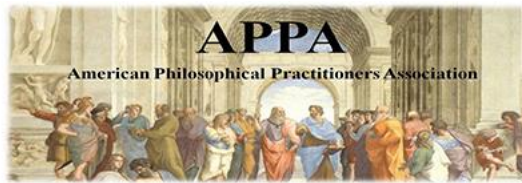


**REPORT OF THE COURSE ON  
PHILOSOPHICAL COUNSELLING WITH  
AMERICAN PHILOSOPHICAL  
PRACTITIONERS ASSOCIATION**

American Philosophical  
Practitioners Association  
*Online*



Certification Program  
with Indian Philosophers  
April-May 2020



First Row: Vaughana Feary, Lou Marinoff, Balaganapathi Devarakonda, Avaneesh Muraleedharan  
 Second Row: Charu Thapliyal, Lekshmi Ramakrishna Iyer, Suchitra Naik, Sudeep Raj Kumar  
 Third Row: Anushree Anu, Mitali Bhagbati, Prashant Shukla, Anubhav Varshney  
 Fourth Row: Komarraju Soujanya, Vikas Beniwal, Madhulika Sharma, Ashwini Mokashi

## INTRODUCTION

Philosophy - the quintessential component of knowledge, which discusses the fundamental questions such as 'what is knowledge?', 'how is it acquired?' and 'what is to be done with it?' – is unfortunately missing from the public epistemologies. It is paradoxical that though the quest for knowledge in its new forms and perspectives is increasing constantly, something that is foundational to all forms and perspectives of knowledge is being neglected to the core. Something that contributed to this state of affairs, at least indirectly, is the way in which Philosophy is being reduced to the academic world with its basic forms of teaching and research. What is required at this juncture is taking philosophy beyond academia into the public epistemologies in a convincing way.

There are different existent ways of applying philosophical knowledge that are being innovated, which include, but are not limited to, Philosophy Cafes, Philo dramas etc. One such significant endeavor is Philosophical Counseling which attempts to support those who need a philosopher to address their concerns. It is often placed antagonistic to Psychological and other forms of counselling which is not true. Philosophical counselling moves along with other disciplines in their practices – by sharing and accepting the expertise wherever it is useful. However, it also demarcates its uniqueness by addressing the human concerns that are exclusive to its domain. Though every discipline in one way or the other is developed to address a particular human concern, no single discipline can claim to be capable of addressing all the concerns of human life. For instance, Psychological Counseling addresses certain issues of human concern such as depression and anxiety, whereas Philosophical Counseling addresses existential human concerns that are unique to Philosophy. The difference also lies in the fact that philosophical concerns are much deeper, more pervasive and universal than the concerns of other disciplines.

The practitioners of Psychological Counseling are well-suited for treating mental illnesses, but while that is a great need for the society, it is also necessary for dealing with various levels of confusion among the minds of people. Strengthening their mental health and making sure that they do not fall in the clutches of mental illnesses is a job that philosophers are well suited for. If we want to keep people productive, sane, at peace and out of trouble, philosophers can help in a big way by applying philosophical wisdom to those, who think they can benefit by the philosophical understanding. Applied philosophy is best practiced by students/teachers of philosophy, who have reached a certain depth of understanding philosophical or wisdom principles.

The issues which are of specific concern to philosophical counseling in general could be of the category of either problem solving or process-oriented or streamlining of rational beliefs. There are a plurality of

methods beginning from Socratic method of dialogue to philosophical midwifery and existential therapy along with various forms of yoga and meditative techniques that help a particular individual in resolving the concerns of his individuated life.

Every crisis opens space for the arrival of new initiatives and provides hope for re-understanding of human conceptions which would lead to an improved perception of human life. The Covid-19 pandemic by affecting every form of human life negatively, also provided a space for a new understanding of human life – insisting for a revised understanding of the relationship between ‘self’ and the ‘other’. Philosophical Counseling is one such initiative that contributes to the improved understanding of ‘human life and its relations’ which are affected by the facticity of Lockdown, Quarantined life and social mistrust. It is in this context that Philosophical Counseling has much relevance to the contemporary situation.

Professor Lou Marinoff, who is one of the pioneers of Philosophical Counseling, came forward to support our initiative to articulate Philosophical Counseling from Indian perspective, by offering a course on Philosophical Counseling, when we approached him. This course is significant in at least two ways; one, this is the first time that APPA ventured to offer the course online. Two, for the first time a course on Philosophical Counseling is being offered to an exclusive group from India. I am grateful to Professor Lou Marinoff and Professor Vaughana Feary for the meticulous way they planned and conducted the course.

In addition to the experienced and resourceful course facilitators, it is the composition and participation of the group that enriches the understanding of the theme. The core group which joined the course is composed of enthusiastic, open-minded and inquisitive scholars passionate about philosophical practice. The composition of the group is heterogeneous in many respects. Geographically it has representation from Eastern, Western, Northern and Southern along with North-Eastern parts of India, besides from the Indian diaspora. Linguistically it has speakers of various languages of India such as Malayalam, Telugu, Marathi, Assamese, Hindi and Punjabi. In addition, the group is comprised of researchers from Philosophy, Psychology and Education, and practitioners of Medicine, Psychology and Spirituality. Similarly, it has representation from various age groups as well. This diversity of the group is apprehended to be its strength.

The course is envisioned to be composed of online sessions with Prof. Lou Marinoff and Prof. Vaughana Feary in an engaging way. Theoretical, practical perspectives of Philosophical Counselling along with legal and organizational concerns and the ways of self-marketing by the counselor, have become part of the course content which made the course enchanting. In addition to these regular sessions which were held on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays for three weeks, 'in-group sessions' were held where various research articles written by established scholars in the field and the experiences of the members of the group were discussed elaborately. In addition to these, there were guest lectures by Prof. Ran Lahav and

Prof. Lydia Amir which helped the group in understanding the diverse perspectives of Philosophical Counseling.

In total, it worked out to be a comprehensive package of the study of the history, methods of philosophical practice and various other perspectives which provided the participants a fulfilling and gratifying experience. Prof. Lou Marinoff, Prof. Vaughana Feary and other office bearers of APPA deserve special appreciation for extending academic solidarity in the current times of global pandemic. While we will continue our efforts in understanding the field and the practices at greater depths, most participants came away with the feeling that they can make a positive difference to the society around them.

Balaganapathi Devarakonda

## COURSE FACILITATORS



**Vaughana Feary, Ph.D.**, taught philosophy and interdisciplinary Humanities at Southern University in New Orleans from 1979-1987. From 1987-2000 she taught Philosophy and Women's Studies at Fairleigh Dickinson University in Madison, NJ. She is a founding Vice President of APPA, past President of the ASPCP, President and CEO of Education Inc., and Program Director for Excalibur Center for Applied Ethics. She has pioneered programs for correctional facilities, hospitals, and corporations, and has published seminal articles and book chapters

**Lou Marinoff** - a Commonwealth Scholar originally from Canada - studied theoretical physics at Concordia and McGill universities, and earned a PhD in Philosophy of Science at University College London. Following postdoctoral research at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, and a lectureship at the University of British Columbia, he joined The City College of New York in 1994, where he is currently Professor of Philosophy. Lou publishes in decision theory, computer modeling of rational and moral agency, global ethics, philosophy of science, Chinese philosophy, Indian philosophy, Buddhism, and philosophical practice. He is founding president of the American Philosophical Practitioners Association ([APPA](#)), and editor of its journal *Philosophical Practice*. Lou has authored several internationally bestselling books that apply philosophy to everyday life, including *Plato Not Prozac*, translated into twenty-seven languages. Lou collaborates with think-tanks and leadership forums such as the Aspen Institute, Biovision (Lyon), Festival of Thinkers (Abu Dhabi), Horasis (Zurich), the Institute for Local Government (at the University of Arizona), Soka Gakkai International (Tokyo), Strategic Foresight Group (Mumbai), and the World Economic Forum (Davos).



## A BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE PARTICIPANTS



### DR. ANUBHAV VARSHNEY

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Anubhav Varshney received his initial training in Philosophy from University of Allahabad and taught at Daulat Ram College and Dyal Singh College, University of Delhi, from 2012 to 2014. He joined University of Rajasthan in 2014 and completed his D. Phil. from University of Allahabad in 2019 on 'meaning of man', which was basically a textual attempt to delineate non-essentialist arguments in the writings of Albert Camus and Jean Francois Lyotard from the Continental tradition and texts like Vaidalyaprakaraṇam from the Vaitaṇḍika tradition. Veda (Ṛgveda), Vedānta (Śāṃkara and Early Post-Śāṃkara), Buddhism (Sarvāstivāda and Śūnyavāda), Vaitaṇḍika tradition, some Continental thinkers (Gabriel Marcel, Albert Camus, Lyotard), and Translation of texts are areas that draw him as a student.

He is presently engaged in translation of Vaibhāṣika Darśana of Anantlal Thakur, one of the very few writings on Vaibhāṣika school of Buddhism; the text is being translated from Bengali to English and Hindi. His published works include a book entitled, Philosophical Contributions of Professor Biswambhar Pahi (2018), co-authored with R. P. Sharma and another book, Studies in Epistemology- Saṃśaya evam Pramā, Doubt and Knowledge in Indian and Western Philosophy (2019), co-authored with A. V. Singh and with a contribution by Ernest Sosa. For the remaining of his tryst with the discipline, he wishes to carry on textual studies of Vedāntic and Vaitaṇḍika traditions, a cross-cultural inquiry of some continental thinkers and translation of certain texts/writings.



### MS. ANUSREE.S.L

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Anusree is pursuing Doctoral Research in the Department of Philosophy, Sree Sankaracharya Sanskrit University Kalady. Her research on "Knowledge, Ignorance and Transcendence: A study with Special Reference to Sri Aurobindo's Integral Yoga". She has recently completed her Mphil graduation in Philosophy from University of Kerala in Kariavattom Campus. Her Mphil research on "Cognitive Basis of

Language: A Philosophical Perspective of Noam Chomsky". She is interested in Cognitive Behavior Therapy and linguistic Philosophy. She currently practices as a freelance motivational speaker and does philosophical counselling for children and women in her village.



### **MR. AVANEESH**

Founder, Le Mantastic

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Avaneesh is the founder of 'Le Mantastic' - a beautiful green space where he interacts with individuals to discover their inner self. Currently he is also a consultant with the National Institute of Speech and Hearing (NISH) on a project named 'Innovation by Youth with Disabilities' (I-YwD) conceived by the Govt of Kerala. With a background in Medicine, Avaneesh completed MA Philosophy from University of Kerala and MA Psychology from Indira Gandhi National Open University. He also has a Post-Graduate Diploma in Counselling Psychology from Loyola College of Social Sciences and is currently doing Post Graduate Diploma in Philosophical Counselling from University of Kerala. Avaneesh has also been collaborating creatively with brands and broadcasters like Walt Disney, Cartoon Network, Nickelodeon, Discovery Channel, YouTube, Amazon, among others. A believer in the immeasurable possibilities of the individual, Avaneesh aspires to make individuals realize their true potential through meaningful and profound interactions.



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Ashwini Mokashi is a published author with the book entitled 'Sapiens and Sthitaprajna', published in 2019 on the topic of the wise person comparing the Bhagavad Gita and Stoic Seneca. She currently teaches a course called 'Wisdom Leads to Happiness' at the Evergreen Forum in NJ. She writes often on ancient Indian and Greek philosophy in order to interpret them in the context of challenges faced in modern life. She is a former President of the 'Princeton Research Forum' in Princeton, NJ and continues to be on their executive board, while also running the Humanities Group at the PRF. She has formerly taught Philosophical courses at the SP Pune University, Wadia and Fergusson Colleges in Pune. She has studied at SP Pune University, King's College London and Rutgers University, NJ. She has also worked in Fortune 50 companies in HR departments in the USA.





### **PROF. BALAGANAPATHI DEVARAKONDA**

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Balaganapathi Devarakonda is presently heading the Department of Philosophy at University of Delhi, Delhi. His research interests are focused on various aspects of Indian Philosophy, Philosophy of Religion and Social and Political Philosophy along with Philosophical Counseling. His recent publications include, Hinduism in Thailand: Its presence and Absence, Role of Guru as an interpreter of Dharma, Orientalist and Nationalist Writings of Indian Philosophy and History of Indian Philosophy: Analysis of Contemporary understanding of the classical through Colonial. His book Philosophical Doctrines of Andhakas: Exploring Early Buddhist Sects of Andhra (2020) is being published by Springer Nature under Springer Briefs in Religious Studies series. South Asia Press is bringing out a new edition of Leviathan by Thomas Hobbes with a detailed introduction by Prof. Bala. He is presently working on a project titled “Yoga Consciousness in Mahabharata: The Ethical value for societal/political Wellbeing” (SPARC) and has completed research project Culture through the Labyrinth of Globalization: A Study of Popular Imaginations and Alternative narratives of Digital and non-Digital Telugu literature (2017-19).



### **MRS. CHARU THAPLIYAL**

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Charu divides her time between her Doctoral Research at the Department of Philosophy, Delhi University and as the Chief Editor at MB Publishing House, India’s first self-publishing platform dedicated to spread holistic living. Her areas of interest include, but are not limited to, Indian Philosophy, Metaphysics, Consciousness Studies, Indian Psychology and Sanskrit Text Studies. She is the recipient of the Indian Philosophical Congress Medal (2011-14) and UGC-JRF scholarship for higher studies. She regularly writes articles on various topics of interest to the civil society for popular magazines. She is a polyglot, apart from her native tongue Hindi she speaks fluent English and Spanish and is learning Japanese and Korean. She strongly believes that books are the swiftest way to enlightenment and through her venture MB Publishing House she seeks to one day take forward her motto of Swadhyaya or “Self-improvement and cultivation of the spirit through reading books” to each and every house in the world. Her group Mad Buddhas is involved with

spreading holistic living in creative ways through animations, graphic design, illustrations, organising national spiritual events, seminars and meets on topics of research in spiritual science etc. A practitioner of meditation herself she conducts workshops, seminars and talks throughout India on topics of spiritual interest to the public, pro bono.



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Soujanya is currently practicing as a freelance Psychological Counselor in Hyderabad. She has a decade's experience in the field of Psychology. Her main areas of expertise is dealing with the issues of adolescents, youth in general, marital issues, and providing positive parenting techniques. Had closely worked with Women and Child Welfare organisations while her husband served in Army .She further contributed her experience to few projects related to Sarva Sikshya Abhiyan (SSA) in evaluation of the implementation of the training programs conducted for government teachers in their respective schools. She also volunteered for an NGO "Asha for education" for which her husband was the founder for the Hyderabad chapter. She also volunteered her services in teaching in a school run for underprivileged and slum children. For the past two years, she has been conducting Personality Development classes as a resource person for the undergraduates in National Institute of Fashion Technology (NIFT), Hyderabad. She also gave a few programs on Maa TV Life Manasa in vernacular language. She is also a Trainer and an NLP Practitioner. Her interest primarily is in Philosophy, and was excited to learn that Philosophy could be practiced and can reach the layman through Philosophical Counseling.



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Lekshmi is presently working as Associate Professor of Philosophy at University of Kerala, Trivandrum. For the past five years, she was heading the Dept of Philosophy, Govt College for Women, Trivandrum affiliated to Kerala University. Philosophy is a passion for her. She has supervised 5 doctoral theses for which Ph.Ds were awarded and 5 more are working with her for their doctoral degrees . Her thrust areas include Vedanta, Analytical Philosophy and Continental tradition. Her Ph.D is from Kerala University

where she did her doctoral thesis on Humanism Of Vivekananda: Some Reflections. She has completed two research projects funded by UGC. She has co-edited and published a book, Philosophical Perspectives of Hermeneutics and published articles in international national journals like JICPR and IPQ. Some of them include Ethics of Science in Its Epistemic and Practical Goals, Written Structures and the Question of Identity etc. She lives a life trying to follow spiritual ideals and carry the same to the world around.



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Madhulika Sharma has recently completed her post-graduation in Philosophy from University of Delhi, and thereupon has been an intrigued researcher about Philosophical Counseling. She is currently interning with a psychologist at Maitreyi College, University of Delhi.

She has worked as a Project Manager at the Department of Preventive Oncology, AIIMS Hospital, Delhi. Later she worked briefly as an Assistant Manager at Anugraha India NGO, which is a day care center for elderly citizens.



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Mitali Bhagabati is currently working as Assistant Professor of Philosophy at Bihpuria College (affiliated to Dibrugarh University), Assam, India. She has done her M.Phil degree from the Department of Philosophy, University of Delhi on “The Concept of freedom: Perspectives of Modern Indian Thinkers”. Presently she is pursuing her PhD in the Department of Philosophy, North-Eastern Hill University, Shillong, India. Her doctoral research is on the concept of ‘Advaita’ and ‘Multiculturalism’. She is broadly enthusiastic about Indian Philosophy, the local philosophies of Assam and understanding philosophy through fine arts. She has been actively engaged in many academic events in recent years and has also penned a few articles on different philosophical topics. She looks forward to dedicating herself in philosophical counselling and research



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Prashant Shukla is currently working as Assistant Professor (Philosophy) at University of Lucknow, Lucknow (since 2010). Also, he is the Visiting Faculty of BITS-Pilani for Symbolic Logic. Prior to this, he has worked in Stephens College, D.U. and Hindu College (D.U.) as faculty of Philosophy (2008-10). He has completed his Doctoral research on Postmodern Philosophy from Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi (2006) and Post-Doctoral research on Classical Greek Philosophy from Kapedistrian University of Athens, Greece (2008). He has been recipient of National (UGC-JRF-2002) and International (Greek Government Scholarship-2006) Awards in Philosophy, His areas of research interest are Greek Philosophy, Postmodernism and Logic with some considerable publications in the form of Research Papers (8 in no.) and Co-authored Books (9 in no., some of them used as Textbooks by the Directorate of Distance Education, Tripura University, Vinoba Bhawe University and Jamia Millia Islamia). He has coordinated one National Workshop (2017) and one National Seminar (2019) under sponsorship of ICPR.



### **DR. SUCHITRA A NAIK**

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Dr. Suchitra A. Naik is presently Associate Dean Humanities, University of Mumbai and Principal of VPM's K.G. Joshi College of Arts and N.G Bedekar College of Thane University of Mumbai (UoM). She is an Associate Professor of Philosophy and has long standing teaching, counselling and research experience spread over nearly 3 decades. Her key contributions include teaching philosophy to undergraduate and postgraduate students. She is a counsellor to several teenage students. She has provided consultancy to a few institutions in establishing counselling centres and is the head of counselling centre at her college. In addition, she is a committee member of Marathi Sanshodhan, a co-opted member of the board of studies in philosophy and logic and a resource person at UGC HRD Centre of UoM. Further, she has published papers at State, National and International level journals. Dr. Suchitra Naik holds first class (rank holder) Bachelor's and Master's degrees in Arts in philosophy and a PhD. In Philosophy of Education from

UoM. She has a P.G. Diploma in counselling and child guidance in which she stood first at the SNTD University (2005) and is a PhD. Guide in Philosophy of UoM currently guiding 4 students. She has published two books entitled Creative and innovative Education models (2018) and Philosophy of education (2019). Also edited a book in Marathi, entitled Hindustanati Streeyanchi Sthiti.



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Sudeep Raj Kumar has graduated in Engineering in Computer Science from PEC University of Technology. Later, he migrated to philosophy. Currently, he is pursuing Doctoral Research in the Department of Philosophy, University of Delhi on “A Study of Time and Consciousness in Buddhaghosa”. He is focusing on the philosophy and ideas of Buddhaghosa, a 5<sup>th</sup> century Buddhist philosopher, a central figure in Theravada school of Buddhism. Keeping Buddhaghosa in foreground, themes such as the nature of mental causality, relationship between mental promptings and action, the role of memory in the perceptual experiences are explored in the thesis. He is also looking into the ideas of Henri Bergson, specifically on the nature of multiplicity of consciousness, the nature of memory and to see planes of convergence between Buddhaghosa and Bergson. He is keenly interested in the nature of causation in Early Buddhism. Broadly, he is interested in metaphysics of consciousness and time; the construction of temporal experience and the questions surrounding the ontology of time-consciousness model. Recently, he had the fortune to understand the workings of paṭiccasamuppāda from Ven Dr. Nandamalabhivamsa at the Centre of Dhamma Education, Myanmar (2019).



**DR. VIKAS BANIWAL**

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Vikas Baniwal is currently working as Assistant Professor at the Department of Education, Delhi University. Prior to joining Delhi University, he taught at Ambedkar University, Delhi for two years (2015-2017). He completed his doctoral research from University of Delhi in Philosophy of Education (2015).

He has been a General Fellow of Indian Council of Philosophical Research, New Delhi for his post-doctoral work for a comparative study of Buber's and Upanishadic dialogue. He has also served as Assistant Director in the Inclusive Education Unit of the Central Board of Secondary Education (C.B.S.E), New Delhi during 2014-2015. Put together, he has about 10 years of experience in school teaching, higher education, research, and administration.

His key research interests include inter-subjectivity, dialogue, inclusion, mental health, self and identity. His recent publications include *Some Questions on the Discourse of Human Development* in N. Ranganathan (ed.) *Understanding Childhood and Adolescence*. New Delhi: SAGE Publications. *Krishnamurti's Dialogue as Being Open to the 'Other'* in M. Thapan (ed.) *Krishnamurti and Educational Practice: Social and Moral Vision for Inclusive Education*. Oxford University Press. 2018, and a co-authored book '*Teaching Psychology: Basic Concepts and Pedagogic Strategies*'. Delhi: Shipra Publications. 2017.

## AN OVERVIEW OF THE LEARNING SESSIONS

Sessions with educators from APPA	Interactive sessions organized by the group	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 20th April</li> <li>• 22nd April</li> <li>• 24th April</li> <li>• 27th April</li> <li>• 29th April</li> <li>• 1st May</li> <li>• 4th May</li> <li>• 6th May</li> <li>• 8th May</li> </ul>	<p><b>Invited Talks</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>28th April:</b> Dr. Ran Lahav</li> <li>• <b>2nd May:</b> Dr. Lydia Amir</li> <li>• <b>5th May:</b> Dr. Ran Lahav</li> <li>• <b>9th May:</b> Dr. Lydia Amir</li> </ul>	<p><b>In -Group Sessions</b></p> <p><b>21st April:</b> Paper Presentations</p> <p><b>25th April:</b> Paper presentations</p> <p><b>2nd May:</b> Psychologists' and counsellors' individual experience</p> <p><b>8th May:</b> Dr. Ashwini Mokashi Book discussion</p> <p><b>11th May:</b> Group Discussion</p>

## SUMMARIES OF SESSIONS ORGANIZED BY APPA

### Session with APPA: April 20, 2020

**Date: 20<sup>th</sup> April 2020      Time: 8.00pm – 10.30pm**

The course kick-started with greetings and introductions by the facilitators and the participants. Prof. Lou Marinoff commenced the session by defining philosophical counseling, and went on to talk about different views, claims and disagreements among philosophical practitioners about the concept of philosophical counseling. The talk then focused on the general orientation of APPA which respects multiple theoretical and practical orientations. APPA believes that such diversity only enriches philosophical practice. Prof. Lou also introduced a list of books on philosophical practice, which depict the discipline's emergence and development. The session later focused on the four general philosophical criticisms of psychotherapy viz overemphasis on psychopathology, reductionist tendencies, tendency towards ethical egoism and tendency towards ethical relativism. In the last section, the session explored the relationship between philosophical counseling and psychotherapy. Specific criticisms of specific psychotherapies including Rogerian therapy, Existential psychotherapy, Gestalt psychotherapy, Cognitive psychotherapy, Positive psychotherapy and also recent psychotherapies borrowing from philosophy, were discussed.

### Session with APPA: 22nd April 2020

The second session with APPA educators consisted of three themes: the session started with a discussion about effective philosophical therapies and their common denominators; the second segment was about the relationship between philosophy and psychiatry; the final theme was regarding an overview of the philosophical practice in contemporary times.

Elaborating upon the first theme, Lou and Vaughana stressed on the need to cultivate inner resources which are secular in nature, having no appeal to gods. According to them, effective philosophical therapy is conducive to serenity and should be compatible with most religious beliefs. Reflections on the potential for collaboration between philosophy and psychiatry in comparison with collaboration between philosophy and psychology were shared. As to the relationship between philosophy and psychiatry, they discussed the common philosophical criticisms of psychiatry. It was discussed how not all mental disorders show symptoms, how some of them are social constructs, how the etiology of some mental disorders is unclear, and related issues. It was told that literature in the philosophy of psychiatry is now extensive and was suggested that it should be of major interest to all philosophical practitioners. Further, different types and modes of philosophical practice were discussed for example, client counseling, group facilitation, and organizational counseling. It was pointed



out that there is a need and scope of expansion in new areas and philosophical practice is gaining acceptance among the public. They proceeded to give an overview of the evolution of philosophical practice starting from Pierre Grimes and acquainted the group with some of the projects undertaken by APPA. The session concluded with queries and questions from group members.

### **Session with APPA: 24th April 2020**

Session three focused on theory, method, resources, and techniques of philosophical counseling. Prof. Vaughana discussed the stages of counseling by relating it to her actual cases. Four stages of philosophical counseling are the Analytic stage, the Synthetic stage, the Critical Stage, Final Stage. It focuses on gathering minute details about the client and later analyzing it in a holistic way to identify the counselee's confusion and assumptions. The counselee finally merges with his/her life philosophy to deal with the issue concerned or life situation.

Prof. Lou Marinoff discussed the four main actual live approaches in the field of philosophical counseling which are as follows:

Dr. Gerd Achenbach - 'Open-ended approach' uses Socratic dialogue for emerging solutions.

Dr. Ran Lahav - 'World View Interpretation' helps to understand the worldviews through deep philosophy.

Dr. Pierre Grimes - 'Philosophical Midwifery' uses the dialectic method of Socrates.

Dr. Elliot D Cohen - 'Logic-Based Therapy and Counseling' mainly emphasises logic and rationality to conquer irrational elements of personality. Besides these four main approaches, many more techniques and methods were discussed by Prof. Lou Marinoff, like Existential approaches, Taoist approaches, Stoic approaches, and Humour based approaches by Prof. Lydia Amir. The session ended with a lively interaction with the participants.

### **Session with APPA: April 27, 2020**

Session four continued to discuss client suitability and its significance in Philosophical Counseling. Prof. Lou distinguished four categories of problematic beliefs and the scope of PC under these categories. To elucidate this, he went on to give examples of two unsuitable cases, and two unusual but suitable cases. The session then focused on the useful skills and attributes that a philosophical counselor needs to possess. Personal, pedagogic, professional's skills and attributes were demarcated. At this point Prof. Vaughana took over the session to discuss on the scope of feminist philosophy in counseling. She elaborated on the positive features of feminist themes in counseling which include spheres of gender, race, class, ethnicity and sexuality. The session concluded by detailing the advantage philosophers have during multicultural counselling in which they can identify the right of an individual to be recognized as an equal and also the right to be recognized as different.

**Session with APPA: April 29, 2020**

This session focused on gathering experiences from the entire team about their experiences of being paired with one another as both counselees and counsellor. Professional feedback from Prof. Lou and Prof. Vaughana was given at appropriate instances along with their personal insights about the cases. Doubts regarding the methodology and consequences of counseling were brought to light. This helped the learners come to first-hand terms with various methodologies being used by other practitioners and feedback as given from the in-house counselees. As usual the session was concluded with a discussion between all members on call.

**Session with APPA: May 04, 2020**

This session addressed the legal concerns associated with Philosophical Counseling before commencing as a professional practitioner. Prof. Lou pointed out two important legal concerns: statutory laws and indemnification measures. Though Philosophical Counseling does not fall into the category of any particular state law, however it is important to identify any applicable laws and exemptions associated with a Philosophical practitioner. He later addressed three types of Indemnification measures - organizational, professional and civil measures. Prof. Lou elaborated about APPA's organizational indemnification measures which includes certification standard, code of ethics and insurance. The professional indemnification measures are universal for all philosophical counselors where the counsellor should provide a consent form, scope of practice and code of ethics information to the counselee before commencing his session. Lastly the Civil indemnification measures should include applicable business permits or licenses necessary to start an organization. Prof. Lou further suggested a counsellor should get a Public liability insurance to avoid any instances of legal disputes in the upcoming future. He summarized the sessions by providing marketing tips for a novice counselor and mentioned some benefits for an APPA certified client counselor such as website listing and referral opportunities across their members and client's.

**Session with APPA: May 06, 2020**

This session consisted of two themes. The first theme is 'starting work without office', a presentation composed by Dr. Rick Repetti who is a philosophical practitioner in the USA. He enlists a variety of ways to start practicing as a Philosophical counselor without any office space. A counselor may begin with virtual sessions which is a convenient option for both client and counselee. If the counselor or the counselee prefers one on one individual sessions, then they may consider the option of single hour room rental spaces available in most countries. Rick also emphasises on the importance of advertisement and promotions for a beginner in Philosophical Counseling. APPA certified philosophical counselors can update their personal profiles on APPA's official website and later it is advisable for the counselors to create their personal websites for a wider outreach.

The second segment was presented by Prof. Vaughana on the 'Role of Philosophical Practice During Corona Virus Pandemic.' A Philosophical counselor can help in resolving the universal ethical, moral, social and individual issues affecting people globally. Ethical concerns can be subjected to government remedial programmes where the counselor can address the moral dilemmas and additionally help in better articulation of laws to ensure a just society. Social and individual concerns can be addressed by teaching philosophical ways for combating fear with healing methods such as meditation, mindfulness and stoicism which are philosophical approaches to spirituality.

### **Session with APPA: May 08, 2020**

This was the last session of the course which was more like an open discussion. The floor was opened to the participants and their lingering doubts and queries were addressed by the facilitators. The participants gave their testimonials for the course and listed their takeaways from all the sessions. The course ended with Prof. Balaganpathi summarizing the journey of the course along with giving words to the inner journey the participants undertook. On a note to meet again soon in a professional setting, the participants took farewell from the facilitators and their peers.

## SUMMARIES OF SESSIONS ORGANIZED BY THE GROUP

### **In-Group Session 1**

**Date: 21<sup>st</sup> April 2020      Time: 5 pm – 7pm**

#### **Paper Presentation - Session 1**

The group assembled, for the first time, to discuss fundamental issues pertaining to Philosophical Counselling. The session saw three presentations being made by Ms Anusree, Mrs Charu and Dr Suchitra.

A fitting start to the deliberations, to get an insight into the scope of philosophical practice, Ms Anusree presented the paper 'What Philosophical Counselling Can't Do?' by Prof. Lou Marinoff. She concisely presented the issues surrounding the limitations of the philosophical practice as understood by Prof. Lou. She discussed how Philosophical Counselling cannot diagnose or treat non-noetically induced physical illness, how counselling cannot treat cerebral illness, how PC cannot endorse postulation or reification of mental illness, and other related ideas of Prof. Lou's paper. Anusree's presentation was followed by another interesting presentation on the article 'The Philosopher as Personal Consultant' by Michael Russell as presented by Mrs Charu. She explained how Russell viewed therapy as a sick word, as it is a context-dependent concept. She elaborated the notion of passivity as discussed by Russell. She briefly explained the history of psychotherapy and touched upon the issues of relationship between psychology and philosophy. The final presentation of the session was made by Dr Suchitra on 'Art and the good life: The role of literature and the visual arts in philosophical practice' written by Prof. Vaughana Feary. She stressed on the importance of literature and visual arts in Philosophical Counselling and gave examples from her own practice to bring forth the point vividly. She elaborated on the seven leading models as outlined by Prof. Vaughana: the representational, the expressive, the phenomenological, the narrative, the developmental, the transformative, and the revolutionary.

The session ended with a stimulating discussion between the participants on all the three presentations.

### **In-Group Session 2**

**Date: 25<sup>st</sup> April 2020      Time: 5.30 pm – 7.30 pm**

#### **Paper Presentations – Session 2**

Continuing the discussion on the nature and scope of Philosophical Counselling, a session was organized wherein three participants presented research articles on diverse perspectives of Philosophical Counselling. The presenters were Dr Prashant, Ms. Madhulika and Dr. Vikas Baniwal.

The session started with a brief review of the ongoing sessions with APPA. Dr Prashant initiated the discussion with a succinct presentation on the article 'The Efficacy of Philosophical Counselling: A First Outcome Study' by Ran Lahav. The author of the article is a pioneer in the field of philosophical practice, and

he has a distinct vision for the nature and scope of the same. Dr Prashant discussed the framework of Philosophical Counselling as developed by Ran. The process of counselling as it pertains to the philosophising aspect by both counsellor and counselee was discussed. Dr Prashant elaborated upon the goal of philosophical counselling which, according to Ran, consists in a more critical and in-depth world view.

The second presentation by Ms. Madhulika was Peter Raabe's article 'Life Examined in Philosophical Counselling'. She explained that Philosophical Counselling is a sort of cooperative examination of an individual's life and its connection to life in general of which Socrates was speaking. She stressed the point made in the article that the philosophical counsellor does not attempt a 'cure' by making conscious so-called 'unconscious motivations', or by bringing 'new material' to the surface.

The final presentation was made by Dr Vikas Baniwal on the article 'How Philosophy Can Benefit from Philosophical Practice' by Lydia Amir. The article particularly gained traction among the group as the question of the relationship between philosophy and its practice was raised many times during different discussions. He elaborated on how Prof. Lydia explained the point that with experience a philosophical practitioner develops an understanding of what is 'in' and what is 'out' in the process of counselling.

The session was followed by a discussion and a good analysis of the ideas present in the articles. All the three papers elicited different responses from the participants. The central point of discussion was the way philosophical concepts and theories can be used. Dr Avaneesh opined that perhaps she is providing a framework for the selection criteria of the usability of philosophical principles and concepts.

### **In-Group Session 3**

**Date: 2nd May 2020    Time: 11.30 am – 1 pm**

#### **Presentations by Psychologists and Counsellors Experience**

The group has many experienced psychologists and counsellors. A session was organised to listen to their experiences, to gain some insight into their methodologies and to get a 'feel' of their personal practice.

The session was initiated by Prof. Balaganapathi by raising some vital questions regarding the interaction with a counselee: How to open a dialogue? How to end a session? The pertinent question of the nature of the language of communication between a counsellor and counselee was also raised. There were three members who shared their individual experiences; Dr Suchitra Naik, Dr. Avaneesh and Ms Soujanya.

Dr Suchitra presented her experiences by pointing out the challenges that she faced initially when she offered counselling as a philosopher in her college, followed by her experience of working with government hospitals. While providing concrete examples from her case studies, she emphasised the need for the counsellor to imbibe qualities like welcoming attitude, eagerness to participate in a dialogue with counselee, etc.

The second presenter was Dr Avaneesh. While emphasising the role of good ambience in providing a positive environment in counselling, he elaborated upon his experiences and style of functioning as a counsellor. He

emphasised that it is particularly important to develop the relationship of trust for the success of the counselling. He cautioned that it is important to avoid labelling and state only those things with which one is sure about. He shared four varied experiences as a counsellor to help the group to get a taste of diversity of clients. He specifically pointed out the place of stoic philosophy in providing amazing results.

Dr. Saujanya, a free-lancer trained in both Philosophy and Psychology, also stressed the value of having a welcoming environment for the counselee. She explained the way philosophy gives a holistic perspective and how it is a treasure of insights. She focussed on the point of cultural rootedness of the individual. She emphasised the need to work on self-health and the process of self-cleansing that the counsellor must take note of post the counseling session.

The session concluded with a vibrant discussion among members on various dimensions of the experiences of the presenters. Some of the issues that engaged the minds of the group during the discussion were: What is success in PC and whose success it is? Why did some of the members opt for Philosophical Counselling when they are already practicing Psychological Counselling? These issues provided a chance for self-reflection on the part of the members in enriching the discussion.

### **In-Group Sessions 4 & 5: Special Lectures by Professor Lydia Amir**

**Session 1: Date: 2nd May 2020 Time: 7.30 pm – 9.30 pm**

**Session 2: Date: 9TH MAY 2020 Time: 7.15 pm – 9.30 pm**

The group was fortunate to have two sessions with Prof. Lydia Amir, one of the pioneers of Philosophical Counseling. She shared her perspective and approach towards Philosophical Counseling with the group methodically.

In the first session she initiated the discussion by highlighting the place of dialogue in Philosophical Counseling. Lydia is of the opinion that the process of such a dialogue should be from the concrete to the abstract and back to the concrete. She illustrated this process using the ethics of Kant. While stressing the need for the existence of plurality of methods, she pointed out that methods should be used creatively to suit the needs of the clients. She emphasized the importance of the self-invented method that a counselor should invent after knowing the existent philosophical methods. She illustrated the methodology of Socratic dialogue that she follows in the form of 'formulation of philosophical questions' and looking for its possible answers to evaluate them. It is important to identify the central question in the dialogue and to discern whether that question is philosophical or not. She underscored the importance of respecting 'the other' who comes as a client and promoting confidence in self-reflection in him/her. For Lydia, the process is deeply pedagogical. It consists in

opening possibilities for the counselee, philosophically creating diverse points of view, and to develop capacities to see various points of view.

The second session with Prof. Lydia was concerned with the role of humour in Goodlife, and in Philosophical Counselling. After delineating and elaborating upon various theories of laughter such as superiority theory, the relief theory and the theory of incongruity and a few more, she outlined various traditions of humour in the history of Western philosophy. These are, to name a few, the tradition of cynics which are practical comics, the tradition which sees wit as a virtue, the tradition which considers laughter as epistemologically valuable and the tradition which considers laughter is ontologically rooted. Prof. Lydia viewed humour to be linked with values. She concluded by claiming that philosophy based upon humour can liberate people from shame, disgust, and ridicule.

Both the talks were followed by an engaging discussion on various aspects of Philosophical Counseling such as the relationship between practice and academic life, client suitability and the role of humor, to list a few.

### **In-Group Sessions 6 & 7: Two Special Lectures by Prof. Ran Lahav**

**Session 1:     Date: 27<sup>th</sup> April 2020     Time: 7.30 pm – 9.30 pm**

**Session 2:     Date: 5<sup>th</sup> May 2020     Time: 7.15 pm – 9.30 pm**

To broaden the horizons of understanding about the nature of Philosophical Counselling (PC), the group approached Prof. Ran Lahav, one of the pioneers of the field, to seek insights in his perspective and practice. He shared his approach and discernments in two sessions.

The first session started with Prof. Ran Lahav raising general concerns surrounding Philosophical Counseling such as meaning, perspectives and challenges. While making a crucial distinction between philosophical practice (PP) and philosophical counseling (PC), Ran pointed out that though PC is the dominant one, it is only one of the many forms of PP. He explained that the movement in PP was from 'the abstract' to 'the concrete'. For him, it is significant to bridge this gap between the abstract and the concrete. But it is significant not to trivialize philosophy in the process.

A panorama of the history of the philosophical practice consisting of the different approaches and methodologies was painted by him. He named the first approach as 'dogmatic approach'. It consists of adhering to a particular philosophy of life. It has no real conversation in it, but it has the fullness of philosophy behind it. He explained the second approach which was adopted by Gerd Achenbach. It has no fixed methodology; it consists in having an open dialogue. He was critical of this approach as it lacked a method. According to him, a practitioner must develop theories, worldviews, and a palace of ideas. The third approach involves logical, critical, and analytical thinking. It focuses on solving problems. He criticized this approach by pointing that it lacks a network of ideas. He spoke about the different formats in which Philosophy is being practiced such as;

Counselling, Philo Café, Philosophical reflection groups etc. He provided a glimpse of his approach where a text takes a central position, which consists of self-reflection that is not problem oriented.

The second session was commenced by Prof. Ran Lahav by again stressing the importance of constructing worldviews, addressing basic life issues, and not trivializing philosophy in the process. He remarked that it was important to have a conception of 'what is philosophy' and 'what it can do'. He was of the view that philosophy did not help solve problems. He observed that ordinary, everyday life was superficial, automatic, and the role of philosophy consisted in exploring deeper dimensions of life. He gave examples from the history of philosophy like Plato, Stoicism, Neo-Platonism, Emerson, Martin Buber who precisely achieved that. He used the metaphor of 'stepping out of the perimeter' to explain his stance.

He explained his approach as consisting of two steps. The first step involves exploring the cave and the second one is striving for self-transformation. The first step starts with a concrete example from someone's life. He explained that the aim was the identification of thought patterns and philosophical theories behind it. What are the philosophical conceptions that underpin the behavior? He said that it was important not to impose interpretation quickly. The second step, for him, involves the construction of a world view, consisting of ideas that are the source of inspiration for us.

Both the talks were followed by engaging discussions on the perspectives presented by Prof. Ran with the participation of the group members.

### **In-Group Session 9**

**Date: 08<sup>th</sup>, MAY 2020      Time: 7:15 - 7:55 pm**

#### **Dr. Ashwini Mokashi book discussion**

Dr. Mokashi gave a talk on her book 'Sapiens and Sthitaprajna: A Comparative Study in Seneca's Stoicism and the Bhagavad-Gita' (published by D.K. Printworld, New Delhi, 2019) Below is the summary of the talk.

The pursuit of wisdom, virtue, and happiness are lifelong goals, and the process of attaining these goals itself is a worthwhile experience. The wise person of the Gita, Sthitaprajna, is concerned with what is right action and how to exercise right judgment. The Sthitaprajna possesses the following characteristics : Engages and excels in one's own duties (Swadharma), Is a believer in the teachings of the Gita (Shraddha), Displays equanimity to pleasure and pain (Samatvam), Develops non-attachment to gains and losses (Anasakti), Attains tranquility of mind (Shanti).

The wise person of Stoic Seneca, Sapiens, embodies the ethical tenets of Stoicism, which bring them permanent happiness. Seneca describes how to be wise by incorporating the Stoic ethical concepts such as appropriate actions (kathekonta), what belongs to oneself (oikeiosis), virtue (arete), detachment (apatheia), telos (goal) of living in accordance with nature, knowledge of the laws of nature, which together lead to



happiness (eudaimonia). For Seneca, happiness essentially means tranquility and peace of mind, which results from a constant practice of virtue, and intellectual exercise, which is required to perform moral actions. In both systems, a wise person is one who has the capacity for making correct judgments when undertaking action, and for these s/he then assumes complete responsibility. Right thinking results in right action, essential for peace of mind and happiness: right or moral actions lead to virtue. Happiness results from knowing one has done the right thing at the right time. Whatever a wise person chooses to do is for the good of mankind. In that sense, s/he is divine. Such people enjoy constant happiness.

### **In-Group Session 10**

**Date: 11th May, 2020 Time: 5:00 pm - 6:45pm**

The follow up discussion taken up by the APPA group on May 11, 2020 was more-or-less a mutual conversation in the backdrop of Prof. Ran Lahav's and Prof Lydia Amir's lectures. Since we all are claiming to do counseling 'by philosophy', therefore a person should be formally very particular about terms, techniques, methodology, approaches of the discipline. Thus we may do counseling by heart and enjoy it out-of-habit but some philosophical rules will still follow. The formal rule training at first step would be to not only maintain purity and exclusivity of the discipline, but also ensure that we are neither deviating, nor creating ambiguity under the umbrella of philosophy (unknowingly). However another question which raises out of this implication would be that if the philosophical counselor deeply attaches himself with the 'purity' and 'popularity' of the discipline, he might get a technical kind of philosophy which would not solve the purpose of counseling. It also seems significant here, how much feasible would philosophical counseling be, if the methodology is not specified? Because if we do not prescribe a strict methodology, the results might be chaotic or unclear. Lastly, what would be the criteria of the success of a philosophical counseling? How may we decipher whether the issue is finally solved or not? Popularity of ethics was another topic of discussion which elongated upon some areas of expertise under philosophy which are no more limited to the subject, so shall other fields also open up the doors of counseling for a particular concern?

The above mentioned issues were carefully interrogated and discussed by the group which reached a consensus that doing pure philosophy and depending on rules might be a good idea in academia. But once we put it in practice, too much reliance might be harmful. As far as methodology is concerned, since every philosophical counselor has his/her own way, thus imposing one specific kind of methodology would not be a good idea. Then, there cannot be a criteria of success of Philosophical Counseling as it's an ever-going phenomenon. Lastly, since no counselor may claim exclusivity, so it's not a bad idea to accept different standpoints to have a holistic understanding of the problem in counseling.

## TESTIMONIALS

"This course has helped us understand the nature, implications, and relevance of this emerging dimension of Philosophy. It has provoked us affirmatively to realize that philosophy should not be taken 'only' as an academic analytic discipline, instead 'also' as a useful tool of counseling for people (as individuals and as social beings). We also learned that overemphasis on tools and methodology doesn't work in one to one discourse as every individual is unique (in his/her way). Thus, this workshop has helped look forward to the growth of philosophy as well as counselling. Looking forward to more such affirmative events for enthusiasts. Thank you."

*Dr. Prashant Shukla*

"This course has rekindled the philosophical aspect in me and I have started seeing the world from a holistic point of view. I understood that all the diverse disciplines either converge into Philosophy or are extracted from Philosophy. Ultimately, I feel Philosophy is a way of Life and each one can have their own philosophies. Similarly there is no "the way" of Philosophical Counseling and somewhere psychology and philosophy merge in Counseling. So, I feel we need to integrate both into our Counseling which I have been doing and getting good results. I am glad I opted for this course and now reaping the benefits of it."

*Mrs. Komarraju Soujanya*

"The course was like a portal to a new world that Prof Lou and Prof Vaughana opened up for me. I got a glimpse of the world of Philosophical Counseling, it's complexities and it's intricacies. The issues, case studies, and themes discussed were varied and the analysis was insightful. The course gave me a new perspective on doing and learning philosophy and acquainted me with the tools and techniques to use philosophy in better understanding the human condition. I thoroughly enjoyed the course."

*Mr Sudeep Kumar*

"The APPA online course was truly a novel experience. It gave an opportunity to understand the varied perspectives of philosophical counseling from the pioneers themselves. Beyond being a course which explored the counseling aspects of philosophy, it also gave clarity on the legal, ethical and the marketing aspects of PC. The course would be flawless had there been more time spent on practical sessions. Louis, Vaughana and the entire APPA team deserve an applause for their sublime vision."

*Mr. Avaneesh*

“The course gave me a fresh outlook on my study of philosophy. I came out of the other end of the tunnel with methodologies, tools and techniques in my arsenal which will help me establish and flourish my practice as a professional Philosophical Counselor. Prof. Lou and Prof. Vaughana took special care to offer an open minded approach in giving us an overview of the different kinds of practices within Philosophical Counseling, stating that there is no better or worse, only different.”

*Mrs. Charu Thapliyal*

“This course has evidently laid the path for philosophical practice in India. With apt resource material, presentation and guidance, this course helped me nurture into an independent philosophical counselor. It unraveled the factual philosophical paradigm of various methods practiced across the world which were always intrinsic to philosophy. This holistic understanding about Philosophical practice has made us well prepared to begin our practices in India, especially during this Pandemic period.”

*Ms. Madhulika Sharma*

“The Philosophical Counseling course at APPA was beneficial. It will allow me to counsel people philosophically as a professional. I believe in practicing philosophy for myself and the people around me. The course has provided a scientific basis for the knowledge of practicing philosophy. It was also a serendipity moment to meet with a lot of Indian philosophers, who were forming a group to do something similar, it opened up the practice to a lot of people in India. Altogether this was a great opportunity, and I was glad to connect with both the US and Indian philosophical practitioners. Thank you! ”

*Dr. Ashwini Mokashi*

“Introducing Philosophical Counseling to us, this course has elucidated some of the prime questions about philosophy; such as - What is philosophy? Why philosophy for all? How does philosophy help in a humanitarian crisis? The course has helped to understand the importance of bridging the gap between academic or theoretical philosophy and philosophical practice. It has boosted the confidence in me and enhanced new directions to represent philosophy to people in general. It was an enlightening experience to listen to Prof. Marinoff, Prof. Vaughana, Prof. Bala, and the distinguished speakers. Looking forward to having more such inspiring events with this brilliant group.”

*Ms Mitali Bhagabati*

"The Certification program conducted by APPA was unique as it opened up new avenues in the field of philosophical counselling. The course was highly structured and delivered in an academic style, but keeping it very interactive. The nature of the lectures was participatory. It was also quite interesting to understand APPA's activities, their journal, and the international conferences they had organized. The striking point which came to be noticed was that there are no strict or specific methods of doing philosophical counselling. On the whole, the course was a total success. All this became a reality solely because of the meticulous efforts taken by Dr. Balaganapathi."

*Dr. Lekshmi*

"The course content was very well thought and crafted. It helped people from varied backgrounds to grasp the spirit of Philosophical Counselling. It practically included the field of Praxis from bird's eye view and also made us aware of subtle nuances of the field. The enhancement of knowledge horizon about Philosophical Praxis was very significant and I was able to place my practice on a larger canvas. Expertise of both the resource persons added a tinge of humour, warmth and informality to the conversations. The examples from Eastern Philosophy made the discourse very relatable. Amen"

*Dr. Suchitra Naik*

"I feel happy to have absorbed some important theoretical insights from the program, which made my understanding of philosophy better and wiser. Prof. Marinoff's views that "Psychology is the daughter of Philosophy", has a new convert in me. Prof. Vaughana's emphasis on 'vernacular philosophy' and feminist/tribal/multicultural dimensions to Counseling is a lasting insight. The program impelled on me, that the easiest and surest, if not the solitary, way of making philosophy a more utility-serving enterprise, is praxis and counseling. For my future research, I feel encouraged to undertake textual inquiry in Indian tradition to delineate cases and models of Philosophical Counseling."

*Dr. Anubhav Varshney*

"This course was indeed an enriching experience from the perspective of both philosophy and psychology. The sessions integrated a holistic understanding of philosophical counseling by incorporating both theoretical and practical aspects of counseling. Prof Lou and Prof Vaughana inculcated a systematic range of topics, making it very easy for an individual to start as a professional in this field. This experience has helped us in analysing the prospects of this practice in our country.

*Dr. Vikas Baniwal*