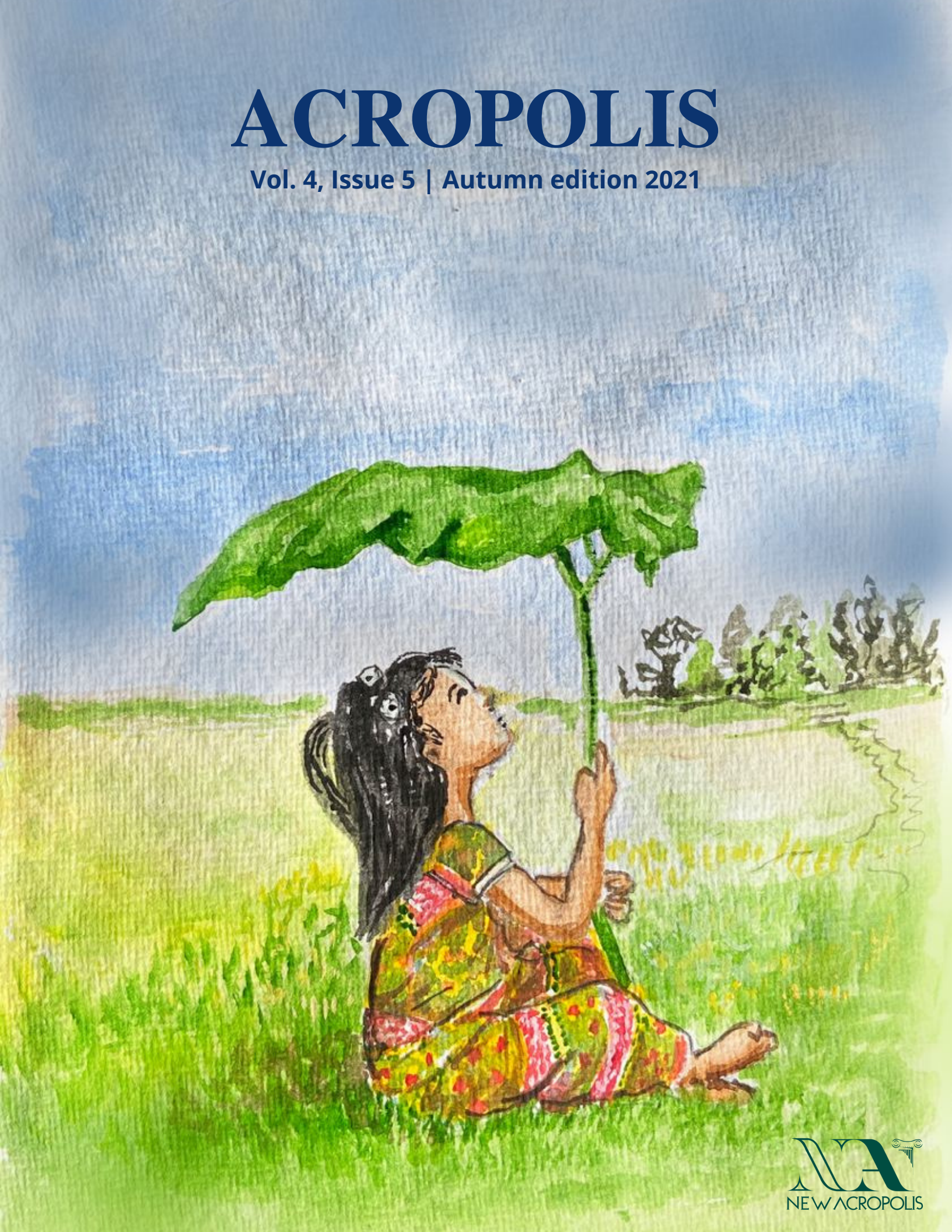


# ACROPOLIS

Vol. 4, Issue 5 | Autumn edition 2021



## On the Cover: Revive and Reconnect

The cover image depicts a little girl holding up a large leaf over her head as the monsoons arrive. The raindrops fall through the green crevices bringing her joy and hope. As we near the end of another year with its own unique challenges, may we find ways to reconnect to the spirit of innocence and enthusiasm within us that enables us to reach out to others in turn. From being dormant to emerging out, expressing and keeping pace with the cycles of nature as life moves on into new horizons of change and transformation. Here's to embracing those changes and finding our hope together.

## Acropolis

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### ACROPOLIS

Vol 4 Issue 5 | Autumn 2021 edition

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## Editor's Note

Dear Reader,

I am delighted to bring to you the Autumn edition of Acropolis. In this edition, we bring you a thought-provoking article on our *motivations*, how they affect us and how we can build our motivations more consciously. Talking of building, we have then a wonderful article on the opportunity we have now to rebuild our lives with discernment, intelligence, and clarity.

We are in the Autumn season, which philosophically is also a season to sow seeds of new and better habits in our lives, actively make changes towards letting go of what stops us, and hence clearing space for a fresh and a better start. Wish you a wonderful Autumn season and hope you enjoy going through this edition.

Happy reading!

**Ankit Jain**

Editor - Acropolis

# Motivations

Delia Steinberg Guzmán

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Image Credits: By mohamed\_hassan | Pixabay | CC BY PD

This subject can be looked at from two angles: being motivated or being unmotivated. Both are expressions that we hear about every day, on different occasions, and in relation to many aspects of life.

Motivation or lack of motivation affects everyone, including those who have the teachings of a Philosophical Ideal available to them but fail to maintain the sense of purpose to convert that Ideal into a happy and lasting mode of life.

## **What is motivation?**

It is the motive, the cause that leads us to movement on one plane or another.

The body has quite evident motives to move itself, but the most interesting causes to look at are those that set in motion the emotions and the mind. In general, the emotions and the mind seek satisfaction and avoid worry: these are the two greatest and most illusory psychological motivations.

We say that we are motivated when there are things that we like, that stimulate us to obtain them, that give rise to a feeling of well-being, pleasure and, especially, the appreciation of others. To have achieved what we set out to achieve motivates us to continue with the action.

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On the other hand, we say that we are unmotivated when there is no incentive that impels us to action, either because we do not see any immediate results or because we are demoralized by some failure.

Motivation and lack of motivation thus become the factors that determine our behavior, our gestures, our way of speaking, and even our approach to life.

### **Lack of motivation**

This is expressed as discouragement, a sense of powerlessness in the face of difficulties, lack of energy to make decisions, loss of enthusiasm, despair about the future.

Although in the beginning there may have been great expectations, as time goes on and the fantasy-based dreams become diluted and the will is thwarted by waiting for successes to come from outside, the causes of the motivations disappear.

In part, the societies in which we live suffer from a lack of motivation, precisely because they overuse false and superficial psychological stimuli because they deceive people by suggesting that success comes from nothing more than by buying a certain brand of product, taking a wonder drug or being in fashion.

This results in the presence of many “indignant people” all over the world, partly irritated by the number of lies in which we have been enveloped, like a spell that is difficult to avoid, and partly disenchanted by a lack of opportunities, that is, of valid causes with which to face the difficulties of existence.

### **Those to blame for the lack of motivation**

The false values that predominate mean that continuous effort is replaced by easy success; work by entertainment; healthy activity by stress; investigation by rumors; study by learning just enough to get by.

Today the immediate prevails over the important. We are incited to live in the present, but not with our consciousness present, but rather by taking refuge in the unconsciousness to avoid responsibilities and difficulties.



*Today the immediate prevails over the important. We are incited to live in the present, but not with our consciousness present, but rather by taking refuge in the unconsciousness to avoid responsibilities and difficulties.*



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## Inner and outer motivations

It is true that we all need a cause that can give a direction to life.

The key lies in looking for good causes and stable roots.

**If the motives come from others and are external to us**, we will live in a state of eternal dependence. The world around us will become an atmospheric phenomenon that will determine our sunny and stormy days, our joys and our anxieties. Not to mention our dependency on other people, who are considered as a motive and cause of our behaviour.

External motivations are, unfortunately, transient and unstable and are not useful as a basis for Life.

The founder of New Acropolis, Jorge A. Livraga said:

“Dreams die when they are allowed to die, when we depend exclusively on external motivations to nourish them: if there are people who cheer us up, we are cheerful, if those people are not there, we don't have any more energy; if the circumstances are favourable, we feel brave, but if things go a little off course, we lose heart. In this way, dreams are not lived and enthusiasm is not expressed. In this way, at most, a disciple becomes the shadow or reflection of the enthusiasm and the dreams of others, the reflection of the circumstances and of the smiling approval of whoever happens to be around us...”

**Inner motivations** arise from our ideas and feelings that we have chosen and assumed by a process of learning and decision-making, by experience and by looking towards the future. They are states of consciousness that are not only based on the satisfaction of primary needs, but go beyond the instincts, the senses, the trivial emotions or the ideas that happen to be in fashion.

The best of motivations is an Ideal of Life which brings all our capacities into play, which occupies the whole of our being and offers us short-, medium- and long-term aims, giving a useful, powerful and efficient meaning to our actions.

## Psychological motivations and philosophical motivations

Psychological motivations are of short duration because they depend on the instability and impermanence of the emotions, whether these be our own or those of others.

If we put the emphasis of our life on the emotions, it will very easily happen that, after a period of motivation, a period of demotivation may arise which, by its own negative weight, will leave deep traces in the personality.

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If, on the other hand, we assume philosophical values, we will be able to understand the great ideas that moved history, that inspired the great figures who continue to be bright beacons on the path.

Philosophy is a permanent motivation, because the search for wisdom is a path that will never end and which, on the contrary, presents goals that are always being renewed, constant opportunities for correction and renewal, for learning and experience, for affirmation and happiness.

Let us go from the outer to the inner and turn the motivations into causes, the causes into roots, the roots into foundations, the foundations into aims, the aims into evolution. This is a true philosophical path, an excellent motive for living.

# A Time to Rebuild

Anand Baskaran

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A year and a half has passed since the outbreak of the pandemic that has taken center stage in most of our lives. Much has been lost, and to different extents for each person, but with none spared, life, since the pandemic began, has been significantly different from before it. And for months now, a constant refrain in the minds and on the lips of many has been *“When will this all be over, and things get back to normal?”*

While we still have a long way to go, there has been a gradual shift away from the initial sense of utter helplessness that most felt as the pandemic spread and ravaged nation after nation. Now there is hope too, and the possibility of being able to fight it seems more tangible – we know a little more about the virus, systems globally have reoriented towards being able to counter it to an extent, and with vaccines and other measures showing positive results, hopes of a post-pandemic “normal” world seem to be gaining traction.

Now it seems, is the time to rebuild. And we have in front of us an incredible opportunity: **to rebuild consciously**. To choose what we build as our *new reality*. To resist the tendency to somehow restore what was, before this crisis enveloped us all.



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**We need to rebuild with intelligence** - a better future cannot come from just a rebuilding of what was before. If we keep the virus aside, so much of the damage and collapse we faced were due to the existing so-called “normal” ways in which we conducted our lives. Our current systems and paradigms have reached a dead end, and the future will have to be different, based on a completely new way of understanding society and ourselves. Rebuilding without making the effort to develop this new way of understanding will at best be a band-aid over a festering wound in humanity.

**We need to rebuild with discernment** – to consciously choose what we take forward to restore and continue from our existing ways, and what to change. There are those that look to the past as *golden days* and seek a return to it; and those that look to it as a cruel, dark time. We need to be more holistic, resisting this black-or-white way of seeing, and objectively pick out the best to take forward, and change or leave behind what has been detrimental.

**We need to rebuild with a clear axis for our choices** - can we make our future and our systems more inclusive, more intelligent, more altruistic? It is an opportunity to choose the basis upon which we build our systems and our lives before we recreate the exact forms themselves. We need a vision for the 21st century, but one that includes the higher potential of human beings and their real needs and not one that is based on yet another outdated economic-only worldview.

**We need to rebuild ourselves as individuals who think with freedom** - in an age where information seems to be everything, there is also much misinformation and significant damage and polarisation happening from lack of clear and independent thought. For this, we can turn to philosophy as a tool that not only teaches us how to think and reflect but also puts us in contact with the wisdom that has been passed down to us for many centuries and has already stood the test of time. Unlike information, knowledge, or technology, wisdom does not become obsolete. Insights into universal principles and understanding the interconnectedness of all things are more relevant than ever.

In a moment, this opportunity to rebuild consciously will pass – let us not be found wanting!



*Now it seems, is the time to rebuild. And we have in front of us an incredible opportunity: to rebuild consciously.*



# Walking towards the Light

## Pierre Poulain

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Life is movement, and movement changes us. Do we have any control over it? Yes, at least in part. Of course we cannot escape the passing of time which ages us and challenges us with some common situations. I remember when I was 40, I discovered that I have to accept some physical limitations - for example, the need to wear glasses for the first time. Then at 60, I understood that I would have to live with the constant presence of pain.

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Not a big pain – not yet, hopefully – just some discomfort... but that “something” would always hurt, today my back, tomorrow a tooth, then a muscle, etc... This is not in our control, but something else is: time allows us to accumulate experiences, and those experiences can change according to our capacity to process them, and to the general direction we choose to give our life.

Life constantly presents us with a choice to make. In many situations, there is a path toward the light, the Good, the Beautiful, the Just... and another one which leads, maybe not to the opposite – darkness and evil – but at least to a lack of light, to compromising what we know deep in our heart is the right choice.

And what would that choice be? Well, in a few words I would say: **Always choose to walk toward the light!**

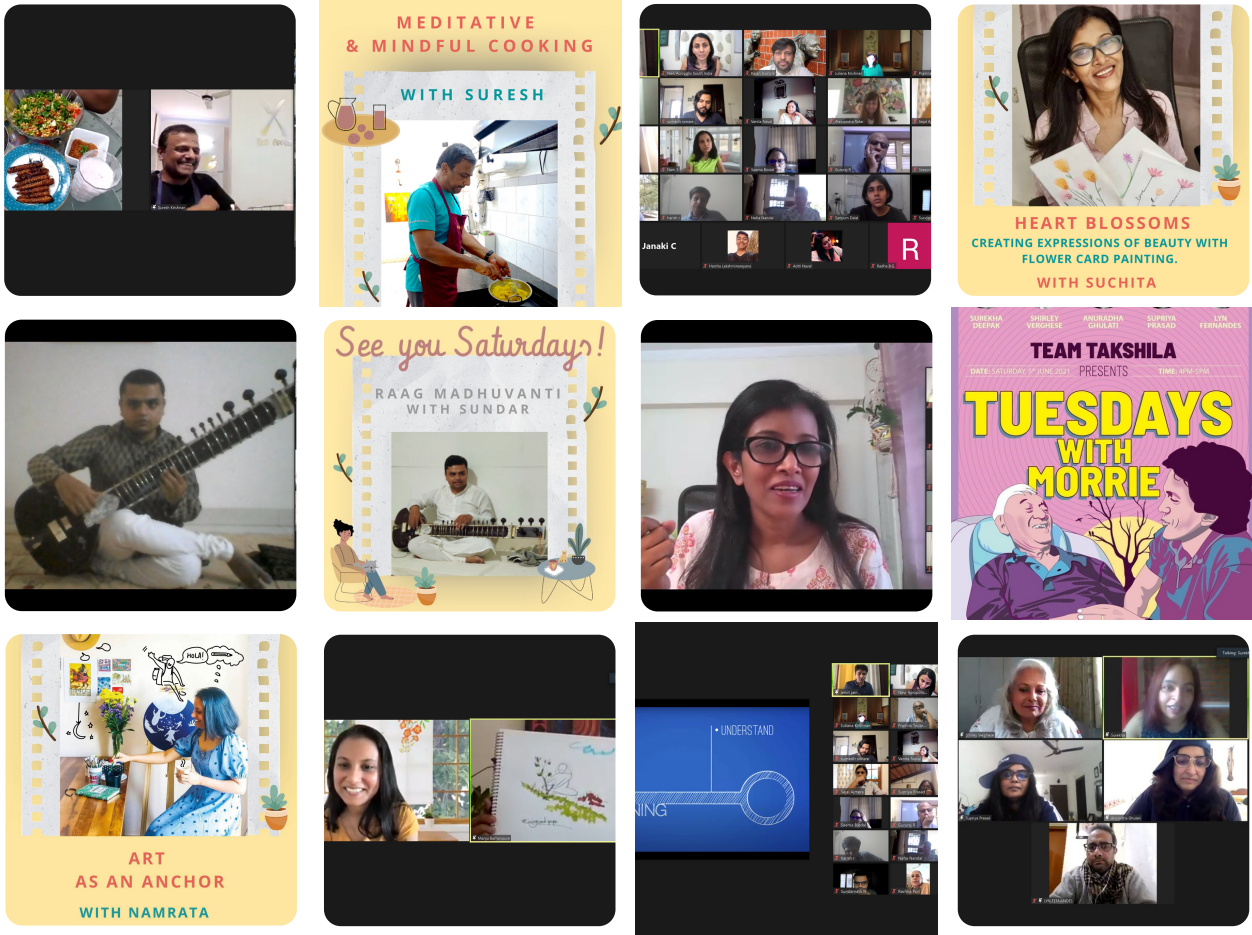


Pierre Poulain is a philosopher and a renowned international photographer. In 1986, he founded the New Acropolis School of Philosophy in Israel.

For more information on the artist and his work, please visit [www.photos-art.org/](http://www.photos-art.org/)

# See You Saturdays!

## Shashwati Balasubramanian



The idea of the philosophical 'sangha' or philosophical community is the coming together of fellow human beings who have recognized the need within themselves to begin the process of working with life in an alive, conscious way to make it joyful and meaningful.

We are stronger and better from being connected and walking the philosophical path together!

As we went into the second lock-down in Bengaluru, the Acropolitian community looked for a way to stay connected and to continue to inspire and learn from each other, during these uncertain and challenging times.

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What emerged was 'See you Saturdays!' – A platform for us to come together every week, bring a warm beverage and settle down for an hour of joyful learning and sharing.

Each week we had a one of our members present something that inspires them in their life and how they connect with it philosophically. Over the weeks we had many special sessions from an exploration of a musical raag, to meditative cooking, to mindful listening, working with art and even a dramatic reading of the book 'Tuesdays with Morrie'!

It was a beautiful way to share inspiration and hope and come closer together!

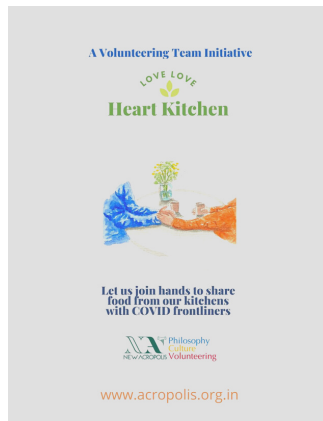


*We are stronger and better from being connected and walking the philosophical path together!*



# Heart Kitchen

## Sejal Ajmera



The Heart Kitchen is an initiative by the members of New Acropolis to send their love and gratitude to the frontline staff at St. John's Hospital, Bangalore in the form of fresh homemade snacks that were sent to them every weekend in the peak of the Covid crisis. Over 1200 single servings of snacks with handmade messages of our love and gratitude were sent over 5 Sundays.

# Upcoming events - October

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## Leading with the Heart

*Public Talk*

**Date and Time:** 24th October, Sunday, 5:30 pm to 7:00 pm

What makes one a leader? Often attributed qualities are decisiveness, charisma, and resilience. Behind the dynamic personality, historical examples, and ancient wisdom point to the essence of the leader lying in their deep-rooted values and innate ability to foremost lead themselves on the ethical path, as they strive to bring the best of themselves in the service of others. Join us as we explore the theme of ethical leadership through the lives and works of some inspiring leaders in history.

Refer to our events page for registration:

<https://acropolis.org.in/events/category/bangalore-events/>

*No. of participants limited on first come first serve basis*

For more information, reach out to us at [info@newacropolis.in](mailto:info@newacropolis.in) | 9663804871



LIVING  
PHILOSOPHY

# Practical Philosophy Course

Discover Awaken Transform

A 19-week foundation course in Practical Philosophy that brings the wisdom of ancient Eastern and Western philosophies to inspire us to lead more harmonious lives in today's times. When Philosophy is practical, it is educational, helping us to know ourselves and to improve ourselves.

The course touches different practical, universal and timeless concepts of life from the wisdom of civilizations of the ancient world, with the perspective of how these can become practical tools to make a profound, lasting difference in our lives.



Duration: 19 weeks | 1 class per week

REGISTER for Introductory sessions at Indiranagar centre on Nov/15, Nov/22, on [our website here](#)





## SYLLABUS

Living Philosophy is a 19-week foundation course in Practical Philosophy that brings the wisdom of ancient Eastern and Western philosophies to inspire us to lead more harmonious lives in today's times.

When Philosophy is practical, it is educational, helping us to know ourselves and to improve ourselves.

Through these 19 sessions (1 session of 2 hours per week), the Living Philosophy course touches different practical, universal and timeless concepts of life from the wisdom of cultures and civilizations of the ancient world, with the perspective of how these can become practical tools to make a profound, lasting difference in our lives today.

The classes comprise lectures and practical guided exercises. The course also includes a fully experiential seminar and one-on-one meetings with the teachers.

The course syllabus follows.

### **PART 1: ETHICS (Man & the Self)**

#### **Know Thyself**

*Identifying the transient and the eternal within us*

#### **The Peaceful Warrior**

*The inner battle of Kurukshetra*

## **Liberation - Inspiration from the Buddha**

*The overcoming of suffering and the process of self transformation*

## **The Inner Voice & the Mysteries of Ancient Tibet**

*The importance of choice and inner identity*

## **The search for Beauty and Happiness: Greco-Roman Philosophy**

*The need and the means to elevation of consciousness*

## **The awakening of consciousness – Wisdom of the Stoics**

*True freedom and principles of Stoic Philosophy*

## **Destiny and Inner order – Wisdom from Egypt and China**

*Justice, Order and Virtue as important everyday tools*

## **PART 2: SOCIO-POLITICS (Man & Society)**

### **Ethical Leadership**

*The connection between individual development and social order*

### **The Essence of Ethical Politics**

*The Philosophical and Political ideal*

### **Forms of Governance**

*Various models of governance in society*

### **From Philosophy to Mystery**

*The role of education in human evolution; education in traditional societies*

## **Peaceful Warrior Experiential Seminar**

*Philosophy in action – an experiential session of individual and group exercises, combined with Artistic activities, that strengthen the learning process of Know Thyself and Sociopolitics.*

## **PART 3: THE PHILOSOPHY OF HISTORY (Man & the World)**

### **Myth & History**

*Myths: Truths hidden in mythology*

### **The Cycles of Time**

*Cycles in Nature: Connecting to a more natural way of life*

### **The Wheel of Life**

*The Kaliyuga - characteristics and opportunities of the current times*

### **The Divine Spark in Man- Evolution & Destiny of Humanity**

*What does it mean to be the human being of today?*

### **Summary**

*A synthesis of the key teachings of the course, and a glimpse into the path ahead of advanced practical philosophy courses at New Acropolis*

# About New Acropolis

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New Acropolis is an international non-profit volunteer-run organization, having a philosophical, cultural and social approach. It was founded in 1957 as a school of Practical Philosophy in the Classical Style, to promote the ideal of timeless values towards human development.

In over 60 countries where New Acropolis is present, this vision is implemented through an eclectic range of teachings, practices and activities, inspired by Classics of both Western and Eastern global cultures and ancient civilizations. Our programs, based on philosophy that is practical and active, combine theoretical and practical education with expressions in the fields of Philosophy, Culture and Volunteering. With over 20,000 volunteers of all ages, cultural backgrounds, and social levels, New Acropolis emphasizes principles of Coexistence, Fraternity and mutual collaboration beyond cultural, sexual, or religious differences.

We at New Acropolis all over the World are greatly inspired also by the timeless principles of the Ancient Classical Indian Culture, Arts and Philosophies. New Acropolis in India, same as in all our centres worldwide, seeks to take inspiration, knowledge and best practices from the rich artistic, spiritual and cultural human heritage in order to enhance both individual and collective human development.

Visit our website at [www.acropolis.org.in](http://www.acropolis.org.in)