Comprehensive Psycho-Educational Programs for School Empowerment

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Development of comprehensive psycho-educational programs for students in a middle school attached to a university is presented. The rationale for comprehensive psycho-educational programs, basic concepts, methods and procedures, and curriculum development are discussed. Background of the birth of comprehensive psycho-education and the integration of psycho-educational programs and clinical knowledge are reviewed. Collaboration, reframing, and empowerment are discussed as basic concepts in comprehensive psycho-education. In the last section, the developmental process of using a psycho-educational program at a school is described in the context of integration with “Comprehensive Studies” and “Mind Education”.

Key Words: comprehensive psycho-education, middle school, curriculum development, collaboration, empowerment

I. What is “Comprehensive Psycho-education”?  
A. Background of the Birth of “Comprehensive Psycho-education”

"Comprehensive psycho-education" is a generic term used to describe a series of educational programs that integrates two important educational issues: "comprehensive study" and "mind education". These two approaches were originally derived from different educational contexts. In order to provide the background of the birth of this new term, we would first like to present a profile of the first author. Kameguchi is a clinical psychologist. In 1998, he was appointed as full-time professor for a counseling support section of the Center for Clinical Research on School Development, an attached institution to the Graduate School of Education of the University of Tokyo, which was established in 1997. In addition, he was appointed as school counselor for the attached school to the School of Education of the University of Tokyo, and has served concurrently in these positions since then. In this dual role, he is responsible for the crucial task “to create the new school of the 21st century” that will be deployed not only in the attached school, but also in many schools nationwide (Center for Clinical Research on School Development, Graduate School of Education, University of Tokyo, 1999).

The attached school to the School of Education of the University of Tokyo has just reopened as a middle school that provides consistent education from junior-high to high school. The first author, with the assistance of the second author, formed a team of teachers from the attached school, some postgraduate research students from the School of Education, and the doctoral students to teach a course entitled “Introduction to clinical psychology.” This course was newly invented for students in the third year of Japanese high school. These students were targeted for this course because they represent a new generation of Japanese students who are said to have various educational needs. The class is held for 100 minutes (the equivalent of 2 classroom sessions) per week, and students use original texts and materials prepared by the instructional team. This new trial provides an ideal field for collaboration, which is not only stimulating but also challenging, not only for the authors, who specialize in clinical psychology and counseling, but also for the attached school’s teachers and the graduate students.

B. Integrating “Clinical Epistemology” into Comprehensive Psycho-education.

Although it is based on different social requirements from those of Japan, the field of education in
the United States has undergone continuous school reform since the late 1980s. In the face of these reform efforts, a new argument has arisen that the results of recent research in modern psychology should be more aggressively employed to the development of curriculum, in addition to those proposals offered by prominent educators (Talley & Short, 1995). Moreover, Hayes Dagley & Horne (1996) claim the necessity of creating new educational programs that can extract greater effects from fewer resources by responding more effectively to the educational needs of a society that has been continuously changing through the more active use of students and school staff as collaborators with university researchers (Hayes & Lunsford, 1994).

In Japan as well, a new educational system is about to be launched, by which a total of ten thousand school counselors will be assigned to public middle schools by 2006. This decision by the Ministry of Education might be considered an educational innovation equivalent to the Meiji government's decision in the late 19th century to establish a public education system for the first time in Japan's history. This scheduled increase in the number of school counselors will change the face of Japan's new schools in the 21st century. One of the roles expected of school counselors is to participate actively in the development of the new educational program, which was previously mentioned.

Unlike Japan, whose school counselor system was just launched, the U.S. already has a 100-year history of using counselors in schools. Nevertheless, critics have pointed out that the U.S. system has become outdated because of the upheaval created by a rapidly changing society for the past decade. In response to such a notion, Americans have been engaged in fundamental educational reform nationwide. In efforts to develop new educational models, the participation of psychologists has become a necessity, given that they are well acquainted with the mechanisms of human growth and development of both students and parents. In addition, it has become increasingly understood that the professional knowledge (so-called "clinical epistemology") of clinical or counseling psychologists is crucial to such reform because they possess knowledge of effective psychological practices in education, and they are in a position to promote comprehensive psychological support for the sake of children and families who are affected by a variety of normal as well as serious psychological problems (Paavola et al., 1995).

Such awareness remarkably coincides with reform efforts by the first author and his Japanese colleagues, who had come to recognize the necessity of developing a new educational program, namely "comprehensive psycho-education," from their actual experiences of being engaged in counseling activities in the schools in Japan (Kameguchi, 2000b). Because the school personnel come from a pedagogical field, they do not typically have extensive previous knowledge of psychology. In order to effectively promote cooperation/collaboration of the staff in developing and implementing educational programs, we would like to briefly present the process of clinical epistemology, which provides the footing for the specialty of school counseling.

II. Basic Concept of Comprehensive Psycho-education

This section presents an examination of the principal concept that forms the theoretical foundation for the actual practice of comprehensive psycho-education in public schools.

A. Collaboration

Scientific psychology, which was born at the end of the 19th century in Europe, has now seen its second century. In its history, the American Psychological Association (APA), the largest psychological association in the world, has shown outstanding increases in the number of its members, which has risen to more than 160,000 currently. Nonetheless, psychologists themselves are questioning the continued existence of current psychology without changing its current status (Bevan & Kessel, 1994). In particular, analysts of the social affairs in the U.S. have severely criticized current psychology for its strong bias in favor of the study-oriented model of those who regard psychology as an intellectual product and regard practice as less important (Gergen, 1990). These critics claim that the methods of academic psychology should be more diversified and that psychologists should develop
methods that can be more responsive to changing social events (Sprinthall, 1990). Meanwhile, many researchers have been realizing that, in reality, the practice of clinical psychology has been separated more and more from the study of scientific psychology, further decreasing the ability of academic psychology to respond to the demands of practitioners (Woolsey, 1986).

Acknowledging this new movement of psychological studies, we launched a program of international collaboration that is aimed not at study for the sake of the limited interests of researchers, but rather at study to respond to the demand of the real world of schools or homes as the principal places in which children are actually living. This research project has two bases: one at the Center for Clinical Research on School Development, which is the attached institution to the Graduate School of Education of the University of Tokyo; and the other at the Department of Counseling and Human Development Services of the College of Education of The University of Georgia in the U.S. At the same time, the attached middle school of the School of Education of the University of Tokyo which is located in Nakano ward in Tokyo, was selected as a model school for the practical base. Such a practical base is planned to be increased gradually to other schools. The research team of The University of Georgia already has considerable experience with conducting practical research in more than sixty schools in the state of Georgia. The knowledge and experience resulting from their research has been applied to the planning and proposal of our project.

Likewise, collaboration/cooperation on various matters, as well as in the various systemic level, are anticipated as possible individual themes in the future from collaboration/cooperation on the international level, such as in our case, to relationships between schools and families, or between in-school counselors and teachers, school education boards, and other school personnel. Nevertheless, because each system is embedded in its own culture and historical background, numerous difficulties and obstacles are likely to arise before a smooth, interactive collaboration/cooperation process of working together across these levels can be realized. This point will be discussed later.

B. Changing the Frame on which Cognition is Premised (Reframing)

When people who have not had actual contact before, or who belong to societies with different systems, try to start new interactive transactions in order to promote effective collaboration/cooperation work, each party will be required to be flexible in accepting different views of others without sticking to his/her own view or idea. Under these circumstances, the concept of reframing, which has been refined through nearly fifty years of clinical practice in family therapy, can be used as an effective cognitive tool (Kameguchi, 2000a).

For instance, look at the case of school refusal children, which is currently a serious educational problem in Japan. First, change the cognitive viewpoint from a frame of children's attendance at school, then move it from the frame of school to home, where children base their living. Accordingly, consider how to treat students from this new frame (the first stage of reframing). By this process, the student's behavior is reframed from a "school refusing student," which implies a strong negative image, to the new label, which implies a more objective image, namely "in-home student" (the second stage of reframing). Consequently, it becomes easier to select some favorable behavior from several student behaviors at home, making it easier to identify conditions to further promote the selected behaviors (the third stage of reframing). Reframing that has reached the third stage is sometimes called "positive reframing".

School refusal students are not the only students for whom reframing can serve as a useful approach to broadening the treatment options. The normal developmental problems of ordinary students can be viewed too narrowly by concerned adults who are rushing to find a solution in their desire for an early settlement. In many cases, therefore, they tend to fall into a vicious circle that prevents them from taking any further step because of the fixed conventional frame. However, implementation of the positive reframing concept will enable them to realize unexpected developments, even in cases that were previously considered impossible to solve. Moreover, the use of reframing can be enriched through the inclusion of specialists from non-academic fields who are likely
to bring an alternative framework, such as counselors.

In the schools of the new century, people from various backgrounds, who thus far have had little to do with school teaching, will be expected to take part in school-related activities, such as school management, student guidance, and classroom teaching. Under such circumstances, reframing can be used effectively, in order to withdraw initially from the individual stance or premise, then to re-establish the frame, which promptly responds to each problem by interactive collaboration/cooperation, and thereby expanding the scope of the search for potential resources that will solve the problem most effectively.

C. To Activate Relationships (Empowerment)

Along with collaboration, which promotes transactions among specialists from various backgrounds, and reframing, which enables flexible diversification in concepts, empowerment, which encourages the activation of relationships, is an important basic concept for the development of comprehensive psychoeducational programs.

Empowerment refers to a process by which people are more actively engaged in making decisions that directly affect their lives (Hayes, Glickman, & Lunsford, 1993). In its simplest form, empowerment means moving the decision-making process closer to those who are most directly affected by the outcome.

Over the past 10 years, Hayes and Lunsford (1994) have participated in school innovation as external consultants and evaluators of innovative activities in more than 60 American schools nationwide. These schools have represented all types of social or economic classes, school grades, regions, and both public and private schools. Based on their experience, they selected factors of empowerment that are considered to be crucial in order to make schools attractive working place for teachers as well (see Table 1).

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<th>TABLE 1 Factors of Empowerment</th>
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<td>Essential Attitudes</td>
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clarified that the inability to collaborate effectively had been the biggest shortcoming of vocational education in the U.S. in the past. With regard to “caring”, the necessity was confirmed that all teachers and staff should share a common view of themselves as interrelated components of the school as a learning community.

Participating in decision making

In order for school personnel to actually be empowered, three factors appear necessary: participation in the decision making process (access), active engagement in some relevant activities (action), and information about any outcomes (accountability).

The attempt to pursue achievement of effective innovation tends to eliminate some members from important decision-making processes. However, if such innovation is resolutely carried out, the actual efficiency is unlikely to be improved. On the contrary, increased efforts at innovation may intensify passive opposition and led to various forms of sabotage. Moreover, even though the information necessary to make decisions is provided, unless members are provided opportunities to join some activities using the information, they will be reluctant to participate at the stage of actual implementation of decisions. Finally, it is important that members be informed about any outcomes of their actions to ensure their accountability for both the success and the failure of their efforts.

Expectation in personal relationships

The expected three conditions for personal relationship that enables empowerment are related to roles, rules, and responsiveness.

In the process of making decisions, members may not be able to fulfill their expected roles fully. Various problems, such as in-group friction, the expression of hostile emotions, or the adoption of inappropriate
role models, are likely to make it necessary to adjust role requirements for some members and to clarify the overall purpose for having all members participate. In composing groups in schools, for instance, we have observed that in the actual process of decision making, members are unaccustomed to working in groups. Thus, when membership expands beyond seven or so, members have difficulty in reaching agreement on even minute issues unless all are fully informed about their roles. If each member is involved fully in the making of rules to guide their participation, however, interactions become more interpersonally responsive, and individual actions become more coordinated. As a result, each member is able to contribute fully to the overall functioning of the group.

III. Development of Comprehensive Psycho-education

A. Development of Psycho-educational Program at School

Although the necessity for collaboration in schools has been repeatedly pointed out, in reality it is an extremely difficult task to achieve in practice. At the outset of any reform, most will agree on the necessity for collaboration. Nevertheless, once participants are called upon to collaborate in the real setting, the interests of individuals come to the forefront, leading to inevitable confrontations. As counselors are introduced more systemically into schools, it is anticipated that similar problems will arise more frequently as teachers and school counselors are asked to collaborate.

In particular, the different roles played by teachers and counselors tend to present an obstacle for collaboration, because teachers are responsible for evaluating student performance, whereas school counselors operate from a position of advocacy for student performance. In other words, school counselors, who are removed from evaluation, can more easily support students interpersonally, putting them in a position, potentially, to oppose teachers who may try to make precise evaluation. Different views may become apparent between teachers and school counselors over how to deal with students that teachers may judge to require special guidance, such as in the case of some act of violence, for example. Such occasions can provoke hostile emotions that had long been kept within the teacher's mind, which may be directed against the school counselor. Carried to its extreme, such difficulties may require mediation. If the responsible person such as a headmaster mishandles the case at this stage, collaboration between the two parties is highly unlikely to be achieved. The attitude that is required for managers in such a case is to maintain neutrality. Nonetheless, the responsible administrator should keep it in mind that most teachers are employed full-time and are thereby in a position to form a majority group. Most school counselors, on the other hand, are employed part-time and, moreover, usually work alone at school. If disagreements between these parties are mishandled, the school counselor could be unfairly scapegoated by a group of teachers who outnumber the counselor. Therefore, a school manager needs to assist a school counselor to some extent, because counselors, who start from a position of relative isolation in the school, may be regarded as heretics as they advocate for changes in established school practices.

However, this possibility does not mean that a headmaster should simply flatter a school counselor while ignoring the hidden discontent and hostile emotion of a group of teachers, which also will not help to achieve collaboration. Teachers have struggled for a long time with student guidance. Therefore, the school counselor's ability in solving students' problems in a short period itself can be regarded as a threat that undervalues the teachers' existence. In such cases, headmasters need to be sympathetic to the teachers' predicament and may need to provide special guidance. The headmaster may need to comprehend and embrace the teachers' feeling sufficiently. Accordingly, the headmaster should reconfirm with the teachers the expected role of the school counselor, which is unique, but limited. In other words, if positive change is observed in a student, whatever the change, headmasters should provide psychological support for teachers without fail, by clarifying that the student's favorable change is due not only to the intervention of the school counselor, but also to the teachers' significant involvement through their collaboration with other professionals.

In such a way, the crises arising from efforts at collaboration can be averted in many cases by repeat-
ing alternate support for both teachers and the school counselor. Nevertheless, in cases where conflict or hostility already exists among teachers themselves, the headmaster may not be able to overcome the increasing discomfort of teachers without intense intervention. Especially, teachers who are critical of the headmaster may dismiss as flattery his or her efforts to assist both the teachers and the school counselor. In such a case, there is the risk that the headmaster him/herself could fall into a predicament.

An experienced school counselor will be able to notice the struggle of a headmaster who is in such trouble, and try to provide psychological support to the headmaster through one or more face-to-face interviews. Given the relative newness of counselors in schools, however, few school counselors are likely to be able to function in this way. Needless to mention, in most cases, the role of veteran teachers, who are in a position to assist headmasters or to supervise other teachers, is most important.

Collaboration Among Students

As recipients of student guidance, students have been told the importance of collaboration from the earliest stages of their school study. Beginning with their nursery days, all children will have heard a teacher saying, "Be a good friend with everybody." By the time they reach middle school, however, they begin to realize how difficult it is to pursue this slogan. This realization does not derive from the difficulty of collaboration among students, but rather results from observing the reality of collaboration, or the lack of it, among teachers and adults at school.

In fact, by puberty, as a result of observing the relationship between their mothers and fathers at home, young people recognize that collaboration among adults is not very easy. While their parents have been telling them to be good with friends, from children's perspective, there may be quite a few cases that the collaboration between their parents has not been working well. However, not many children express to their parents the impressions they have formed as a result of their observational study at home. Without this feedback on their own behavior, parents cannot usually recognize that their children are discreetly watching their relationship as wife and husband.

In such a way, children's perception of collaboration among parents or teachers is in general far more precise than adults imagine. This ability to judge relationships among adults does not necessarily coincide with the level of their study, however. On the contrary, among students who seriously devote themselves to high academic achievement, there are some who do not pay attention to the ways in which adults collaborate with one another because it is only an incidental matter to them. Therefore, they are not able to recognize the real situation of adults.

Collaboration Among Teachers

Similar to students who concentrate only on their studies, there seem to be some teachers, especially among those who are strictly obedient to their role as a teacher, who do not fully recognize that collaborating with others is really an important task. This situation may be explained, in part, by noting for that the highly motivated teacher who is in competition with others to be superior, collaborating with other teachers, or with school counselors, whom they may view as in a different occupation, may mean that the teacher runs the risk of being defeated. Therefore, as an approach to working with more independent teachers, it is important to wait patiently until they begin to realize the necessity of collaboration, rather than hastily requiring them to collaborate. Hence, particular concern may be necessary for those teachers to save them from feeling defeated or inferior, by taking the opportunity to suggest to them the possibility of collaboration with others, for instance when they struggle with student guidance, or when they encounter difficult situations.

Collaboration Among School Counselors

As individuals, there are various character types among school counselors. Some counselors are enthusiastic to collaborate, whereas some are not so. The counselors who only have experience in conducting personal interviews and who have little experience with group interviews or in a community clinic, may find it difficult to perform to their fullest ability in an educational environment. Such counselors may avoid providing teachers with information on student
progress. From the counselor's point of view, keeping client's privacy is an ethical requirement, and also is an aspect of the counselor's work that is central to the counselor's identity. Therefore, in dealing with counselors who stubbornly try to protect privacy rather than considering students' privacy more flexibly depending on individual cases, it may be more sensible to keep some distance from such counselors until they heartily recognize the necessity to collaborate with other school personnel.

The point of this discussion is not to deny the importance of maintaining privacy, which those counselors regard as a top priority, but rather it is to recognize the importance of moving the educational system in the direction of enhanced collaboration by maintaining students' privacy together with teachers and managing staff. In particular, in the case where the student's problem is related to relationships with parents, or to some factor related to their home affairs, school counselors may not be able to spare sufficient time to work directly with such students because of the counselor's limited working hours. In such cases, it may be more expedient to take some measure to support the counselors' work by precisely judging the situation and timing for such support, for instance, by dispatching a classroom teacher or a teacher's aide to the student's home.

B. Integration with "Comprehensive Studies"

A lot of psycho-educational programs thus far have been developed in response to various needs of educational scenes (Ichihashi, 1999). In early days, the techniques that were applied to personal or group psychological clinics were brought directly into classrooms in many cases. However, the original techniques have been gradually modified and further developed to respond to changing school conditions.

Along with the revision of the Japanese government's course of study for the year 2002, individual schools will be able to decide how to deploy "comprehensive studies". Judging from its objective and contents, we believe that our concept of integrating comprehensive studies with psycho-education programs to create a program of comprehensive psycho-education has turned out to be a highly relevant concept that responds to these changing educational surroundings.

In the attached school to the School of Education of the University of Tokyo, comprehensive studies was implemented in 1993, as a special subject for students in the third year of middle school. The concept of comprehensive studies had appeared from the discussion over how to utilize a spare hour in the school curriculum and was later designated to the main curriculum in 1996 (Attached School to the School of Education of the University of Tokyo, 1998). Under the pre-war educational system, the antecedent of Tokyo high school had been well known for its liberal and lively school tradition. Having inherited this spirit, the basic concept of our school on its re-inauguration as the attached school was to become unique by being both an ordinary and special school. This spirit has continued to the present. Now the school additionally has tried to express extrasuperiority in developing human's overall capability as well as in nourishing rich humanity. The students in the school are selected for enrollment by draw rather than by their educational achievement. Hence, by providing ordinary students with ordinary curriculum as well as especially arranged special studies, our school has attempted to pursue extrasuperiority. To realize such an objective, we established comprehensive studies in our school.

The Objective of Comprehensive Study

The comprehensive study of our school is intended to integrate and internalize each student's experience and studies within themselves, thereby eventually enabling the student to compose one personality. Considering this aim, we are investigating the possibility of its realization according to the following objectives.

- Communicate with nature and people using mind and body. Based on their action and participation in the program, learn the behavior that enables students to live an enriched life voluntarily through communication with others.
- Provide students the opportunity to re-examine themselves by extending the activity field outside of school, including the local community, thereby stimulating students' independence and growth.

—241—
- Provide a safe place for teachers and students to cooperatively consider and tackle various cultural and social problems. In addition, establish the foundation for lifelong learning, by letting students be aware of the surrounding society, and thereby make them recognize the meaning of studying for their continued development.

Developmental Significance for the Third Year of Middle School

By the time they reach the third year of middle school, students have already completed a large number of studies. Nevertheless, those studies were not always integrated to create a well-balanced personality within the students. In some way, this lack of integration is understandable, given that, at least from a psychological aspect, youth at this age are facing the difficult and complex developmental crisis of transitioning from a child to an adult. Considering this fact, we initiated comprehensive study in the third year curriculum, expecting that the study would provide an opportunity for third year students to become aware that they are in a crucial growing process, therefore letting them consciously observe their own growth.

After four years, an evaluation of our practices revealed some tasks that required further improvement. For instance, discussions had identified the need for additional materials development, research on student guidance, revision of the teaching system, and collaboration and more cooperative relationships with outside organizations. These practices created the foundation for a movement toward the integration of comprehensive studies, or mind education, which shall be discussed later, with our comprehensive psycho-education.

C. Integration with ‘Mind education’

A new task that was brought from practices over six years of comprehensive studies in the attached school of the University of Tokyo was how to foster "internal integration" of each student (Attached School to the School of Education of the University of Tokyo, 1998). This task can be considered to be closely related to educational tasks such as mind education or living power that have been highlighted in relation to school refusal, PTSD resulting from natural disasters such as the Hanshin-Awaji earthquake, or to suicides resulting from bullying. Similarly, under the same concept, school counselors nationwide have begun experimental programs of peer support. These case studies are expected to provide significant implications for developing programs of comprehensive studies.

Peer Support (Peer Counseling)

Peer support is a counseling method that can be used not only by school counselors but also, in a limited way, by students themselves as supporters to other students (Kondo, 1995). The idea of creating a peer support system is not particularly new and has been conducted successfully in other countries like the U.K. In the U.S., tutor programs, which were organized and run by university students, became popular in the late 1960s. In the beginning, the programs provided peer support mainly for studies, although it was gradually extended to personal counseling. In such a relationship, it was reported that students felt more comfortable discussing their personal problems with peer counselors than with teachers. Backed by such successful results, peer counseling was introduced to high schools in the early 1970s. Begun initially with groups in high schools, peer counseling was eventually extended to individuals under the supervision of a trained counselor or teacher. Having found that high school students, like university students, preferred to disclose their personal problems to their peers, researchers extended peer counseling to middle schools and then to primary school students. Moreover, the programs of peer counseling have been diversified to address issues such as general personal affairs, vocational guidance, orientation for new students of middle school who had just been promoted from primary school, and have been modified to include telephone counseling and training, using peers as facilitators of self assertion training, conflict solution, or peer mediation.

Cast against the backdrop of the development of peer support, there is the serious reality of rapidly increasing juvenile problems such as rising school violence, drug use, suicide, and teenage pregnancy, all
of which cannot be handled only through the efforts of school counselors and teachers. Besides the U.K. and the U.S., researchers in Australia, Canada, and New Zealand have reported evaluations of peer support practices. In Japan, there are still few examples of peer support applied to schools, although Nishikidai middle school and Hongo middle school in Yokohama City, and some schools in Gunma and Oita prefectures have reported on their practices. Peer counseling has been used as an effective support method that has been shown to be both ordinary and less costly (Kameguchi & Hotta, 1998).

The merits of peer counseling that have been pointed out thus far include: (1) a student who is in trouble prefers to confide in a supportive fellow student rather than a school counselor, teachers, or parents; (2) the curative process can be more effective if students disclose their problems to reliable friends and then are advised by that friend to see a school counselor; (3) it can foster the humanity of peer counselors as well as that of the student client; (4) it can improve the overall capability of interactive support among students at school; and (5) thereby it is able to enhance the overall effectiveness of the counseling program offered by the school (Kameguchi & Hotta, 1998).

Creating Mind Education

In September 1998, as an annex of the Center for Clinical Research on School Development, a counseling room named “Hotto Room” was established in the Attached school. In addition, full-time professors of clinical psychology and their assistants were assigned to the room in order to serve as school counselors on a weekly basis (Kameguchi, Hotta, Saeki, & Takahashi, 1999). Thereafter, the counseling room became the base for offering various activities such as peer support, assertion training, relaxation training, psychological testing, and a group approach using the sand play technique, through the collaboration of teachers of the attached school with researchers and postgraduate students from other universities.

Coincidentally, the attached school had been planning to transform itself to offer consistent education by combining middle school and high school beginning in the year 2000. During the process of revising the curriculum, as noted above, “Introduction to Clinical Psychology” was proposed as a new subject. Accordingly, “mind education” was designated as a core curriculum, which was probably unprecedented in any other high school in Japan.

In preparing the contents of the class as well as in actually teaching, we relied upon actual examples of psycho-education programs created in Japan and abroad that were consistent with our proposed curriculum in comprehensive psycho-education. Thus, the first trial integrating three practices from different educational fields (i.e., “psycho-education,” “comprehensive studies,” and “mind education,”) had begun in Japanese school along with the dawn of the new millennium.

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