

HARMONY AND THE ART OF TRUE FRIENDSHIP

BY RAN KREMER



A wise man once said, "One close real friend is better than ten distant and estranged brothers." Does true and unconditioned comradeship still exist in the 21st century? How different is real friendship from having casual friends or from "Facebook Friends"? Can this kind of lasting and profound friendship be found? How and where?

There are many kinds of friendships, some casual, some romantic, some are pleasant like flowers that bloom for a day or like a summer cloud, but some rare ones are as firm as an oak. These rare relationships do not depend on passing needs or on momentary interests.

The quest for this relationship can be compared to the holy grail of human relationships. Our path at New Acropolis is a constant search towards the metaphysical values. This quest is also the path towards true and sustainable friendship. We call this a "Philosophical Friendship".

Here we are guided by the wisdom of the New Acropolis Worldwide President, Delia Steinberg Guzman, when she writes about Philosophical Friendship, "It is what makes it possible for two

persons to try to know each other, to comprehend each other, through the knowledge of their own self. It is what makes respect, patience, and constancy to be born. It is the one that forgives but also corrects and the one that encourages each one to be better each time so they deserve the friend."

True Philosophical Friendship is an outcome of developing inner harmony. This harmony may then expand to encompass a relationship and harmonize it. Once a certain level of harmony is achieved, the relationship can become profound and transcend beyond circumstances or challenges.

Harmony in Latin is Concordia, which translates to, "with (one) heart." The Ancient Romans worshiped a goddess named Concordia, who embodied like-mindedness.

Harmony is created when there is Concord between different aspects of one's life. It is integration and balance. Harmony is when different parts of myself are "playing" different notes that come together as one melody!

The challenges on the path to harmony in our lives come with Discordia which is caused by Dissonance. Dissonance is imbalance and disintegration. When

one aspect of our life "steals the show". When one part takes over in an unproportionate manner thus creating imbalance with the other aspects of life. This imbalance is seen when one cannot integrate between, for example the personal, the career, the family and the more philosophical or altruistic engagements.

Discordia is also created when we allow ourselves to be indifferent, or when we are in conflict.

Discordia is created by the parts of the personality which cause conflict or disconnection and eventually become a force of separation.

The Buddha described separation as the greatest illusion of all! We can say that separation is the force directly in opposition to the force of Love.



Image Courtesy by Nandini Kumar
peexels | CC0

Harmony that is manifested over a period of time turns into an unbreakable and invincible Unity. In ancient Greece the concept Homonoia represented the value of "Order and Unity". It means "being of one mind together" or "Union of hearts" (Wikipedia). Unity is the supreme value of all. Living Unity is being closer to the Atman, the Aum.

"A harmonious chord is the ability to work together, to know how to relate our actions to the actions of others, not in a dissonant confrontation, but in an advantageous integration.

Once again, Union depends on our will, and undoubtedly on our love for people, our love for reaching mutual agreement, and the intelligence to achieve that end.

Unity will be the consequence. If selfishness, pride and the desire to stand out above others with or without merit prevail, there can never be unity, because each person will be focused on themselves and always trying to put others down." – Delia Steinberg Guzman, President – New Acropolis International Organization

Once an individual finds the path to inner harmony and starts walking on it, he or she is ready for real coexistence. One can connect and develop harmonious relationships or Philosophical Friendship. These friendships build real and lasting fraternity among human beings. And this fraternity enables people to truly know each other with patience and forgiveness. They motivate each other to better themselves, making it worth the effort, and cherish this kind of friendship.

To be a real friend means to be able to give more than to receive, to be devoted and serve each other rather than expecting to be served or wait for an applause for what we have done.

Philosophical friendships can transcend time, age, demography, life's circumstances and even pain, sorrow and tough personal life situations. It is the kind of relationship that can be the future of human relationship, it is the foundation for building a new and better world. The Philosophical Comradeship we are committed to build has the potential to become an eternal path creating bonds between our souls. May these bonds live long, even beyond Death.

As many of our loyal readers know, we at New Acropolis, are in a relentless and constant search for everlasting and metaphysical values. These values are a firm ground for us, aspiring philosophers, in a fleeting and transient world.

We are on a grand journey in search of the Good, the Beautiful, the True and the Just. ★★★

Ran Kremer is the National Director of New Acropolis Cultural Association, based in Bangalore. This article was previously published in The Clarion Call (Vol1:Issue 4, Apr-Jun 2016).
