

A Magazine on Philosophy, Culture & Volunteering

THE ACROPOLITAN



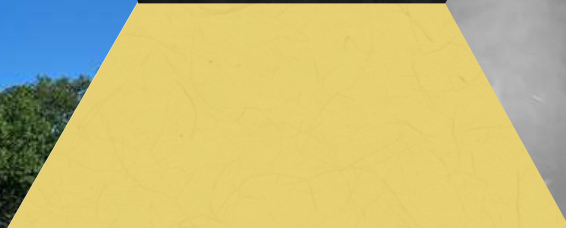
Making Music from the Heart:
In Conversation with Fali Pavri

FEATURE
**Embracing Discomfort:
A Recipe for Fulfilment**

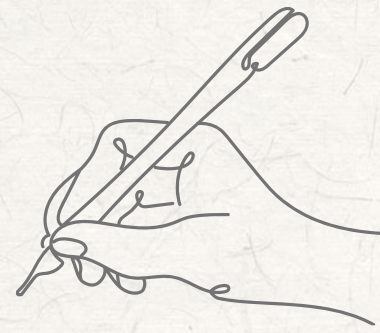
The Myth of Osiris

Education and Art

OCT | NOV | DEC
2024



FROM THE EDITORIAL DESK



Dear Reader,

In a time filled with the lure of comfort and increasing distractions, philosophy—love of wisdom and truth—offers a vital guide, providing a deeper lens to view life. While chasing comfort may lead to inertia, growth demands stepping beyond it, facing trials, and making choices that shape who we become. Every decision gives us the power to nurture what serves us and let go of what doesn't. For instance, when we act in service, we diminish selfishness, allowing generosity to thrive.

The ancients understood this; in the Olympic Games of the old, body, mind, and spirit were harmonized, and ethics outweighed mere victory. Like life, sports offer opportunities to awaken the hero within by embracing challenges with courage and integrity.

At New Acropolis, a school of philosophy in the classical tradition, we seek to revive this ancient wisdom to guide our life today. We understand mythology as a vehicle for communicating deep truths; in sports, we strive to live the Olympic spirit of harmony and virtue.

Philosophy helps us sharpen our discernment, enabling us to navigate life's complexities with an inner compass that seeks what is good, right, and beautiful. Much like a tuning fork resonates only with its matching frequency, our inner senses need to be fine-tuned to perceive and imbibe these values.

Discover. Awaken. Transform.

Malini Nair
Editor



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EMBRACING DISCOMFORT: A Recipe for Fulfilment



By Trishya Screwvala

Our world today lays an incredible amount of emphasis on comfort. We have constant innovations enabling us to exert the least amount of effort in our everyday tasks – instant food and grocery delivery, cleaning robots programmed to mop our floors at specific times in the day, digital forums for learning and interaction without the need to step out of our homes, entertainment personalized to our interests available at the touch of a button. Such developments are, of course, meant to allow us to utilize our time more efficiently and meaningfully. But a question that we perhaps neglect to ask ourselves is – has the need for comfort or minimal effort become a primary goal for us as human beings; and moreover, is this a worthwhile goal to pursue?

If we look to philosophers and great thinkers from the East and West, we may perhaps question our deep affinity for the cozy embrace of comfort. Plato's famous allegory of the cave, speaks of the journey of the human being from ignorance towards wisdom, as one that requires daring to let go the familiar shackles and notions of truth, in order to discover a deeper and truer reality.(1) Friedrich Nietzsche's concept of "Amor Fati" or learning to embrace and love one's fate, was firmly rooted in the need to embrace all aspects of life, the seemingly positive and the negative – that each have a valuable role to play and are both an integral part of the nuances of one life. (2)

Siddhartha Gautama Buddha too, who dedicated his life to discovering the cause of suffering for all of humanity, spoke of pain as an instrument of learning, necessary for the evolution and growth of the human being. (3)

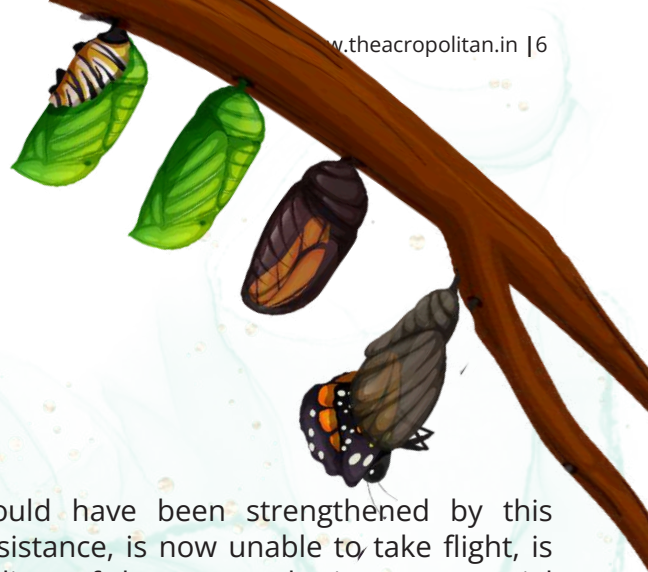


...has the need for comfort or minimal effort become a primary goal for us as human beings; and moreover, is this a worthwhile goal to pursue?

It almost seems that realizing one's human potential may be at odds with the pursuit of comfort at all costs.

If we look at great men and women in history, those that made breakthroughs in science, created inspiring art or architecture, or dedicated their lives to uplifting the dignity of fellow human beings,

we see that what defined them was their strength to rise above their challenges. What we remember about those we admire even closer home, isn't the ease with which they ambled through life but their ability to strengthen and ennoble themselves through the challenges life sent their way. As founder of New Acropolis Jorge Angel Livraga said, "We are nourished by our difficulties"(4), and if this is the case, could it be that our growing aversion to the smallest inconveniences and challenges are making us less resilient as a society?



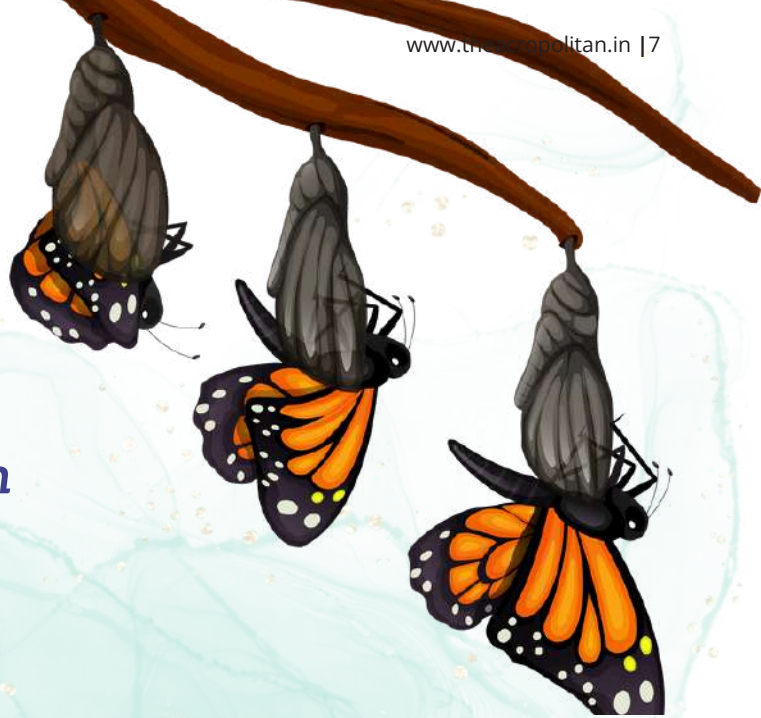
Comfort, as much of an alluring cocoon it may be, keeps us stuck in the same place, holding us back from advancing forward.

If we look to nature, we see that conflict and struggle are an inherent and integral part of the natural cycle of life. A seed needs to break through its hard, protective exterior and travel through dense soil, upwards against gravity, in order to realize its potential as a shoot directed by the light of the sun. A flower must let go its life and beauty in order to bear fruit. A well-known modern parable about a man watching a butterfly fighting its way out of its cocoon, and out of pity carefully cuts open the cocoon, only to discover that the butterfly, whose wings

would have been strengthened by this resistance, is now unable to take flight, is telling of how struggle is an essential ingredient for strength and growth. Comfort, as much of an alluring cocoon it may be, keeps us stuck in the same place, holding us back from advancing forward.

Stepping out of our comfort zone can look different for different people. More than the constant search for physical comfort - which may also limit our ability to experience life, our emotional and mental habits and attachments are perhaps even more challenging to confront. For the introvert, challenging one's comfort may mean stepping out into new experiences, opening one's heart to others when the easier response may be to withdraw behind a mask of anonymity. For an adventurer, it may mean embracing stillness or learning to work with routine. Welcoming discomfort in our day to day can look like addressing a difficult conversation rather than avoiding it endlessly, or following through on a small everyday commitment rather than convincing myself and others of my tiredness. It is to act based on what is right, good and true, rather than what is easy and convenient for me, starting with the small everyday moments.

If all of life is in a constant state of growth and movement, could it really be that our purpose as human beings is to get through life with the least amount of effort and movement possible?



While stepping out of the familiar and the easy will always challenge us, can we say that staying in our comfort zone makes us happy? "Yes!" we may exclaim impulsively - to avoid the uncomfortable, to choose instant gratification, is after all, how we are conditioned to respond to life today. We bury difficult emotions with a comforting bowl of ice cream, we avoid endless to-do lists or difficult conversations by numbing our restless minds with the endless scrolling of social media. So much so that we wait for the opportunity to unwind by doing "nothing" - vegetating on a beach, or yearning to shut down our thoughts and emotions by allowing television shows or idle gossip to passively dictate our emotions and ideas without exerting any initiative.

The easy and comfortable certainly give us short term refuge from unsavory situations, but they also leave us weak -

hampering our ability to navigate our lives in the direction we choose and see as right, and making us passive products of our circumstances. The habits and attachments we are so accustomed towards become heavier shackles, holding us back from blossoming into the person we would like to become. And we become disconnected from the natural flow of life. If all of life is in a constant state of growth and movement, could it really be that our purpose as human beings is to get through life with the least amount of effort and movement possible?

So perhaps, in reality, we need discomfort. Facing adversity enables us to know ourselves, to strengthen ourselves and make us upright and accountable - able to stand for what is right rather than to be a slave to our personal conveniences or fancies.

The practice of embracing the less pleasant or convenient in equal measure to life's highs, allows us to engage with life fully and deeply.



The practice of embracing the less pleasant or convenient in equal measure to life's highs, allows us to engage with life fully and deeply. The pursuit of only the pleasant is to go through life with blinkers - experiencing life partially and selectively, accepting only what one would like to accept and avoiding the more inconvenient realities; when in fact, it is the difficulties that allow us to truly appreciate our victories and good fortune, and it is these very successes that allow us to bring meaning by extracting learnings from our challenges.

And I would even dare to say, as an aspiring philosopher still taken at times by the promise of comfort... that the practice of learning to find joy in embracing discomfort, even if with a hint of reluctance, can allow us to live with more contentment. To face life with the spirit of a philosopher or adventurer - to seek truth even if it is uncomfortable, to see life for what it is, in all its nuances, enables

us to encounter a happiness that is much deeper than a fleeting pleasure of comfort, but rather, one that engenders a sense of living with more meaning, purpose and initiative.

Stepping out of our comfort strengthens our identity, it allows us to encounter who we are, and enables us to discover that we can count on this identity when encountering the uncomfortable. It shows us that what makes life meaningful and beautiful is when pain and pleasure, challenges and victory coexist in harmony. If we can truly challenge this notion of comfort as an ultimate human goal, perhaps, we will be able to discover a more profound direction to life - of growing, evolving, coming closer to our human potential, for which, perhaps our strongest foe is the illusory companion of comfort. ☺☺

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Education and Art

By Sabine Leitner





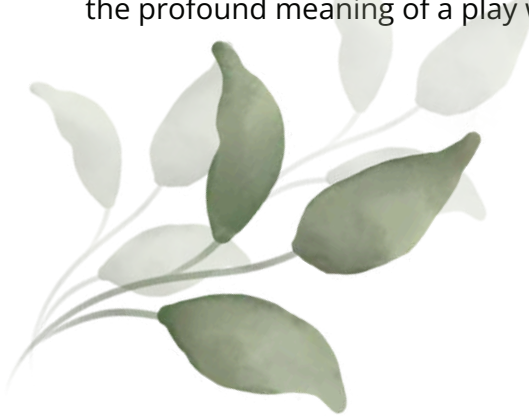
There are many studies that show that involvement in the arts can lead to increased academic performance. Dance, drama, music, and the visual arts in the school curriculum enable children to develop self-confidence and self-understanding, problem solving skills, perseverance and discipline, focus and concentration, creativity, self-directed learning, collaboration and many others – these are all skills that are increasingly important in the workplace and keys to a successful career. Another valuable aspect of art in education is that young people discover the power of their own potential for expression, which is vital for our psychological well-being and happiness.

However, in this article I would like to leave the ‘well-travelled road’ of the academic mainstream and explore another dimension of the educational value of art for the unfoldment of the human potential: the power of art to develop our inner senses. Although sound, colour, texture, etc. play on our physical senses and can be received as very pleasant stimuli, beauty and meaning (in my view, theatre is more about meaning than beauty) are not perceived by our physical senses but by our *inner* senses. Otherwise, we would all be able to see the same beauty and meaning in things, but this is not the case as the old dictum of ‘beauty is in the eye of the beholder’ shows.

It is obvious that in order to perceive anything we need to develop organs of perception. To be able to see we need to develop eyes, to be able to capture sound waves we need to develop ears. If we did not have a nose, smells and fragrances would be non-existent for us.

But seeing and hearing alone are not enough to enable us to perceive beauty. Everyone with healthy ears can hear a piece of music, but not every person will be able to resonate with its beauty. The difference lies in our inner sense and not the physical sense. To be able to appreciate the beauty of music, dance or poetry, or the profound meaning of a play we need to develop our *inner* senses.

We probably all have an experience of how our inner senses have grown and developed over time. A piece of music that did not touch us when we were younger has now become very beautiful.




A book we read some time ago and which was maybe not particularly interesting then, is suddenly full of meaning and we can hardly believe that we have read that book before. What has changed? Not the notes of the music or the words of the text, but our inner ability to perceive their beauty and meaning. It seems that while our physical ability to see and hear diminishes naturally with age, our inner senses grow over time, and we are able to see more with our heart and the eyes of our mind.

All perception is a question of resonance. A string or a tuning fork will resonate when another instrument emits the frequency it is tuned to. A different note will not make it resonate. Developing these inner senses is like developing tuning forks that are able to resonate with more and more subtle vibrations.

Why do these inner senses matter? Because they enable us to access higher realities. Psychology speaks about different types of intelligence and the inner senses develop our *aesthetic intelligence*. We could say that aesthetic intelligence is the faculty of perceiving beauty and appreciating it in ever more subtle ways. Aesthetic intelligence allows us to experience heightened states of consciousness (e.g. the experience of beauty and meaning) and to love and value life more because we can see more of its beauty and meaning.

Our outer senses inform us about the external world where things can be defined, measured and quantitatively assessed. However, our inner senses enable us to perceive quality rather than quantity. Our inner senses develop our discernment and also our own inner compass for what is good, right and beautiful.

How can we develop our inner senses? There are usually many roads that lead to Rome, but I believe that the exposure to great works of art and the practice of art are invaluable tools to support this process.



Developing these inner senses is like developing tuning forks that are able to resonate with more and more subtle vibrations.



Exposure to art and the possibility of practising an art should be part of every good education. Taste is acquired and needs to develop over time. Without an appropriate education, the beauty and the meaning of the greatest works of art will probably be non-existent in the same way as colour does not exist for a blind person.

Great art needs an education to be appreciated. Only an education that includes art will ensure that the greatest works of art can continue to be sources from which future generations will be able to draw strength and inspiration.

It seems to me that evolution is a reaching for ever higher levels of consciousness, like a stairway towards higher realities. From the sensible to the intelligible, from the phenomenon to the noumenon, from physical beauty to transcendent beauty, from the literal to the symbolic. Art has always been a bridge between the two worlds and art in education and an education in the arts can therefore help us to realize our human potential.

"Beauty is truth, truth beauty – that is all ye know on earth, and all ye need to know." *Ode on a Grecian Urn by John Keats*

"Music is the one incorporeal entrance into the higher world of knowledge which comprehends mankind but which mankind cannot comprehend." *Beethoven*

"Nulla Aesthetica sine Ethica, Nulla Ethica sine Aesthetica." *(No Aesthetics without Ethics, No Ethics without Aesthetics).*

Words written on the building of the Reina Sofía Higher School of Music in Madrid.

"There is such a thing as a stairway of beauty, a progressive appreciation and sense of the beautiful. Taste has to evolve and reach maturity and refinement."

N. Sri Ram



Losing the Battle, but not the War

*Life lessons
through
Muay Thai*

By Sheetal Shetty



I started Muay Thai as an adventure to know and develop myself as an athlete, but little did I know that I would be learning much deeper lessons of life; in how to be an inner warrior.

Muay Thai (Thai boxing) is a martial art and combat sport known as the 'Art of Eight Limbs'. It is characterized by the combined use of both the fists, elbows, knees, and shins. A popular international sport today, its history and origins date back to the ancient myth of the Ramayana.

The Thai Ramayana is called Ramakien (Glory of Rama) and was adapted from the Indian original, with all the names of the characters, places, architecture, wildlife etc. transformed to reflect the language, customs and way of life of ancient Thai culture. The Art of War in the original was also transformed according to the traditional Thai Art of War. Over the centuries, the characteristics and deeds of specific characters like Hanuman (son of Wind God) and the warrior skills of the two brothers Ram (Phra Ram) and Laxman (Phra Lak) inspired and influenced the experts of Muay in their process of creation of martial techniques that are still in use today. (1)

After months of training, I participated in my first Muay Thai competition with World Muay Thai Council India in Kolkata. The preparation of my first fight was an opportunity to construct myself. It was a profound, reflective adventure through sports; constantly testing my limits and slowly expanding them.

The month-long fight camp demanded all of me! I knew I could never be fully prepared for all eventualities, but I dared to push myself to see who I could become. We prepared ourselves with 6km runs, intensive training, drills, sparring, and conditioning to sustain ourselves through the fight. Being disciplined was a way for me to respect myself and my goal of coming closer to achieving my potential. As I look back, what made up for the grueling hard work, was what happened in the process; the team work, the heartfelt laughter after being punched, the sore body that made you appreciate your own effort, and a joyous heart that conquered new boundaries every day. For me, it was not only about developing the techniques for the competition, but to develop tools like physical strength, consistency, emotional stability and mental clarity that would center me.

***I learnt
that the
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begins at
the end of
my comfort
zone...***





***I began to learn to fall
with awareness, to get
up with strength, and to
stand with valor and joy.***

By the end, I began to learn to fall with awareness, to get up with strength, and to stand with valor and joy.

The fight day is the real test. You enter the ring alone. Moments before the fight I felt the butterflies in my stomach but I knew I was prepared. Until they announced my name! I was taken by the rush of emotions and felt out of control. I entered the fighting ring for my first fight numb and blank. I could only hear myself breathing, my heart beating and the feeling of fear rushing through my body.

In the first round, my opponent's first punch caught me off-guard. It took a while to make sense of what was happening. But to my surprise, I could endure the hit but had no clue how to respond: my muscle memory was blocked and I was frozen by fear. At the end of round 1 my teammate suggested I initiate action instead of waiting. I gathered myself, decided to go all in and give it my best without thinking about the result. This was the moment of shift. I fought fearlessly till the last round and did not give up: I lost the fight, but not the battle over myself.

There were conflicting emotions of being proud and disappointed at the same time. So many thoughts, learnings, and feelings! After living the whole journey, I am able to turn inward and reflect: what did I really lose? Nothing much, compared to what I gained, and how much I was able to grow. What started as an athletic adventure through Muay Thai turned out to be a beautiful philosophical journey through life: a Journey of Becoming.



Though there were many moments when I wanted to give up, I learnt that the real fight begins at the end of my comfort zone: Muay Thai became an opportunity to construct myself, by practicing discipline, encountering boundaries, learning and unlearning, building confidence, strengthening imagination, and holding fast to a stable center no matter what the circumstances.

Sports has been an integral part of my life since I was 10 years old. Whether athletics, basketball, throwball, or training for martial arts - the forms kept changing but looking back, every sport taught me deep philosophical lessons. I honor these truths with action, by consciously trying to make them a part of my life. I realize now that being a philosopher is to understand that every opportunity that life affords you is a means to know yourself, to polish yourself, to strive to walk the path steadfastly one step at a time.

I recognize now that this is the real battle, the inner war, the most meaningful fight of all, of choosing to be highest I can be, of becoming human, through philosophy, as a way of life. ☺☺

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The Line That Holds

A poem by members of New Acropolis, Pune, invoking the spirit of a philosopher, a warrior for a new and better world...an Acropolitan.

In the scorching heat of middle Greece,
In the narrow pass of Thermopylae,
300 Spartan warriors marched forth,
To face the thousands and millions to come...

Filled with fidelity for their country in their hearts,
They chose to stand strong and bold,
They chose the virtue of responsibility,
And with shields and spears, they moved forth.

Our love for Philosophy, and the ideals missing in the world,
Drives us to bring this spirit, and take the responsibility that we can hold.
With the convictions on the path, and inner freedom that we all found,
The resolve in our hearts, keeps growing strong and strong.

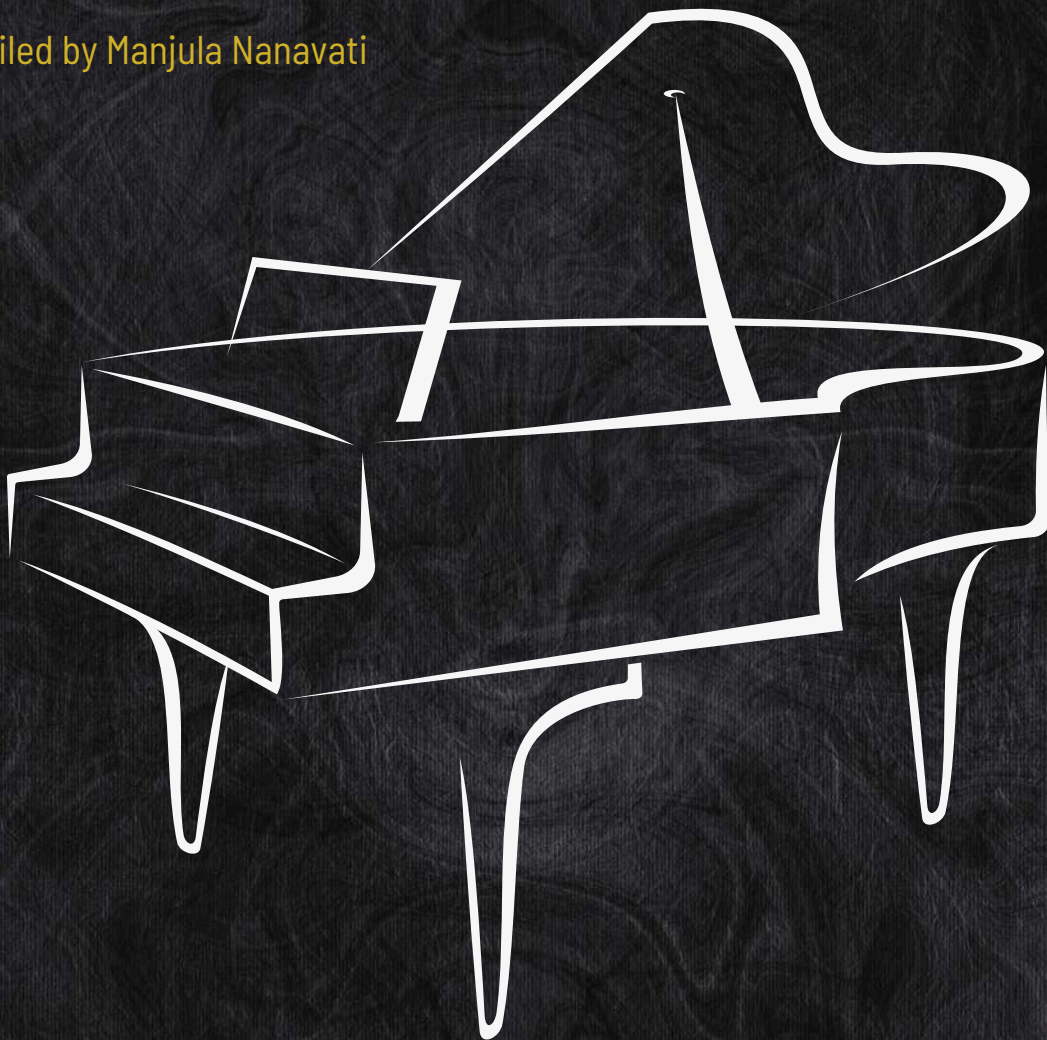
The root of the Spartan bravery lies, in their phalanx on the field,
Where each brother stands, shoulder to shoulder protected by their shield.
A mystical glue, binds them as ONE,
For they were many, and yet were ONE.

In the camaraderie of philosophers, and seekers that we are,
The secret to remember is that, I am not alone, but many we are.
Men of silver must work in groups; then they shine against the odds.
For it is us who form this phalanx, and be the line that holds.

Carrying this strength as our shields, let us remember what the Spartans said:
"This is my shield. I bear it before me into battle,
But it is not mine alone. It protects my brother on my left. It protects my city.
I will never let my brother out of its shadow, nor my city out of its shelter."

MAKING MUSIC FROM THE HEART: IN CONVERSATION WITH **FALI PAVRI**

Compiled by Manjula Nanavati



Born in Mumbai, trained in Moscow and London, Fali Pavri is the Associate Head of Keyboard and the Professor of Piano at the Royal Conservatoire, of Scotland. He joined a New Acropolis Culture Circle audience in Mumbai through a video conference call, from Glasgow, where he both spoke and played for us, passionately, from his heart. Here are excerpts from the insightful conversation that was interspersed with his beautiful presentations of inspiring pieces of classical music from Beethoven, Schumann, Laviniak, and Folkmar André.



NACC: A very warm welcome to you, Fali, on behalf of New Acropolis. Let me begin with a quote from Rostropovich, who said “You must play for the love of music. Perfect technique is not as important as making music from the heart.” So, Fali, what is it to make music from the heart?

Fali Pavri: Let me match you quote for quote: Beethoven said, I can't remember the exact words, but something like “To play a wrong note is insignificant, but to play without passion is inexcusable.” So basically, whatever you do, whatever you play, and I think that applies not just to music but to anything you do really, to do it with 100% commitment and honesty and sincerity.

But, to go deeper into what it is to play music from the heart, well, that is complicated. It's not just about emoting, it's a little bit more complex than that, especially with the piano and with Western classical music, because some of these great pieces that we play, actually getting to grips with the physical, technical aspects of learning hundreds and thousands of notes is a complicated business. And after that, one has to somehow delve into the emotional and musical intent that the composer might have had. So, it involves a lot of thought and time, and only once one has internalized all this, then one can try and play with honesty and commitment and, as you said, from the heart.

“To play a wrong note is insignificant, but to play without passion is inexcusable.”

There is more to making music than just playing the right notes, and audiences will never forgive you if you play a sterile performance with all the correct notes, but they will willingly forgive you if you touch them in some way, communicate something that elevates them.

NACC: In all these years what do you think music has taught you? How has it changed the way you see life?

Fali Pavri: Well, first of all, it's given me endless hours of pleasure. But playing the piano and grappling with music also teaches you a lot of fundamental life skills I think, that you can apply anywhere: it has taught me the value of patience, humility, dedication, focus, mindfulness, overcoming your fears, overcoming emotional, physical, mental challenges, all these things that you need to be a musician and a performer, but also in life. Most importantly, great music can offer you glimpses into another world, a spiritual world, which is a far cry from the kind of ordinariness of our usual humdrum daily lives. So, it provides some kind of nourishment for the soul.

We have such a short time here on this planet and we experience so many different things: joy, sorrow, love, success, failure, disappointments, loneliness, grief... and music can evoke all these feelings and help give comfort, solace, joy. So, I think it's a very valuable gift to have in your life, no matter if you're a performer or a listener, or just a lover of music.

NACC: Vladimir Horowitz, perhaps the greatest pianist of all time, said, "Never be afraid to dare." You have dared to do things, and really stepped out of your comfort zone. What drives you to do that?

Fali Pavri: What drives me or anyone to take risks, as you say, and do things outside their comfort zone, is because it's something you love doing. And the fact that as pianists and musicians we have a never-ending quest, a never-ending sense of discovery, because there's so much good music out there and so little time to learn it and play it and get to know it. That's a very, very big thing that keeps you driven.

"Most importantly, great music can offer you glimpses into another world, a spiritual world, which is a far cry from the kind of ordinariness of our usual humdrum daily lives. So, it provides some kind of nourishment for the soul."

While I was a student in London I'd heard that Rostropovich was planning a trip to India, and so I just went to the Royal Festival Hall and went backstage, after one of the rehearsals, introduced myself to him in Russian, because I spoke Russian and just told him that I was a pianist from India and if he was going to India, could I play with him? Now, I probably wouldn't do that now. I did it then because I was still, I don't know, young and daring.

And he was taken aback and said, "Well, that's very interesting. You'll have to come and play for me." So, I went a few weeks later and auditioned for him. And a few weeks after that, out of the blue, I got a letter from him saying that we were going to India. So, you know, risks sometimes are worth taking in life. Without them, you often don't realize what you can do.

"...audiences will never forgive you if you play a sterile performance with all the correct notes, but they will willingly forgive you if you touch them in some way, communicate something that elevates them."

NACC: What was your greatest learning from Rostropovich, from your tour, and from being with him?

Fali Pavri: Well, he was an extraordinary man, really. He had this unbelievable energy, drive, and enthusiasm for life, of living life to the full. He never ceased to amaze me. Even at his age, though not a young man, he had this boundless enthusiasm for everything. To give you a little example, we travelled to Delhi to give a concert, arrived late at night, and we had a concert the next day. And this was after many concerts, and it was all quite tiring. And he said, "I want to go to the Taj Mahal. Yes, yes. we have a concert, in the evening, and it's a long, long drive away. Never mind, I will play better if I see the Taj Mahal." So, we got up at 4.30 in the morning and drove hours and hours all the way to Agra, spent the day there looking at the Taj Mahal, and came back just in time to play the concert. He was forever doing things like that. He once mentioned to me one of his life mantras. He said, "I try to do something new, experience something new every day, and I want you to try to do that: whether it's discovering a new piece of music or looking at a new painting or learning a new life skill". And I think that's quite a valuable way of looking at how to live your life.

NACC: What do you think makes a good teacher and what brings you the greatest pleasure in a student?

Fali Pavri: Teaching is a difficult thing to do. I think I'm always struggling with it. It's such a big responsibility, especially when you're teaching the kind of students that I am lucky enough to teach, very motivated, young, talented students. And I know this is a bit of a cliché, but I really, truly do learn as much from them as I give them. I'm constantly humbled by the amazing energy, dedication and determination to pursue this very difficult path and, and achieve their dreams and fulfil their potential.

Teaching music is not a one formula thing. So much depends on who you are teaching, because they all have different strengths and weaknesses and need help in different ways. Some of them need basic technical guidance, others are already fully formed pianists and need just encouragement and confidence to find their own voice. Some just need a little push, some people need a kick. So, you have to be very sensitive to each student's needs and guide them along in a nurturing kind of way.

I think one of the most valuable things you can do as a teacher is not do anything destructive with a talented student. Give them the space, the time to find their own way and help them along, gently guiding them. Because as I often say to my students, in the end you will learn the most after you've finished your studies. You'll find your own way of dealing with everything that life has to throw at you, even when it comes to piano.



All I can do is provide the tools and then it's up to them really to find their own way. I think you have to give students that space to find their own individuality. You don't want them to become clones of you or play like you. You want them to explore what they are capable of. And I think if you can do a little bit of that, then you've done your job reasonably well.

"...music has this power to evoke feelings and emotions in you which you may not necessarily have personally experienced, but which are an intrinsic part of humanity."

NACC: You have spoken about how music demands all aspects of the musician, physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual. Could you explain more about the spiritual?

F.P: Well, you're absolutely right. Music does demand all these aspects. You need to have tremendous physical skills, almost the skills that are the equivalent of an athlete. And you have to always be in good physical shape. It also requires mental intelligence and alertness. And it requires an emotional openness, the ability to show your vulnerability, which is not easy to do, but the greatest artists are able to do that, and that's when they are really able to touch the listener.


I think it was Oscar Wilde who once said, talking about the music of Chopin, (but it can apply really to any great music), 'when I play Chopin, I feel as if I'm weeping over sins that I had not committed and mourning over tragedies that were not my own.' I think what he means is that music has this power to evoke feelings and emotions in you which you may not necessarily have personally experienced, but which are an intrinsic part of humanity. Which is why music can be so powerful. It can affect you in ways that are difficult to express in words. I think everybody's experienced this in some way. It may not necessarily be with music, it could have been with any other form of art, but I think particularly with music there's a directness about it.

And certainly, as a performer, there are these rare, (but because they're so rare, they're so precious), these moments where you feel this real, special connection with an audience.



You can feel some kind of a vibration going on there, connecting you with the audience, with something else. And if you can capture that and treasure it, it's very precious.

And finally, of course, I think there's something about music that can somehow give you glimpses of what are actually the really important things in life; things like love, acceptance, generosity of spirit, friendship, kindness, sharing, communication, power of silence, and having fun. And through music you can experience all of that. And it's interesting because I can't think of a single culture anywhere in the world that doesn't have music. It just shows how important it is to humanity.

I was looking through my music the other day and I found a copy of the Beethoven sonatas that my teacher, Shanti Selden, had gifted to me, after I won the competition that took me to Moscow. I just read this wonderful inscription that she had written inside. She wrote, "To Fali, for your wonderful success in music this year. Herein lie many rare treasures of the soul. Hope you will discover them and make them your own." 

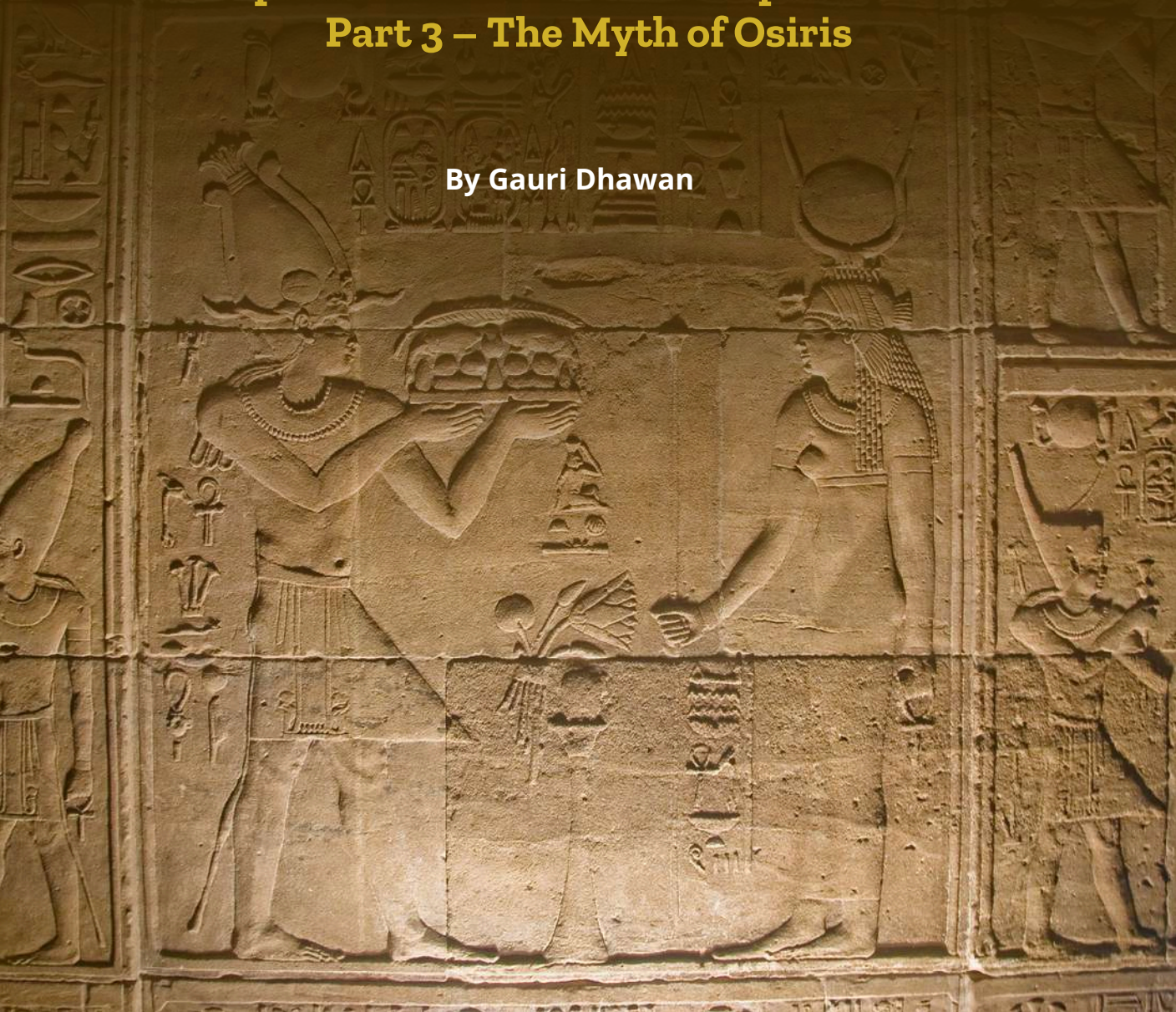


**TRAVELING
BEYOND**
Explorations with New Acropolis

TRAVELING BEYOND: EGYPT

**Explorations with New Acropolis India
Part 3 – The Myth of Osiris**

By Gauri Dhawan



Traveling Beyond: Explorations with New Acropolis India, is an opportunity to travel with a philosophical lens, to visit places, not only as a tourist, but also as a seeker of truth and beauty. To try to uncover together, the wisdom that exists in the world, and to extract from it something that we can apply today, to make our lives and the world better. This orientation for the travel, shared by the National Director of New Acropolis India, along with my experience and education as a member of New Acropolis added another dimension to the travel for me.

This article is Part Three of our learnings from the trip to Egypt and includes my reflection on what it can mean to 'Travel Beyond', specifically in relation to the concept of mythology, as I encountered it on this ten-day journey.



When we think of the word "myth", we often associate it with something that is untrue; a superstition, or just a story. However, when looked at from a philosophical perspective, mythology forms a significant part of the human legacy and tradition, passed down from generation to generation, and used as a tool in the moral education of our young. This offers a fresh way of looking at mythology – as something which uses a story, to communicate some fundamental truths. Therefore, while there may be variations in the way the story is told across geographies and time, the

essential truths communicated remain the same. With this understanding, and backed by my philosophical education and perspective, I tried to 'travel beyond' the mysterious stories of Egypt, to perceive the deeper meaning they had to offer.

One such myth is that of Osiris, the God of the underworld, and of the afterlife. This legend was narrated to us by our travel guides, while on our way to the beautiful Temple of Dendera.

This is a temple dedicated to the mother goddess Hathor, which has 2 notable chapels on its roof – the Zodiac Chapel, showing the various constellations of the Zodiac; and the Osiric Chapel, dedicated to the god Osiris. During our visit, these were highlighted, though some sources suggest there may be additional chapels.

***Traveling Beyond:
Explorations with New
Acropolis India, is an
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and beauty.***

We also visited the ritual tomb of Osiris in Abydos, which is believed to be the site where this myth took place, and the final resting place of Osiris.

According to tradition, Osiris was the primeval king of Ancient Egypt, and his brother Seth, was jealous of him, and wanted to usurp the throne. Seth prepared a beautiful sarcophagus, made with precious metals and studded it with jewels, and announced that it would be given to the one who fits into it perfectly. One after the other, many men and women tried to enter the sarcophagus, but could not, as it was made specifically to the measurements of Osiris. This was all part of Seth's plan. When Osiris got into the Sarcophagus, Seth immediately closed it and threw it into the Nile, thus killing Osiris.

Hearing about this, Osiris' wife, Isis, was deeply impacted, and started looking for her husband everywhere. She found out that there was a tree by the shore of the Nile, which looked just like the

sarcophagus, but before she could get there, Seth had cut up Osiris' body into 14 parts and scattered them all over Egypt.

Isis painstakingly travelled all around Egypt, in search of the pieces of her husband, collecting one piece after the other, until finally she was able to find all but one – Osiris' reproductive organ. Together with her sister Nephthys, who was also the wife of Seth, she guarded the body of Osiris and called upon the Gods for help, to resurrect him.

In the Osiric chapel located on the roof of the temple of Dendera, we see a beautiful depiction of the resurrection of Osiris, and his body being guarded by the two sisters – Isis and Nephthys.

With the help of Thoth, God of Wisdom and Right Knowledge, and Anubis, God and Guide of souls in the Afterlife, Osiris was resurrected, but without his reproductive organs, which symbolise attachment to the material world. He dies to the physical realm, and is reborn as a God.



One can look at any difficulty in life, as an opportunity for internal growth, and any person that challenges us, as a facilitator of that growth without which we would not be able to actualise our latent potential.



Hunefner, Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons

If the heart is as light as the feather, it means that the person has lived with justice, true to their purpose on earth, and can pass on to the afterlife. On the other hand, if the heart is heavy, the person must incarnate again on this earth, as another opportunity to live with meaning and justice.

According to the ancient Egyptians, at the end of a lifetime on earth, each soul goes through a trial. In this trial, the heart of the deceased is weighed against the feather of justice, or Ma'at as the Egyptians called it. If the heart is as light as the feather, it means that the person has lived with justice, true to their purpose on earth, and can pass on to the afterlife. On the other hand, if the heart is heavy, the person must incarnate again on this earth, as another opportunity to live with meaning and justice. This judgement at the end of life, is presided over by Osiris because it is believed that he has crossed this boundary. He has died to the material and has entered the afterlife, taking his rightful place as the King and Judge of souls at the gates of the afterlife.

Here are some of my key learnings from this myth:

1. Learning to see Challenges as Opportunities

When I first heard the myth, I was tempted to look at the characters as hero or villain, good or bad, but I was urged by our instructor, who accompanied us on this travel, to try to look deeper:

Life and death are in the here and now. In every decision we make, it is up to us to choose what we will give life to, and what we will allow to die within us.

Perhaps the challenges posed by Seth are not just evil actions, but necessary trials for Osiris to go through before he can take his rightful place as the King of the Afterlife. Perhaps Seth in this story is not a "villain", but a facilitator in the journey of Osiris, allowing him to reach his full potential. With this perspective, one can look at any difficulty in life, as an opportunity for internal growth, and any person that challenges us, as a facilitator of that growth without which we would not be able to actualise our latent potential.

When I choose to act in service, I kill selfishness, that is, I don't allow it to take form through me.

2. The 'Small Deaths' and 'Small Resurrections' of the Day to Day

From a philosophical point of view, death is not just something that happens at the end of life. Life and death are in the here and now. In every decision we make, it is up to us to choose what we will give life to, and what we will allow to die within us. When I choose to act in service, I kill selfishness, that is, I don't allow it to take form through me. The recognition of unhelpful tendencies within us like laziness, greed, selfishness, is not enough. We also need to find it's opposite. A virtue which can replace it, which will serve us better. Only then will we be able to uproot the bias, habit, tendency, or shortcoming and give birth to the right virtue in its place.



It is through our choices, that day after day, we can work towards transmuting ourselves, into better human beings, with more love, generosity, and courage.

This can be an inspiring way of looking at our daily choices as opportunities for 'small deaths' of those attributes and tendencies which no longer serve us, and the birth, or resurrection, of those which can better serve us, and those around us.

3. The Painstaking Path of Transmutation

The word 'transmutation' refers to an irreversible change of form and composition, wherein the object or person cannot go back to its previous state, like the metamorphosis of a caterpillar into a butterfly; whereas a 'transformation' is simply a change of form - like that of water to ice - which is reversible.

In this myth, we see the transmutation of Osiris, as he dies to the material realm, symbolised by the reproductive organ, and is born to the divine realm, as an immortal God - a step in the journey of evolution, which can be seen in many other mythologies - referring to a conquering that cannot be undone, a movement forward which is permanent in nature.

4. Life and Death - Duality or Continuum?

The myth sheds light on the concepts of life and death in an interesting way, treating death, not as the absolute end of life, but rather a continuation. Like Osiris continues as a God, after dying as a mortal, the ancient Egyptians believed that there is a part of us which continues even after dying to the material. Perhaps this can inspire us to spend our life in the pursuit of virtues and values that nourish the eternal aspect of ourselves, which will empower us to take those irreversible steps forward in the journey of our evolution.

Travelling Beyond allowed me to see deeper into this myth and to perceive that perhaps the ideas of resurrection and transmutation can hold some meaning for the way we live our lives, and the way we make decisions. It is through our choices, that day after day, we can work towards transmuting ourselves, into better human beings, with more love, generosity, and courage. Perhaps this is how we can make our way, step by step, towards human nobility. ☪☪

Building Values of the Olympic Spirit

Presenting glimpses from the Third International Philosophical-Sports Pre-season event in Greece, August 2024

By Shruti Chopra

Some of us from New Acropolis (India North), along with 17 other countries came together to take part in the 8-day long, Philosophical-Sports Pre-Season event in Greece. But what is a Pre-Season about? How does New Acropolis, a School of Philosophy connect with the School of Sports? What does it mean to be a Philosopher-Athlete that practices the values of the Olympic Spirit?

I'm an (almost) two-year old member at New Acropolis and this would be the first time I would be meeting other Acropolitans from around the world - over 220 of them, so I guess it was natural that I had all this inquisitiveness.



Our eight days were divided into two locations - four days at the International Olympic Academy (IOA) in Olympia and four days at the Greek Acropolitan rural centre, Agios Mamas.

The Journey Begins

Accompanied by four senior Acropolitans from India; Ubai, Samarth, Axelle and Sheetal, we arrived in Athens and were picked up by bus along with other Acropolitans.

The journey to the IOA was around 5 hours with a couple of stops along the way. It was during the journey that I got a small chance to interact with other Acropolitans who represented their countries. Everyone was happy and shared the wonder with me.

Passing through some beautiful villages, along with watermelon, apricot and olive farms, we arrived at the International Olympic Academy where we soaked in the manicured lawns, the huge pine trees, and views of the mountains that appeared so close! The air was crisp and our rooms were immaculate. It was time to unpack, and get organised for the adventure ahead.

Day one ended with dinner at the community dining hall, but with an early morning Opening Ceremony the next day, it was wise to get into bed early and so I did.



A Ceremonial Start

There were over 220 of us, standing in a huge circle on the main grounds of the academy, at the centre of which, the Acropolitans of Greece presented a theatrical performance that felt very true to the essence of what an authentic ceremony should feel like - uplifting and unifying. All of us, who barely knew each other, were part of something together. This laid the foundations of what sports with a philosophical heart means - something we would explore and discover in the days ahead.

We were divided into six groups - each group was named after a Greek God. I was in Hermes, but there was Niké, Kairos, Mnemosyne, Athena and Prometheus. These would be our groups till the very end. It was in these groups that we would have the opportunity to learn the principles of various sports and play them too, allowing us to experience a sport through the values of it represented. Now what does this all mean?

This is where the lectures helped us.

Lectures Matter

The first lecture was about the *Origins of the Olympic Philosophy or Olympism*. There were five original values of the Olympic Philosophy: *Respect, Fair-Play, Pursuit of Excellence, Balanced Mind, Body & Will* - but the one that stayed with me throughout these eight days, and still does, is, *Joy in Effort*. I'll share the 'why' a little later on.

What many of us discovered through these lectures was that Philosophy and Sports coming together isn't about breaking records, but being able to work with oneself, bringing focus, through joy, discipline and determination. We all have our own barriers, our own sometimes self-imposed limitations, and it's about pushing through these, and realising that we have so much more within, if we didn't hold ourselves back.

This isn't just about sport, but the game of life and the choice of how to act is ours.



There were five original values of the Olympic Philosophy: Respect, Fair-Play, Pursuit of Excellence, Balanced Mind, Body & Will, Joy in Effort.

Connecting with a lot that was shared was easy, and through the eight lectures, we were all able to bring something back with us, that we could work on in our own live

For example, living with the spirit of Areté - which is a strong posture that comes from within, a posture that is reflected through generosity and love; such as an expression of will as an athlete works through their pain but is in charge of themselves. Many of us work through our pain, and we do get through. But the question remains of whether we managed to do this through generosity and love? Or could we have done better in this aspect?

The theory part was great, but were we able to put it into practice?

Philosophy & Sports: The Practice

We were introduced to many sports, such as volleyball, athletics, football, swimming,

a newly invented sport for athletes. But we also had the opportunity to play table tennis and ultimate frisbee in the free time we had. We absorbed every experience possible despite the fluctuating weather conditions - yes we played in the rain, heat and cold! It was all there, challenging us. But what we drew from all the sports was the value of rhythm.

Not just rhythm in how we moved, but also how we were breathing, and how we coordinated with our other team mates. A consistent, healthy rhythm allowed us to keep the volleyball in play, or helped us achieve a smooth transition as the relay race baton moved from one athlete's hand to the next.

Being present, putting in that effort, problem solving, saw us grow and lift our fellow teammates and even the opposition. There was harmony and genuine encouragement.



Samarth shared his insight, that *"Sports is one of the branches of a big tree. If we look at this branch as a means to develop ourselves and realise our potential then it is something that can create a good impact for the whole tree."*

I believe our visits to various ancient sites also had some role to play in this.

Visiting What Once Was, and Still Remains

Just three kilometres away from the International Olympic Academy was Olympia, the place where the original Olympic games were held. What once had training areas, temples of Zeus and Hera along with a stadium, was now mostly in ruins. But what was still alive were the stories they carried within them - of heroism, facing challenges and of sacredness.

For many of us, it held encouragement for the present and hope for the future. It opened us up to the ancient ways of thinking, where an endeavor was made sacred by engaging the body, mind and spirit, where ethics was prized above victory, and where victory was rewarded with no material gain whatsoever, but a simple laurel wreath.

The fun part was when almost everyone, in turns, took part in a 192 metres race at the ancient stadium of Olympia - yes, it was an Olympic race, but it was a race without competition, a race with joy.





Image Courtesy: Escola do Esporte com Coração

The games provided an opportunity to face trials head-on and overcome them, leading to the awakening of the hero within each person.



I didn't feel like a spectator of what was, but what is possible.

This experience only grew when, we eventually ventured to Delphi.

Believed to be the naval of the world by the Ancient Greeks, Delphi was a personal favourite. The dedication of the athletes who undertook the arduous journey, of walking for days or weeks, then climbing up a high mountain to compete in the Pythian Games was inspiring.

The journey for us at Delphi began at the Temple of Apollo, which led to the spectacular theatre and then a further trek up to the stadium. Many of us were out of breath at the end of this serpent-like steep climb, but what most wondered was, why did the temple come first and the stadium last.

As we stood at the top, this discussion grew. One idea that most connected with, after experiencing the trek up, was the games may have been so revered that the Greeks gave it the highest place symbolized by the laurel crown which was seen as sacred and represented unity.

Delphi was special for those sportsmen who experienced this journey as a pilgrimage; just as we were asked to do as philosopher-athletes.

And there was something special about Delphi that made you wonder - how did they build all this, so high up, with so much thought and precision?! I guess similar questions are asked about the Pyramids in Egypt.

Standing at Delphi, I remembered my teacher telling us about the inscription at the Temple of Apollo "Know thyself and you shall know the universe and the gods". It felt so apt; a reminder to dig deeper within to be able to know life better.

Two days later, we had our final day trip to Nemea & Corinth where Nemean & Isthmian Games were held every two years. With 40,000 people turning up, these games were a great melting pot for philosophers, traders, poets and of course the athletes.

The games provided an opportunity to face trials head-on and overcome them, leading to the awakening of the hero within each person.

So whether it was Olympia, Delphi, Nemea or Corinth, we all had a place we connected with. A place that helped us feel the merging of philosophy and sports.

What was beautiful about the groups we were in was when we met almost every night and shared our experiences.

Reflective Evenings

We spoke of what we felt, what challenges we faced and what we were looking to overcome. We saw how sports, so effortlessly reflected the trials of life and we so effortlessly managed to discover more about ourselves, individually, and as a unified entity because we found Joy in Effort.

Each one of us, from around the world entered these 8 days with our own inhibitions and we all worked on overcoming this.

Personally, I found that I was able to find joy whether I participated actively, or whether I helped with strategies and unification of our teams. My physical capacity did not define the value I could provide and this gave me immense confidence.

Although, I have to admit that when I was able to play ultimate frisbee, volleyball and table tennis - it was fun!






But the perspective of standing outside, and having a broader view helped me to learn that this too is important - just as the wind is invisible and helps support the flight of a bird, there is a role to play for all those elements that don't appear so obvious, yet help us move up.

Axelle too shared her connection with Joy in Effort when we showed up to practice other sports despite it being our rest time, and without compromising on what we were there for. She says, *"We knew, that we weren't doing it for ourselves, there was no medal to win, nor any other reward, but to really understand through experience, what it means to be a Philosopher-Athlete practicing the values of the Olympic Spirit. It was our way to push the limits and create an experience that time couldn't take away ever, and that will stay in the hearts of each of us!"*

I end with one last, but important experience to share. We spent four days at Agios Mamas, the Greek Acropolitan rural centre. It was an incredibly enchanting place inside a forest.

With over 220 of us, along with many Greek Acropolitans hosting us - cooking, cleaning and taking care of us all, I was witness to the fraternity that I experience here in India, but at a scale I couldn't imagine.

As I write this, it does feel too perfect, but that's what the experience was.

We travelled back to India with our stomachs chock-full of the wonderful food we had eaten, our hearts brimming with the love and joy we had experienced, and our spirits, uplifted with the inspirational ideas and principles of Olympism! 

NEWS SPOTLIGHT

Among the varied activities conducted by New Acropolis, Mumbai and Pune this quarter, the spotlight fell on the celebrations for the 67th Anniversary of International Organisation New Acropolis (IONA). Marked by Acropolitans all over the world, members from the Mumbai main centre and Pune branch held classes and cultural performances showcasing IONA's commitment to fostering fraternity, knowledge and the evolution of the individual and of societies.



Founded by Jorge Angel Livraga Rizzi, IONA has a presence in over 50 countries today, continuing its activities based on the 3 pillars of **Philosophy, Culture** and **Volunteering** and continues to be an inspiration to members committed to **creating a new and better world through a new and better me.**



PHILOSOPHY

"We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, then, is not an act, but a habit."
 – Aristotle

Building bridges was a theme in Mumbai with 2 interactive talks that delved deep into this idea. "What is success to me?" was the key question in ***Bridging Individual Dreams with Collective Goals***, while ***Building Bridges Across Hearts*** highlighted that while daily interactions often engaged the mind alone, true connections occur from the heart.



In Pune, ***Designing my life for Happiness*** explored how true meaning lies in a life that is lived with purpose, one that transcends self-interest; and key take-aways from focus exercises and reflective writing in an interactive seminar on ***The Art of Concentration in a Noisy World*** included active listening and reducing mental stimuli.



CULTURE

"Whether you succeed or not is irrelevant, there is no such thing. Making your unknown known is the important thing."

- Georgia O'Keeffe

The New Acropolis Culture Circle, Mumbai held a well-attended Poetry Open Mic at its main centre, titled **Where Poetry meets Philosophy**. Many enthusiastic budding poets from diverse backgrounds expressed themselves in renditions about inner challenges, yearnings and thoughts about life, to an appreciative audience.



An art workshop that delved into the profound philosophy behind the ancient art form of creating Mandalas, offered lessons in **Discovering my Centre**. Participants constructed a Mandala, representing their own inner world, illustrating what they wished to place at the centre of their lives.



VOLUNTEERING

*"The wise man must remember that while he is a descendant of the past he is a parent of the future."
– Herbert Spencer*

200 mature saplings were planted this monsoon at Manav Bustan, the New Acropolis Rural Centre in Raigad, as an ongoing Forestation Initiative, to nurture a food forest. These saplings as part of the **Wish a Fruit Tree Project** were pledged by members of New Acropolis Mumbai and Pune and included Avocado, Olive, Orange, Lemon, Chikoo, Guava, and Custard Apple among others, with the hope that the sweet fruits of joyful labour will continue to be enjoyed, well into the future.





PHILOSOPHY

BUILDING UNITY THROUGH DIVERSITY

World Philosophy Day 2024

A part of a global commemoration by New Acropolis in approximately 500 branches in over 50 countries.

As an individual strives to elevate towards 'arête' which in ancient Greek thought means 'excellence', he or she naturally develops deep sensitivity towards other humans and nature. This empathy naturally awakens a deeper need to practically work for the betterment of all. New Acropolis School of Practical Philosophy bring together individuals who have dedicated their lives to improving society through the arts, sciences, ethics, and leadership. Although their paths may differ, it is a philosophical approach - the pursuit of human values like justice, goodness, beauty and truth, that drive them towards a common endeavour.

Pune | Thurs, 21 Nov, 6.00pm

PANEL DISCUSSION



Scan to Register

VENUE
Deccan Gymkhana
No. 759/1, Ground Floor, Club House
Building, Deccan Gymkhana, Pune, 411004

Mumbai | Fri, 29 Nov, 7.00pm

PANEL DISCUSSION



Scan to Register

VENUE
National Gallery of Modern Art
Sir Cowasji Jahangir Public Hall, Mahatma
Gandhi Road, Fort, Mumbai, 400032



Free Intro: Thurs 14 Nov, 7:30-9:30pm
21 Nov, 7:30-9:30pm

Course Begins: Thurs 5 Dec, 7:30-9:30pm

**Venue: Mumbai Centre, A-0 Ground Floor,
Connaught Mansion, Opp. Colaba Post Office, Colaba, Mumbai.**

LIVING PHILOSOPHY

16 WEEK INTRODUCTION TO PHILOSOPHY COURSE

Scan to register for the Free Introduction:



14 Nov



21 Nov

PUBLIC EVENTS NEW ACROPOLIS **MUMBAI**

**Sat
26 Oct**

Free Workshop

**6 pm (2 hrs)
at Mumbai Center
(Colaba)**

[Register Here](#)



THE ART OF BEING PRESENT: WISDOM FROM HAIKU POETRY

The simplicity and depth of Haiku poetry offers a refreshing perspective on life. With just 17 syllables, this ancient Japanese poetic form invites us to observe life more deeply, finding wisdom and beauty in everyday moments. Join us as we draw inspiration from Haiku to cultivate the art of being present—of becoming artists of our own lives by learning to see the extraordinary in the seemingly ordinary.

**Thu 14 Nov
&
Thu 21 Nov**

Free Introduction

**7:30 pm (2 hrs)
at Mumbai Center
(Colaba)**

[Register for 14 Nov](#)
[Register for 21 Nov](#)



FREE INTRODUCTION TO LIVING PHILOSOPHY COURSE

2 hours once a week | 16 weeks

Discover Philosophy as a Way of Life

Living Philosophy is an opportunity to discover ourselves and the world around us, with the insights of ancient philosophies and human wisdom put into practice in everyday life. Extract practical tools through the course to learn to live with more freedom and sustained happiness. Explore the path of inner change as a key to actively contribute towards building a better world.

This event is a Free Introduction to learn more about what this course offers. Hope to see you at either one of the sessions.

**Sat
16 Nov**

Free Philosophical
Talk

**6 pm (2 hrs)
at Mumbai Center
(Colaba)**

[Register Here](#)



STOIC STRENGTH: WISDOM FROM MARCUS AURELIUS

"You have power over your mind – not outside events. Realize this, and you will find strength." - Marcus Aurelius

Stoic philosophers were known for their ability to remain serene and upright in the face of any circumstance. Together we will draw inspiration from Roman Emperor and Stoic philosopher Marcus Aurelius, who not only led ambitious military campaigns but also actively reflected upon and dedicated his life towards cultivating a stronger, stabler and nobler version of himself. Let's discover how we can develop this unshakable Stoic strength in our daily lives!

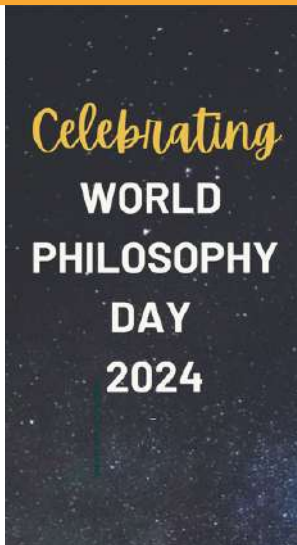
PUBLIC EVENTS NEW ACROPOLIS MUMBAI

Fri
29 Nov

Free Panel
Discussion

7 pm
at NGMA Mumbai
(National Gallery of
Modern Art ,
Mumbai)

[Register Here](#)



PHILOSOPHY: BUILDING UNITY THROUGH DIVERSITY

"We all naturally strive toward a "better" future—but what does this truly mean? National Gallery of Modern Art (Ministry of Culture, Govt. of India) and New Acropolis School of Practical Philosophy bring together individuals who have dedicated their lives to improving society through the arts, sciences, ethics, and leadership. Although their paths may differ, it is a philosophical approach - the pursuit of human values like justice, goodness, beauty and truth, that drive them towards a common endeavour.

On the occasion of World Philosophy Day 2024, we invite you for a panel discussion to explore how Philosophy can enable us to build unity through diversity, and offer a path to bring out the best within ourselves, offering it to the world around us.

Sat
14 Dec

Free Interactive
Talk

6 pm (2 hrs)
at Mumbai Center
(Colaba)

[Register Here](#)



REFLECTIONS ON MEANING & HAPPINESS: WHAT REALLY MATTERS IN LIFE?

All of us seek happiness... yet often it feels like a fleeting emotion tied to external achievements, novel experiences, or momentary pleasures. Join us as we explore the timeless wisdom of philosophers from the East and West, to discover how we can cultivate a deeper, more sustained happiness rooted in purpose and meaning. Let's explore how we can focus on what truly matters in creating a fulfilling life.

Sat
21 Dec

Free Philosophical
Talk

6 pm (2 hrs)
at Mumbai Center
(Colaba)

[Register Here](#)



SYMBOL OF CADUCEUS - RESTORING HEALTH THROUGH EQUILIBRIUM

The Caduceus is a symbol representing dynamic equilibrium. In Greek mythology, the Caduceus was the staff given to Hermes by Apollo. Maybe there is a key towards healing that we can learn from its symbolism. What if we could learn this art of balance, not just within our physical bodies, but also within the opposing pulls within our psyche, and eventually between our deepest ideas and sentiments and our outer choices? Dis - ease which manifests in our bodies, perhaps gives us a clue on what within us we need to pay attention to, what we need to bring back in proportion, in order for us to regain our equilibrium and therefore our health.

PUBLIC EVENTS NEW ACROPOLIS PUNE

**Sat
5 Oct**

Free Talk

**6 pm (2 hrs)
at Pune
Branch**

[Register Here](#)



STRENGTHENING 'HOPE' – LESSONS FROM MYTH OF PANDORA

Hope is needed for a better tomorrow. It is an active approach towards building our life in the face of everyday challenges. Join us as we learn from the symbols within the Myth of Pandora's box on how we can practically cultivate 'hope' for a better future together..

**Sat
26 Oct**

Free Interactive
Talk

**6 pm (2 hrs)
at Pune Branch**

[Register Here](#)



BRINGING ETHICS IN ACTION – LESSONS FROM SAMURAI

It is said that at their prime, the 'Samurai', the warrior people of Japan, were driven not by greed, hate, or lust, but by a beautiful code of conduct called Bushido, that required them to develop virtues such as Justice, Courage, and Mercy. In fact, their expert skill is often attributed to their inner strength of character. Can we revive the much relevant 'spirit of Bushido' in our times? We will read excerpts from "Bushido – The Soul of Japan" authored by Inazo Nitobe to explore how we can bring out our best human potential in the face of our daily challenges.

**Sat
9 Nov**

Free Talk

**6 pm (2 hrs)
at Pune Branch**

[Register Here](#)



COEXISTENCE - TO LIVE AND LET LIVE

A bouquet of flowers is beautiful, because the different flowers are arranged together in harmony. A beautiful symphony has many different instruments being played together. Nature has so many examples of coexistence. Maybe we could learn some principles from the book of nature on how to coexist as conscious individuals with diverse qualities? It could help us to live and let live in a way that we all naturally grow together towards unity. Can the seemingly different perspectives, complement rather than contradict?

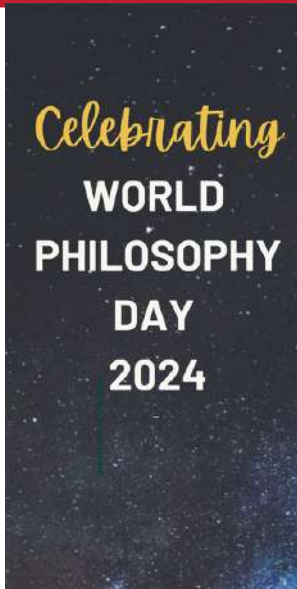
PUBLIC EVENTS NEW ACROPOLIS PUNE

**Thu
21 Nov**

Free Panel
Discussion

6 pm (2 hrs)

[Register Here](#)



PHILOSOPHY: BUILDING UNITY THROUGH DIVERSITY

As an individual strives to elevate towards 'arête' which in ancient Greek thought means 'excellence', he or she naturally develops deep sensitivity towards other humans and nature. This empathy naturally awakens a deeper need to practically work for the betterment of all. Our city 'Pune' sometimes referred to as 'Punya Nagari' i.e. 'City of virtues' is filled with exemplary individuals and institutions who constantly strive for excellence and the cultural upliftment of all people. While the expressions may be varied, it is philosophy, i.e. love for ideals such as goodness, beauty, truth and justice that unites all of them.

Join us this World Philosophy Day as New Acropolis Pune invites leading personnel from different Institutions, who are relentlessly working towards building human values for a panel discussion on how Philosophy can help bring unity through diversity.

Every year at New Acropolis India we celebrate World Philosophy Day. This initiative is in line with centres of New Acropolis around the world that respond to the call of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). This initiative has been taking place every November since 2002.

**Sun
1 Dec**

Free Interactive
Talk

**6 pm (2 hrs)
at Pune Branch**

[Register Here](#)



ART OF INNER DEVELOPMENT - LESSONS FROM ARJUNA

Meet the inner hero through the ancient wisdom of India, the Bhagawad Gita, and the story of the Arjuna. The inner hero is the one who responds the call to embark on a journey towards the unknown.

On the way he will meet his greatest fear, discover his powers and the mysteries of nature, to evolve through his journey and return home as a hero.

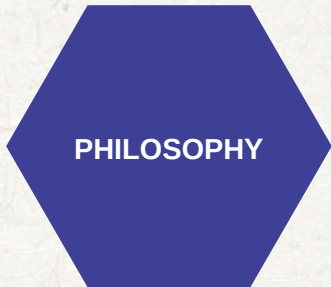
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Philosophy, when it is practical, is educational. It helps us to know ourselves and to improve ourselves. To be a philosopher is a way of life committed to the best aspirations of humanity.



The practice of human values is the basis for a model of active and participative Culture, which brings out the qualities of each person, broadens the horizons of the mind and opens the human being up to all the expressions of the spirit.



Volunteering is the natural expression of a spirit of union with life and humanity, which manifests in the practice of values such as unselfishness, commitment and striving for the common good.

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