

A Magazine on Philosophy, Culture & Volunteering

THE ACROPOLITAN

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NEW ACROPOLIS

Farewell to Delia Steinberg Guzmán

FEATURE
Life Lessons from Cyanotypes

The Moral Struggle

Humanizing Medicine: In Conversation with Dr. Farokh Udwadia



FROM THE EDITORIAL DESK

Dear Reader,

This issue is dedicated to Delia Steinberg Guzmán, the International President of New Acropolis from 1991 till 2020, who passed away peacefully on August 15, 2023. A few years ago, she said in an interview: "The meaning and purpose of life is to be found in this question: What can I do, now that I am here? What can I improve, now that I am here? How can I help, now that I am here?" For us, Delia exemplified this approach - someone who dedicated her life to fulfil her vocation, to help others and to improve the world.

Today, as the world hurtles forward in its relentless pursuit of 'growth', have we perhaps forgotten to question the larger purpose of the human journey? The path of philosophy is the invitation to rediscover this. Delia said, "Philosophy is everything; it is everyday life, it is the meaning of life, it is the daily chores, it is the search for moral principles, it is the transformation of a society."

True to this prescript, some articles herein showcase that whether in the practice of a profession, pursuit of a hobby or learning of an art form, there is of course an aspect of gaining the relevant knowledge, or mastery over the techniques or the process. But perhaps there is something beyond this, that would allow us to go deeper and bring meaning, not just to certain actions to but to our life itself - developing a philosophical point of view.

Let us Discover. Awaken. Transform.

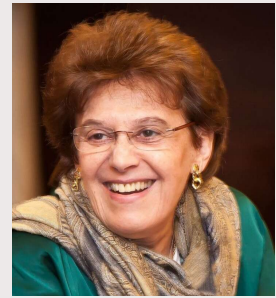
Malini Nair
Editor

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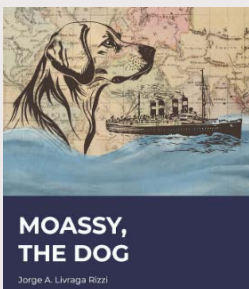
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Compiled by the
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**Farewell
to
Delia Steinberg Guzmán**

By Sabine Leitner

I would like to dedicate this article to my teacher Delia Steinberg Guzmán, International President of New Acropolis from 1991 till 2020, who passed away peacefully on August 15. A few years ago, she said in an interview: *"We should all take time to think: why are we in the world? Not because we feel so important, but because there must be some reason. We have come into the world, we are here. What can we do? The meaning and purpose of life is to be found in this question: What can I do, now that I am here? What can I improve, now that I am here? How can I help, now that I am here?"*


Delia certainly lived all her life with this vocation to do something useful, to help others and to improve the world she encountered. For all those who knew her, she was an exceptional human being, a great example of wisdom, humanity, willpower, infinite kindness and a generous love that expected nothing in return.

"We should all take time to think: why are we in the world?"

- Delia

Born on 7 January 1943 in Buenos Aires, Argentina, into a family of Jewish immigrants fleeing the horrors of the Second World War, she showed from an early age a natural propensity for profound questions and a great love for music. At the age of 17, she graduated as a Teacher of Piano and Composition and continued to study the piano for a concert career. However, when she was 23, she met New Acropolis and its founder, Jorge Angel Livraga. Here is how she described this first encounter: *"When the class had finished, I found myself in an indescribable state of inner happiness. In spite of the fact that it was already midnight, I walked home because I needed to breathe, to reflect, to go over all the events of the day, to get used to the idea that - at last! - I had found what I had always been looking for, a living philosophy."*

"After that class, I no longer had any doubts, none at all, because of the way he spoke, the way he explained things, his common sense, the fact that he never presented things - however mysterious and esoteric they might be - as something occult or magical, in the lower sense of those terms."




**Philosophy is everything;
it is everyday life,
it is the meaning of life,
it is the daily chores,
it is the search for moral principles,
it is the transformation of a society.
- Delia**

He spoke with a lot of common sense, he presented things with great intelligence, with great clarity, very sensibly and when I was listening to him, I thought: that's it, this is the Master I have been searching for all my life. I really felt a direct recognition towards him."

A few years later, she decided to dedicate herself completely to New Acropolis. When asked whether it was difficult to give up her music career, she explained: *"When I chose to leave my career as a pianist, I did so because I was convinced of something that Jorge Livraga had taught us: that philosophy is a music made by the soul."*

"Because philosophy fills the whole of life and is useful for every aspect of life. Philosophy is everything; it is everyday life, it is the meaning of life, it is the daily chores, it is the search for moral principles, it is the transformation of a society. And, with music I could not have done that, so it was not so difficult to choose." "I found that speaking, expressing oneself with the soul, was much more important than anything else... It was the same as, or almost better than giving a concert..."

Music, however, continued to accompany her throughout the rest of her life and in 1982, she instituted the International Piano Competition which now bears her name. Some years later, in 1988, she founded the Tristan Music Institute that today operates in several countries and continues to expand.



“Practise loving continuously, because this is the best way to understand others. Help others cheerfully and generously, which is the best way to feel at ease with yourself.”

- Delia

All good teachers leave a mark and influence the lives of those they teach. Delia is no exception. She believed in her students and could see the best in everyone. Her love of others also inspired an enormous love towards her. One of her students wrote after her death: *“The love that contained us all in your heart is so great that we just need to close our eyes and we can still feel your warm, generous and strong embrace. When we open them, we see the immensity of your work, which was a continuation of the work of your teachers and their teachers. We are truly fortunate...”*

I would like to end with some of her own words, from her last book, *The Path to Victory*, that sum up the way she lived: *“Practise loving continuously, because this is the best way to understand others. Help others cheerfully and generously, which is the best way to feel at ease with yourself.”* △△△

Sabine Leitner is the Director of New Acropolis, UK.

Celebrating
**WORLD
PHILOSOPHY
DAY 2023**



PHILOSOPHY IN ACTION

Victory Of Light Over Darkness

In her book *Philosophy for Living*, Delia Steinberg Guzman shares - "It is not knowledge that transforms us, but the action we take on what we know".

We yearn to be gallant adventurers, bringing the light of courage to combat the darkest challenges that cast their shadows on us. We won't find this path on the vast internet, nor in the advancements of technology, but we may find the answers in the subtle realm of our indomitable human spirit. How do we do this? Philosophy shows us the way, and teaches us that within every challenge lies an incredible opportunity; that the key to the solution lies within ourselves.

With the inspiration of Diwali and World philosophy Day, we invite you to join us for a Philosophical Panel discussion to discover the secrets of Philosophy in Action and the practical solutions it offers for the victory of light over darkness - within ourselves and in our world.

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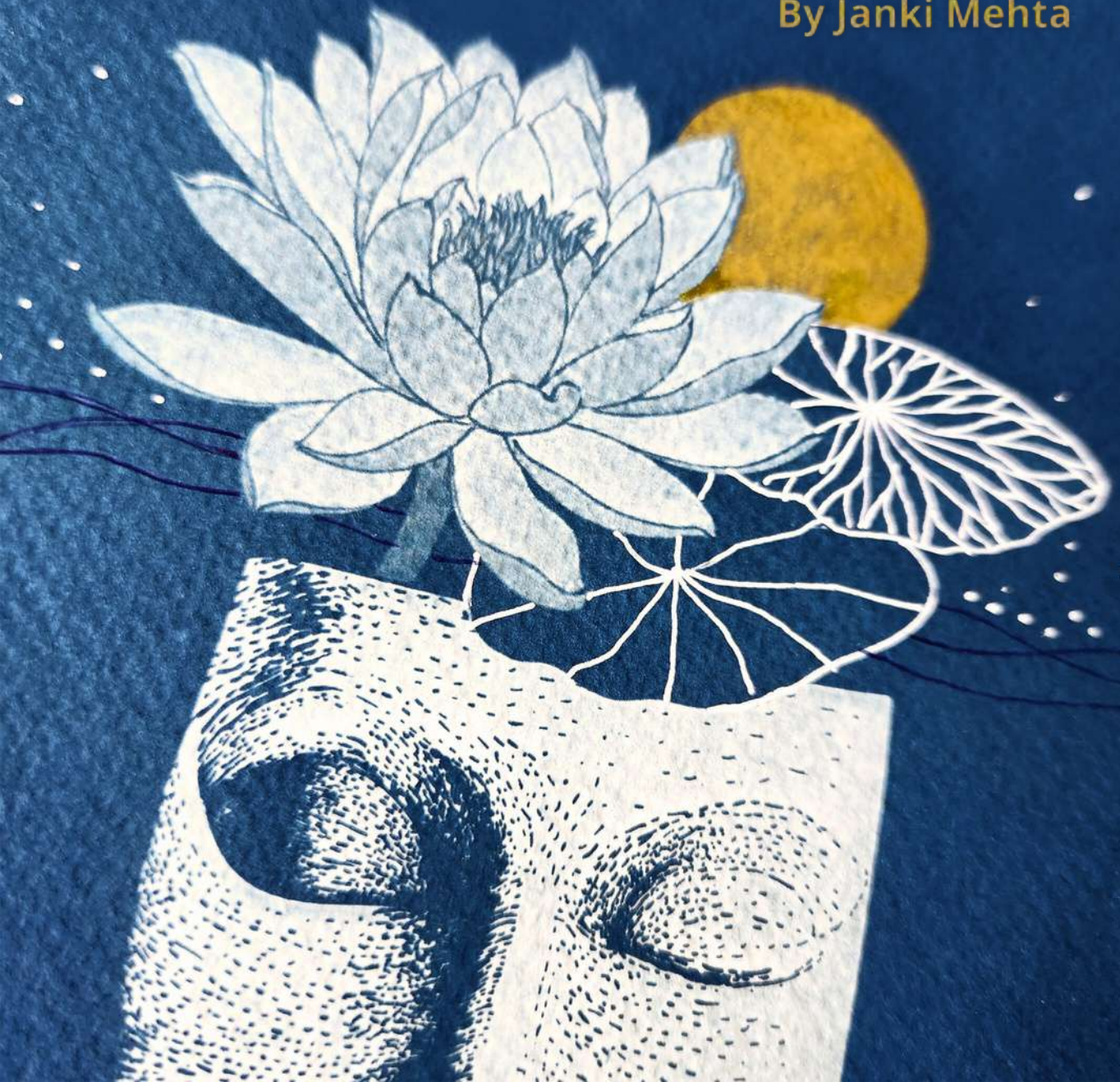


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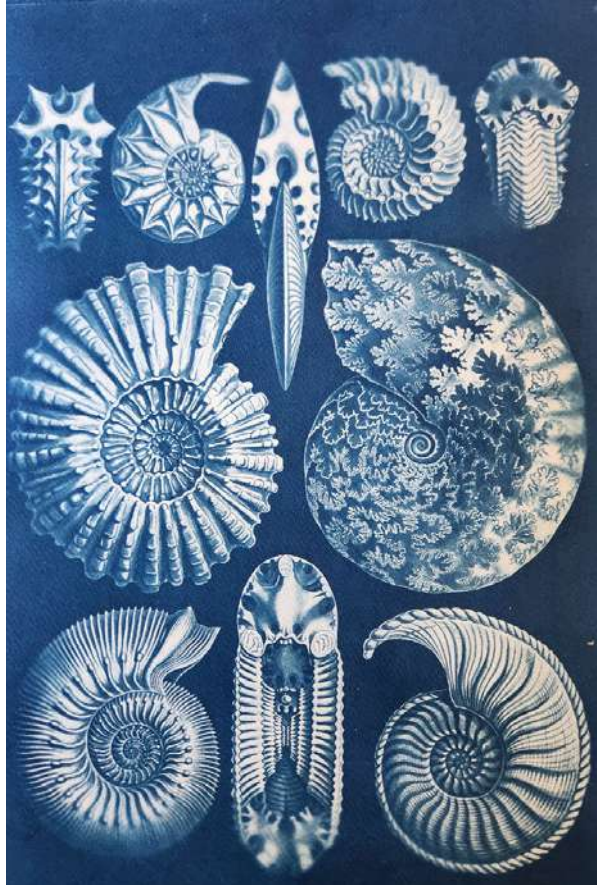
Life Lessons from Cyanotypes

By Janki Mehta



The cyanotype process is a fascinating analogue photographic printing process that produces distinctive blue hued prints. It was one of the earliest non-silver processes used for creating photographs, and its invention marked a significant development in the history of photography. The cyanotype technology was invented by Sir John Herschel (1792-1871) - a remarkable British polymath, renowned for his contributions to science, astronomy, chemistry and photography. Incidentally, the word 'photography', also coined by Sir John Herschel in 1839, is based on the Greek word 'phos', meaning 'light', and 'graphê', meaning 'drawing' - so literally 'drawing with light'.

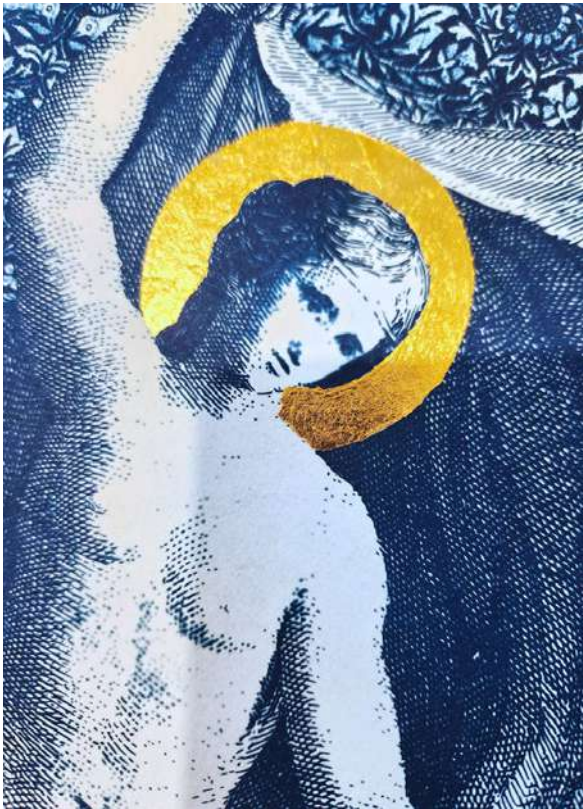
Although Sir John Herschel was the inventor, it was Anna Atkins, a British botanist and friend of Sir Herschel, who played a crucial role in the spread and popularization of the cyanotype process. In 1843, just a year after Sir Herschel's invention, Anna Atkins began creating what is considered the first book illustrated with photographs. Employing the cyanotype process, Atkins beautifully captured botanical specimens, particularly algae, in photograms, and compiled them into a book titled "Photographs of British Algae: Cyanotype Impressions." Anna Atkins's pioneering work not only established her as one of the first female photographers but also demonstrated the practical applications of photography in scientific documentation.



What is cyanotype?

The process of cyanotypes involves coating a surface, like paper or fabric, with a light-sensitive solution containing a mixture of ammonium iron citrate and potassium ferricyanide. When exposed to UV light (sunlight), the treated surface darkens, resulting in a blue image. After exposure, the material is rinsed with water to fix the image, and the unexposed chemicals are washed away, leaving a beautiful white impression on the cyan-blue print.

On the other hand, my tryst with cyanotype began fairly recently. Experimenting with this medium was something that lingered on my bucket list for way too long, but I couldn't find the time for it. And then, in early 2021, during the second wave of Covid, a pervasive feeling of helplessness and despair overwhelmed us all. Amidst these challenging circumstances the cyanotype experiments I began became a much-needed refuge, diverting my attention and energy from aspects I couldn't influence, to something tangible and at least somewhat within my control. The analogue nature of this creative pursuit which required working with the hands, provided an opportunity to connect with myself, and a therapeutic escape from the constant digital, screen-dominated, secluded existence of that time.



I had no idea then, that this journey would teach me some valuable and practical life lessons!

Fear of starting something new

I still vividly remember staring at the blank sheet of precious watercolour paper (procured with artful solutions to the challenges posed during a strict lockdown), attempting for the first time ever to coat it with cyanotype chemicals. Experiencing apprehension of the unknown, coupled with the fear of failure, along with unrealistic expectations of perfection, inevitably led to the familiar feeling of paralysis – wanting to stop before starting! But then the inner ‘philosopher’ awakened... to remind myself that without overcoming this ‘hurdle’ of the unfamiliar, of the uncertain, there is no growth. Not in this small journey of cyanotypes, neither in the big picture of life! **Fear is natural – an animal instinct. But overcoming the fear in order to walk towards a goal can also become natural – a human response!**

We always have a choice

Cyanotype printing by its nature is a ‘temperamental’ artform with many variables - so initially it seemed like I had no control over anything – not the process, nor the results. It was as if the fate of my artworks was in the hands of the erratic ‘cyanotype gods’.

However, upon continuing this pursuit, one valuable lesson became evident: I always had the choice of response. This profound realization is a metaphor for life itself – **while we may not have control over our circumstances, or people in our lives, we always have a choice of the right perspective towards life and the right inner response.** It is these choices that leave lasting imprints on who we become. And regardless of the medium, we are all artists shaping our lives, one deliberate choice at a time.

Mistakes are the best teachers **(If we're willing to learn from them)**

Even today, my stack of 'not good' cyanotypes is manyfold that of the 'good'; and the very good ones are a fraction of the total number! From the word go, I encountered many 'failures'. For example: patchy or streaky areas on the print due to uneven coating of the light-sensitive chemicals; overexposure to sunlight leading to a loss of detail and a very dark print; underexposure resulting in a faint image; unsuitable paper choices; incorrectly prepared chemicals; an unexpected cloud cover that blocked the sun; a bad composition that produced unaesthetic results ... the list is endless! While the failures were all different, my first instinctive response was the same - to blame the circumstances, something external, something not in my control, and to feel like a victim.


But this process also continuously unveiled to me the wisdom that progress often emerges from the shadow of error. This is the principle that reminds us that **in our artistic and life journeys, mistakes serve as the compass guiding us toward a deeper understanding of our craft as well as ourselves.** Mistakes are not only okay but a very essential part of becoming better, not just at what we do but at who we are!

Commitment is freedom

There was a lot of excitement when I started the journey, which is natural considering the discovery of a new medium is full of novelty, wonder and enthusiasm. But developing a skill takes commitment and constancy of practice. And only once the skill is developed to a certain degree, does the expression becomes more natural and more free!



As I firmly held to a disciplined rhythm of practice, I encountered the paradox of freedom that emerges from discipline: The liberty to express, innovate, and break the boundaries, but one must know the boundaries first in order to break them. And this paradox, as you might guess is not only relevant for developing a skill but also for life. Today, **I have learnt not to avoid any form of 'commitment' like a plague, associating it with being 'tied down', because I realize that being committed is exactly what allows one to live with more depth, resulting in more joy and freedom.**

To conclude, I'd like to share something I had probably read somewhere, but have come to believe from my experience - there are three main steps to acquiring knowledge and turning it into wisdom: observation of nature (to collect facts), reflection on laws of nature (to connect the dots) and experimentation with these laws (to verify the results for oneself). And as my journey of cyanotypes proceeded, I began to see how much the philosophical point of view developed at New Acropolis had changed my experience of learning. Without the relentless drive to look deeply within, and to try to glimpse what is beyond the external, visible world, I would perhaps have gained more and more mastery over a technological and artistic process. But being an Acropolitan awakened in me the ability to make connections between seemingly separate elements. As a result, this 'little' art project ended up allowing me to gain some very deep insights, build a more intimate connection with and understanding of life. 



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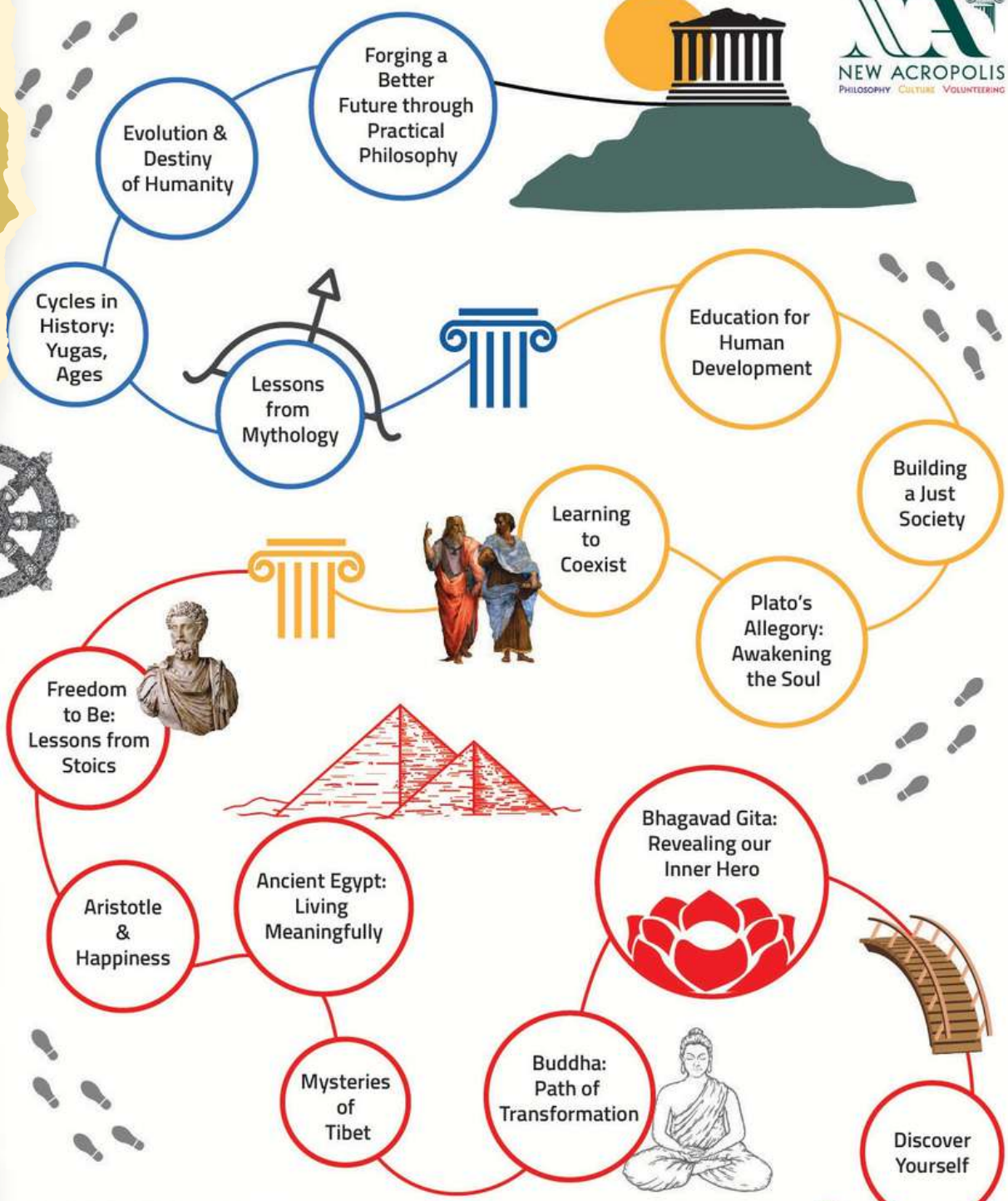
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Fear and Courage

By Delia Steinberg Guzmán

That fear is the greatest adversary on the path of wisdom? We already knew that. But we have to experience it. Wisdom is not about filling our heads with ideas that are never applied (precisely because of fear or cowardice, or comfort, which is another form of fear and cowardice); wisdom is to learn to live, to evolve, to become more determined and confident.

Evidently, in order to reach wisdom we have to traverse many uncharted routes, we need to pierce through the complicated forest of experiences. To stay back due to fear, believing that we will avoid these encounters with life, is only to delay the inexorable intent of life. Even worse, it consigns us to live what lies ahead in the perpetual shadow of fear, in the regret of opportunities delayed in wait for the inner hero, whose birth was aborted amidst the mediocre comfort preferred by those unwilling to surmount obstacles.

Life is a treasury of wisdom once we learn to defeat fear with every stride. It is your life, your steps. Do not be afraid.

How do we recognize authentic courage?

While some speak of a courage rooted in reflection and one rooted in instinct, we believe, with Plato, that when these dualities are starkly contrasted, it reflects an inability within the individual to establish inner order. When there is order – another name for justice – there is an agreement between one's rational reflection and one's emotions, as instinctive as they may be.

If instinct prevails, courage transforms into recklessness, propelling human beings to face dangers beyond their reach, or that only boost their vanity. In such cases, we come closer to failure than to victory. Conversely, should cold reflection solely rule, we might not be dealing with a courageous person, but simply an indifferent one.

“When we know, when we bring light, when we see all that is around us and within us, fear and doubt disappear.”

As we are well aware, in our world of dualities, this indifference hardly constitutes a virtue: those who do not know fear, who have never felt fear, cannot recognize courage, or the capacity to overcome fear.

Hence, we deduce that courage is an elevated sentiment, elevated precisely by its alliance with intelligence. Courage, – Plato's "Spirited" aspect of the soul– when it acts on behalf of the instincts, is not so much courage, but an unleashed instinctual force.

To control anger and to develop courage

The person who is inclined to anger is enslaved in two ways. First, they are their own slave, because a part of their soul, the coarsest and roughest part, can override their refined and thinking soul. Second, they are also a slave of others... the loss of their own self-control exposes them to manipulation by those who can exploit the situation for their own benefit. The angry person's soul is in the hands of others...

"It is good to master anger, and much better to replace it with courage"





“...those who do not know fear, who have never felt fear, cannot recognize courage, or the capacity to overcome fear.”

How easily the choleric person can be angered with arguments that make them explode! How readily they can be guided into decisions engineered by their circumstantial “owners”!

The one who controls the situation makes them believe that they are the architects of their actions and words, but it was all predetermined..

It is good to master anger, and even much better to replace it with courage. Courage puts our true heart into play, the genuine human soul. Courage is the audacity of seeing things as they are, of tempering our emotions, of listening, interpreting ideas, choosing what is valid, and discarding what is no longer of value, to act with justice.

Fear and Ignorance

What things do we fear? The things we do not know, the things we do not know how to face. Then what is our fear, our doubt? Ignorance, pure and simple.

When we know, when we bring light, when we see all that is around us and within us, fear and doubt disappear. 

Extracted from Delia's book 'Philosophy for Living'.

A close-up photograph of several people's hands clasped together in a circle, symbolizing unity and support. The background is a blurred green field. The text is overlaid on the lower half of the image.

The Moral Struggle

By Delia Steinberg Guzmán

The true philosopher should think of his struggle as a moral battle.


The field of morality includes all those latent powers that are trying to emerge but are unable to do so, because they need our decisive and willing support. Morality is the sum of all our virtues, the combination of all our powers, active and latent; it is the armour and the weapons with which we enter the battle of life, from which we want to emerge victorious.

Morality, then, is the union of our physical, energetic, emotional, intellectual and spiritual potentials in their positive aspects.

Ours is a moral struggle to achieve the conquest of our human values. The effort and struggle that precede any victory, whether great or small, are especially evident on the innermost planes of the personality.

There is no doubt that many efforts require the active participation of the body and the energy. But the root of that physical effort is always to be found in the things we know or the things we want; the forces of wanting and knowing are powerful motivations.

It is clear that the most fearsome struggles take place in the emotions and the mind. Bodies undergo great pain when they suffer; but it is not comparable to the intensity of pain in the subtle bodies, for which there is no quick and easy remedy.



“Morality is the sum of all our virtues, the combination of all our powers, active and latent; it is the armour and the weapons with which we enter the battle of life, from which we want to emerge victorious.”

Calm is expressed as serenity, as peace.

Many brave fighters know how important it is to remain calm in the midst of battle.

When the goal has not yet been reached, when we are still following uncertain paths with many byways and hidden traps, it is not advisable to lose control of ourselves or of the external circumstances.

The destabilizing element of aimless emotions, confused ideas and actions without continuity is the enemy that stands in the way of victory.

It is at these times that we are most in need of self-control. We have to know how to moderate the passions, clarify our ideas; we have to measure the movements of the body; we have to connect our actions. Everything must have an aim and, to ensure that the aim does not disappear from view, we need serenity.

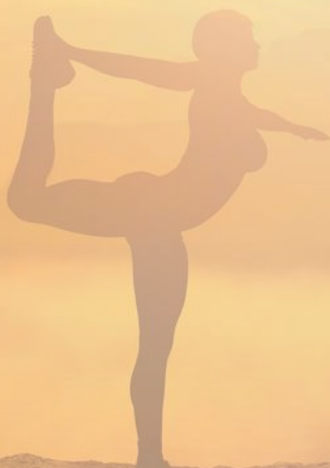
Serenity does not imply insensitivity. It makes room for the best sentiments and enjoys them as long as they are expressed within ethical and aesthetic channels. It enables us to work with the best ideas because there is space, there is light and there is time to understand and develop them.

Serenity is a state of the soul which is very close to victory, even if it is not the great victory.

As regards peace, it was honoured on ancient altars as the deity that followed in the wake of victory. Victory gives rise to peace.

Our peace, for now, will be achieved by controlling our opposites. Calm victory, like all victories, cannot avoid inner struggles.

***...only one who possesses can
give and only one who is capable
of giving possesses.***



WE NEED TO KNOW THE TRUE NATURE OF SACRIFICE.

Sacrifice is not about pain, but about courageously exercised willpower.

Without looking very far, there is one well known explanation: sacrifice as self-denial, as the ability to put one's own desires aside and place oneself at the service of others. But in addition to self-denial we have the concept of sacrifice as *sacrum officium*, a sacred duty, a sacred action or offering. Altars, now and at all times, are those places where there is an opportunity for worthy and useful work. Sacrifice as a sacred offering is about creating more space in the soul.

***Sacrifice is not about pain,
but about courageously
exercised willpower.***

The sacrifice that leads to victory has a lot to do with purification: leaving behind the residues and rubbish that obstruct the personality; it is impossible to move forward if our feet are stuck in the mud. It has a lot to do with generosity: possessing in order to give; only one who possesses can give and only one who is capable of giving possesses. It has a lot to do with mysticism: seeing what is hidden behind the appearances, perceiving the laws of nature in every action, understanding the purpose that moves the universe and all living beings.

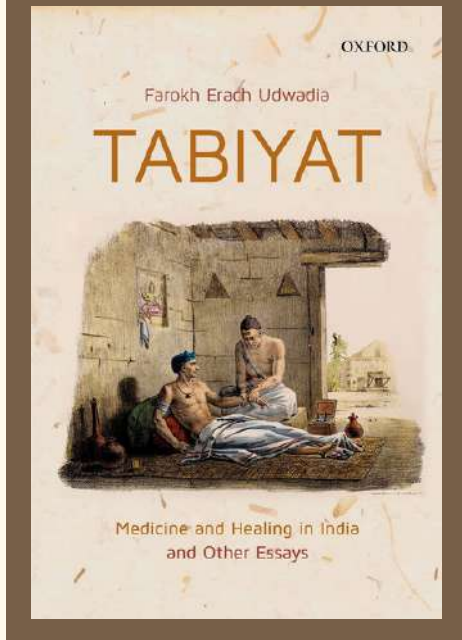
This is the victory we must achieve. The victory that rises up like fire after the dross has been burnt. The ever-burning fire on the altars has a base of wood, a fuel that sets it alight and a star that attracts it. △△△





Humanizing Medicine: In Conversation with Dr. Farokh Udhwadia

Compiled by the Acropolitan Editorial Team



In March 2022, New Acropolis Culture Circle hosted renowned physician, author and Padma Bhushan awardee Dr. Farokh Udwadia at our Mumbai center. Dr. Udwadia has contributed to many National and International publications, and written several books, one of which is *TABIYAT: Medicine and Healing in India*. He has spoken out strongly about how humanizing medicine will engender greater empathy and create a stronger bond between the doctor and patient, a vital precondition for optimal healing.

Below are extracts from his talk:

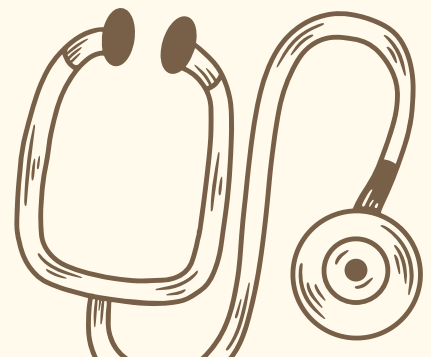
Medicine was born with the awakening of human consciousness, so it has always been by our side as life climbed the ladder of evolution. It arose from the myths of magical beliefs and empirical observations of ancient civilizations. The trail of medicine has had its twists and turns, periods of scintillating light and darkness, through over 5000 years of recorded history, to manifest as a force, an art, a science, a profession.

Medicine has been influenced by so many factors: philosophy, religion, economics, sociology, geography, art and culture, by wars and conflicts, by natural disasters and by the rise and fall of civilizations.

The romance of medicine really lies in the great men and women who have trodden its exacting trail. Since its earliest days, Medicine consisted of just one thing -

care. And it is interesting how this idea of care is and will always be the pulsating heart in Medicine.

In the West, Medicine began in 500 BCE, with the idea of philosophy, as emphasized by Pythagoras. Philosophy centered around the study of man, including the study of health - when is a man considered healthy or unhealthy? Why does a man come into being? Where does he go? Every question related to man, was investigated by numerous branches in the human endeavor, including medicine.



In the last 70 years, Medicine has made giant strides and worked miracles. Today, we can transplant almost all organs in the body except the brain, and have various drugs to counter numerous ailments and infections. Although the profession in the past was held in its highest regard, today a fair amount of antagonism exists against it. Why? Perhaps because medicine has lost its path in terms of humanity, due to the mechanization of medicine; the hubris of science and technology has robbed medicine of its art and of its "raison d'être". The machine serves as an intermediary between the doctor and patient. The doctors and consultants of today are more concerned with looking at various organ systems within the patient, without ministering to the patient as a whole.

Despite the stunning leaps made by Science, can Technology ever soothe the anxiety of relatives, of patients who are on the verge of death? Can they handle patients emotionally and advise them on bravely coping with the problem or urging them to fight? Medicine is learnt *at the bedside* - by listening and interacting with



Medicine is as much an art as a science.



the patient, by touching him carefully. Not via books, or gleaming machinery and sophisticated gadgetry, nor from being enamored by the lovely pictures thrown up by scans, angiograms, and ultrasounds. This mechanization of medicine is partly due to the commercialization and the institutionalization of medicine, and partly related to a falling sense of values, not just in medicine, but in all fields. How could Medicine stay as an island of virtue in an age swamped with corruption?

Medicine is as much an art as a science. Unfortunately, this art has now been put into the shadows, and is on the verge of fading away. What a tragedy, for both man and medicine. The art of medicine lies in the qualities of the heart and the mind, which have to vibrate in empathy with a sick patient and thereby promote healing. It is defined by:

Taking a good History of the patient. A disease never manifests itself in the same way in two individuals - that's the beauty and also the challenge in medicine. Hence it will never be an exact science. A good physician also has to be a good detective.

If I am stumped about a patient's ailment, I may find an important clue in just an offhand remark from the patient which hints at the true situation inside of him.



Next comes meticulous **Examination**, using our eyes and ears and hands; then **Investigation**, which should precisely cover only what is relevant; And finally, a **Conclusion** as to what the patient suffers from. Perhaps the most important aspect of a good physician is **Judgement**. Clinical judgement is an intuitive gift which we cannot equate with intelligence or knowledge. Very knowledgeable, intelligent physicians may have poor judgement and ordinary physicians may be gifted with excellent judgement.



Medical ethics: The moral obligations that govern the practice of medicine, the idea of right or wrong. Ethics is rooted in philosophy, religion and social customs, and these can be different in different communities, and different civilizations. Hence it is impossible to have a common goal of ethics in medicine - but by and large all civilized societies have a reasonable concept of right and wrong, and that I think is the key.

Beneficence and **Competence** are significant aspects of the ethics of medicine. Beneficence is about doing good to the patient, and for that we need Competence. **Humanism** is the quality that enables a physician to empathize with the suffering of the patient. So, competence has to be allied with Humanity. The opposite of beneficence is maleficence- which is doing harm to the patient. "Primum non Nocere" was the Hippocratic oath which meant - first of all, do no harm. And that's not easy because every medicine has side effects, a quandary that is always a challenge.

Autonomy: The patient has to give his consent to what the doctor recommends in terms of investigations, or invasive procedures. But for a decision to be truly autonomous, the individual who is making that decision, perhaps contrary to the advice of the doctor, has to have his own interest truly at heart, and should make this decision after proper thought and critical thinking. Many in the west, support the idea of absolute patient autonomy. But great decision making in medicine comes as a result of finding in

each case the right balance between beneficence and autonomy. For e.g. a medical student of mine was brought in almost dead, with a note saying that under no circumstances am I to resuscitate her. It appeared to be a suicide attempt, with poison. But we resuscitated her and she lived, to eventually regret her act. This is an example of beneficence winning the conflict with patient autonomy. An impulsive autonomy driven by one's anxiety, stress or panic is not truly autonomous, so in an emergency when there is a conflict between beneficence and autonomy, I would advocate beneficence.

Justice: The doctor does the best that he can while ensuring he causes the *least* harm possible while striving to do the *most* good for the patient. For e.g.- when we started a tetanus ward at JJ hospital, there were 12 patients convulsing because of this dreadful disease but we only had three machines. Now, how do I choose with justice? I have no option but to choose the three people who are the worst affected and use it for them, knowing fully well that tomorrow, one of those whom I had not used the machine on, could be worse than the ones that I had.

Communication: It is important to make the patient an ally, and communicate in a way that does not make him panic or worry, on why and what the doctor plans to do. This honest and precise communication creates a sense of faith, a bond between the doctor and the patient. All patients whether educated or not, have the instinct to distinguish between a physician who truly cares, from a physician who pretends to care. It is also important to communicate honestly with the relatives. Finally, the physician needs to communicate clearly with his inner self; I do that by writing personal notes on very ill patients - why have I chosen this? What if I had chosen another plan? This clarifies my mind's quagmire of thoughts and may help me gain more insights later.

The physician needs to communicate clearly with his inner self.






Humanism is the quality that enables a physician to empathize with the suffering of the patient.

Equanimity: The Physician has to be unruffled in times of great stress, able to think logically with correct judgement. He has to be composed so that the patient can draw courage from his equanimity. A doctor not born with this trait must work hard to develop it.

Charity: A Physician ought to always keep in his heart the quote "Do not enter the temple of science with the soul of a money lender.", by the author of the great book *Religio Medici*, Sir Thomas Brown.

Protection of human rights: Modern medicine may end up tampering with Human Rights. The Geneva convention states that the research on the genome should be directed solely towards alleviating the suffering of patients, and nothing else. But research being done right now can be misused to allow genes of the human race to be altered!

The natural pace of evolution of humanity across millions of years, through genetic drift and Darwinian selection, may be hastened to leap ahead by hundreds of years. Perhaps in a thousand years, we would be able to alter the human genome such that he might achieve super human qualities. It's sad that human beings may function as part or total machines.

To sum up this piece, I would like to quote Maimonides, a philosopher physician from the middle east, who centuries ago, gave the first description of bronchial asthma. He said, "Let me treat my patient, a fellow creature in pain and in distress with great humanity. Let me never ever consider him as merely a vessel filled with disease." 



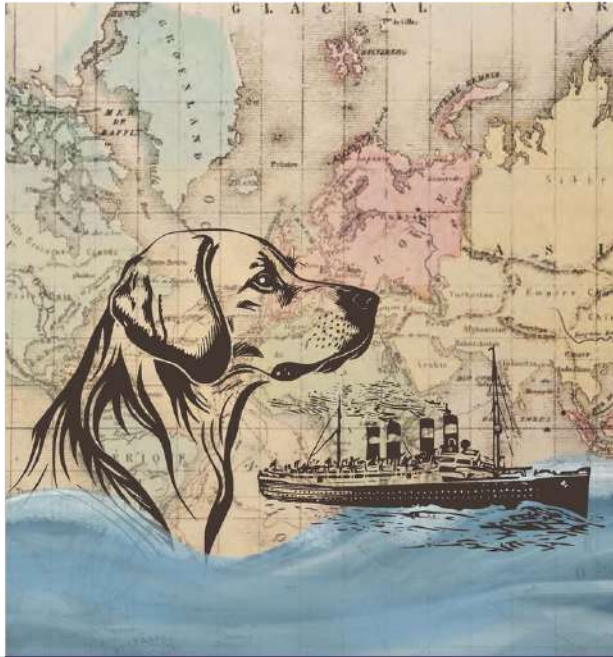
“ART IS WISDOM MADE INTO BEAUTY”
JORGE ANGEL LIVRAGA

Join our investigation and celebration of the diverse range of culture, through interactive & intimate bi-monthly events, held mainly at our centre in Colaba, Mumbai.



Scan this QR Code to join New Acropolis Culture Circle & receive invitations to our upcoming events.





BOOK EXCERPT

MOASSY, THE DOG

By Jorge A. Livraga Rizzi

Written from the unique and imaginative perspective of a dog transformed into a man, who travels the world, visiting different countries, this work is the author's way of expressing his views on some of the world's sociopolitical systems, exposing their irrationality and the duplicity of human beings, while paradoxically continuing to love them. However, it is not only a political work, but a deeply philosophical one, in which the author contemplates his own death and muses about the two infinities above and below.

BY WAY OF A PROLOGUE

Last night I felt cold. Although the thermometers recording the temperature of the air conditioning in my room indicated that it was warm, I felt cold... and a little bit anxious. No, it is not due to psychological reasons; I'm not very prone to psychological disorders, because I don't have much of a psyche. No; I think it's something more important... Perhaps the most important thing: I'm going to die. My unflinching instinct tells me so... Moreover, I have already lived for many years, too many for those of my race. I have tripled or quadrupled my normal lifespan, but now it's coming to an end.

This strange anxiety makes me want to drink water, to walk, to look through old photographs in search of friendly faces, to observe my own body with inexplicable curiosity; perhaps I want to say goodbye to it. Yes, now I am sure; I am going to die. And I cannot keep the terrible secret of my life for any longer.

I sit down in front of a typewriter; I put it on the floor to be more comfortable. Somehow, I go back to being a child again.

How strange! My breathing is not difficult, the air flows quickly into my lungs, but, as if it were stale, I cannot assimilate it and I feel an increasing sense of suffocation. I need to hurry; I need to write.

Although I don't have much time, I feel that the hours are becoming longer for me and that I will be able to complete my task. At least I try to convince myself that I will. No one will be able to help me. When we are born and when we die, we are incredibly alone. And yet, I'm not afraid... and I don't know why I'm not afraid. Those of my race, in my situation, become sad and melancholic; that is not happening to me at all. If nothing awaits me after death, what is there to fear? Nothing matters any more... Or perhaps that's not true. If I could remain in front of the typewriter, and write, write... but I get up every now and again... as if I were looking for something or trying to escape... From what? From whom? I don't know.

My name is Moassy... sorry, Dr William Ferdinand Moassy.

This is the true story of my life. It is so incredible that I don't expect anyone to believe it. But truth is always unbelievable; there is nothing more believable than a lie. This little black wooden hut that awaits me on the horizon and is my death, does not disturb me, but reminds that I was born in another one, painted white, next to centuries-old pines and a new beehive, full of golden bees, drunk on honey and the music of their own wings. My mother had a beautiful red coat, my father... I don't know; I never knew my father. I had six brothers and sisters, all of them long dead, like my mother, like the bees.

Let me tell you...



CHAPTER ONE

MY CHILDHOOD

In the depths of my time, like fragments of a boat that has sunk long ago, the memories of my childhood rise to the surface and disappear again. I see black water trying to submerge them; some of them, appearing for a brief moment, sink back forever. Others reappear again and again. I have to make an effort, in those brief intervals when they are visible, to retain something of their shapes, colours, sizes, natures...

From the darkest region, I draw the sensation of warmth and the rays of a very clear sun, peeping out, like the face of a mischievous child, between two mountain peaks. Then, enormous pine trees, many of them, of which I can only remember the powerful roots sinking into the earth towards the mysterious world of damp and deep darkness. And above, that other mystery of the heights, a mixture of blue, gold and white.

While my brothers and sisters were frolicking around, I lay still, gazing first at one infinity and then the other. And I would try to climb up the rough and ancient bark of trees, as if it were a vertical path, until I fell down, exhausted; and I would dig feverishly in the earth, but

neither the earth nor the roots ever ended. My only possibility, like that of so many beings, was horizontal. The vertical, in one direction or another, was barred to me.

Among the fallen branches, the acorns, the pale trunks of poplars, my siblings and I used to play, following invisible labyrinths, getting lost and finding our way again amid short whimpers and equally short yelps of joy. At times, I would stop and gaze at the branches that had fallen from above: they came from the mystery of the heights, but, when they entered my horizontal dimension, they lost their green leaves and turned black. The earth I had dug up dried in the sun and became pale. They were both dead witnesses that could tell me little or nothing of those two infinities that obsessed me. Giving me a gentle push, my mother would urge me to run off again with my brothers and sisters. I discovered very early on that anyone who stops to reflect, is seen by others as sick. For that reason, I have always reflected on my own.

I was always different; I don't know if I was better, but I was different from others. As soon as I could look after myself, I started to go as far away as possible from the little white hut that had witnessed my birth, following the zigzagging flight of the golden bees. And then came the fear of loneliness and confusion; the only thing I knew was where the mystery of above and the mystery of below were; on this horizontal earth I have always got lost.

And I would laboriously return to my family, to my bowl of food, where the bones of other beings who, like me, had bones of other beings who, like me, had lived between two mysteries, were being bleached by the sun. When I understood that, I was horrified and would not taste food for several days. Then, hunger proved more powerful than the horror and pity: sad prophecy!

But then came a day, a day that dawned like so many others. The clouds shook off their sleep, stretched their moving arms and rose above the high valleys boxed in between mountains. The sun was pale; the air cold. But there was nothing to indicate that anything important was about to happen to me. And so it was that, after the washing that my mother subjected me to every morning, and a hurried breakfast among the palpitating bodies of my siblings, all anxious to go out and play, I left the white hut – though I didn't know it then – forever.

My departure was absurdly simple. I ran after the bees and couldn't find my way back again. At first, I was seized with despair and used all my instincts to discover the way back, but I couldn't. I told you: on the horizontal earth I have always got lost. But, when youth makes us restless and we begin to tire of the monotony of home, we soon forget our sorrows, so I kept running about and playing, and telling myself: "I'll worry about that later."

After the blazing hand of the sun had blessed the entire arc of the sky, it began to hide behind the mountains of the horizon, and the shadows, which during the day had kept timidly close to the objects, began to separate from them in order to begin their own cycle of races, running faster and faster. The stars stood out against the firmament which had now turned violet, and a cold wind, howling like a wolf, blew down from the mountains.

Still today, so many years later, I remember that first night of solitude with a shudder... Afterwards, one becomes accustomed to solitude, even if one continues to shudder. It's strange: there's a certain part of myself which is not afraid of solitude, and even enjoys it. I imagine that it must be that part which is always alone. But there are other facets of ourselves that see solitude in a dark light, and these are so afraid that sometimes with a part of our own body we squeeze and hold onto the other part, in a parody of company. Dissimilar natures that might lead us to deduce they have dissimilar destinies! But here I have already started philosophizing and I was in the middle of telling you about my childhood, and philosophy and childhood don't usually go together.

I made myself as comfortable as I could among the many feet of an immense tree and fell asleep; I don't know for how long. But I remember feeling the warmth of the sun and, at the same time, some hands

lifting me up until I was looking at a face that was old and from which a snowy white beard hung, like an old rock. I whimpered and closed my eyes. I was no longer alone.

Shortly afterwards, a bowl of food and some words I didn't understand, but which I instinctively recognized as affectionate, restored in me a sense of peace. And they also made me aware that the little white hut where I was born, my mother and my playful siblings, had all been left behind. I was beginning a new cycle of my fantastic and incredible life.

My fingers have grown stiff on the keyboard of the typewriter, and I am intentionally delaying initiating you into my secret. I am only encouraged to keep going by the certainty that you won't believe me and that it is all true. If I were intelligent, I would find a way to express

myself, but I'm not and I never was, and now I regret it, perhaps for the first time. Everything is piling up and becoming confused in my mind and I am even doubting that I will be able to finish writing this. But... courage! I must keep going. I will tell you once and for all: I, known today as Dr William Ferdinand Moassy, who has received so many honours from different countries around the world, and has sat on university boards and legislative bodies, I am... a dog. Yes, laugh or be astonished, I am a dog. A dog who had a red coat, a wagging tail and a wet, calm nose. It is only my appearance that has been transformed, but I am a dog. Now that you know my secret, I will continue trying to explain to you how I became transformed and how I compensated for my lack of intelligence by the little use that human beings make of their own.



NEWS SPOTLIGHT

▶ Philosophy

▶ Culture

▶ Volunteering

The highlight of this quarter for us has been the visit of the International President of New Acropolis, Carlos Adelantado, along with Pierre Poulain, Regional Coordinator of New Acropolis for Asia-Africa-Oceania, to our Mumbai centre at Colaba, as well as Manav Bustan, our Rural centre at Mangaon.



Below is a review of some of the activities hosted by New Acropolis, Mumbai and Pune during July, August and September:

PHILOSOPHY

The most challenging thing in life is to know yourself. - Thales

New Acropolis Mumbai conducted a series of **PHILOSOPHY IN ACTION** workshops, which emphasised philosophy as a way of life through interactive talks and practical exercises. **FINDING MY BALANCE** took lessons from the Buddha and his simple but profound teachings on living a life of harmony, balance and being centred.

FREEDOM TO BE YOURSELF explored the concept of freedom. Is it the ability to do whatever I like, or is it the ability to stay true to myself despite the circumstances? **DESIGNING MY LIFE FOR HAPPINESS** offered some answers on sustaining happiness, no matter life's challenges. **THE ART OF CONCENTRATION** has become paramount today, and this workshop shed light on how to live with more clarity and depth amidst the conflicting voices that make up our lives. **WHO AM I, BODY, MIND or SOUL** invited participants to deepen their understanding of themselves beyond thoughts, emotions and the different roles they have in this life.



Lively interactive talks in Pune included **EGYPTIAN SYMBOLISM: THE WEIGHING OF THE HEART**, which uncovered practical keys to living an ethical life; **INSIGHTS FROM KHLIL GIBRAN**, the mystic, artist and philosopher, investigated concepts of freedom, love and friendship; **THE WAY OF COURAGE** explored how to work with fear, to move forward despite it.

THE ART OF IMAGINATION investigated how to perceive challenges as opportunities to propel us forward and to find creative solutions to the problems that frequently overwhelm us.



CULTURE

Beauty in things exist in the mind which contemplates them. - David Hume

Celebrating human values through culture, the New Acropolis Culture Circle invited our members to experience the range and beauty of Ancient Indian Arts and Crafts. Karishma Swali shared her passion and action in **PRESERVING INDIA'S ARTISANAL HERITAGE** through her 'Living Museum of Master Artisans.' New Acropolis Pune hosted a **WARLI ART WORKSHOP** with Avanti Kulkarni, a renowned artist and practitioner of Warli Art, to share her knowledge about this indigenous tribal art form that is centred around the respect for nature and all her elements.



VOLUNTEERING

Volunteers do not necessarily have the time, they have the heart. – Elizabeth Andrew

A trip to a forest in the **SAHYADRI FOOTHILLS** allowed members along with their family and friends to experience one of the world's top bio-diversity hot spots. Under the guidance of native forest dwellers, participants listened to their tribal wisdom and learned about the importance of maintaining our natural eco systems and living in harmony with nature. At the end of the day, members enjoyed a tribal meal, cooked over an open fire with local herbs, vegetables and fruits that they had foraged together.



PUBLIC EVENTS NEW ACROPOLIS MUMBAI

Fri

13 Oct

An Evening
of Story Telling

7.30 pm (2 hrs)

**at Mumbai Center
(Colaba)**

[Register Here](#)



THE ART OF MAKING MISTAKES

What are stories, but the narrative of lives? Of sometimes imperfect people who inspire us because we resonate with their struggles and their spirit in enduring them.

We invite you to participate in an evening of story-telling, to explore how making mistakes can be the first step to victory.

Sat

28 Oct

Free Workshop

6 pm (2 hrs)

**at Mumbai Center
(Colaba)**

[Register Here](#)

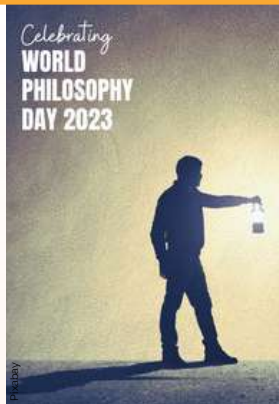


WAY OF THE HEART: AN ENCOUNTER WITH ANCIENT EGYPT

From the wisdom of the Egyptian tradition, a striking visual called "The Trial of the Heart" uncovers valuable and practical keys of how to live a meaningful and ethical life. Join us to discover the mysteries of ancient Egypt and be inspired to follow the Way of the Heart!

Sat
4 Nov

Celebrating
WORLD
PHILOSOPHY
DAY 2023



PHILOSOPHY IN ACTION: VICTORY OF LIGHT OVER DARKNESS

Celebrating World Philosophy Day 2023

In her book "Philosophy for Living", Delia Steinberg Guzman shares - "It is not knowledge that transforms us, but the action we take on what we know".

We yearn to be gallant adventurers, bringing the light of courage to combat the darkest challenges that cast their shadows on us. We won't find this path on the vast internet, nor in the advancements of technology, but we may find the answers in the subtle realm of our indomitable human spirit. How do we do this? Philosophy shows us the way, and teaches us that within every challenge lies an incredible opportunity; that the key to the solution lies within ourselves.

With the inspiration of Diwali and World philosophy Day, we invite you to join us for a Philosophical Panel Discussion to discover the secrets of Philosophy in Action and the practical solutions it offers for the victory of light over darkness - within ourselves and in our world.

Free Philosophical
Panel Discussion

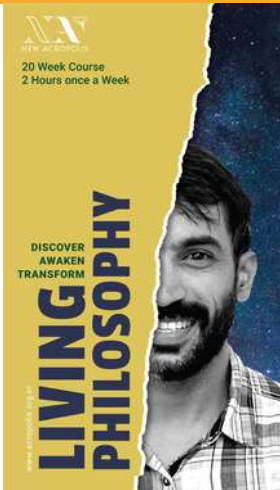
6 pm (2 hrs)

**at Mumbai Center
(Colaba)**

[Register Here](#)

PUBLIC EVENTS NEW ACROPOLIS MUMBAI

Wed
22 Nov



Free Introduction
7:30 pm (2 hrs)
at **Mumbai Center**
(Colaba)

[Register Here](#)

FREE INTRODUCTION TO LIVING PHILOSOPHY COURSE

20 week course | 2 hours once a week

Living Philosophy is an opportunity to discover ourselves and the world around us, with the insights of ancient philosophies and human wisdom put into practice in everyday life. Extract practical tools through the course to learn to live with more freedom and sustained happiness. Explore the path of inner change as a key to actively contribute towards building a better world.

This event is a Free Introduction to learn more about what this course offers.

Sat
2 Dec



Free Workshop
6 pm (2 hrs)
at **Mumbai Center**
(Colaba)

[Register Here](#)

LIVING THE "GOOD" LIFE: STOIC LESSONS FOR TODAY

What makes us truly content – a comfortable life, or a life aligned to the values we define as important for ourselves? Stoic philosophers offer many lessons on living with more clarity, purpose and happiness that are as relevant for us today. Join us for a workshop as we experience and explore the many facets of living the "good" life – the Stoic way!

This session is a glimpse into our Living Philosophy Course – An introduction to Philosophy as a way of life.

Mumbai Center



KHAR

Wed
25 Oct

Free Philosophical
Talk
7:30 pm (2 hrs)
at The Studio at
Anokhi Garden
(Khar W)

[Register Here](#)



DISCOVERING OUR INNER STABILITY

A Glimpse into Living Philosophy

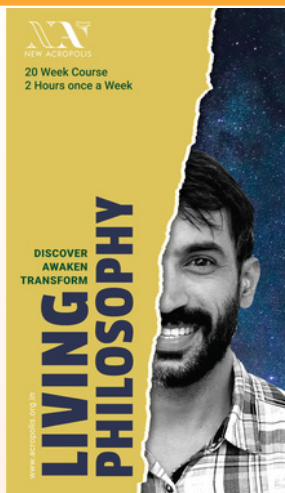
Do you find yourself constantly pulled in various directions; distracted by numerous noises; torn between multiple choices? Join us to explore how the path of Philosophy can help us to discover an inner stability, serving as our compass as we navigate through the fast changing world today.

BANDRA

Wed
22 Nov

Free Introduction
7:45 pm (2 hrs)
at The Yoga House
Sherley Rajan Road
(Bandra W)

[Register Here](#)



FREE INTRODUCTION TO LIVING PHILOSOPHY COURSE

20 week course | 2 hours once a week

Living Philosophy is an opportunity to discover ourselves and the world around us, with the insights of ancient philosophies and human wisdom put into practice in everyday life. Extract practical tools through the course to learn to live with more freedom and sustained happiness. Explore the path of inner change as a key to actively contribute towards building a better world.

This event is a Free Introduction to learn more about what this course offers - Now in Bandra!



For Enquiries: +91 97692 91908 |
akanksha.sanghi@acropolis.org

PUBLIC EVENTS NEW ACROPOLIS PUNE

Sun
8 Oct

Free
Philosophical
Talk
6 pm (2 hrs)
at Pune Branch
[Register Here](#)



CHOOSING UNITY – BUILDING A BETTER WORLD

Can we be a force of unity in today's world? We all are very different but may be these differences enrich us. Join us on this evening of philosophical storytelling where we will narrate and explore stories of heroes who dared to overcome internal and external separative barriers to give example of solidarity and harmony.

Fri
13 Oct

Free
Philosophical
Talk
7 pm (2 hrs)
at Pune Branch
[Register Here](#)



DARE TO BE AUTHENTIC – LESSONS FROM SOCRATES

Socrates, one of the greatest philosophers of our times, was as humble as he was brave. He dedicated his life to the enquiry and investigation towards Truth, even at the cost of his own life. Let us look at his extraordinary example, to bring a spark of courage and to search and stand for Truth in our own daily lives.

Fri
17 Nov

Free
Philosophical
Talk
7 pm (2 hrs)
at Pune Branch
[Register Here](#)



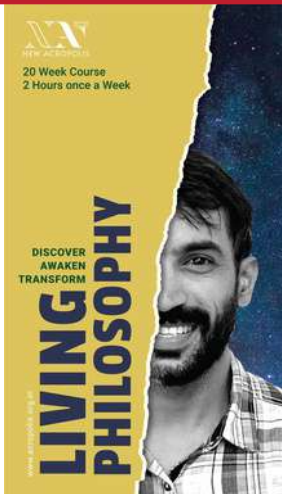
FINDING A WAY OUT OF THE MAZE – LESSONS FROM MYTHOLOGY

A Glimpse into Living Philosophy Course

What is the maze in our lives? What are our own thoughts and behavioral patterns that enslave us? Is there a way out of it? Let us extract practical lessons for our daily battles. Whether it was Theseus killing Minotaur, the defeat of Ravana, Perseus confronting Medusa, mythology seems to offer us keys to pave a path in order to get out of our own internal challenges and emerge victorious.

PUBLIC EVENTS NEW ACROPOLIS PUNE

Tue
21 Nov



FREE INTRODUCTION SESSION TO LIVING PHILOSOPHY COURSE

20 week course | 2 hours once a week

Free Open House
7:30 pm (2 hrs)
at Pune Branch

[Register Here](#)

Living Philosophy is an opportunity to discover ourselves and the world around us, with the insights of ancient philosophies and human wisdom put into practice in everyday life. Extract practical tools through the course to learn to live with more freedom and sustained happiness. Explore the path of inner change as a key to actively contribute towards building a better world.

This event is a Free Introduction to learn more about what this course offers.

Fri
01 Dec



PATH OF "CONCENTRATION AND INNER AWAKENING"

Talk and Book
Discussion
7 pm (2 hrs)
at Pune Branch

[Register Here](#)

A Glimpse into Living Philosophy Course

In the fast-paced lives we lead, it can be easy to get lost in doing many things. In the year 1600, one of the great Tibetan Lamas decided to draw a special picture in order to teach his disciples about the Art of Concentration. What is the important role of concentration according to Tibetan Buddhism, and what can we learn from this special drawing that can enable us to live with more clarity and meaning in today's world?

Join us for a book reading and discussion session of the book 'Concentration and Inner Awakening' authored by Fernand Schwarz which explores this path towards improving concentration.

Pune Branch



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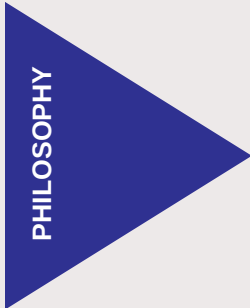
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Philosophy, when it is practical, is educational. It helps us to know ourselves and to improve ourselves. To be a philosopher is a way of life committed to the best aspirations of humanity.



The practice of human values is the basis for a model of active and participative Culture, which brings out the qualities of each person, broadens the horizons of the mind and opens the human being up to all the expressions of the spirit.



Volunteering is the natural expression of a spirit of union with life and humanity, which manifests in the practice of values such as unselfishness, commitment and striving for the common good.



NEW ACROPOLIS

PHILOSOPHY CULTURE VOLUNTEERING

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