

# An Anthropological Study on Death Education

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This thesis, confirming that death is the most fundamental fact of humans, examined the anthropological meaning of death education, which has facing death squarely as the fundamental subject, by dividing it into three parts – “Death and Humans,” “Death and Children,” and “Death and Education.”

Chapter 1, with the subject of “Death and Humans,” examined the meaning of facing death squarely for humans. Facing death squarely means realizing oneself as the being toward death. We realize human limitation clearly through facing death squarely and undergo ontological suffering, but through such suffering, our life faces more profoundly toward the fundamental direction. And through the self-awareness as the existence living with death, it was confirmed that we are awakened to others who live with the same destiny which we have forgotten until now.

Chapter 2, with the subject of “Death and Children,” renewed the understanding of children as the being toward death. Awareness of death is the fundamental subject not only of children but also of all humans including children. Awareness of death of oneself and others is equally important for children as well, and particularly, it was confirmed that the experience related to the death in the early period of life exerts great influence on the whole life.

Chapter 3, with the subject of “Death and Education,” pointed out the problems through a critical review on the existing death education, and presented the direction of how education should cope with the question of death, the fundamental subject of humans.

Self-awareness as the being toward death is the fundamental condition for us to live as humans that is given to us from the beginning. The fact that awareness of the being toward death is the fundamental and essential part of life is important as always not only to adults but also to children. The purpose of death education is to live on the level of profound understanding of humans by both teachers and children sincerely facing the question of death that the children have here and now. And through such thorough facing death squarely, the existence of others is also connected. The relationship with others, which is formed through the experience of facing death squarely that is humans’ fundamental suffering, is the key subject not only of death education but also of human education.