

THE CLARION CALL

AWAKEN THE PHILOSOPHER WITHIN





The Clarion Call

Vol 1 Issue 4 | Apr - Jun 2016

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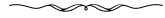
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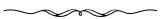
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Editor's Note

Dear Reader,

In ancient Rome, mosaics were made using small pieces of marble, tiles, glass, pottery even shells, to create a pattern. Once the small pieces were stuck on to a base there is a process called grouting which fills all the gaps and holds the tiny pieces together. There is no uniformity in the pieces that go into making the mosaics, but they come together in harmony to create breathtaking beauty.

Almost like the Roman empire at its pinnacle of glory, with its many different cultures united under the rule and patronage of Rome. Can we use the symbols of the mosaic today to recreate this kind of harmony, where every piece makes an important contribution to the whole, but is not necessarily the same as the other.

On a personal level harmony comes from finding balance. Harmony is created when there is a balance between intention and action. We create tension when our intention point us towards one direction but all our actions pull us in the opposite direction. When we find the 'satva' or the balance we can be in perfect harmony, peace and happiness. We invite you to read on for more on finding harmony personally, in relationships, and ways to create a harmonized society.

Regards,

Editorial Team,

Clarion Call

PS. Our beautiful cover image is a mosaic artwork created by members of New Acropolis, Bangalore !



Harmony and The Art Of True Friendship

Is it Relevant, is it Practical?

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



Apollo Citharoedus, or Apollo Citharede, is a statue of Apollo with a cithara

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.

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.



The Art of Human Relationships

The State of Being Connected...

BY BHANU PRATHAP SALATHIA



Illustration by Antoine de Saint-Exupéry in 'The Little Prince'

“Love does not consist of gazing at each other, but in looking outward together in the same direction.”

~ Antoine de Saint-Exupéry

A relationship is the way in which two or more people or things are connected - the state of being connected. We do not live alone in this world. We are always surrounded with people and we have to constantly deal with those around us. Whether we are grocery shopping, or meditating or at work, or while chilling with friends ...at every point in our lives we are always communicating and building relationships. It is the quality of our communication that decides the nature of our relationships. The relationships in our lives can be strong if there is effective communication. The question, though, may be how we achieve this.

Building a relationship is an art. It needs maintenance, rather like a garden, where there is some input that is needed for plants to flourish. The time spent need not be very much but the quality of the time matters. Creating a beautiful garden requires time. It does not appear overnight. Each plant has to be nurtured and given time to grow and express itself.

For relationships to go beyond the mundane we need to be creative. Nurturing a relationship requires the interest and efforts of all the people involved. This is what makes the relationship last through thick and thin and not just through the good times.

There are some parts of a garden that look beautiful filled with wild flowers and wild plants that do not need much attention. Similarly, there are times in a relationship when it can be left to its own devices. Though mostly, relationships need to be cultivated. The old and dying parts need extra care. Weeds and bugs need to be monitored and must be removed if they are causing a problem. Any relationship can fall prey to indifference, materialism and over sensitivity. Just like in the garden, these problems can be fixed if we are attentive and take care.

Many a times a relationship suffers from the lack of attention. Often it is not the duration of time spent together that makes a difference, but rather the quality of time. However, clichéd it may sound, quality time is being able to give undivided attention. We are often together, yet we are not. We can see this at our own dinner tables when we are on our phone or lost in our thoughts. Television or social media seems to take up all our mind space and attention.

Quality time, on the other hand, is a powerful way for us to communicate love. The key is to learn how to be fully available with a hundred percent of our attention.

There are certain challenges related to communication that are inbuilt. The average person speaks at a rate of about 150 words per minute. The problem is that we can hear at about a rate of 1,000 words per minute. While we wait for new ideas, we get distracted, tune out, even assume that we already know what is being said and therefore interrupt the other. None of these help foster healthy relationships. If you are not a good listener, you cannot be an effective communicator.

While our ears are the primary sense organ we use in the listening process, eye contact and body language are equally important. The heart, however, plays the lead role. With love comes the generosity to give someone else your full attention.

This is not a one-time act. We have a responsibility to also keep renewing our relationships, to nurture them

with life and freshness. Look at all nature around us. Everything in the universe renews itself.

In nature young seeds renew the cycle of life. In relationships, we need to grow internally to reflect our ability to express ourselves, and communicate better with everyone we come in contact with. We inhale philosophy and exhale love, generosity, compassion. This becomes possible when we see the connection that exists between all of us. When we learn to be in harmony with our self, with the people around us, and with nature.

Today, it is a task to learn to communicate better. Most of us are caught up in the 'daily'. In survival and earning more. Gradually we don't recognise the importance of the social order that creates harmony.

Psychologically we have to revive basic tools required for effective communication and relationships. The flip side of effective communication is fear, extreme responses, violence and indifference. For a healthy social life we need to understand ourselves, use our soil of healthy communication, to be fruitful, happy, to bring and to give life. Simple as it sounds, it requires effort and learning.

A parallel can be seen in the practice of permaculture. Today, most agriculture is monoculture, i.e. farmers with big farms rearing one crop. Nature will never grow one crop in a field. If there is a pest attack it will damage all crops. Ecological wisdom is to grow a mix of crops in a single field. A pest attack then, cannot damage all crops and less pesticide is required. The difference also creates a give and take and maintains the nutrient balance of the soil.

Like plants, people are also different from one another. We should build our fraternity, on the basis of this diversity, to go beyond our differences and to find the unity that lies at the core.



Harmony and Aesthetics

Beauty is in Infinite Places...

BY SHASHWATI BALASUBRAMANIAN

The world we live in today is far from harmonious. We see around us a time of strife, with growing intolerance, insecurity and confusion. It is in relation to this aspect of our historical condition that Delia Steinberg Guzmán, the President of New Acropolis International Organisation, says in her message at the beginning of the year, "That is why it is important to restore balance, to restore harmony and I would say it is necessary to restore beauty: For you see, there is a very close relationship between Harmony and Beauty.

What is Beauty? To find something truly beautiful is to experience something from a higher realm. It is to be transported beyond the realm of the personal,

to a realm that is more universal and elevated. The artist therefore, who is forever in pursuit of Beauty, seeks through his work to build a bridge between the ever-changing world of matter and the eternal world of values. He seeks to do this by making visible, the invisible harmonies and unchanging laws of the universe. The way of the Artist is therefore said to be one of the many ways to approach the divine.

In her New Year's message Delia poses a question – "Where do we look for Beauty?". She then goes on to answer this by saying there are infinite places to look. We can find Beauty in Nature, in simple things that we have, in Art...even in the everyday questions of life. It

is a matter of developing our ability to recognize it all around us.

The Art and Aesthetics team at New Acropolis works with the Ideal of Beauty. We find small ways to make this work practical. One of the art forms we have been practicing for more than a year is mosaic making. This is an ancient art form where pieces of ceramic tiles and glass are painstakingly assembled to make beautiful new works of art. Weekly meetings enable us to develop our skills, while also affording us the opportunity to research different aspects of mosaic making. While the most enriching part is to create beautiful vibrant forms out of little odd-shaped pieces of color, it is also the laughter, and fun and excitement of working together.

We bring Beauty to this world not just by the loveliness of the physical things that we create, but also by the beauty of the feelings, relationships and ideas we share and build and the Ideals we touch and experience in the process.



New Acropolis, Bangalore **UPCOMING EVENTS** Apr - Jun 2016

APRIL

Public Talk
Habits and You

19 Session Course
LIVING PHILOSOPHY

MAY

Public Talk
Courage and Fear

JUNE

Public Talk
**Kabir- The Poet
Philosopher**

Public Talk
**Ethics, Morality and
Happiness**

For more details about
upcoming events visit
www.acropolis.org.in



Beauty Does Matter

A REFLECTION BY PIERRE POULAIN...

Image Courtesy: Pierre Poulain



Beauty can be expressed through a wide array of manifestation. Nature is often related to Harmony and Beauty, like the flowers with their bright colors.

In the case of photography, if we follow some Masters as Henri Cartier-Bresson, then Beauty would be found more in the "geometry"- in the relations between forms- than in color.

The most important is not how to manifest Beauty, but the presence of Beauty itself. According to Plato, Beauty is linked to the True, the Good and the Just. Our world is in such a great need for those, that any addition of Beauty can indeed be considered as a necessary remedy.

Here I believe that Photography, as any Art media, can play a great part and help make this world better.

Pierre Poulain is a philosopher and a renowned international photographer. In 1986 he founded the New Acropolis School of Philosophy in Israel and later on in many other countries. Pierre blogs at www.photos-art.org

Recent Events AT NEW ACROPOLIS, BANGALORE

The past few months have been interesting for us. We are building collaborations with people and organisations who share our vision...

Public Talk The Art of Concentration



We are indeed fortunate to have worked with Atta Galata who hosted our event in their lovely space. The talk was on the "Art of Concentration". The national director of our organization, Mr. Ran Kremer, led us through the path shown by a Tibetan Lama. The Lama visualised the whole process of gaining control of the mind. The talk was followed by practical exercises on mind control.

Public Talk Women in Vedic Times



In another special event we invited Prof. Mangala to share her ideas with us. Her talk on "Women in Vedic Times" showed us, with examples, the esteem women were held in during that time period. She used history and quotes from the Vedas to show that Vedic women had choices. One of the interesting ideas that Prof. Mangala shared was that women in Vedic times could opt to continue studying as Brahmacharinis or to get married. These options were available to both genders.

About New Acropolis

International Organisation

New Acropolis is an international non-profit organization – with a presence in over 60 countries. At its core it is a school for practical philosophy in the Classical style run by volunteers. Worldwide we have close to 40 thousand volunteers. All our volunteers are dedicated to bringing philosophy closer to the society for all people regardless any differences of social, religious, gender or political background.

We came into being almost 60 years ago, with the aim of bringing universal philosophy and wisdom to life in the hearts of the cities worldwide. Our focus is on philosophy - not just in the sense of the quest for knowledge, and ideas, but on how we can use it so it will turn into Experience and Wisdom, thus widening our perspective over life and helping us evolve individually and collectively. We focus on philosophy as a way of life – as practical philosophy.



PHILOSOPHY

Philosophy has always been a search for spiritual truth. A process of going more deeply into the knowledge of Nature, the Human Being and the Universe. The search is an exercise of fighting against ignorance, confusion and prejudices. To be a philosopher is a way of life committed to the best aspirations of humanity. At New Acropolis we work with Practical Philosophy, which means we do not limit ourselves to reading, studying and theoretical knowledge, but set ourselves the goal of learning to live well.



CULTURE

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.

New Acropolis seeks to bring a new vision of culture: a culture with practical and living values, which enables its audiences to transform and improve themselves.



VOLUNTEERING

For New Acropolis, volunteering is the practical way of embodying and applying Philosophy and Culture. It is the natural expression of generosity and service to society. It is an active and conscious participation to contribute to the common good. All the activities carried out by New Acropolis in the world, in its different fields of action, are achieved thanks to the work of thousands of volunteers. Volunteering makes us better as individuals and helps to make the world a better place.

What is in it for Me ?

A few new members of New Acropolis share their experience...

New Acropolis is a school of philosophy in the classical manner, more importantly we are a school of practical philosophy. New Acropolis makes the abstract accessible. Philosophy is not longer simply an intellectual challenge. It is a living idea that enables the transformation of those who attend it.

Musa, a finance expert, felt unsettled, knowing he wanted to 'be doing something better' but not sure what or how to go about it. The daily routine of life was 'fine' but 'somehow something is not connected somewhere'. He felt he was missing something. At New Acropolis he was on a quest to find some answers, which helped him continue his quest. 'It wasn't about giving up samsara and wearing a robe and all that, I have struggled and am still struggling with that!'

His journey has led him to question some of his priorities, and he is now in the process of finding answers. 'Making money is required but is that what life is all about, doesn't make sense to me. So I feel I could find those answers for myself here, that's why I chose to stay.'

Saumya, a PhD student, says her journey here has a different route. "New Acropolis helped me navigate through life and situations that were not working for me. I was already on a path with no GPS. But this course is giving me a GPS on a strange terrain with no compass. It helped me actually start afresh. So it's a clean slate right now and I am rewriting my life's script."

She has experienced the harmony, which is our focus in this issue. "What I like about this place is that the people I am interacting with regularly, they accept me as I am, they are not expecting anything from me or want anything from me. They are not bothered from what I am doing. It's a place where you can be just your actual self."

Joseph, an entrepreneur, shares this little anecdote with us, 'My friend came home and she noticed that everything is more organized and cleaner. [Laughs]. And it is not stressful. Getting organized was a stressful thing before.' He is also able to apply the ideas of the classes in his life, 'The idea of the right tension is helping me at a personal level as well as running my organization. I am able to see when people are not able to work, why are they not able to work, why are they stressed. I am able to help them better.'

But the recurring theme is the harmony and friendship, 'There is an immense amount of love and friendship I feel in people here. It is very pure I feel. There is no manipulation.'

We invite you come and share this experience with us. Do check our schedules for events and the dates for the next 'Living Philosophy' course.

LIVING PHILOSOPHY

Learn. Investigate. Evolve.

Foundation to Practical Philosophy at The New Acropolis International Organization (IONA) – India

Is philosophy restricted to books and concepts or is it possible to live the wisdom of the ancient masters in our everyday life?

Living Philosophy is the foundation of a journey to discover and experience the deeper esoteric concepts of self, nature and humanity. Philosophy as a way of life begins foremost with an inward journey and when practiced, it finds its true essence of transformation of the self and that of the world around us.

Highlights of some of the themes that will be covered in the 19 session course:



Know Thyself

Different levels of human consciousness with perspectives from the east and the west. What is transient and what is eternal?



The Wisdom of Ancient India

Learn the story of Arjuna, the warrior. The Bhagavad Gita describes the battles of life and tools to help us win this battle. Universal laws of Dharma, Karma and the discernment to identify and implement the Right action.



Life and Teachings of the Buddha

Explore the life of the Buddha and his teaching through the Dhammapada. This gives us practical advice on how to overcome pain and suffering and live a noble life.



The Artist, The In Love And The Philosopher

Who are you? Discover the wisdom of the ancient Romans through the Stoic philosophers. Epictetus, Seneca and Marcus Aurelius teach us simple and practical philosophy, of working with virtues as a path to progress.



Tools For Life From The Ancient World

Explore the wisdom of the ancient Egyptians, the idea of justice. From ancient China comes Confucius' expounding the importance of an ethical social order.



The Light At The End Of The Cave

What is the identity of a philosopher, the true leader and a politician. The metaphor of Plato's Allegory of the Cave, the grand illusion and how we can free ourselves from it.

"New Acropolis teaches me how to balance myself when confronted with various challenges in my life. Also, the teachings helped to channel my energy in the right direction."

~ Arijit Das

Member of New Acropolis,
Bangalore

For details of the upcoming batch of **Living Philosophy** refer to back cover.

LIVING PHILOSOPHY

Learn. Investigate. Evolve.

Foundation to Practical Philosophy

at New Acropolis International
Organization (IONA) - INDIA



COURSE DETAILS

Free Introductory Session: April 12, Tuesday, 7:30 pm
April 19, Tuesday, 7:30 pm

Course Start Date: April 26, 2016 7:30 PM – 9:30 PM
(Tuesdays)

Duration: 19 weeks (weekly once)

Course Fee: Rs. 4500

Limited seats per batch

**To register visit www.acropolis.org.in/living-philosophy
or call +91 96638 04871 (Last date to register is April 26)**

