

## Inputs for Philosophical Counselling from Murdoch and Rosenberg<sup>1</sup>

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### Abstract

In this article, I suggest that combining resources from philosophy and psychology can yield useful tools for philosophical counselling. More specifically, I argue for three theses: a) Iris Murdoch's notion of *just attention* and Marshall Rosenberg's method of *non-violent communication* are interestingly compatible; b) engaging in *non-violent communication* serves to support one's endeavors to acquire the kind of clear vision Murdoch thinks doing well by others requires; and c) *non-violent just communication* would be beneficial to both counsellors and counselees and thus a useful resource for philosophical counsellors.

**Keywords:** *Iris Murdoch, just attention, Marshall Rosenberg, non-violent communication, philosophical counselling*

## **Exploring Three Traditions of Philosophical Counseling in India**

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### **Abstract**

This research paper reviews three philosophical counseling traditions that became significant in the author's philosophical counseling practice. The paper begins with (i) an introduction of the topic, (ii) a review of possible definitions of philosophical counseling, (iii) defines the aim of such counseling, (iv) provides methods and techniques used to address various issues, (v) discusses some concerns and solutions found in the philosophies of the *Bhagavad-Gita*, Saint Kabir, and Gurudev Ranade, and Nimbargi Sampradaya, before (vi) a conclusion.

**Keywords:** *Bhakti, Socratic dialogue, Bhagavad-Gita, Anasakti, Detachment, Divine Love*

**The Act of Midwifery in Aristophanes' *Clouds* and its  
Relevance to Philosophical Counseling: A Critical Exposition**

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**Abstract**

This paper starts with the presumption that the 'act of counseling' must involve the strategic 'method of dialogue', and by doing so, the practitioners/counselors do indeed 'philosophize' with their counsees. Such a strategic method involves "... attending and encouraging, restating and paraphrasing, reflecting content and feeling, clarifying and perception checking, and summarizing." This method may be traced way back in the philosophic dialogues of Socrates (though in a subtle manner), which have been compiled in the dialogues of Plato. In Aristotle, we find that this method of dialogue is relatively less apparent than in Socrates and Plato, but it continues to be applied. It becomes the *aporetic* method: the solution of the problem results from a discussion of all possible opinions/beliefs: the 'act of midwifery' in the method of dialogue seems a crucial aspect of 'Socratic perspective', and conducive to the act of philosophical counseling. This paper shall focus on a particular piece of work called Aristophanes' *Clouds*. In modern times, it definitely seems to make sense in the process of philosophical counseling where the counselee is supposed to reach the solution to her/his dilemma (with the assistance of the counselor). This is supposed to be conversational, mimetic, and sometimes rhetoric as well.

**Keywords:** *Dialogue, Ostensive, Synthetical, Aporetic, Universalization, Abstraction, Contradiction, Consensus, Exonum pro cred, Abort, Midwifery*

## **Philosophical Counselling: Some Methodological Concerns**

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### **Abstract**

Philosophical counselling is a heterogeneous field. Since the ends of philosophical counselling are diverse, it would be reasonable to assume that practitioners utilize a diverse range of means. While some practitioners endorse methodological eclecticism—the freedom to use any and all philosophical material and methods, I will make the case that a Socratic approach (in which the practitioner assumes the role of a critical dialogical partner with a view to helping the participant access, assess and modify her worldview) is predominant. Widespread application of the Socratic approach might be justified if it was the only and / or best means to attain a general objective of philosophical counselling, or if its application facilitated the realization of a variety of distinct objectives. I will argue that neither condition is satisfied. Firstly, I will argue that the Socratic approach is not the only means to achieve the shared objective of increasing participant autonomy, and that it may not be the most efficacious. Secondly, I will argue that the Socratic approach is inadequate to achieve many of the ends of philosophical counselling. I will conclude that oversubscription to the Socratic approach is unnecessary given the plethora of philosophical means that are available to the practitioner.

**Keywords:** *philosophical counselling, Socratic approach, Kant, the Stoics, Dewey, Aristotle*

**The Methods Question and the Questioning of Methods:  
Achenbach's Approach to Philosophical Praxis<sup>1</sup>**

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**Abstract**

In this paper, I present an understanding of the nature of philosophical praxis and of the problem of method in philosophical counselling, based on a reading of new English translations of Achenbach. Cautious of presupposing too narrow a notion of method, I refract an array of its meanings or uses in relation to the “free conversation” of philosophical praxis, so different answers are sometimes appropriate. But for any of the more robust and determinative meanings, insisting on the application of a method in philosophy is about as inane as imposing methods on friendships. After such indirect analogical support for Achenbach's notorious rejection of method, I turn to a presentation of Achenbach's views based on quotations (appearing here for the first time) from authorized English translations of Achenbach that I am preparing for forthcoming publication with Lexington Books. It is hoped in this way to give readers an advance glimpse beyond the paradoxical sound-bites (‘beyond-method’ method; anti-therapy therapy; etc.) that Achenbach has been saddled with in the absence of good translations of many of his works.

**Keywords:** *Gerd B. Achenbach, philosophical praxis, philosophical counselling, philosophical methodology, philosophical expertise, the “big problems”, therapy, rules.*

**Conversations on Psychological Counselling and Philosophical Counselling:  
Examining the Convergences and Divergences Between  
Philosophical and Psychological Counselling**

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**Abstract**

This paper is a conversational presentation of the points of convergence and divergence between Psychological Counselling and the emerging field of Philosophical Counselling. Dr Vikas Baniwal (VB) shares insights from his learnings in clinical psychology and as a certified philosophical counsellor. Prof. Balaganapathi Devarakonda (BD) adds perspective to the conversation as an expert in Indian philosophy and a certified philosophical counsellor. The discussion has been moderated by Vanshaj Garg (VG), a philosophy student seeking clarity about this emerging field of practice. The central attempt is to develop a broad understanding of the field and to consolidate the emerging questions rather than provide any final answers.

**Keywords:** *Philosophical counselling, counselling, psychological counselling*