

**Willing Well, Living Well: Educating the Will for Autonomous
Philosophical Living**

Lydia B. Amir

School of Media Studies, College of Management, Academic Studies,
Tel-Aviv, Israel*

There is a continuous tradition from Plato through Whitehead down to Erich Fromm which identifies the art of living at the maximum with reason. Reason in its integrity is the process by which one guides life, with will as its instrument and desires as its subject. Drawing on Western and Eastern traditions of perfection or self-education, I concentrate on the somewhat neglected yet crucial subject of the will as the instrument of the art of living.

Developing one's will in self-image, action, consciousness and commitment is a prerequisite of a philosophical life. The issues involved in educating the will, however, are on the boundaries of Western philosophy as we know it. Uncharted theoretical and experimental territories of the relations holding between unconscious and conscious desires, body and mind capacities, relative and absolute intentions and goals, obscure the discussion. Yet, arduous as it may be, a sufficient understanding of what it takes to educate the will as well as a practice of willing well marks the difference between philosophy's potency and impotence, for willing well is living well.

Drawing on Western and Eastern perfectionist traditions, I present in the lecture a program for willing well, followed in the workshop by a discussion and practice of the proposed program.

*9, Shoshana Persitz St., Tel-Aviv, Israel

Tel: 972-3-7441086

Fax: 972-3-6990458

lydamir@colman.ac.il