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Abstract of the lecture:

How to examine if life is worth living

According to Socrates “an unexamined life is not worth living” (Apol. 38a). In a first part I discuss which qualities are necessary for a philosopher to be competent or qualified for such an undertaking. Plato describes three “dialectical virtues” or philosophical qualities as necessary for this process: Knowledge (*epistêmê*), goodwill (*eunoia*) and frankness (*parrhêsia*). It will be shown that these qualities are of timeless value, also for working as philosophical practitioner.

In the second part the “examinational process” will be described in four steps, characterised by the concepts of coherence, congruence, transcending and transparency.

Coherence is a first, yet important, step, investigating the worldview or philosophy of life of the client, checking for incoherencies etc.

Since coherence on a low level of quality may be accompanied by negative “side effects” such as rigidity, defensiveness, loss of empathy etc. the next step is oriented towards the goal of congruence.

The third step, enabled through the openness and authenticity attained by a higher realization of congruence may be described as a form of “horizontal transcending”, towards other people or nature.

The fourth and final step could also be characterized as a transcending process, namely “vertical transcending” (moving up, ascent); here, however a different image is used, more that of opening, becoming transparent, “letting”, using the concept of “transparency” (for transcendence).

Thus a model is presented which might be useful for the process of “examining life” as an aspect of philosophical practice or counselling.

The lecture closes with two examples (texts) of participants in philosophical seminars using the structure here presented.