APPA Annual Meeting

Perspectives from East to West

Saturday, June 28, 2025

All times in EST (New York time)

30-minute presentations plus 15 minutes Q&A

<u>9:00-9:30 a.m.</u> **Lou Marinoff (USA)**
Welcome, and Annual Report

<u>9:30-10:45 a.m.</u> **Zhiyuan Wang (China)**
Live a Happy Life According to Aristotelian Thought

<u>10:45-11:00 a.m.</u> *coffee break*

<u>11:00-11:45 a.m.</u> **Hamad Al-Reyes (Bahrain)**
Living on the God's Good Side: Eudaimonia as the Reintegration of the Daimonic

<u>11:45 a.m.-1:00 p.m</u>. *lunch break*

<u>1:00-1:45 p.m</u>**. Mustafa Çevik (Turkey)**
Meaning-Oriented Healing: The Place of Philosophical Counseling in Therapy through the Lens of Meaning-Centered Approaches

<u>2:00-2:45 p.m</u>**. Ross Channing Reed (USA)**
Existential Philosophical Counseling, Part I

<u>2:45-3:00 p.m</u>. *coffee break*

<u>3:00-3:45 p.m.</u> **Chester H. Sunde (USA)**
Platonomy: The Art and Science of Self-Governance on the Road to Eudaimonia

<u>3:45-4:30 p.m.</u> **Closing Report & Open Mic (TBA)**

Platow Wong (Ph.D., Nanjing University) is Professor of Philosophy, Philosophical Counselor, Life Mentor, core member of the Nanjing School of Philosophical Consulting. As a visiting scholar, He has done some important research works on philosophical practice at CCNY. He expertises in Existential Therapy, Logotherapy, Cognitive Therapy, and has helped more than 1000 people with their life problems. He has written four books on philosophical practice: *Diagnosis and Treatment on Life Problems*, *To Search for the Meaning of Life*, *Looking up at the stars at Café*, and *The Consolation of Life*. *I am Waiting for You at Café* is being written.

Correspondence: wangzhiyuan2002@163.com

Live a Happy Life According to Aristotelian Thought

Generally, motion is change of one thing with invariable carrier from one state to another. In fact, it is fulfilling of what exists potentially. There is always privation for a thing, form of a thing will change eternally. Practice aims at and direct towards goodness, happiness is natural goal or aim of life and also the highest goodness. Compare with matter, human is not only just one kind of matter, but an importantly active agent. Guided by rationality, under practical wisdom and theoretical wisdom, the form of something about us (human beings) will be more and more nice if motion is endless. Thus, happiness will be achieved. Model of Revised Realization of Aristotelian Goodness is presented, Realizing goodness is defined, and a cased is discussed briefly.

Hamad Al-Rayes is a Senior Lecturer and the student counselor at the Bahrain Institute of Banking and Finance (BIBF), where he teaches critical thinking, business ethics, and academic writing and research skills, among other subjects. His approach to counseling is fundamentally based on the principles of philosophical practice as delineated by the APPA and Logic-Based Therapy (LBT). His interests range from the philosophy of poetry to the philosophy of education. Currently, his research is focused on discovering his own voice as a philosophical counselor, drawing on the recent history of philosophical practice, the wisdom-traditions of the East and West, and existential psychology.

Correspondence: hmohamed@bibf.com

Living on the God's Good Side: Eudaimonia as the Reintegration of the Daimonic

This presentation reimagines eudaimonia as the lived reintegration of the daimonic: the impulsive, generative, and transgressive forces that display themselves in phenomena both cognitive and conative, as diverse as fearless questioning and unabating desire. Drawing on Socrates' reference to "the god" or *daimon* in the *Apology*, as explored by Pierre Grimes, the daimon is positioned not only as a whispering inner moral guide but as a site of dynamic tension with traditional values and a source of creative growth. The ideas presented draw on existential psychologist Rollo May's framing of the daimon as eruptive wish, Otto Rank's idea of the power of negative will repressed by millennia-strong social codes, and the role of "vegetative currents" in Wilhelm Reich's conception of the biopsychic unity of the individual. These clinical insights are brought into conversation with the philosophical accounts of desire and the Good in Socrates, Aristotle, and Proclus. I will also be guided by the mythic friendship between Gilgamesh and the bestial Enkido as a symbol of the growth-oriented tension between human and daimon, with Humbaba – the life-threatening aspect of the daimonic – standing guard at the outskirts of the cedar woods of transformation.

Socratic ethics and Aristotelian teleology present the Good as the object of rational desire. I do not dispute this definition, but argue against viewing such object on the ascetic model, as Stoic *apatheia* or Epicurean *ataraxia*, a placid virtue obsessing over sanitized serenity. I suggest that philosophical counseling will better serve the counselee if it frames rational desire as essentially intertwined with daimonic impulse, its roots striking deep into the life of the appetites and emotions. The challenge of philosophical practice becomes a sporting one, to wrestle with rather than neutralize this energy in the counselee. In May's words, losing this energy would amount to "self-castration." Like Proclus' sunflower prayer, the soul orients itself toward the Good by channeling, not disowning, its subterranean drives. The daimon is a co-traveler, not to be tamed or broken-in (pace the *Phaedrus*), for fear of sapping its disruptive caprices and relentless Socratic questioning. Rational desire, on this model, aligns with the *phronesis* of wise self-leadership, the *psyche* becoming a *polis* in which the chthonic and the calculating enjoy equal representation.

Correspondence: drcevik@gmail.com

The biomedical model of modern psychiatry often reduces mental health issues to biochemical imbalances, frequently neglecting the subjective human experience, the search for meaning, and existential distress. In contrast, humanistic psychology (Carl Rogers, Abraham Maslow), existential psychotherapy (Viktor Frankl, Irvin D. Yalom), narrative therapy (Michael White, David Epston), compassion-focused therapy (Paul Gilbert), and meaning-sensitive versions of cognitive behavioral therapy (Aaron Beck, Judith Beck) treat the individual as a subject who constructs the meaning of their own life story. This study aims to examine the therapeutic value of philosophical counseling through the framework of "meaning-centered healing" proposed by these approaches.

Frankl's logotherapy emphasizes the "healing power of meaning," White's narrative therapy employs the rewriting of one's life story, and Yalom's existential themes—death, freedom, isolation, and meaninglessness—all stress the individual's capacity to make sense of life. Within this framework, philosophical counseling places the search for meaning at the heart of the psychotherapeutic process through Socratic inquiry, ethical analysis, and work on identity and values. Rather than focusing on clinical pathology, it addresses existential and conceptual conflicts, making it particularly effective in cases involving identity crises, fear of freedom, ethical dilemmas, and a sense of purposelessness.

This article offers a comparative analysis of meaning-centered therapy models as alternatives to modern psychiatry and argues that philosophical counseling presents a strong model of meaning therapy through its ability to transform the individual's subjective world, value system, and narrative of life. Furthermore, it explores the role of the philosophical counselor as a "guide to meaning" and investigates the circumstances under which philosophical counseling can be integrated into psychotherapeutic practice.

Prof. Dr. Mustafa Çevik is the Chair of the Department of Philosophy at Ankara Social Sciences University and the founding president of the Philosophical Counseling Association in Turkey. His academic interests span a wide range of fields, including philosophy of education, history of philosophy, philosophy of religion, philosophy of artificial intelligence, and family philosophy. He has also served as a visiting scholar at the University of Oxford and participated in numerous international academic events and symposia.

Prof. Çevik is one of the pioneering figures in the field of philosophical counseling in Turkey. He is dedicated to promoting philosophy as a transformative and therapeutic tool in personal, social, and professional life. His contributions to the field include several books such as *Introduction to Logic-Based Therapy*, *The Republic of Reason*, and *Love and Existence*, alongside numerous peer-reviewed articles.
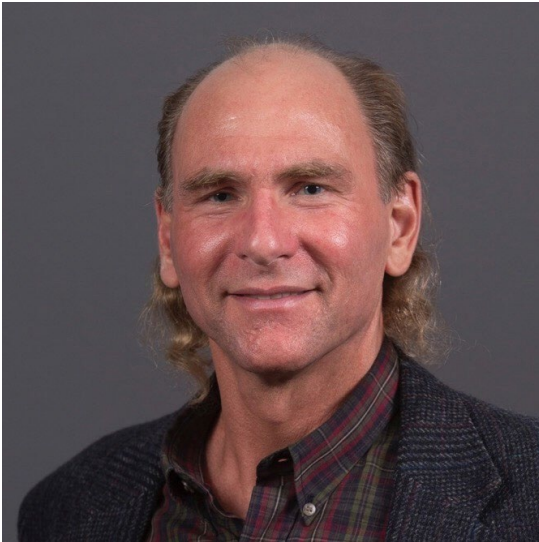
Through his writings, lectures, and seminars, Prof. Çevik actively contributes to the development of philosophical counseling both academically and practically. He strongly advocates for philosophy not merely as an academic discipline, but as a source of guidance that can foster individual insight and existential clarity. His work continues to inspire the integration of philosophical methods into everyday life for intellectual and emotional growth.

Ross Channing Reed has been a philosophical counselor in private practice since 1998, and a member of the American Philosophical Practitioners Association since its inception. He is the author of *Love and Death: An Existential Theory of Addiction*, *The Liberating Art of Philosophy*, *Mindscapes*, *Precarity, Trauma, Addiction, Love* (forthcoming), other works of philosophy and fiction, as well as number of book chapters and scholarly articles. He is a member of the National Philosophical Counseling Association and is certified in client counseling by the American Philosophical Practitioners Association. He teaches philosophy at Missouri University of Science and Technology.

Correspondence: doctorreed@yahoo.com

Existential Philosophical Counseling, Part I

The author has applied philosophical concepts and practices in mental health settings since 1985 and has been an existential philosophical counselor in private practice since 1998. This paper provides a brief overview of some of the basic principles and practices of existential philosophical counseling rooted in the author's biography, training, and experience. His work in mental health and his experience as a mental health client are viewed as indispensable to his practice of existential philosophical counseling. Topics discussed include the medical model of mental illness, Emmanuel Levinas's concept of the face of the other, discerning the Aristotelian mean between over-disclosure and under-disclosure, the importance of refraining from moralizing about feelings, the nature of unarticulated trauma, and progressive liberation through narrative construction. Existential Philosophical Counseling Part I focuses on clinical observations. Subsequent papers will expand upon these observations and discuss the conceptual contributions of existential thinkers from antiquity to the present.

Dr. Chet Sunde is a licensed clinical psychologist in Redding, California, specializing in PTSD treatment for combat veterans and first responders. He developed **Platonomy**, a therapeutic approach based on Plato's constitutional psychology that identifies a four-part model of the psyche, including the overlooked fourth element of constitutional governance (auto politeia). Dr. Sunde created the **SELF model** and **RULE process** as practical frameworks for applying Platonic psychology in contemporary therapy. He published "Plato's Super-Ego" in *Philosophical Practice* (2016) and his book **Platonomy: Ancient Wisdom for the Modern Self** was published on May 29, 2025 and is available through Amazon. His work demonstrates that Plato's *Republic* is primarily a psychological rather than political work, offering timeless insights for modern mental health.

Correspondence: chetsunde@gmail.com

Platonomy: The Art and Science of Self-Governance on the Road to Eudaimonia

Plato never wrote a dialogue called "The Republic." The work we know by this title was actually called "Politeia" in Greek, which more accurately translates to "constitution" or "governance" (Ferrari & Griffith, 2000). This consequential mistranslation originated with Cicero, who referred to it as "de res publica," meaning "concerning public matters" (Wikipedia, 2025). This seemingly minor linguistic choice has profoundly shaped how we understand one of philosophy's most influential works for over two millennia. By framing Plato's *Politeia* as primarily political, readers throughout history have sought blueprints for ideal states rather than guidance for internal self-governance. This misinterpretation continues to influence political theory and civic education today, where the dialogue is often presented primarily as a political treatise rather than an exploration of psychological constitution.

In 1715, the philosopher Leibniz made a remarkable observation: "If someone were to reduce Plato to a system, he would render a great service to mankind." The challenge was significant - Plato deliberately wrote in dialogues that resist systematic interpretation. Yet within his works, particularly the *Politeia*, lies a sophisticated framework for understanding human psychology and achieving genuine well-being. The word "Platonomy" represents this systematic approach - a deliberate fusion of "Plato" and "nomos" (law or governance), suggesting both "Plato's understanding of natural law" and the "science of self-governance." This isn't mere wordplay. The Latin term for autonomy, "auto-nomia," combines "self" (autos) and "law" (nomos) - literally meaning self-governance. This relates directly to Plato's concept of "auto politeia" - one's internal constitution that determines how all parts of the self relate and function together.

What makes this recovery particularly valuable is recognizing that Plato's *Republic* is fundamentally misunderstood. Throughout the dialogue, Socrates repeatedly emphasizes that their goal is not primarily political but psychological, stating explicitly that they are discussing "the right conduct of life" and that one should "keep his eyes fixed on the constitution in his soul" (Plato, *Republic* 591e).