

Philosophy 101

Back in the day, when I let myself go, I would talk about different philosophies. It was an interest of mine that I had a yearning to discover. I have since dropped the formal training from my current recallable knowledge base. (it has been too many years since I've read or discussed anything about formal Philosophies.) So if you are expecting me to name drop some famous philosophers you will be disappointed.

I am now more interested in the interactions between people. What makes friendships. How can we remain friends with someone we rarely see or communicate with. What is trust? Why do people behave differently in a group. What masks do we weave for others to see. And of course, how does this all interact with the new electronic neighborhood.

I've always been a people watcher. I do tend to notice the background or driving force behind the hustle and bustle of daily life. I notice when people are having a bad day, sometimes, to my embarrassment, before they realize themselves. I notice when people aren't getting along. I see when people really like each other. I usually can tell that people are putting on a mask to hide their true feelings, and at times I can see the truth behind the mask. I find that interesting.

I also see the way people are on-line compared to how they are in real life. Some people really hide behind the machine. Others, thinking they are anonymous in their computer lives. They hope their employer never finds out about their on line activities. Again, I find it interesting.

We are social beings, constantly (almost) looking for acceptance in our little parts of the world. Not finding that acceptance can cause pain or sorrow. Finding too much can give inflated feelings of self-worth. We need to look elsewhere for

our worth. Find it, hold on to it and live it. Everything else is then just gravy on the meal. Nice to have, but the base can stand on its own.

I don't know your pain.

Sometimes I get inspiration from my little posts on facebook. Sometimes I get inspiration for little posts on facebook from my blog. This is a bit of both.

A blog post with the above title was started on the 20th of May. Five days later, I think the original thoughts are finally gelling. All from a facebook post I made yesterday.

I don't know your pain. I only know my own. I can, however, listen when you need it, advise when you want it, and care for you always, because I call you friend.

There it is. The original idea behind this was that I have a number of friends going through some difficult times right now. I was able to listen to their description of pain and sorrow. I offered a bit of advice when asked. And through it all I think I became a better person.

It takes a lot to try to ignore or temper your own sorrows when dealing with the problems of others. Your problems, sorrows, worries are of the utmost importance to you. Nothing can be bigger or more intense than the situation you are in. These are your feelings and are rightfully justified.

That being said, if a person shares their situation with you, their problems are going to be bigger than yours, at least in their eyes. To be a truly caring individual, you need to look past your problems and listen to what your friend needs to

share. There are times when this cannot be done. In those times, you should beg the others indulgence and say you are at best willing to listen, but advice would not be the best from you right now. Good friends will be able to understand this. There is never a good time to be in a war of who has the worse problems.

And through all of this, maybe you will be able to see that other peoples problems can be bigger and even more intense than your own. Then we come to true understanding of the people we share our lives with.

And that leads me to one of my favorite movie quotes. From the movie "Harvey":

Elwood P. Dowd: Harvey and I sit in the bars... have a drink or two... play the juke box. And soon the faces of all the other people they turn toward mine and they smile. And they're saying, "We don't know your name, mister, but you're a very nice fella." Harvey and I warm ourselves in all these golden moments. We've entered as strangers – soon we have friends. And they come over... and they sit with us... and they drink with us... and they talk to us. They tell about the big terrible things they've done and the big wonderful things they'll do. Their hopes, and their regrets, and their loves, and their hates. All very large, because nobody ever brings anything small into a bar. And then I introduce them to Harvey... and he's bigger and grander than anything they offer me. And when they leave, they leave impressed. The same people seldom come back; but that's envy, my dear. There's a little bit of envy in the best of us.

Not just a book reader

Yes, I realize you may be getting tired of my Nook posts. But I am discovering new things about it all of the time.

The kind folks that do the programming for the Nook gave it a few updates recently. I don't really play the games, but I did find the web browser useful in scanning my email. Don't think I will use it to reply to email, but reading it was fine. That is not what I wanted to write about.

This summer Barnes and Noble is running a free e-book promotion. Go to a B-N store with your Nook or some other electronic gear with the free Nook reader installed, and you can get a free e-book. Since I was picking up my daughter in Fort Wayne, I stopped to get the free e-book. And then I noticed there was a coupon on my Nook. I could go up to the coffee bar and get a free 7-layer bar. Not knowing exactly what it was, I went over to find out. It was a chocolate/coconut desert bar. Very tasty. So in addition to more reading than I will ever be able to finish, I get desert with my nook. Who know what it will be next time I am in.

As far as the free book. I haven't read it yet, I was still reading the Friday Free Ebook. Someday maybe I will buy an ebook, but not yet. ☐

And of course while visiting a B-N store, you can read ebooks for free. They even tell me that your place is saved for the next time you go in.

And I also heard that more libraries are getting into e-book lending. I think I will have a full summer of reading ahead of me.

More iPad thoughts

I was going to combine this with my last post on the iPad, but I thought that the initial thoughts could stay there without further editing.

Things I wanted to try, but couldn't.

1) I was wondering if you could play music while doing other things. There was no music on the iPad, and I don't have an itunes account, so I don't know.

2) New and different apps... See above. I guess if I really want to play with one, I need an itunes account. I don't really like that, but I guess it keeps the device safe from most viruses.

3) Needed to load an app to get to MLB.com stuff. No flash video on these devices. And the Tigers were winning. Listening to the ball game on this would have been fun.

Things I liked

1) Quick responsive touch screen. Fairly easy to type on the screen. I did have to look at what I was typing. I haven't had to do that in years. That would set back my typing habits.

2) Screen was clear and very legible. I do like the instant enlarge and shrink feature of the touch screen.

3) Hey, I could use it in the dark.... Could have been an e-book reader for me, but then....

Things I didn't like:

1) Fingerprints. Touch screens and finger prints go hand in hand. Really nice display messed up by finger prints.

2) No Flash. I can understand why Apple doesn't want it, but not everybody is ready for new web videos. No MLB.com

3) No, I would not buy this to be an e-reader. It does have a back-lit screen and after a while I noticed it was harder on my eyes.

How would I use one? Would I use one?

Well I was actually thinking of many ways that this could be used. The astronomy software just jumped out at me. With that I was thinking of how easy it would be to load this with the proper software and take things with me. It is easier to carry than a laptop so the portability is great. The screen is bigger than the iPod, iPhone and other devices of that type, so it is easier on this old guys eyes. The iPad is built for sharing things. Use it to take notes, load it with things you are working on. Take it over to a coworkers desk or a meeting room. For my job it would be extremely useful.

That being said, I don't need it. The iPad isn't jumping out at me like the e-book readers did. I could walk into an electronics store and not have an urge to buy one. I would use one if it was given to me, and use it often, but I think there it stops.

Quick Post on an iPad

I am getting to borrow an iPad from work this evening. Very easy to use, but touch typing on a touch screen makes me look at my hands.

This one has a cool astronomy program that I will try out if it is clear tonight. I will have to be on the lookout for the new pad computers when they arrive on the market.

More later...

Rocks and other things...

My oldest daughter almost stole my next blog post right out from underneath me. ☐

In the past, I've been told the story about rocks and other things many times. Most of the time it is almost exactly the same. The situation changes a bit, but the story and the message behind it stays roughly the same. One story really got me thinking and it had an extra twist.

I'll give a rough outline with my own little twist...

A master had three large piles of Stones, pebbles and sand behind him. He went to the pile of stones and filled his bucket with them. He asked is the bucket full? All of his students responded yes.

He then proceeded to add pebbles to the bucket, shaking them down until he could fit no more. Again he asked if the bucket was full. One brave student muttered probably not, or you would not have asked us the second time.

The master was pleased and then added sand to the bucket until it filled each crevice. He asked is the bucket full? All of his students said no.

"Very good!" the master replied, "You are learning." He then added water until it almost reached the top. A student saw this, and said "The bucket is not yet full master." At that point the master took his teapot and filled the bucket the rest of the way.

"What do you learn from this?" the master queried. One student responded, "No matter how full your life is, there is always

room for more.”

The master said to this, “Not quite, the message is that if you don’t fill in the big rocks first, you will never get them in. So decide, what are your big rocks in life. Do those first. The little stuff will find its own path.”

“But why did you not fill the bucket with the water master?” a student finally asked.

To this the master replied, “No matter how busy you get, always leave room for a cup of tea with one you love.”

And that my friends is my story of the rocks, stones and sand...

Thinking about thinking

Has anyone noticed that the “thinking” gorilla has been on this page for a while now? I noticed. I haven’t felt like changing it recently. And I have been thinking a lot.

Some thoughts are coalescing in my mind.

1) I should spend more time with family and friends. That does mean less time doing theater stuff. I think I’m going to be very choosy about my theater endeavors. I’m not going to limit the number of shows, but I won’t be in a show just because it is the only show I’m the least bit interested in.

2) Part of everything is doing what I really want to do. Yes, some chores just can’t wait, but a lot of them can. Clear evenings should be spent with a telescope. Sleeping during the day should not be a problem on weekends.

- 3) NO is a very important word. I should use it more often.
 - 4) YES is another important word. I should use it more often.
 - 5) I didn't contradict myself in the last two items. I need to learn when to say yes and when to say no.
 - 6) I may end up hurting some feelings when I say yes or no. I will apologize for that, but not for my decisions.
 - 7) Life is too short. There will never be enough time to do everything. There won't even be enough time to do all of the important things. It is best to choose the most important things first. Old simulation with rocks, pebbles, gravel, sand and water... If you really want to know, ask. I may explain it in another blog...
 - 8) I will stop worrying about sleep. The best thing is to sleep when I can and the rest will take care of itself.
 - 9) Relationships with others are the keys to a happy life. If you are getting along with others, your life will be better. Hmm that was deep.
 - 10) I know what real love is. I can't really explain it, but I know what it is. Guess what, nobody can take that away from me. It is mine and it will always be a part of me.
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Mid May? Really?

Take 2?

Cool weather for mid-May, and I have a fire going in the fireplace. I have had no other heat since the some time in April and I will start a fire in the evening if needed. The

cool damp weather calls for that fire.

Started the fire a bit later than I normally would since I had to rehearse today. I just found out that the Dinner theater I am in on the Weekend of the 22nd is sold out. A week and a half before the show. Wow!! It has been a while since I've been involved in a sold out show. Should be fun.

I also found out that the last show I was in is destined to go to regional contest. I'm not sure about this. I liked the characters, but I was ready to let the show go when it was over. Can't really say I am looking forward to this. That is two years in a row that a show I was in was elected to go to our regional contest. Last year I had a good excuse not to go. I don't think there are any weddings planned for this year's contest (there better not be...) But maybe a family party? Something that I could use? Is that the weekend my youngest has to move home from College? Hmmm.

Oh well, the fire needs another log tossed on it.

Expanding on a theme

There are times we recall those we have lost. These times can cause tears or laughter. Don't fight the tears, don't live in the laughter. Doing either will cause us to forget the past and ignore the present and then we will miss the future.

A facebook post for today. These thoughts and the thoughts of my children this weekend push me to expand on the above. (Somebody push Froggy to read this!!) ☐

I'm almost certain it was a tough weekend for all of my daughters. I was with the youngest all day yesterday, so she

did have a bit of comfort on mothers' day itself. The other 3, well I still have a hard time being in multiple places at once. I did make the effort to see the 3 I could, but not enough effort to talk to number 4. Sorry K.

With all of the heartache from the past year. All of the Joy felt. And the new situations we found ourselves in, I am offering some of my thoughts and words.

On mother's day, my daughters found themselves 6 years without their mother. They were all too young to lose someone so important in their lives. I am not, and will never be a suitable replacement. I just try, with all my human failings, to be the best Dad I can be. Remember her in your hearts. Share your stories with each other. You share that common loss. If there is anyone that you should talk to, it should be your sisters. You know each other, and could comfort each other if you wish.

Don't fight the tears, the anger, or even the joy you feel when thinking of those you lost. Yes, you should curb your responses to some feelings. Good social contact almost demands it. But try to recognize those feelings. If you need to yell and scream, be open about it. Tell people why you are mad. Try not to take these feelings out on others, but share them. Let the tears fall, if someone asks why, share the reason. It is much easier for us as people to share the good times. WE MUST make the effort to share the hard times with people. Good friends will support us in that. Of course you may not want to share those hard times with the wrong people (social graces, covering your back, ect.).

Don't be totally consumed by the past. This is a very hard one (I know from experience). At some point the past has to become the past. For each of us that is a different time. In fact, from day to day it may be different. Let it go when you are able. Again, look for help.

I don't pretend to know all you are going through. You are all different. You are all in different situations. I know what it is like to lose my parents, but that came after I had many years to share with them, and I was on my own. I don't know what it was like to have a depressed widowed father responsible for me. I don't know what it was like for you not to have your mother there for you on the important days of your life. I only know what it was like not to have 1/2 of me available at those same times.

Know that I will listen and offer advice (unless you tell me to just listen) and I love you all. I'm only a phone call or two away. And one more thing, ask your sisters if they have read this.

Dark Thoughts???

I do have a 'Facebook' account. Yes, I have joined the evil dead some time ago. I have yet to play any of the games or join groups. I try to keep up with some friends and my children.

Anyway, I will occasionally post things to the status. A few (very few I think) friends have said to me that my updates on facebook seem a bit dark. I did tell them that they need to read some of my blog posts if they want dark. Hee Hee. I doubt that they will read them. I just wonder sometimes.

Yes, I have put a few quotes from Edgar Allen Poe. They could be considered dark, Poe is dark at times. But for the most part I have 'happy go lucky' little comments. Quotes from movies and little jokes. I wonder if my humor is being missed?

Oh well, it was just something I wanted to comment on.