

**Shifts in the Classical Indian Conception of Philosophical Practice:  
*Vedic, Itihāsa-purānic and Dārśanic***

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**Abstract**

The present study attempts to provide an understanding of the various shifts in the philosophical practice that existed in Classical Indian tradition. The three shifts identified for this purpose are from *Vedic*, *Itihāsa-purānic* and *Dārśanic* phases in terms of cosmic, *dharmic* and rationalistic perspectives. I comprehend the limitations of choosing such a broad canvas. In tandem with the classical *Advaitic* tradition (*nēti nēti*, not this, not this) of India, let me specify what I am not doing here, in order to prevent unwarranted expectations. Firstly, presentation of a tradition of philosophical practice of more than 3000 years, if not more, would often be endowed with sweeping generalizations of the sort that ‘everything of human life is a philosophical practice’ or it would often suffer from the dismissive attitude that ‘there is no philosophical practice at all.’ This paper moves beyond these extremes and avoids the shortcomings of both these perspectives. Secondly, scholars who attempt such a broader canvas may present the historical evolution of philosophical practice. Such an approach may suit a descriptive account articulated for a lengthy research article more than a presentation of this sort. Such an approach will suffer from inadequacy of material of the vast periods of history as well as an epistemological impossibility of comprehending and presenting every aspect of the evolution. Given the limitations of time, I am not resorting to this approach as well. Thirdly, contemporary perspectives of philosophical practice are the outcome of recent developments in widening and deepening the praxis of Philosophy to enrich its outlook on the everyday life of human beings. Searching for such perspectives in Classical and Medieval Indian traditions would be a misplaced attempt. I am, therefore, not trying to make such an attempt. To bring out a distinctive and selective picture of philosophical practice in India, this paper would relate philosophical practice to the broader perception of human life in the Indian tradition and further identify the shifts during various phases of Indian history that have contributed to the changes in philosophical practice. The paper further attempts to explicate the difference in the basic conceptualization of philosophical practice in various phases of Indian history such as *Vedic*, *Itihāsa-purānic*, and *Dārśanic*.

Keywords: *Vedic, Itihāsa, Purānic, Dārśanic, Philosophical practice in Indian tradition, Ṛta, Dharma*

## **Engaging with the World: Mind and Emotions in Buddhist Philosophy**

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### **Abstract**

This paper aims to present an account of experience, where emotions and feelings play a constitutive role in our engagement with the world. It is a philosophical exploration of our emotional life seen through the prism of Buddhist philosophy, the concepts of which can be utilized in the counselor-counselee dialogue. The objective is to illustrate the various facets of the category of *vedana* and its preponderance in the development of a worldview. Basing upon the discussion, we would call into question Ran Lahav's claim regarding the content of philosophical counseling.

**Keywords:** *Mind, Emotions, Non-Self, Buddhaghosa, Ran Lahav*

**Understanding Multicultural Self:  
The *Advaitin* Method of Philosophical Counseling**

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**Abstract**

The concept of nondualism enhances the belief that “All is one”. This concept has both philosophical and psychological impacts on human beings for a compassionate and inclusive functioning; which can help us understand the broader aspects of humankind. This article will argue on the need of understanding the age-old Indian traditional philosophical theory as a method of philosophical counseling for contemporary human conflicts which leads to manifest a positive attitude towards life. The article is divided into three sections. The first section of the article will bring about an analysis of the concept of ‘*Advaita*’ (non-dualism). The second section will reflect on the concept of the multicultural self. The concept of ‘Multicultural self’ portrays the idea of integration of the individual with the globe. The third section will depict how the understanding of the philosophy of ‘*Advaita*’ (especially the *Upaniṣadic* dictum *Madhuvidyā*) can help in enriching our multicultural self.

**Keywords:** *Advaita, Philosophical Counseling, Multiculturalism, Multicultural self, Brhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad, Madhuvidyā*

## The *Bhagavad Gita*: A Handbook for Philosophical Practice

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### Abstract

The *Bhagavad Gita* is a scripture of the Indian tradition that teaches us how to live. It is an existential treatise which is to be carried all through one's life. The *Gita* presents before us a number of archetypes which can be effectively used by a philosophical practitioner. Though the *Gita* begins with an account of the state of despondency of Arjuna who is the main character of the book, to explicate the *Gita* as a psychological treatise will be as good as limiting its philosophical depth dimensions. The philosophical import of the *Gita* finds manifestation through the eight archetypes discussed in this article which are: 1. The method of self-correction 2. Freedom and choice 3. Building up Self-confidence 4. Equanimity (*samatvam*) 5. Emotional stability 6. Steadiness of wisdom (*sthithaprajna*) 7. Integrity of mind and intellect (*buddhi yoga*) and 8. Skill in action (*karma kausalam*). They are the best models that can be used by a philosophical counselor. The author Vyasa chooses a battlefield as the context for conflict resolution for imparting the principles of philosophical counseling. Arjuna is expressing his mental conflicts and emotional despondency which is immediately addressed by Krishna in the most endearing manner through interpersonal dialogues. The methodology for psychological cure is rooted in philosophy. Krishna tells him about the real nature of a human being and the importance of discharging one's duties in the most selfless way. The weakness of mind is only a temporary aberration which can be strengthened by the power of will. At the end of the whole discourse, Arjuna is given freedom to choose his course of action. The *Gita* helps us to learn lessons for philosophical practice.

**Keywords:** *Karma yoga, samatvam buddhi yoga, trigunas, sama, dama, karmasu kaushalam*

## **Beyond Images: Implications of Krishnamurti's Ideas for Philosophical Counselling**

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### **Abstract**

This paper presents insights for philosophical counseling rooted in the thought of Jiddu Krishnamurti, a modern Indian thinker. This paper does not suggest that Krishnamurti was a philosopher or philosophical counsellor, even though his words inspired many towards personal transformation. Rather, the attempt here is to suggest that a cogent approach to philosophical counseling may be rooted in the thought of Krishnamurti. To develop this proposition, this paper explicates the ideas of illusory self, images and experience from Krishnamurti's thought as these hold relevance to the practice of philosophical counseling. Krishnamurti believes that self is an illusion created of mental images that tend to become so powerful over time that they hinder our genuine engagement with people and the world. This genuine engagement with others and the world is possible only through a non-judgmental state of mind which Krishnamurti calls 'choiceless awareness'. This state of mind involves observation devoid of the usual psychological processes, such as, comparing, contrasting, and evaluating. The paper further elaborates on the proposition of mental images being at the core of psychological suffering. Subsequently, the paper explicates the underlying assumptions of the system of philosophical counseling based on the thought of Krishnamurti followed by a detailed discussion on the implications and practical considerations. This discussion is centered around the possibility of using philosophical counselling in deconstructing the images and discovering one's true self to give a direction to one's life. This paper ends with some concluding remarks that highlight the special relevance that Krishnamurti's ideas may hold when applied to philosophical counseling in present times.

**Keywords:** *choiceless awareness, dialogue, otherness, images, self, authenticity*

## Philosophical Perspectives on Relationship Conflicts in a Couple

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### Abstract

This research paper intends to categorize individual-specific complaints that will lead to problems in the relationships of couples. Toward this purpose, the paper provides behavioral and contemplative techniques to address these issues by taking recourse to *Bhagavad-Gita* and Stoicism from a critical-creative perspective. The paper also tries to show the importance of romantic relationships in one's life and the ways and means of overcoming the pitfalls in couples' relationships by adhering to specific behavioral techniques from the perspectives of the Gita and Stoicism. Our argument is that the behavioral and contemplative techniques along with the principles of wisdom in the *Gita* and Stoicism will help us resolve various individual issues in a marriage and thereby increase our Happiness in our lives.

**Keywords:** *Stoicism, Bhagavad-Gita, happiness, wisdom, relationships, perspective, purpose, detachment, attachment, love*

**Embracing Culturally Rooted Methods in Philosophical Practice:  
A Study Conducted During the Festival of Navrāti in India**

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**Abstract**

The following paper is a case study in employing culturally rooted methods in philosophical counseling and practice. It puts forward the hypothesis that when it comes to philosophical practice, employing methods already present in the collective epistemic framework of the target demographic might be equally, if not more, effective as introducing new and alienating terminology. Hence, the methods used would be more effective when they are culturally rather than geographically local for the counselee. The outcome of a parallel study conducted during the popular Indian festival of *Navrātri* makes an experimental case for the theory. The present study demonstrates that using group sessions as a supplement to philosophical counseling can help familiarize participants with philosophical concepts and eventually aid in their transition to one-on-one counseling.

**Keywords:** *philosophical practice, philosophical counseling, storytelling, meditation, writing therapy, group activity, transformational philosophy*