

Politics and Philosophical Counseling

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Abstract

In this paper I propose to challenge the position that philosophical counseling *should* be detached from politics, and wonder whether it can. I examine seemingly anti-political arguments and explore some different meanings of 'politics'. Despite my awareness to the history of misuse of philosophical rhetoric in political propaganda and indoctrination and acquaintance with cases of dishonest compliance of philosophers with oppressive or lucrative regimes, I believe that any philosophy that deals with knowledge, action, life and morality has political aspects as well. I argue that such aspects may and sometime should come to the fore in philosophical counseling as well. I demonstrate it by a fictional example, with which many readers are probably acquainted. It raises questions. I accordingly stress the importance of meta-philosophical dialogues among philosophical counselors about the complexities and risks of discussing such issues in counseling sessions.

Keywords: *philosophical counseling, counselee's concerns and perspective, widening horizons, political and individual perspective, counselor's political bias, meta-counseling*

Measure for Mismeasure: Two Case Studies in the Use of Virtue Epistemology

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“I once was lost, but now I’m found, I was blind, but now I see.”

From *Amazing Grace* by John Newton

Abstract

In order to succeed in one’s endeavors, a person needs to have a proper assessment of their epistemic strengths and weaknesses. As philosophical counselors, you have most likely encountered clients who either do not have an appreciation of what they can achieve, or of what is beyond their grasp. They might be either timid and servile, or arrogant and overbearing. Either way, they do not experience proper pride. This prevents them from setting realistic goals or making appropriate choices, which can result in epistemic harm. These kinds of mismeasures of the Self are very common. How do we help our clients recognize and assess their mismeasurements and thus to achieve the proper pride necessary for human flourishing? How do we help them to change their attitudes towards themselves? This paper lays out the theoretical background for thinking about measurements of the Self. Utilizing the case studies of two philosophical counseling clients to illustrate various mismeasures of the Self it shows how, with dialogue, education, modeling, and practice, subsequent changes of attitudes towards themselves occurred. With time, these clients have been able to achieve a well-calibrated sense of their strengths as well as their limitations.

Keywords: *arrogance, hubris, humility, proper pride, self-respect, servility, timidity, vice epistemology, virtue epistemology*

Nelsonian Socratic Dialogue as an Ethical Practice¹

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Abstract

In this article we seek to understand the nature of Socratic dialogues in the Nelson-Heckmann tradition as an ethical practice or a way of moral conduct. First, we discuss the typical structure and principles of Socratic dialogues. Second, we seek to identify and explain what constitutes the ethical practice in these dialogues. In this part we look at some of Nelson's ideas on ethics and philosophy. Third, we discuss how facilitators have promoted this ethical practice in the dialogues after Nelson. Here we address the ideas of experienced facilitators of the tradition. In concluding, we argue that there are at least three main normative ideals constituting the current practices in the tradition: the search for truth, the trust in reason, and the respect for others.

Keywords: *Leonard Nelson, Gustav Heckmann, Socratic Dialogue, Socratic Method, Ethics*

**Philosophical Practice as an Approach to Enhance the
Consistency of Decisions Made by Business Executives**

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Abstract

In this paper I propose an approach for enhancing the consistency of the decisions made by business executives, which is achieved through the development of their capacity for decision-making. I explain why this is a relevant contribution both for individual executives and for society, and why Philosophical Practice is well positioned to offer a substantial contribution in the direction of addressing the issue. I also offer a description of key inconsistencies in the decision-making process of executives, propose a solution in terms of specific ways in which those inconsistencies need to be improved, and offer the basis for a Philosophical Practice approach to promoting the development of the executive's capacity for decision-making in such a way as to solve those inconsistencies.

Keywords: *Decision-making, critical thinking, ethics, autonomy, integrity, existential, executives, business*

Sufism as a Method of Philosophical Counseling

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Abstract

This article defends Sufism as a new method of philosophical counseling. Sufism considers the human being a unity of the spiritual and the material body. Consequently, the soul can be a necessary support in solving problems in material existence. The life of human beings consists of several gradually increasing circles. When a node forms on this line, it interferes with further movement. Sufism is a method that teaches how to get to the bottom of the problem and untie, not to cut, the knot. The author investigates the essence of every stage of the Sufi practice as steps in philosophical counseling. The main goal of philosophical counseling is to bring the counselee close to the soul in order to hear its voice. The philosophical counselor uses the Sufi states (*haal*) for it. The whole process of solution in philosophical counseling is based on the main Sufi principle of cognition.

Keywords: *philosophical counseling, Sufism, spiritual practice, stages of philosophical counseling, node formation, Sufi principle.*

The Unfolding Soul in the Writings of Alice A. Bailey

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Abstract

The article presents an overview of a contemporary philosophical teaching that aims at the development of the whole person, with specific emphasis on the unfolding of the soul. Given this important goal, this essay attempts to fill a gap in both academia and in current versions of philosophical practice. The works of Alice A. Bailey can be viewed as a contemporary counterpart to classical Western philosophical schools, Neoplatonism in particular. The article explores major features and functions of the human soul as decisive factors for personal growth and development. The reported statements about the soul are presented as a set of hypotheses to be verified by personal experience. Theoretical perspectives in Bailey's writings may serve as building blocks for a revitalized love of wisdom. The delineated account about the human soul and its unfoldment is a central source and support for practicing an embodied philosophy as a way of life.

Keywords: *Soul; personal development; transpersonal psychology; Platonism; Neoplatonism; Plotinus; Alice A. Bailey; philosophy as a way of life*