

## The project of raising the self-esteem of Korean dentists. Part I Ethics that a dentist should possess

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When looking at the dental field in South Korea as a whole, it is widely agreed that it is facing an increasingly chaotic crisis. The Declaration of Ethics for Dentists, established in 1971, was later articulated through the Korean Dental Association in 2006 as the "Charter of Ethics for Dentists" and further detailed in the "Guidelines for Dental Ethics."

The concept of medical ethics, which is the application of ethics in the medical field, was first proposed by Thomas Percival in 1803 as "the duties that a person should rightly perform or uphold." In 1970, Beauchamp and Childress defined the four principles of medical ethics. Medical ethics exists as a collective ethics of active responsibility rather than as individual ethics, serving as a professional ethics. The term "professionalism" comes from "profess," which means to publicly declare, and it embodies the idea of publicly proclaiming altruistic ideals in order to ensure one's own practice. Dentists must understand the paradoxical logic that by regulating themselves as smart intellectuals and diligent medical professionals, they can gain the public's trust, thereby further solidifying the identity and rights of all dentists.

Our dental community is now at a turning point, facing social criticism and a decline in trust due to the rampant moral insensitivity in our society, which has led to reckless medical advertising and excessive commercialism in treatment practices. Additionally, as South Korea enters an ultra-aged society in 2025, the importance of strong teeth, which are the most fundamental foundation for extending the health span of the population, becomes even more crucial. Therefore, we must establish a socially-centered value for dentistry and make efforts to uphold the dignity of dentists, creating an opportunity for dentists to regain their status as respected and diligent healthcare providers.

### Profile

- \* Graduated from Seoul National University School of Dentistry
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- \* Master's and Doctorate in Oral Medicine from Seoul National University School of Dentistry
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