

**An Alternative Educational Pedagogy for  
Civic and Moral Education:  
Real-Life Moral Dilemma Discussion  
(Re-LiMDD)**

**公民及倫理教育的另類教學法：  
現實生活中倫理難題的討論**

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[ABSTRACT] One of the aims of education is ensuring that knowledge, skills and values learnt can be broadly applied in daily life as a socialisation process. In this aspect, social agents and institutions such as family, peers, religious and other civil society organisations are all involved in socialisation. The current rapid development of technology and globalisation acknowledges that individuals worldwide are interconnected and interdependent beyond the conventional means of their local society and nation. Thus, civic and moral educators play a crucial role in promoting the necessary knowledge, skills and values to cultivate a sense of shared destiny through identification with their spiritual, social, cultural and political environments. Educators need to know how to educate students to become aware of the challenges posed to the development

of self and others through an understanding of social, economic and environmental change. This article explores the use of real-life moral dilemma discussion (Re-LiMDD) as an educational pedagogy to engage students, teachers and society in civic and social intervention in view of positive societal participation and transformation based on local issues with a global view. It explores the process of resolving real-life moral dilemmas in and outside the formal setting. It critically analyses the Re-LiMDD process and the different components necessary to adapt such an educational pedagogy in the 21st century. The basis of preparing a platform for individuals to bring their real-life into the formal setting and vice versa provides an opportunity for moral and civic engagement in the true sense, taking into consideration religion, cultural diversity and other complex participatory issues.

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## **Introduction**

Today, there is much debate about how much of moral and civic education taught and learnt in schools is being applied in real-life by students and by teachers. Knowledge is no more confined to that person called teacher or “guru”. Knowledge resources are not limited to places such as libraries or resource centres. The world has become a revolving space of knowledge. Thanks to the technology explosion, each individual can design the path to acquire knowledge based on his or her capacity, liking and need.

Schools and teachers are facing a challenging time in keeping up with the latest e-knowledge and technology boom. From the positive perspective, individuals are becoming more knowledgeable and have multiple resources for their moral and civic development.

From the practical perspective, however, individuals are facing more real-life dilemmas as they are at times in difficult positions of having to resolve a conflict or dilemma.

A study conducted in Malaysia and Thailand in 2016-2017 by a Harvard professor for 18 months made him conclude that local graduates in these nations are like Danish high school drop-outs. He concluded that the knowledge acquired was not equivalent with their poor soft skills and communicative skills. He also concluded that education in this part of the world did not cater for the students in the poor category. This provides validity to my own 30 odd years of research involving real-life dilemmas when dealing with matters of morals and morality.<sup>1</sup>

The use of Re-LiMDD has been administered and trialled for more than three decades in formal and informal settings. It started during my high school days when I was heading the school prefectorial board which used to meet every fortnight. As school leaders and helpers for the school administration, prefects have been the gatekeepers for upholding school rules and regulations. However, many times, I have seen injustice happening in front of me. There were times when students were not punished for being late because they were from the upper class or had connections with the school authority. There were times when prefects were bribed in the form of free canteen food or given extra portions for not reporting the actual issues taking place.

Other than discussing the normal agendas for the meeting such as past discipline issues, future prefectorial plans and activities, a special session was held toward the end of each meeting where each prefect was provided sufficient time to bring forward a moral

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<sup>1</sup> Vishalache Balakrishnan, *Using Real-life Dilemmas To Teach ME* (Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia: University of Malaya Press, 2011).

dilemma faced as a prefect in school, either while on duty or at other times. As upholders of the school social order, my prefectorial group and I had so many issues to be discussed and we were personally and collaboratively involved. Sometimes, several prefects had similar issues but at other times, only one or two had issues. After the real-life dilemma was presented, each prefect had a say and the person with the issue had the advantage to also contribute her way of resolving it.

What was important was to provide equal opportunity for everyone to have a say about their moral issues. Sometimes, things got out of hand as personal attacks and sensitive issues were brought up such as one not doing their duty or covering up for friends. The session ends with each one of us stating one positive aspect in every prefect and that ends the real-life moral dilemma discussion (Re-LiMDD) with a constructive and positive mood. Most important was each dilemma presented would be discussed and alternative solutions shared by all in the prefectorial board. This was an effective method to resolve moral issues as every issue had its own complication. The whole process was within a safe, private and confidential environment. The prefectorial advisor who is usually a teacher is present as a discussion group participant.

Later, after leaving high school, I joined a non-governmental organisation (NGO) and one vision of the NGO was to help individuals, families and communities to help themselves. We usually reached out to individuals in dire poverty or those who were disoriented. Again, instead of imposing our thoughts and values upon them, I introduced Re-LiMDD to these individuals and groups. The process we implemented was similar with the prefectorial board and many times, the process of shared empowerment and providing voices for the target group participants made them more independent and better at resolving their own moral dilemmas.

I continued this method of resolving moral issues during my days as a teacher; towards other teachers and students, as a netball coach, a trainer in a multinational electronics factory and during my term as a regional president for an international association. It produced very satisfactory results and kept me going further to use the method in resolving moral issues. However, I was using the method based on my experience and pool of knowledge on how to improvise the moral dilemma resolution process based on previous success and setbacks.

It was only during my master and doctoral studies that I ventured into the theoretical aspects of what I was doing my entire adolescent life in applying discussions for resolving moral issues and focussed on the technical aspects of what Re-LiMDD was all about. After more than two decades of practical dealings of Re-LiMDD with all kinds of organisations and communities, different countries, different age groups, different gender, ethnicity, religious background before I explored in-depth the critical educational theories, organisational behaviour theories and procedures for Re-LiMDD.

## **What are Moral Dilemmas?**

Moral dilemmas are situations whereby an individual, several individuals or society faces conflicting situations with several alternatives to choose from to make a moral decision. The moral dilemma happens because of clashes in values between one or more persons.<sup>2</sup> At times, the moral dilemma is within the thoughts of an

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<sup>2</sup> Vishalache Balakrishnan & Lise Claiborne, "Vygotsky from ZPD to ZCD in ME: Reshaping Western theory and practices in local context," *Journal of Moral Education* 41.2 (2012): 225-243.

individual. At other times, it involves two or more individuals, groups of people, nation and nation or individual(s) and nature.

In simple terms, a moral dilemma comprises one issue, involving one or more characters where there is conflict and one should analyse the issue to make a decision. The decision might be based on several factors such as rational reasoning, justice, and care perspectives. Moral dilemmas can be hypothetical moral dilemmas or real-life moral dilemmas.

### **Why Real-Life Moral Dilemmas?**

In current times, the world is borderless and unexplored areas of cultural and moral conflict diversities are limitless. Coming from a background of mix-parentage ethnicity, multiple faith and religiosity, I had always faced real-life moral dilemmas as an individual myself from a young age. The culture, societal norms, individual and family preference were all a life-long struggle for me and my family when we faced structured societal norms which we refused to adhere to because of our biological and social understanding of more than one culture or religion or ethnicity. Thus, we were constantly bombarded with daily moral dilemma issues of all sorts, which needed careful and complex consideration when deciding on resolution. It was not an easy phase in my early childhood especially growing up in a pluralistic nation where social ethics seemed so structured and conventional. The pluralistic aspect of multicultural countries such as Malaysia is sometimes taken for granted or not even provided a definition. As such domineering or social ethics of the majority becomes the guide for the minorities in a pluralistic nation. And children of mixed parentage have to face daily real-life dilemmas when they are with family members of either parent. These differences have provided me the opportunity to face real-life moral dilemmas of all sorts.

What are real-life moral dilemmas? Real-life moral dilemmas are ethical conflicts faced by individuals as one or many in their everyday lives.<sup>3</sup> The use of real-life moral dilemmas is practical and realistic in understanding the moral perspective of an individual. People differ in the way they interpret a moral dilemma; I found that moral dilemmas in real life were unclear and complex. It might be interpreted as serious by one but as something not to be worried over by another.<sup>4</sup>

Individuals and organisations facing moral dilemmas and interpret those problems according to their own moral orientation, level of moral development, and particular context and experience. If they come from nations or communities where individuals lack freedom to express their views because everything is governed by rules and regulations, then the collective voice is heard. However, in current times, there seems to be a balance between individual and collective voices. In different parts of the globe; individuals are capable of sharing their own moral dilemmas and interacting with each other to resolve such conflicts. This shift especially in the Eastern context all the more makes Re-LiMDD an important pedagogical teaching and learning tool.

Identifying real-life situations and developing the situations for discussion in a learning environment is considered as one effective teaching pedagogical tool. Individuals involved feel and become part of what is being discussed. They take shared responsibility to share their own real-life dilemmas and whatever decision made is thought through carefully as decisions made would have a consequence on themselves as individuals or as a collective group.<sup>5</sup> Since lifelong learning is ongoing, continuous, voluntary and self-motivated, we

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<sup>3</sup> Carol Gilligan, *In A Different Voice: Psychological Theory And Women's Development* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1982).

<sup>4</sup> John Wilson, *Introduction to Moral Education* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1972).

<sup>5</sup> Lev Vygotsky, *Thought and language* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1986).

need to create social innovations and keep the spirit going. Every day, we are learning new things. Learning throughout life till life is no more is an undeniable practical principle. What is currently being challenged is how lifelong learning as an educational principle has been utilised in the globalisation era for the 21st century.

Until current times, many organisations and teaching tools have been using hypothetical moral dilemmas to educate and introduce problem resolution skills to individuals. It might have worked when individuals and organisations were mono ethnic, single culture and generic in nature. However in current times, using limited stereotypical dilemmas is neither realistic nor practical. For example the popular *Heinz Dilemma* introduced by Kohlberg on whether Heinz should or should not steal the drug which he could not afford to pay from the drug-store for his dying wife can have several responses from individuals of different cultures and beliefs. The concern that I foresee is that this hypothetical dilemma focusses on fictional characters that may be unfamiliar or irrelevant and under such circumstances may minimise individual creativity, cognition and emotional involvement in resolving the dilemmas.

Presenting actual dilemmas as stimuli based on my experience and research evidence provides an exciting and creative avenue for 21st century social innovation. These dilemmas may seem more relevant, factual, more realistic and authentic to individuals. Not only are they learning some new skills, but they are developing to be more experienced individuals in dealing with their own life and work issues.

## **Approaching Real-Life Moral Dilemmas**

Real-life moral dilemmas can be approached using the “head”, the “heart”, to proceed to “action” or all three depending on which



aspect overpowers the other. When one faces a moral dilemma, the head which is the cognitive component will think actively of all the possibilities to resolve the issue. The heart symbolising the emotional component would start feeling strongly about what should be done and not done but if the head is too strong, the heart takes a setback and rational reasoning will overpower the rest. Based on the heart and the head, action follows.

However, there are times when individuals overwhelmed by emotions decide or act without consulting the head and the heart. Such hasty decisions may bring more disaster than solution. At other times, individuals who have been indoctrinated with structured aspects such as religion, cultural norms, rules and regulations take the easy way out by not even thinking through or allowing for self-reflection and collaboration if the decision involves an organisation.

### **Real-Life Moral Dilemma Discussion (Re-LiMDD) as a 21st Century Educational Pedagogy Tool**

Re-LiMDD is based on the modified version of Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), extended to suit a multicultural, multiethnic 21st century societal setting; and here called the Zone of Collaborative Development (ZCD). In ZPD, it was suggested that what an individual learns and does in cooperation today, based on the knowledge and experiences of his capable peers, can be transferred to his action tomorrow when he does it alone.<sup>6</sup>

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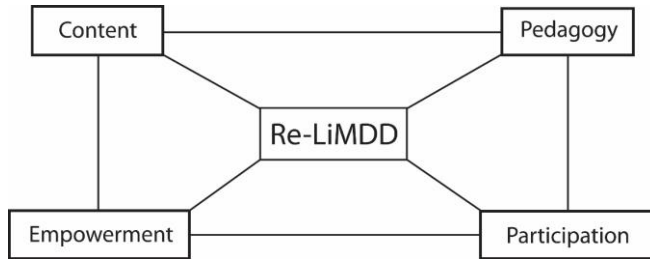
<sup>6</sup> Vishalache Balakrishnan and Sue Cornforth, "Using Working Agreements in Participatory Action Research: Working Through Moral Problems with Malaysian Students," *Educational Action Research* 21.4 (2013): 582-602.

Vygotsky introduced the concept of ZPD in relation to learning and development. According to him, learning and application of what is being learnt is a largely socially-mediated activity and the real learning takes place in the individual's ZCD. The basis to this approach is Vygotsky's claim that in order to match theory with practical world view knowledge and experiences in an individual, what must be determined is not only the actual development but also the level of potential development. The actual development reflects what the individual knows and is able to perform at the moment. However the setback here is it is all individual based and there is no expression of collaboration or team effort.

Where moral and civics education is concerned, there is a crucial need to adapt Re-LiMDD into the school and societal pedagogy. Individuals do not live alone and they have their micro and macro cultural, ethical, civic and religious preferences as well as differences. Re-LiMDD provides the platform for individuals to bring out issues of current times which is of importance to them and their society, their nation, which can be discussed in a civic and ethical manner. Individuals are able to learn from others' dilemmas, successes and failures, from others' cultures and experiences because of the equality in power sharing implicit in the process of Re-LiMDD.

With current development in technology, Re-LiMDD can be an educational pedagogical tool set in a virtual space where individuals or organisations come together to discuss moral dilemmas they are facing. By creating such a space, there is room for components such as time, flexibility and discussions across the globe.

Re-LiMDD is constructed based on the following four dimensions:



*Figure 1: The four dimensions of Re-LiMDD.*

### ***1.Content***

The content is the real-life dilemma and it is usually in the form of a narrative that can easily be explored through several ways such as digital cloud, or the traditional oral and written form. The content is provided by the individuals involved in the ZCD who may be from any organisation or representing their own self which makes it relevant to them. In order to allow some system within the Re-LiMDD, thematic forms of discussion should be encouraged. The root of a certain problem should form the thematic discussion. However, this suggestion is flexible and can be further discussed among the ZCD participants.

### ***2.Pedagogy***

The pedagogy or method for Re-LiMDD is dialoguing, discussing, and engaging in a critical thinking process. The pedagogy is transformative in nature and develops in participants the knowledge, skills and values needed to resolve the moral conflicts discussed. Decisions made are reflected upon. Re-LiMDD

encourages reflective decision-making with collaborative and personal moral action.

### ***3. Empowerment***

Power sharing is essential in implementing Re-LiMDD. It is between the different participants in an organisation. Each party should feel comfortable and confident that they have equal power and privilege to voice their opinions, suggestions, and arguments.

Cultural differences and societal norms make empowerment a very subjective issue; yet it is so important for conducting Re-LiMDD. In many traditional Asian societies, the leaders such as a teacher or manager of an organisation are always seen as the authority. However, the principle in Re-LiMDD is that participants have multiple resources for knowledge and teachers and managers must share power with participants. Though equal power is impossible in any situation, all involved in Re-LiMDD can work on giving participants opportunities to exercise their own agency.

### ***4. Participation***

In Re-LiMDD, participants in the ZCD process take on an active participant role. Sometimes they become the capable peers who lead the group discussions. It all depends on their experiences and their funds of knowledge. The role of the capable peer is taken up in various forms and the director or manager of the organisation too can take this role if participants lack the expertise.

However, the notion of power sharing is important and participants in any organisation tend to listen and dialogue better

when there are fewer constraints from the director or manager exercising an authoritative role.

All four components in Re-LiMDD; content, pedagogy, empowerment and participation are interrelated and they all share equal weight in Re-LiMDD.

## **Importance of Re-LiMDD**

Re-LiMDD provides a platform for individuals to resolve daily life issues which at times seems impossible due to dogmatic or merely strong conventional beliefs. Re-LiMDD objectives are to encourage open discussion among individuals to resolve moral issues faced in daily life, to resolve conflicting moral issues that might touch on cultural sensitivities which need mutual respect, to provide a voice for, and to empower, every individual within an organisation. Through Re-LiMDD participation, the individuals might be able to perform better and think critically, to increase their productivity and performance and communicate effectively.

The scope of ZCD is to transform organisations and individuals to a more positive environment and outlook through Re-LiMDD. People become more confident when they are able to resolve their own moral dilemmas with a certain level of approval from individuals around them. People become motivated when their talents are recognised and they are empowered to resolve moral conflicts in their organisation. They become more productive and proactive toward organisational growth and development. The duration of the whole process depends on the type and seriousness of the moral conflicts involved. It can vary from one session to several sessions of Re-LiMDD.

## **Process Involved in Re-LiMDD**

The process involved in Re-LiMDD starts with meeting the participants, building trust between members, bringing out moral conflicts either written or oral and proceeding to the moral dilemma discussions and ending with a reflective session. The whole process in Re-LiMDD is divided into five phases.

### ***1. Meeting with Re-LiMDD participants***

Meeting with participants is the start to the whole Re-LiMDD process. Participants involved usually are there on their own free will and there is mutual understanding with the facilitator that participants can leave if they are uncomfortable with the pace and tone of the Re-LiMDD.

### ***2. Rapport Building with Re-LiMDD participants***

The second phase is to ensure establishment of a safe environment for participants to discuss and resolve their real-life moral dilemmas. To ensure that every participant has a fair say, a working agreement can be developed. It allows participants to decide what would constitute a safe environment for them and how to deal with any difficulties arising in the Re-LiMDD process. This phase also allows participants and facilitator to build trust with each other. And this trust will help during the discussion phase.

### ***3. Problem Formulation***

The third phase is listening to problems of participants. Participants present their moral conflicts in writing either the

traditional or digital way, depending on the working agreement with the group involved. Participants can present their own dilemma or any that they encountered through discussions with other individuals or social media. As dilemma analysis would be one of the methods for resolution, participants need to write in detail all the information that they want the discussion group to know. Privacy and confidentiality is ensured throughout the Re-LiMDD process.

#### ***4. Procedures***

The fourth phase comprises the real-life moral dilemmas discussions and resolution according to the participants' perspective. Everyone in the group will have a say and provide reasons for the solutions suggested. Participants are encouraged to keep a personal journal where they can further write their resolutions, their feelings, and whatever their emotions were at that moment. When discussions do not bring any resolutions, participants can continue a next cycle based on the same dilemma, after which they reflect individually.

Depending on the time and depth of discussion, the facilitator has to ensure that everyone's dilemma has a fair chance to be discussed.

#### ***5. Reflective Cycle***

The fifth and final phase is a reflective phase. After several cycles of dilemma analysis and self-reflection as well as journal entries based on all the moral dilemmas presented, participants will meet for the final cycle to reflect upon the whole Re-LiMDD process that they had undergone. In the reflective session, participants would be encouraged to express their views of the Re-LiMDD process and

what moral action they took or would take based on the dilemma analysis. The whole process and products of Re-LiMDD can be of direct and immediate benefit to those involved but also might spread with a ripple effect.

The above mentioned process can be modified to suit the digital world where chat rooms can be organised and facilitators as well as participants can be near or far. The virtual Re-LiMDD also provides more space for a safe environment and confidentiality. The detachment from face to face meeting can be analysed from two perspectives. One, the freedom to think and reflect without having the group members reacting through body language and non-verbal actions provide Re-LiMDD participants with a more conducive environment for them to think through the real-life dilemmas. On the other hand, participants might not be as serious as they could be within a physical space where the shared responsibility would provide a sense of commitment to be part of the whole group. Whatever the perspective, there is space to make Re-LiMDD work.

## **Making Re-LiMDD Work**

The required facilities for Re-LiMDD would include a conducive place to conduct discussions, facilitators well versed with Re-LiMDD and the acknowledgement of each individual or organisation to conduct the Re-LiMDD with the intention to resolve moral conflicts or to improve the organisational system and bring it to greater heights.

As Re-LiMDD involves the need to dialogue, agree, disagree, protest, think, reflect, collaborate, cooperate and resolve moral dilemmas, a working agreement is needed at the beginning of the



whole process to ensure it proceeds smoothly and that Re-LiMDD is a reality and not a myth.

### ***1. Working Agreement***

Taking time before the discussion process begins using Re-LiMDD about how to work together in the whole process would enable the facilitator and participants to address any ethical issues that arise later. It is the norm with any newly tested or utilised innovative tool. Aspects such as gaining fully informed consent, in-group confidentiality, overcoming cultural misconceptions, and protecting participants from risky self-disclosures are all important. Drawing on my own experiences of conducting Re-LiMDD in schools and workplaces, I found that participants responded to attempts to address conflicting moral dilemmas whether individual based or organisational based when a clear working agreement is constructed. Such a working agreement provides participants with a greater sense of safety and more confidence in their ability to solve ethical problems.

The working agreement can be written or oral but usually individuals prefer it to be a written reference source.<sup>7</sup> However groups of participants might prefer a flexible and authentic working agreement because they usually alter it especially when facing unanticipated situations. The working agreement also enables the facilitator to be more aware of, and responsive to, the cultural context of the Re-LiMDD participants.

In one of my research conducted using Re-LiMDD, the working agreement contained the participants' own suggestions for what they

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<sup>7</sup> Balakrishnan and Cornforth, "Using Working Agreements in Participatory Action Research," 582-602.

expected of every group member during the Re-LiMDD process. It was a document agreed upon by all group participants before the analysis of the moral dilemmas began.

It is essential to provide all Re-LiMDD participants with a safe and conducive environment.<sup>8</sup> It is equally important to safeguard the process and product of Re-LiMDD. Participants should be given clarifications of confidentiality and working agreements within each Re-LiMDD. The working agreement aids in keeping the Re-LiMDD structure and safeguards the entire process. If needed to safeguard the individual participants especially in moral conflicts involving high risk, participants can write the moral conflicts using pseudonyms. The aim of Re-LiMDD is to resolve moral issues; thus the source should be safeguarded at all times. Group confidentiality and working agreement design can vary from culture to culture and needs sensitiveness and sensibility from the authorities who want to try out Re-LiMDD.

There are several knowledge areas which becomes part and parcel of Re-LiMDD. Such knowledge areas become the basic deliverables for this social innovative tool which is to provide individuals and organisations with empowerment and simultaneously the ability to participate in organisational growth and development through Re-LiMDD when necessary.

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<sup>8</sup> Code of Mutual Respect and Cooperation for Faculty, Staff and Students in The Eberly College of Science, 2010, <http://science.psu.edu/climate/support-and-resources/code-of-mutual-respect-and-cooperation/Code-of-Mutual-Respect%20final.pdf>.

## ***2. Knowledge Areas Identified for Re-LiMDD***

### ***Mutual Respect***

Respect and being respected are essentials for Re-LiMDD. Every individual is seen as important as the moral dilemma and no one is above the others. Mutual respect moves beyond tolerance and requires nurturing comfort within the myriad differences inherent in the complexity of life.

Mutual respect would include characteristics such as being courteous, treating everyone equally and with respect, being ready to communicate, encouraging others and sharing expertise, giving and accepting constructive criticism, being receptive to change, being a team player, getting involved, having a positive attitude, being honest and accept responsibility, recognising other people's priorities and striving to do your best.<sup>9</sup>

In one dilemma discussed by the secondary school students from two different groups, students from diverse religions and ethnic groups repeated that their religion and moral teachings emphasised the need to respect elders but these adolescents also wanted the practice of mutual respect and their voices to be heard especially regarding their choices of profession or leisure time activities.

### ***Cultural Diversity***

In Re-LiMDD, appreciating the differences in individuals within the discussion group is essential. Cultural diversity appreciates the differences in individuals whether in a multicultural or monocultural group. Many societies may inculcate ideologies in

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<sup>9</sup> Summer B. Twiss, "History, Human Rights and Globalization." *Journal of Religious Ethics* 32 (2004): 39-70.

their young but not all ideologies inculcated are equally suitable to every sort of society.

Cultural diversity is sometimes known as multiculturalism. Thus cultural diversity in Re-LiMDD means being able to accept differences within each of the participants including language, religion, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender, age, disability and so forth.

### ***Self-Reflection***

Self-reflection in Re-LiMDD is the ability of participants to practice introspection which is related to the philosophy of consciousness. It is an act of spending time in a quiet moment to look at the moral issue and think of all the alternatives available. This practice may lead to more inquiry and wanting to know more answers; the individual can then come back and collaborate or ask their group participants.

Self-reflection requires honesty and integrity but is an essential method to improve one's self-awareness about dealing with moral dilemmas whether within or without.

### ***Integrity***

Integrity is an important aspect in any society and culture. In Re-LiMDD it refers to the participant's level of honesty, moral and social commitment and willingness to help oneself as much as helping others with the notion of improving the quality of life especially when facing daily moral dilemmas.

Lack of integrity can affect the effectiveness of Re-LiMDD especially when participants only favour their dilemmas over their friends. Such attitude can be resolved if each participant understands that they are there as a group to dialogue and show respect to other participants with appropriate conversation and empathy. Re-LiMDD is a social tool enabling participants to have the courage to say no and face the truth in any situation. It helps with the process of developing integrity because there is the balance between the life one is living on the outside which should match who one is on the inside.

### ***Safe Environment***

Individuals are vulnerable to criticisms, all the more if it spears into one's personal or intimate moral dilemmas. Building a safe environment for participants in Re-LiMDD is indeed important. Participants and their families' privacy in Re-LiMDD should be protected where trust and honesty embedded in the ethics of care become the basis for this aspect. Gaining informed consent is a necessity and guidelines for the Re-LiMDD process should be in place and agreed upon in the event of a difficult closure. The individual(s) organising the Re-LiMDD need to build rapport before Re-LiMDD takes place.

### ***Effective Communication***

Communication generally refers to the imparting or exchange of thoughts, ideas, opinions or information by signs, speech or written form. Communication in Re-LiMDD takes into account the verbal and non-verbal aspect. Effective communication in Re-LiMDD takes place when participants have the moral courage to share and discuss issues that have escalated beyond their problem-solving ability. The

strength of this ability is the confrontation and urgency of challenging real-life moral dilemmas where effective communication is essential.

### ***Identify Conflict Ideals***

When a moral dilemma exists, one can expect differing ideas regarding how to resolve it. Moral dilemmas make individuals and groups think and reflect on how to resolve such matters. Naturally most individuals would have some ideals of resolving such dilemmas. This can be destructive if such ideals do not consider previous deliverables such as cultural diversity, integrity and so forth. Thus in Re-LiMDD, there should be minimal conflict ideals and zero stereotyping. Mind sets become in tune with problem resolution if individuals, through Re-LiMDD, are encouraged to come up with a collaborative solution.

## **Social Ethics and Re-LiMDD**

In the 21st century, social ethics is meant to act as a guide by setting the ground rules for what society accepts as the norm or culture. Naturally, the welfare of society as a collective group is prioritised ahead of the interest of any one or small individual group.<sup>10</sup> This generally helps to ensure that every individual is held accountable by each other.

Within social ethics is a rule that is applied in order to define the relationship with others so that effective communication can be established. Social ethics is applicable in a community and

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<sup>10</sup> David Miller, *Principles of Social Justice* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1999).

sometimes has a life of its own. Traits that appear depend on the culture and customs applicable in areas where a community resides. Then the culture is still influenced more by the mind-set of the local community as well as the location and geographical conditions of that community. Since every community has a certain prevailing social ethic, every person who lives with members of the community must be willing to obey all kinds of rules and regulations. The goal of this philosophy is to establish a harmonious life, especially with other community members. Every action we take must be in accordance with the prevailing social ethic in the area. This applies globally wherever we live. Whether it is in the western hemisphere, east, south or north. Each has its own rules to maintain the good life in the neighbourhood.

However, the idea of principles of social justice can be explored through three categories of justice within social ethics.<sup>11</sup> The three modes of relationship include solidaristic community, instrumental association and citizenship. Solidaristic community exist when individuals share a common identity as members of a relatively stable group with a common ethos. Instrumental association exists when individuals relate to one another in a utilitarian manner, where each individual has aims and purposes that can become reality and realised by collaboration with others. Citizenship is generally defined in law that anyone who is a full member of a certain society is understood to be a bearer of a set of rights and obligations/responsibilities that defines the status of a citizen. Beneath this definition appears the understanding of citizenship as common social and political statutes that may be appealed to in criticism of existing legal practices.

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<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

Whatever the situation, the definition given by Miller can be applied for Re-LiMDD. Since Re-LiMDD can be applied in any situation, whether solidaristic community, instrumental association or citizens of a society, the application of Re-LiMDD is viable for all three principles. Social ethics deals with human nature and human desire. Every individual in their life journey will want to find out what he or she wants, which part should be chosen and what are the challenges as well as opportunities that might be faced. Thus all these organisations and structuring within oneself would be smoother with a practical life-long skill such as Re-LiMDD.

Without such a skill, individuals can proceed with their daily lives. However they might face moral conflicts which are taken in circles, zigzag, progress or regress. It is added value to resolve moral dilemmas with Re-LiMDD as a tool.

Moral dilemmas in real life purport to supply ways of thinking of, perhaps even dealing with, the ins and outs of ethical argument in different social contexts. The world and the speed of technology development today presents both individuals and communities with situations demanding moral, social and ethical deliberations. From the more general issues of universal globalisation to the very specific problems of every-day existence encountered by active agents, contemporary life is replete with moral and ethical conundrums. Any rational person is required, so it seems, to be concerned, involved, or – at the very least – conversant with social ethics and the need to at least resolve their very own Re-LiMDD daily.

Social ethics is that communal locale where theory meets praxis. Re-LiMDD is designed to make that meeting point explicit, by understanding different aspects of life and facing daily social ethical challenges in a systemic yet creative way.



## **Re-LiMDD Touches All Aspects of Life**

To live a life, one has to face issues and consequences of daily desire, economic, sexual, social, the need for power and responsibility, for self and collective expression, for security, for adventure, for a bit of everything. Philosophy traces the consequences of our desire to know ultimate truth. For example, understanding biology explains to us what will happen if we continue to discover and understand living matter to different levels of awareness within and without. Thus each aspect of life teaches us the meaning of our existence and our desire to go on based on our very own fundamental principles of life which has evolved from the time we were born until current times.

Social ethics compares all these desires and traces their results so far as is necessary for people to orient themselves among others and to decide what they, individually and collectively, intend to do about it, what shape their lives will take, life as a producer of wealth, as a friend of men and women, as the father or mother of a family, as a citizen as a member of clubs and teams, as a lover of good literature or of any other art, as one curious about nature's handiwork and the globe we live on. This is indeed what everyone is thinking about within their own capacity and capability.

However, the desires and interest in organising one's own life does not only include individual interest but also group interest. What do we intend to do about education, about our form of government, about the control and development of industry, about immigration, poverty, crime, disease? Every man takes some part, or refuses to take a part, in forming our social policies in these matters. At elections in professional and trade associations, in church activities, these problems confront us. No one can escape the results of social policies on criminal law, the housing regulations in cities,

the management of public schools. Therefore social ethics is concerned with social policies as well as with the discussion of right and wrong in human relations.

And Re-LiMDD might be an alternative for facing such aspects of social ethics. Currently in many nations, education is measured using the economic progress scales rather than social ethics scales. The need for a balance between the two is necessary for holistic human growth.

## **Conclusion**

Re-LiMDD would create a positive environment in any individual or organisation where individuals feel their worth and become reflective, productive and proactive beings of society. Re-LiMDD may make an important contribution in grounding social innovation theory. We are now at the stage of development in many fields where there is more to reflect on and synthesize. I also expect the Re-LiMDD which is developed for mapping social innovations could make a useful contribution to social innovation research in the future.

With the current facts of human nature, human civilisation and human degradation, the facts of poverty and its causes, ethnic relations, Re-LiMDD encourages a voice to be heard for each and every one with a view to a fuller more reasonable, more decent and happier life.

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[摘要] 教育的其中一個目的，是確保所學的知識、技能和價值能以社教化過程廣為應用在日常生活之中。由此看來，家庭、朋輩、宗教和其他公民社會團體等社會組織都參與社教化。現時科技和全球化急速發展，令處於世界不同角落的人能超越本國和本地社會的傳統方式，加強聯繫和互相依存。因此，公民和道德教育者在提倡所需的知識、技能和價值上扮演關鍵角色：透過對精神、社會、文化和政治環境的認同，培養一種共同的命運。透過明白社會、經濟和文化的轉變，教育工作者需要知悉如何讓學生意識到自我和他人發展所面對的挑戰。

本文探討以「現實生活中倫理難題的討論」作為教育法，讓學生和教師參與公民和社會的互動／行動，他們本著宏觀視野關注本地議題，取得正面的社會參與和轉化經驗。通過展現如何在正式場合內外處理現實生活中的倫理難題，批判性地分析了這個教學法，以及其在 21 世紀中所需的元素。此教學法提供一個平台讓人將現實生活放在正式場合討論，能夠真實地提供道德和公民參與的機會，同時照顧到多元文化和其他複雜的參與議題。