Annual Meeting 2023

Online, 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. EST

Saturday, June 17, 2023

All Members Welcome

Flexible Attendance, Come & Go As You Please

to receive the Zoom link,
please register here
https://appa.edu/annual-meeting-registration-june-17-2023/
Program

all times indicated are EST (New York time)

9:00 – 9:30 a.m. Lou Marinoff and co-hosts TBA
Welcome, and updates on APPA’s new initiatives

9:30 – 10:30 a.m. Kevin Cales
When the Client Does Not Know:
Regressive Abstraction and Nelsonian Socratic Dialogue in Client Counseling

10:30 – 10:45 a.m. coffee break

10:45 – 11:45 a.m. Carol Gould
Philosophical Counseling as a Tool for Addressing Body Dysmorphia

11:45 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. lunch break

1:00 – 2:00 p.m. Greg Sadler
Philosophical Resources for Understanding and Managing Anger

2:00 – 2:15 p.m. coffee break

2:15 – 3:15 p.m. Shanti Jones
The Pragmatics of Eudaimonia: Lessons from Aristotle and Jane

3:15 – 3:30 p.m. coffee break

3:30 – 4:30 p.m. Jörn W. Kroll
Jaspers’ Philosophy of Existenz and Its Manifold Value for Philosophical Practice

4:30 – 5:00 p.m. Happy Hour! Open mic chat moderated by Lou Marinoff
Drink a glass of wine, socialize, and philosophize
Kevin Cales

When the Client Does Not Know: Regressive Abstraction and Nelsonian Socratic Dialogue in Client Counseling

Abstract: I instituted an IRB approved research project on the efficacy of philosophical counseling at Roanoke College. Unexpectedly, I received some potential clients who in their initial consultation did not have a problem or issue to discuss. Nevertheless, seeing no reason to exclude them from the study, I decided to continue the counseling sessions. In what follows, I examine the method I used in these cases by considering one case in particular, the case of Finn. I argue that my approach was to utilize regressive abstraction to locate a topic of significance to the client. In addition, I argue that the initial use of regressive abstraction pairs well with an adoption of Nelsonian Socratic Dialogue (NSD). I defend adopting NSD in counseling by expositing its process, arguing for its legitimacy as a method for self-knowledge, and explaining its connection to the virtues of autonomy, egalitarianism, and humility. Together, I claim, these approaches elicited a genuine topic of significance for Finn, maintained client autonomy, and gave the client self-knowledge.

Bio: My life has been a long engagement with philosophy as an educational activity for existential concerns and life situations. I believe that others can benefit from philosophy just as I do. I became an APPA-Certified Philosophical Counselor in June, 2022. My goals are to bring the skills, methods, and wisdom of philosophy back to issues of everyday life, to help clients reason through their problems and processes, and to assist clients' discoveries of who they are as philosophers so that they can fare well in their personal and professional lives.
Abstract: Body Dysmorphia (Body Dysmorphic Disorder) can be profoundly maladaptive, often leading to social and romantic avoidance, not to mention sheer unhappiness. Arguably, it may have two different types of etiology, one social pressure (perpetuated by TikTok and other platforms) and the other a person's unique psycho-social history. In this paper, I look not so much at the first of these, which has been especially mischievous at this cultural moment, I focus on the second, which philosophical practice can address, especially drawing on the work of Walter Benjamin, Plato, and John Stuart Mill, not to mention the example of Socrates. Some psychiatric research has suggested that BDD sufferers have greater aesthetic sensitivity and higher aesthetic standards, tout court. A philosophical practitioner can help a client understand the key role of something's (or someone's) uniqueness in eliciting aesthetic wonder and appreciation, something akin to Walter Benjamin's "aura.". Someone with BDD might not see her body any differently, but overcome her anxiety by cultivating herself as an artistic work in progress. A Philosophical Practitioner could help such a client see herself as a person with a unique aura, who resists the siren song of kitsch, conventional standards of beauty, irregardless of whether she unknowingly meets them. Philosophical practice would not preclude the BDD client being under psychiatric treatment. Rather, the philosopher can help the client attain Philosophical Health, as Luis de Miranda conceptualizes it.

Bio: Carol S. Gould, Ph.D. is a Professor, Department of Philosophy at Florida Atlantic University, where she is also a Senior Distinguished Fellow in the Center for Future Mind (in the FAU Brain Institute). She publishes widely in Aesthetics, Ancient Greek Philosophy, Philosophy of Psychiatry, and, more recently, Japanese Philosophy. Her forthcoming book is Glamour: A Philosophy of Elusiveness (Bloomsbury). She received her Ph.D. and B.A. from University of Buffalo (SUNY) and studied at Brown University. She is also a Philosophical Practitioner based in Boca Raton, FL.
Philosophical Resources for Understanding and Managing Anger

Abstract: Many people get little, inconsistent, or even harmful advice about understanding and dealing with the complex and common emotion of anger. All too often, it takes being labeled or viewed as having “anger problems” for a person to get referred to any substantive resources or guidance. Anger was viewed and explored as a significant issue within a number of philosophical traditions from ancient to early modern times, and we can find not only useful theoretical discussions, but also a number of helpful exercises and practices worked out by a number of philosophers. These can often prove quite useful for our philosophical counseling clients or for groups and organizations we work with as consultants. In my talk, I will discuss several of the philosophical schools and traditions I have found most useful to draw upon, explain in brief what their overall perspectives on anger are, and set out several helpful practices derived from those schools. While acknowledging that there is also a wealth of expertise on anger in non-western philosophical traditions, during this talk, I will be focusing on those drawn from western philosophical traditions, thinkers, and texts. I will also give some brief advice on approaches useful for leading philosophical counseling or consulting clients into better understanding and managing anger.

Bio: After a career as a fairly traditional academic teaching and publishing in Philosophy, Religious Studies, Literature, and Critical Thinking, I transitioned into entrepreneurial, public, and client-focused work. After completing APPA certification in 2014, I have engaged in philosophical counseling, executive coaching, and ethics and organizational consulting through my business, ReasonIO. Another aspect of my work in public philosophy involves producing educational content making philosophy accessible worldwide. My main YouTube channel contains over 2,500 videos, has over 135,000 subscribers, and over 12 million views. I appear frequently on podcasts and shows discussing concepts and real-life applications of philosophy, and provide lectures, discussions, and workshops. I also teach part-time at the Milwaukee Institute of Art and Design, and co-host the Wisdom for Life radio show.
The Pragmatics of Eudaimonia: Lessons from Aristotle and Jane

Abstract: For Aristotle, everything had a natural telos, or aim, which, for human beings, is eudaimonia— the condition of human flourishing, or living well. It is an elective teleology that human beings can either choose, or not. Of those who want to reside in their natural telos, most will need pragmatic help to arrive at their goal. Aristotle had a threefold model for fulfilling one’s telos: First, the person needed to see where he was in reality. Then he needed to discover where in the world he could fulfill his telos. Lastly, he had to determine what he must do to arrive at this happy state of being. Aristotle’s model for achieving eudaimonia is replicated in this 21st century approach to philosophical counseling. Existentialism, phenomenology, pragmatism, and ethics theory constitute the main schools of philosophy from which this approach draws. Their use enables the counselor and the client to have starting points that are clear to them both (existentialism), to connect with what is meaningful to the client (phenomenology), and to know what the client needs to do (pragmatism) to achieve their unique version of the highest good: eudaimonia. This virtues-based philosophical approach to counseling, developed by the author and framed by the highest good, provides the basis for fruitful work with Jane, a 78 year old woman faced with a diagnosis of progressive supranuclear palsy. When confronted with a diagnosis that left her with the realities of increasing immobility and dependence as well as a finite amount of time, she became depressed and angry. She had very real existential questions. She began to wonder what she had made of her life. What was the meaning of it all? Did her life add up? Within a period of nine months and over twenty-seven sessions, our co-created work enabled the client to move from a place of anger and depression to one of feeling hopeful and at peace – the goals which we had initially established as the highest good that could come out of our work together.

Bio: Shanti Jones, Ph.D. is an APPA certified philosophical counselor and independent scholar in private practice in Taos, New Mexico. Her research interests include philosophical counseling and practice. She has published 13 articles on the subject and presented her ideas at international philosophical conferences.
Abstract: My presentation provides a brief overview of the many ways the philosophy of Karl Jaspers, MD (psychiatry), can be employed in philosophical practice. Despite his almost exclusive career in academia (Prof. of Psychology and Philosophy, University of Heidelberg, Germany; Prof. of Philosophy, University of Basel, Switzerland) and a remarkable scholarly productivity, Karl Jaspers (1883-1969) decidedly states that “the ultimate point of all philosophical thought is philosophical life.” For Jaspers, philosophizing is an inner activity characterized by flexible movements of thought that are not frozen by learned wisdom, rigid doctrines, or schools of thought. Thinking as such interior engagement is an open-ended activity of individuals who are receptive to facts and multiple perspectives, and are willing to change their stances. Jaspers thinks in polarities that are constructively intertwined, such as world vs. transcendence, and mundane existence (Dasein) vs. Existenz. Such dialectic tension and probing causes suspense, which may loosen our consciousness and thus guide us to freedom from held standpoints. As a result, views on personal, social, or political identities may dissolve or lessen their fixations; social and political antagonism possibly transforms into a respectful “loving struggle.” In addition to his central elucidation of Existenz, Jaspers offers a sweeping philosophy of transnational history, analyses of contemporary society and politics, and a critique of intolerant religious thought and of theology conceived as doctrine. Through his writings on ancient Indian and Chinese philosophers, Jaspers made pioneering contributions to world philosophy.

Bio: Jorn attended the University of Göttingen (Germany) and the University of California, Berkeley (Ph.D.). Member: American Philosophical Practitioners Association; Karl Jaspers Society of North America; American Philosophical Association; Institute of Noetic Sciences; Scientific and Medical Network (London). Student of the Diamond Approach. Philosophical practitioner with a focus on facilitating embodied transformation.