?

Everybody wants to behave morally and everybody admits that their actual behavior often falls short of this expectation. So I presume that everybody needs moral competence in order to close the gap between their moral ideals and their decision-making. Some groups, however, deserve special mention. To give some examples:

To be a good partner and friend means to support one another, but it does not necessarily mean to agree all the time or to protect a partner under all circumstances. During KMDD-events, participants sometimes discuss dilemma stories in which friendship and partnership are involved (see Appendix, page xx.). Many participants argue – at least at the beginning of the discussion – that one should help or support or protect a friend unconditionally, that is, even when the friend violates the law. However, some also argue that true friendship could also mean to turn a friend in for prosecution, for example, in order to prevent more serious problems later on. I have observed that sometimes the number of participants who share this argument (although they do not always change their judgment on the protagonist's decision) grows slightly during the discussion. In adult relationships, a lot of people feel most comfortable with friends they can trust unconditionally. But, then again, some partners tell me that they think that trust could also mean that the partners correct and criticize each other when they make a mistake or behave immorally. Responding to the question of an observer on why one should listen to counter arguments, a ten-year-old participant pondered a short while and then said, “Yes, it helps me to check on my own position.” Love and care for friends and partners then means not just toleration but also sharing their partner's counterarguments and critical evaluation of plans and deeds. Pure ‘toleration’ cannot last for long, for no two people, regardless of how close their relationship, share entirely the same beliefs/opinions, and these positions change over time.

What is true for partnership is basically true for all other forms of relationships between people, that is, also for asymmetrical relationships like those between parents and children, superiors and subordinates, teachers and students, experts and laypeople, police and citizens, soldiers and conquered enemies, or politicians and their constituents. Such asymmetrical relationships have their own challenges. Sometimes they might partially function like a partnership, but mostly one side has a greater responsibility for the other side because of social role, legal status, power, or knowledge.

Parents have little training for their roles but have to solve a series of very difficult dilemmas when they want their children to become self-reliant grown-ups. Even when their children are still babies who fully depend on them for food and health care, they have a strong moral sense and a need for a cooperative social environment (Hamlin et al. 2007; Hepach et al. 2012). As the children get older, their need for respect and their own will additionally grow. How much

free rein should parents give their children for making their own decisions on the one hand, and how much must they protect them against harmful experiences on the other? What age is appropriate for total freedom in decision-making? If their children get into conflicts with siblings or with other children, should parents intervene or let them negotiate their own solutions? Obviously, these questions arise in many situations in which parents feel trapped in a dilemma: Whatever they do may turn out to be wrong. Often parents do not get immediate feedback on the effects of their parenting efforts. What may appear as a short-term failure for parents may turn out to be a long-term success. Adolescents whose parents listen and speak to them about problems show higher gains in moral competence, but only with a time lag, as Betsy Speicher has shown using data drawn from Kohlberg's longitudinal study (Speicher 1993).

Teachers and professors and the learners entrusted to them have a special relationship, which contains a fundamental dilemma: Teachers and professors ought to educate their students to become mature parents, managers, participants in civil society or even politicians, who can think for themselves and make responsible decisions on their own. But free will and autonomous judgment cannot be enforced with the use of standards and high stakes tests, and can only be fostered with opportunities for learning, responsibility-taking and reflection (Dewey 1916; Kohn 1999; Lind 2001c; 2015a; Portele 1978). How can this dilemma be resolved on the level of daily classroom practice and educational policy making?

When I taught a class of German Armed Force officers, they were skeptical whether my workshop about 'discussion' and 'democracy' (as they were told by their superiors) would benefit them at all. Their service, they told me, was completely ruled by the principle of 'command-and-obedience'. So I told them about the case of Private Snyder, who was on guard in an ammunition camp in an 'enemy' country late at night. He noticed a person leaving a building and running toward the fence. The person did not stop when he called upon him to stop in his tracks. Snyder hesitated. He thought that it could be an enemy stealing ammunition – but perhaps also a comrade stealing whisky. He decided to shoot into the air. Did he make the right decision? Immediately a very intense discussion broke out among the officers. What about the former belief that no discussion was needed in the Armed Forces? The officers were stunned when they realized that beyond commands and orders there was still much room for interpretation, that is, they were required to deliberate and discuss what is right and wrong. Later they talked about the extremely difficult decisions they have to make, for example, when searching private homes for snipers. While on a mission, each time a door opens, within a fraction of a second they have to decide whether they must shoot in order to protect their lives or not to shoot because a civilian is standing in the doorway. Right or wrong is not just an academic question or thought experiment for them. It is a question of surviving or killing innocent people, and then potentially suffering from post-traumatic distress syndrome. No, they have not been prepared for this kind of decision-making, they told me. At the end of the week, they further informed me that my morality workshop was of great use for them in their profession.

Learning opportunities for moral competence

In this book, I argue that moral competence *can* (and *must* be) taught. As I indicated already, not every method of teaching is successful. Indeed, some methods of teaching have been found to be unfit:

- By imposing punishment and reward, we can get people to change their behaviors in order to avoid a penalty, but we cannot promote their ability to behave morally in the absence of an authority figure (see Section 4.6). Rather, we must strengthen individuals' ability to act autonomously on moral principles, and solve the problems which autonomous action implies.
- Through the direct teaching of moral principles, we frequently 'carry coals to Newcastle.' People usually know what is right and wrong. But they often do not know how to resolve conflicts between opposing moral demands or tell exactly which concrete decision their moral ideals would imply.
- Rather we must provide appropriate learning opportunities for people to use their moral competence and, through this, strengthen it. Providing more learning opportunities for children of all ages in general has, as Clive Belfield and Henry M. Levin have shown for the United States, a huge impact on the individual's quality of life (health, income, freedom from criminal assaults etc.) and a government's influx of taxes: "If we assume that one-third of the opportunity gap [between high school dropouts and college graduates], the economic consequences would be \$50 billion in fiscal savings and \$200 billion in savings from society's perspective. By point of comparison, total taxpayer spending on K-12 education is approximately \$570 billion." (Belfield & Levin 2013, p. 205)

The authors emphasize that fact that their calculations have been based on very cautious assumptions, and that the true saving would be much higher. So they did not take into account the benefits of more effective teaching when teachers are better trained. Neither did they take into account the lowering the costs of crime and dysfunctional conflict resolution at home, in the neighborhood, at the work-place and in international politics through more effective moral and democratic education programs. Such a program could be build around the *Konstanz Method of Dilemma Discussion* (KMDD) which I have suggested for the promotion of moral competence. The two core ideas of this method are:

- The KMDD provides opportunities to cope with moral tasks, to put feelings of moral dilemmas into words, to weigh opposing arguments, and to discuss moral dilemmas with opponents. After all, moral competence – like other abilities -- is most effectively fostered through its frequent use.
- The KMDD triggers an optimal level of moral emotions for moral learning, not too weak and not too strong.

The realization of both ideas is easier said than done. What tasks are appropriate for moral education programs? How can we set up the training so that all participants in a learning group can benefit equally? In the second part of this book, I will describe how we have solved these and other questions.

My original inspiration for the KMDD came from the project 'Democracy and Education in the School' (DES), which I initiated with the help of my colleagues Jürgen Raschert, Fritz Oser, Sibylle Reinhardt, Karl-Heinz Schirp, Peter Dobbstein (in this book, page xx

Over the years, I had many opportunities to try out my ideas for improving the KMDD method in many KMDD sessions as well as workshop-seminars with diverse participant groups in different institutions and countries, including:

- Student teachers at the *University of Konstanz, Germany; Guangdong University of Foreign Studies, China; Universidad Santo Tomas, Bogotá, Columbia; University of Serres, Greece;* and at the *Yildiz Teknik Universitesi, Istanbul, Turkey.*
- Teachers of various subjects and fields of inquiry (ethics, philosophy, biology, social studies, German) in the context of their continued education in the German states of *Baden-Württemberg, Rhineland-Palatinate, Saxony,* and *Hamburg* as well as in the *District of Bogotá, Columbia.*
- Social workers, youth workers, law enforcement officers, and consultants as part of their continued education.
- Psychology students at the *University of Konstanz, Universidad Santo Tomas, Bogotá* and *Guangdong University of Foreign Studies, PR China.*
- Students at the *University of Applied Sciences of Special Needs Education* and the *University of Social Work* in *Zurich, Switzerland.*
- Prospective ethics teachers at the *Pedagogical State Institute in Rhineland-Palatinate* and at the *Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznan, Poland.*
- University professors from various disciplines (e.g. medicine, psychology, philosophy, pedagogy, technology, engineering, and natural sciences) through further education events at the *University of Konstanz; Guangdong University of Foreign Studies, China; Universidad Santo Tomas, Bogotá, Columbia; Universidad de Monterrey, Mexico,* and at the *Institute of Technology and Higher Studies at Monterrey (ITESM).*
- Training officers, troop psychologists, and chaplains of the *German Armed Forces* in the field of political and ethical education (*Innere Führung*).
- Editors, reporters and marketing personnel of the national daily newspaper, *El Tiempo* in *Bogotá, Colombia* as part of their in-house training.
- Mixed groups of individuals (parents, teachers, students, professors, doctors, economists, and experts in other fields, including the military and fire brigade) participating in KMDD events offered to the public in *Bogotá, Konstanz, Dresden, Monterrey, and Sao Paolo.*

Effectiveness

Many programs of moral and character education claim that they are effective, yet this claim often rests on subjective impressions by observers but not on objective tests of efficacy or, if tested, the programs have not been shown to be effective (see for example Hartshorne & May 1928; Lockwood 1978; Lind 2002). Moreover, in many instances, there were no adequate instruments for measuring moral competence. Numerous instruments that have been used to assess the effectiveness of curricula do not measure moral competence but measure moral orientations (attitudes, values or the like) or norm-conforming behavior. As far as I can tell, only the efficacy of the Blatt-Kohlberg method of dilemma discussion was intensively studied with an instrument of moral competence (Blatt & Kohlberg 1975; Lockwood 1978; Higgins 1980; Leming 1981). In the beginning effectiveness was only defined as “statistical signifi-

cance” of the increase in a test score which did not truly show the power of an intervention because “significance” depends largely on the size of the sample but not on the size of effect. “There is no good excuse for saying that a statistically significant result is significant because this language erroneously suggests to many readers that the result is automatically large, important, and substantial.” (Carver 1992, p. 288) Therefore I re-analyzed 141 intervention studies using a measure of relative effect size. As it turned out, the Kohlberg-Blatt was highly effective and no negative effects were found in any of the interventions (Lind 2002). The effect size excelled the typical effects of interventions found in other fields of education, psychotherapy, workplace enhancement, and medicine (Lipsey & Wilson 1993).

However, there are some drawbacks to these effectiveness studies. One is that the application and scoring of their measurement instrument, Kohlberg’s *Moral Judgment Interview* (MJI) method, is very time consuming. Hence its application is highly expensive and makes large scale application unlikely. The second drawback is that its scoring involves subjective rating, which is highly standardized and reliable but still triggers questions about its objectivity. Finally, the MJI provides scores which confound the two aspects of moral orientation and moral competence validity (Lind 1989b). For these reasons we developed a new instrument for measuring curricula effectiveness in the 1970s, the Moral Competence Test (Chapter 4). The availability of an economical, objective test allows teachers to try out changes to improve the method or introduce new dilemma stories.

The KMDD has shown to be at least as effective as the Blatt-Kohlberg method even though its effectiveness is evaluated with an objective method for assessing moral competence (Chapter 8). Generally, a few sessions suffice to achieve a substantial effect size (if the instructor is trained as a KMDD Teacher). This means that the KMDD is not only effective but also efficient, that is, positive effects are achieved at little cost. Studies also indicate that KMDD sessions produce sustainable learning outcomes. The intervention effects could still be observed several weeks and months later (Lind 2002; Lerkiatbundit et al. 2006; Hemmerling 2014).

Participants in KMDD sessions report various kinds of learning experiences. Discussions often extend beyond the formal conclusion of the KMDD session. Students regularly group together during recess to further discuss the dilemma story. Former participants have contacted me even weeks after the event to state that they still think about the dilemma story and discuss it with their family and friends. Teachers who have tried the KMDD commonly continue to enlist the method even if there are no external incentives. They report that the KMDD sessions strengthen not only students’ moral competence, but the overall classroom learning environment as well.

Additional evidence for the sustainability of the method comes by way of recommendation from various institutions. The general of the German Armed Forces then in charge of its education programs deemed the KMDD as important for the concept of democratic training of soldiers (Bergmann 2007). A Protestant bishop affirmed the value of the KMDD for teaching values (Weber 2006). The Minister of Education for Colombia recommended the KMDD method to teachers across the country (Ministerio de Educación 2004). The Medical School of Monterrey has offered the KMDD as part of its curriculum for several years.

Changes to the KMDD

Although the basic concept of the KMDD has worked well for over twenty years in varied contexts, I have made a very few alterations of the method which are incorporated as follows:

- In my publications to-date, I generally used the terms *moral competence* and *moral judgment* competence synonymously. I realize that this may cause confusion. In the context of moral psychology, the term “judgments” refers to certain verbal behavior, namely the judgment or appraisal of a person’s actions and arguments. It is connected, in this context, with moral consciousness and reflection about behavior: “Conscious realization is a reconstruction and consequently a new and original construction superimposed upon the construction already formed by action.” (Piaget 1965, p. 177) Yet this book is about a disposition that is *manifested* directly in behavior, which may or may not be conscious. Therefore I use the term *moral competence* or synonyms like *moral ability* without the word “judgment.” I have also changed the name of our test accordingly, from Moral Judgment Test to *Moral Competence Test* (see Chapter 4).
- A *dilemma* is something which exists only in the eye of the beholder (Lind, 2006a). That is, it is not objective and does not exist outside our minds. Therefore, we cannot write or tell a “dilemma.” We cannot know whether the participants share our perspective and feel the moral dilemma that we see. We can only hope that our stories trigger the feeling of a dilemma in our audience. As a teacher, one develops over time an increasingly better feeling for stories which trigger the feeling of a particular dilemma in certain target groups. Of course, this is all the more difficult, the farther away the group of people with whom we perform a KMDD session may stand from us, such as the very young or very old, or people from other cultures than our own.
- Formerly, I recommended changing the story during a session if two discussion groups could not be formed due to the vote. (If none or only a very few in the group vote for one of the sides, it makes no sense to start a discussion). That was not good advice, as I later learned. If the KMDD teacher alters the story in front of the participants it loses credibility. In these cases participants experienced less serious moral feelings that are important for effective learning. I now recommend that the teacher should not announce a discussion so one does not have to apologize if the vote does not lead to the formation of discussion groups. We now announce KMDD sessions not as a discussion but rather as ‘*Talking about a Story*’ or as ‘*Talking and Listening.*’ If the vote precludes a debate, the teacher can use the occasion to discuss topics with the class for which there is otherwise no time or conduct an exercise that relates to the KMDD. For example, the participants may choose to write a fictional dilemma story based on their own experiences and present it to the class (see “Writing a dilemma story” instructions in the Appendix). In my experience, the participants will have great fun with this task.

What we have learned so far

The most important lesson we, the users of the KMDD, have learned through our experiences with many KMDD sessions in many different cultures indicates that Socrates was in fact right: “All desire the good.” Everyone desires to behave morally. Not a single participant in KMDD sessions to-date has broken the ground rule of the KMDD to contest arguments, not people. This is noteworthy because in the KMDD, compliance with the rules is not enforced

through threats of punishment. The teacher only *reminds* participants of a particular rule if someone has violated it. As one participant remarked in representative fashion after a KMDD session, “I have always wanted to discuss with others about important matters in such a way without both becoming mad. I did not think that it was possible.”

Second, we have also learned that Socrates’ second assertion is also universally true: “*And if one man is no better than another in desiring good, he must be better in the power of attaining it.*” All data from large and small surveys show that people’s moral competence varies to a great extent. Moreover we found that on average people’s moral competence is low. Through this and other findings, my confidence has increased that so-called ‘evil’ is not a drive or desire of human beings, but that it rather indicates a lack of moral competence. Just as some diseases of the body indicate a certain lack or deficiency in a vital nutrient, so too do violence, deceit, and coercion point to the lack of a capacity to solve problems and conflicts through thinking and discussion. So we do not need to ‘fight’ dysfunctional behavior. Instead, we need to empower people to overcome their lack of moral competence so they have a choice.

What remains to be done?

Morality *must* be fostered. Most children and adults have far too few learning opportunities for practicing and thus training their moral competence. Therefore, it is not enough that we announce and disseminate our new knowledge about the nature of moral behavior and its promotion. In order to benefit as many people as possible, KMDD teachers must be trained who can effectively and responsibly implement proven methods so that the promotion of moral competence is not restricted to only a few people. Only when *all* people can benefit from this method, will our living together, our ways of life be significantly improved. I am sure that we could make the world much more peaceful, non-violent, and cooperative if every young person (and also every adult) participated once or twice a year in a KMDD session, and thus could train their moral and democratic competence.

Moreover, we need to educate trainers of KMDD teachers. To this end we need Master's degree programs at universities with qualified professors. These professors must have both extensive practical experience with running KMDD sessions, and scientific qualifications in subjects such as psychology, education, moral philosophy, and especially in the KMDD. As part of these programs, research on moral and democratic competence should also be established in order to learn more about its nature and relevance for individual well-being and global democracy, and to improve the KMDD, to adapt it for various fields of application, and to monitor and further develop the quality standards associated with its deployment.

Finally, we should continue to make the KMDD more versatile without losing sight of its goals or reducing its effectiveness (Chapters 4 and 8). New developments for the KMDD are available online in English, German, and Spanish at: <http://www.uni-konstanz.de/ag-moral/>.