

# Friday Open HoonDokHae Discussion

## Why do we need a Strong Character?

Bucharest, Romania, 22. January 2016



Good afternoon dear brothers and sisters in the world!

In Bucharest, Romania, winter is at its highest but the heart of the Peace Centre is warm and welcoming. All members and guests, from all over the world, Asia, America and Europe alike gather again for an experience that tries to wake up the mind and **move the body. This Friday's topic** referred to how to grow our character **after standards that don't follow just a** secular model or time, but towards an unchanging and altruistic ideal self. We feel that Romanian young people need to find their model and that this desire/search needs to be born from within and not from another person that they must follow. UPA and STF members supported the activity but also for them it was a growing experience. Minds came together and this could surely move the heart of the world. Out of the 29 participants, 12 came for the first time and the rest were guests that previously attended either the Introduction in the Divine Principle, the One Day Workshop or another weekly event, a few even bringing their friends. We are happy to

create such an environment in which guests want to share their experience with their acquaintances. Even if this meeting lasts for only about 2 hours we often **feel like people don't want to** leave for home at the end but would like to remain longer in the peaceful heart of the centre.

People strive, throughout life, to build strong personal characters, traits that reflect their purpose, passions, and values. Yet, as people who would like to build a strong character, we find it difficult. The difficulty lies in our resistance to the very circumstances that would lead us to grow. Simply put, character education is a conscious effort to develop virtues in people.

When preparing the material, we decided to first ask why they believe that a strong character is important and how to empower it in our lives. There were various conclusions of our open discussion.

The representative of the first team talked about how our character defines us, that it speaks in our name a language that explains more about us than anything else. A lot of people

believe that a strong character means **"not caring or not loving" in order not to get hurt. "Personally I think that by** actually being interested about what is happening around you, by loving, thinking and acting outside the box, being sensitive, but at the same time having the power and will to fight against all the bad things, these traits **make you into a strong person."** Even more, you need to feel the desire to never give up, of hoping and being optimistic. So the main point is that education is essentially influencing the character, but also that man has a choice on how he reacts: to be kind, to be good.

Another opinion that was shared included characteristics that generally people would like to have or appreciate in the others, such as: mind of acceptance in front of challenges, not complaining, taking responsibility, accepting the others as they are, gratitude for life, finding beauty in everything, overcoming selfishness, curiosity to discover what is good for oneself, not letting yourself be influenced by others, getting out of the comfort zone and acting upon the

conviction that everything can be conquered with love. Basically it all starts from getting to know yourself, investing time and energy in this self-discovery in order to grow to maturity in a healthy way, as we have learnt **from our parents' example of power through sacrificial love.**

All the participants were very bright and sincerely thinking about their own state of mind and heart, the team-leaders tried to organize them well, in order to make sure they all express their ideas but also encouraging them **to actively understand the others' arguments.**

The second point of the group discussion brought to light some words of wisdom that were meant to both **inspire and stimulate people's thinking.** There were a series of sentences on how to act in the right way and the participants were supposed to put their own experience into such kind of sentences. (for example: Be gentle when you meet with cruelty and harsh

temperament. Give generously to those who have nothing to give.

Communicate peace to those who are saddened or anxious.) Some of the words that they found were: Be calm when the ones around you are agitated. Be happy in front of bad. Invest your effort when everyone else is lazy. Keep an inner balance when everything else feels like chaos. Of course, forming a strong character is not a simple matter, but it involves a lot of hard work and heart work and seriousness.

**The "message to go home with" was that character education must aim for growing people who are good in their "heads, hearts, and hands." Such people know what is good, they care about what is good, and they do what is good. The beginning point of education lies with the cultivation of the child's heart by providing experiences of love. This enhances the child's feeling of security and worth, making a solid foundation for subsequent growth and development. Because the heart is the**

core of human character, the ability to give and receive love is the ultimate manifestation of true maturity, over and above academic knowledge.

We really hope the topics that we choose every week can be useful for the people coming, that we can approach a life matter or situation that they have a problem with and give guidance as to our own siblings, parents or even children. There is a sense of communion that rises from these meetings and we have hope that people can bloom through this spiritual and emotional food.

Thank you so much for all those who supported, for brothers and sisters and the spiritual world. We hope, Father, that together we can work to create one big family that embraces all humankind.

With joy and gratitude,  
Romania CARP Family.

