Hope in Philosophy

Toward the 22nd-Century World Philosophy: Philosophy as a Program (III)

Hideo KAWAMOTO

Keywords: Problem composition, Theoretical philosophy, Social philosophy, Catalyst, Freedom

Introduction

Philosophy has always aimed to boldly go ahead where it must. If one philosopher expounds on a given concept, another will come up with a different concept from a different perspective, developing various different concepts in the process. Without question, all these concepts have contemporary limits. Philosophy is an effort made with the conviction that the best way forward is to follow one's own path. Many of these paths eventually wear out their potential and find themselves left in the wake of history. Nonetheless, these ideas can be reread many times in several different ways.

Moreover, philosophy includes the process of organizing and arranging past and contemporary concepts comprehensively. The typical examples of which include Aristotle and Hegel. While this kind of work might help us to see the connection between concepts, it simply rearranges various discussions in a consistent and compatible manner and drifts away from the process of eliciting the internal potential of individual concepts. In such cases, what needs to be done is to abandon the knowledge already arranged, including the interpretations of existing academic theories, and use the essence gleaned from the experience of apprehending individual theories to open the way to new possibilities once again.

In philosophy, after language is used to acquire the experiences that are embodied within said language, language itself must be discarded. In extreme terms, the language of philosophy is mastered in order to be abandoned. There are some experiences that only become clear through abandonment, while others can be gained only through the abandonment of language. The work of abandoning language is an adventure and commitment that is also common to poets. Abandoning language is itself the way in which experience expands its range of motion. Thereafter, language is spun out once again. To this end, philosophy requires the skill of abandonment.

The language of philosophy is often considered difficult to parse. This is because its meaning is not definite; instead, the language itself is established as a "matrix." Language is always about something; however, there is no guarantee that a single word or phrase is enough to express that "something" on its own. Language is always and only language; it is unclear even whether it corresponds to experience. Therefore, language is used as a metaphor for experience or perhaps a shadow thereof. Language can be no more than a foothold with which to advance experience.

Philosophy possesses peculiar characteristics. Philosophy is not a definite specialized field. We can find management philosophy in management studies, legal philosophy in law, and social philosophy in sociology. Similarly, there is philosophy of science in science, philosophy of knowledge in knowledge, philosophy of morals in morality, historical philosophy in history, and philosophy of art in art. Furthermore, the act of living

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includes philosophy of life, competition includes philosophy of competition, and clinical practice includes clinical philosophy. Philosophy is characterized by this failure to occupy or possess a specific area.

Moreover, it is not an empirical science that elucidates specific facts. The task of empirical science is to acquire data within a specific region and indicate regularities of some kind within that region based on data. In this manner, the daily weather forecast uses decades of data in make predictions, providing us with the weather for tomorrow or perhaps a week from now. In many cases, these are probabilistic predictions. Weather forecasts may be accurate or not; however, the content of the forecast is either right or wrong. But for most people, they serve as a hint for how to handle tomorrow and how to prepare oneself mentally. In other words, for most people, daily weather forecasts are useful.

In this sense, philosophy has no practical use. In one sense, philosophy is—in the short term—"useless." Weather forecast is needed on a daily basis. Further, the durability of the forecast is roughly one day, and long-term predictions might cover as much as a week, a month, or 6 months. However, the durability of the content as evidenced by the data is quite different.

Philosophy analyzes modern situations from a wider perspective. However, this process does not work in the same way as journalism. Philosophy requires a particular kind of sensitivity when extracting reality. To consider an aspect that is the easiest to understand, philosophy is involved with the durability of the significance of the reality extracted. Journalists are required to report on the status quo and make various judgments derived therefrom. This involves telling people the reality and adding related comments. However, extracting reality requires a specific sensitivity in journalists as well. Various feelings become involved in the process, and in many cases, value judgments influenced by the media are included when the material is made public. To distinguish their material from others, the media almost always apply biases. That is how they sell content; the biases are built in from the start. For example, theories of the origin of COVID-19 oscillated many times between the natural origin theory, in which the virus was zoonotic, and the theory in which it was a leak from a research lab in Wuhan. Every time a new fact appeared, the topic became more sensationalized. In this case, if there is a special reason for the topic to appear in itself, it may become a philosophical topic of some kind. However, philosophy does not offer the knowledge or judgment basis required to act as judge for competing arguments.

When philosophy analyzes topics of world news, its purpose is not to produce reportage notifying people of brand new facts or the status quo. If nothing else, philosophy is not in possession of the investigative capacity required to take up the role of reportage. Moreover, nor is it called on to comment from a specific stance. Philosophy lacks sufficient training to display insight in the form of critique on current affairs. Honestly, it is essentially of no use for problems of this kind.

At the very least, in cases where we need to be able to identify the structural basis for what is happening, or the turning point of a major change of some kind, and its barely visible "triggers" must therefore be brought to light. Notably, it might be necessary to dissect and extract certain elements to fully understand the actual reality. We only know what has happened in events or incidents after they have become history. Temporal distance leads to chronological analysis, and the analysis of discontinuous points proceeds. The fundamental strands that connect points in time are narratives. Predicting the future is essential in a narrative, but its execution is the task of futurists and not of philosophy in itself. Naturally, philosophers may also predict the future, if blessed with the right qualities, environment, and training conditions. But they are not called upon to engage in street-corner gossip. Such work is best suited to other departments.

1. Problematics

When philosophy comes face to face with reality, their questions are configured in a "philosophical" fashion. In philosophy, configuring these questions is a form of training as well. For example, take the familiar story of Urashima Taro (a Rip Van Winkle figure in folklore). The fisherman Urashima Taro saved the life of a tortoise, which expressed its gratitude by taking him to a life of leisure in the Dragon King's undersea palace. Stories of this kind that have made it to the modern day are so-called folklore, containing mysteries of their own. This is not an issue of how Urashima Taro, a human, could have survived under the sea. Nor is it a question of whether the staff of the Dragon King's palace looked at Urashima Taro enjoying himself and wished he would hurry up and leave.

Philosophical questioning must contain the potential for development and must be configured to provide a sense of the depth and breadth of the mystery itself. If not, it fails to go beyond the level of casual conjecture. The greatest mystery in the story of Urashima Taro seems to be the "souvenir that must not be opened" that he received as he left the undersea palace. This jeweled casket was something like a Pandora's box. Normally, who gives anyone a souvenir they must not open? Further, the giver must have known that saying "you must not open this" would have compelled the recipient to open it at some point. Things that must not be opened actually remain unopened for only the briefest of periods.

The question that immediately comes to mind is that of what the "souvenir that must not be opened" contains. If there was nothing worth giving in it, it would hardly count as a souvenir. If it were anything immediately practical for the recipient, there would be no point in saying "don't open it." At most, the giver might say something like "use it with utmost care."

When Urashima Taro ends up opening the box, smoke billows out of it, and his hair and beard instantly turn white. In other words, his all-but-forgotten "time" passes all at once. He has grown old. Perhaps the grateful tortoise had taken him to a place where each day was so fulfilling that he had forgotten even to age. Perhaps that is what the Dragon King's palace was in truth. The time of experience does not proceed in parallel or in linkage with the physiological passage of time. It is not uncommon to not age at all for several decades. Moreover, sometimes, given a trigger event, aging several years in a moment may occur. A rearrangement of the whole takes place in an instant, as if something that has been accumulated over a long time suddenly takes shape. That is what aging means. The jeweled casket seems to have been a mechanism for fast-forwarding the aging process.

Time is limited for everyone, but most often, we do not calculate the time we have remaining. When we start the remaining time, the sense of "life" in our lived time becomes entirely different. The turning point here is occasioned by the jeweled casket; right at the moment when the casket is opened, life is cleaved in two.

This is an interpretation of the jeweled casket as a worldview. Philosophical questions should, to the greatest extent possible, be configured wherever the greatest depth and breadth can be found. Ideally, the arrival at one interpretation should coincide with the appearance of another question. Each time a new reality appears, the narrative dons new dress and generates new questions; this is the value and the significance of the questions themselves.

Let us try a different problem. For instance, a commonly addressed environmental issue at the moment is the reduction of carbon dioxide emissions. It is evident that the carbon dioxide and steam in the atmosphere are raising the temperature of the atmosphere near the surface of the earth. These two substances have a high thermal capacity. They contain a great deal of heat. Steam eventually rises within the atmosphere and is

cooled, discharging heat into the upper air as it becomes rain. The heat in the upper air does not directly affect the rising temperatures on the surface of the earth. Thus, carbon dioxide is generally considered to be the main cause of the rise in atmospheric temperatures. It is difficult to judge how much the rising concentration of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere contributes to the rising atmospheric temperatures, because the facts are on such a grand scale. But some people still argue against this theory. While reducing carbon emissions can become a kind of political trend, we have so far not been presented with really clear reasons for doing so. Above all, limiting the discussion of a problem like environment protection, which has a network of multiple variables, to the reduction of carbon dioxide emissions is a narrow view of the question.

In such cases, we try putting the question through a separately constructed network to widen the scope of the question. One thing is definitely true. Heat in itself is the detritus of energy. With regard to a given physical substance, when there is no further way to make use of it and any further use will lead to costs far exceeding the benefits of its use, we define it as "detritus." Heat is detritus with no use other than discharge.

What about carbon dioxide, then? If a material that can stabilize and prevent carbon dioxide from escaping could be developed, carbon dioxide could become a resource at that stage, depending on the necessary costs. For example, carbon dioxide liquifies when compressed and further pressurized at low temperatures. If there are uses for liquid carbon dioxide, it might become a resource in some cases. As for the substances that emit carbon dioxide when burned, they could be pulverized rather than burned in order to be reused in suitable applications. The cycle of reuse for substances can be configured relatively cheaply. Additionally, there have been attempts to combine hydrogen and carbon dioxide in order to synthesize various carbon compounds, thus turning carbon dioxide into a resource. However, the success or failure of this plan will depend on the amount of energy required for the chemical reaction. If large quantities of energy are required to turn carbon dioxide into a resource, creating carbon dioxide compounds will discharge large quantities of energy detritus.

It is possible to turn carbon dioxide into a resource through the use of microorganisms by finding something that consumes carbon dioxide as a source of nutrition, making it a resource for their growth, and cultivating such organisms in large quantities. For instance, the "hydrogen bacteria" that inhabit the areas around hot springs use carbon dioxide as a source of nutrition; if their growth could be given artificial direction, carbon products could be mass-produced. Carbon dioxide could thus become a resource. There is a Japanese venture corporation that has discovered "UCDI hydrogen bacteria," which use CO_2 as a source of nutrition. One organism can multiply to 16 million in just 24 hours. As they are bacteria, numerous variants exist, and the hydrogen bacteria most suited to production can be selected. This maximizes the use of biotechnology while propelling R&D and commercialization forward. We can look forward to the following outcomes: (1) biofoods (animal protein for aquaculture, etc.); (2) high-functioning proteins; (3) bio-jet fuel; and (4) chemical products (biodegradable plastics, etc.). Contribution to the resolution of food supply issues and the realization of a fossil-fuel-free society can be expected through the relevant businesses. Technology in this area is predicted to expand dramatically.

Conversely, as of now, heat itself is truly detritus, with no uses other than in heating equipment. Thus, reducing emissions is required for the preservation of the global environment. The use of natural energy (solar power, wind power, tidal energy, and so on) creates relatively little heat during the conversion to electrical energy. Moreover, plants use solar energy, but we never hear of their leaves becoming "hot" the way tin roofs do. Plants' conversion of energy uses a mechanism that does not produce heat. Heat is the detritus of energy; thus, it seems clear that the use of natural energy is contributing to a quantitative reduction of emissions thereof.

In this way, philosophy changes the internal nature of questions about various phenomena and resets

the questions themselves. Simultaneously, with regard to complex issues, rather than indicating a model of the ideal, "best" solution, philosophy presents "better" options for a given situation and encourages the exploration of circuits that connect the better options. For instance, it is not clear how much of the petroleum reserves will be left in 30 years or how much drinking water will be accessible to humans. In almost all the proposals offering "best" solutions, the process is inadequate in some way. Therefore, the model considered "best" often ends up being placed under completely different conditions because of historical context. Instead, the preferable system or model should be to continue using "better" alternatives while resetting the way we are asking questions.

2. Theoretical Philosophy

Theoretical philosophy is, basically, knowledge regarding judgments on whether things are real or fake. Furthermore, it involves investigating the question of whether something is true or false. This issue of truth and falsehood cannot, properly speaking, be decided on a single basis alone. Sentences that determination whether something is true or false are called "propositions." Sentences that are not propositions are called "statements." While the sentences used in weather forecast include predictions, they are basically provided as a hint for preparations for the coming day(s) and thus can be seen as "statements." Saying "we're going to win tomorrow's game" is also an announcement of commitment and not an issue of truth or falsity. Even if the speaker ends up losing the game, the response is not a critical complaint of "you lied yesterday" but "too bad, what a shame."

Propositions are, in themselves, created from language in the subject and predicate form. Thus, the accuracy of the sentence is either bestowed by comparison with actual facts or examined through the consistency within an assembled text overall. The former is the "correspondence theory" of truth and falsehood, and the latter is called "consistency" or "coherence."

For example, texts on the theory of infinity cannot confirm the corresponding facts. It is impossible to investigate infinite facts within limited time. Likewise, the Big Bang, said to be the birth of the universe, cannot be directly investigated. Furthermore, it is not feasible to reproduce the Big Bang using an experiment. In such cases, judgment of truthfulness or falsehood relies on the coherence found in the theoretical language used. Similarly, as of now, there is no way to investigate the "evolution of species." Among the incredible number of existent insects, we have no way of knowing how new species branched off. That said, the current method of explanation, known as "synthesis theory"—in which genetic mutation occurs and the organisms best equipped to survive in their environment become new species—is inevitably circular. This is because such an explanation simply resorts to defining the end-result survivors as "the fittest." The synthesis theory relies on the oddly coincidental premise that when one part of the genetic makeup undergoes mutation, variations occur in other parts as well, and the entire organism gains a more effective way of living and surviving.

It is immediately clear that the world is filled with such matters such where truth or falsity cannot be determined. **Here, philosophy as theoretical consideration becomes a discussion that clearly sets the range of conditions required to determine truth and falsehood as well as the extent of the argumentation that can be established under certain conditions.** The discussion need not always be limited entirely to "theoretical hypotheses." These issues include some matters of actual urgency.

The origin of COVID-19. For example, the origin of COVID-19 is something that should have been properly established: whether it appeared naturally as an RNA virus mutation through zoonosis or whether it

leaked through human error from a gain-of-function experiment at a virus laboratory in Wuhan.

Regarding the mutation of the virus itself, it is not possible to determine with certainty whether a mutation similar to the annual influenza mutations occurred. However, it is possible to estimate theoretically whether this virus mutation could occur spontaneously in the natural world as well as with what probability it might occur. If it is probabilistically likely to occur frequently, the scope of prevention must be widened, and the world must be waned even in the case of a tiny initial change.

If it is a result of natural mutation, there must have been an intermediary host on the infection route from bats to people. A worldwide pandemic has begun and has lasted, so far, for 10 months, and yet this intermediary host has not been confirmed. If even a theoretically probable estimate of the intermediary host is not possible, the theory of a natural mutation seems unrealistic. Moreover, if the virus involved multiple natural mutations, the work of confirming any mysterious jumps in the mutation chain is also necessary for estimating the limits and probability of the mutation.

Elsewhere, if various incidents coincided by chance during a gain-of-function experiment at the Wuhan virus laboratory and led to a leak, that research environment must be thoroughly checked and placed under strict control once again. This is because environmental conditions in which a second or third novel coronavirus could occur must not be allowed to prevail. The safety management level of the laboratory would come into question. A third-party international organization would need to investigate the safety management.

Gain-of-function experiments are artificial operations mainly intended to enhance viral infectivity. It is clear that the Wuhan virus laboratory was performing this kind of an experiment. However, it is difficult to establish the conditions necessary to confirm whether COVID-19 was created by a gain-of-function experiment. The issue would be whether the experiment is reproducible, but the process required to confirm this would be too risky to conduct easily.

Investigations of what actually happened in Wuhan, of the kind that may raise problems in politics and journalism, are necessary. In particular, the relationship between this laboratory and the People's Liberation Army is a sensitive one. However, that in itself is an issue of the Chinese research structure and the scientific research system. It raises a separate serious issue altogether. In general terms, COVID-19 has killed far more people than World War II. Many people have lost family members to the virus. They have the right to know the truth about its origin, and many international organizations and national research institutes have the duty to clarify this matter.

The origin of the virus mutation is related to things that can never be finally confirmed. Even if a mutated virus was formed in a gain-of-function experiment, it may have leaked and then mutated significantly thereafter. Moreover, the extent of the possible natural mutation should be confirmable from the base sequence. In that the leak of the virus itself would be a "latent unnecessary act of error."

Additionally, the evidence for the virus as a leak from the Wuhan laboratory is that its base sequence shows changes that are highly unlikely to occur owing to natural mutations, leading to the conclusion that they were artificially induced. This argument calls for examination. However, as "evolution" itself is predicated on the occurrence of unheard-of natural mutations, it includes the difficult question about how to set the possible limits of naturally occurring mutation.

As in COVID-19, RNA viruses use their host DNA to multiply and thus repeatedly mutate. COVID-19 itself has produced highly infectious natural variants, such as the Delta variant. However, even if the degree of danger of the virus was not well understood at the initial stage, at the point when it was confirmed that a new coronavirus has appeared, the data along with its base sequence should have been immediately released. If anything, the initial response does not appear to have been sufficiently scientific. More precisely, many

errors were made in the initial response, including those by the World Health Organization. These resulted in an incident that will leave its mark on world history. The number of deaths has already exceeded that of World War II.

In judgments about truth and falsity, a philosophical discussion addresses the conditional establishment thereof within broader possibilities. Simultaneously, discussions within philosophy work to widen the possibilities of the appearance of new knowledge.

3. Social Philosophy

Social phenomena worldwide tend to lead to polarized opinions. This polarization can go to extremes. For example, LGBTQ people comprise about one-tenth of the population. This is a statistical frequency similar to being left-handed or having the AB blood type. Given the number of people who may continue to refrain from declaring themselves as part of this group, the actual ratio is probably a little higher. The word "minority" is not suitable here. In this case, we must question what social "equality" and "justice" should look like.

After a long struggle, freedom has been recognized as a basic human right. Similarly, equality and justice are both basic human rights, and the nature and reality behind these concepts need to be reconsidered and adjusted each time they come up. Formal equality is in fact a form of inequality and is frequently impossible to achieve. Moreover, it often happens that a reality that has escaped our notice thus far comes to light and calls for reconsideration about new standards of equality or justice.

Deciphering the true nature of something like gender, which is invisible to a third party, is not easy. Arguments for the recognition of diverse forms of gender or marriages are using too many yardsticks that are external to gender. Even if these arguments are valid, they seem rather far away from actual recognition in reality. Even when some claim to support such arguments, many are far from being able to celebrate unorthodox forms of gender or marriage in earnest; furthermore, these people cannot help but feel that there is a sense of inequality behind the equalization of these forms of marriage, and yet they do not voice such opinions. This appears to be a more accurate description of the existing reality.

People whose experience of gender differs from the majority include gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender people, among others. They are called LGBT because of using the initials of the aforementioned qualities, and this phrase draws less attention to the fact that these people differ from the majority. BlueCity Holdings, which operates the largest LGBT matching app in China, Blued, was listed on the US NASDAQ on July 8, 2020, with first quotations totaling aroud10 billion yen on its first day. At that point, the app had approximately 4.5 million members; they hope to reach six million eventually. Based on statistics alone, these numbers do not suggest that this group of people constitute a "minority."

The United Nations High Commission for Human Rights released a report on November 17, 2011, concerning the need for and legitimacy of avoiding the social exclusion inherent in calling LGBT people "minorities" or "socially vulnerable," instead guaranteeing their dignity and rights, as with other people, and accepting them into society. In defiance, the Hungarian parliament passed an anti-LGBT law on June 15, 2021. The law prohibits the release of information supporting homosexuality or gender reassignment to minors. Other European Union countries opposed this law, and the foreign minister of the Netherlands called for Hungary to leave the EU.

This incident was a reminder that, with regard to the rights of minorities, the modern standard of "equality" is a value norm that cannot be easily realized. Even if the formal argument that LGBT people are people like any other and should not suffer discrimination is established, actual equality cannot be easily realized. Many

people simply do not know how to treat them with equality.

Equality is an individual problem, an issue that requires a search for the best solution on a case-by-case basis, and can hardly be thought to be a formalistic "standard" or "principle" guaranteed in advance. This includes the gap between formalistic, mechanical equality and actual equality. This gap is an issue concerning equality. Further, it cannot be simply resolved. Analysis of this kind brings particularly tangled issues to light, requiring a philosophical structural analysis of the problem itself. For example, the question of whether transgender people can compete unconditionally in sports events as their post-transition gender is a delicate one.

On the point of protection of diversity regarding same-sex marriage, two different forms of reality are involved: that of recognizing rights under civil law and that of the continuing gap (as above) within actual society. The current state of this problem seems to be one in which same-sex marriage is legally protected and recognized, while at the same time, the gap itself remains without resolution. There is nothing we can do about it but accept this dual reality with composure and openness. Furthermore, we must accept the continuing changes in our relationship with this duality.

Those who wish to engage in same-sex marriages to claim equal status on every count with opposite-sex marriages based on the desire to receive legal protection and recognition of the law would involve excessive self-assertion. The same applies to those in support of opposite-sex marriage in how they are trying to perpetrate and fortify this gap itself. These forms of excessive self-assertion are polarizations. This polarization solidifies and deforms the problem.

By approaching the phenomena within the fluidity and unresolved processes in this dual reality, we gradually start to see a path that can improve the situation. The job of social and practical philosophy must go beyond simply bringing universal human nature to light. As society fluctuates, humanity itself changes. When this happens, the emphasis of philosophy shifts to focus on what are the "better" options and what these options may look like. Traditional philosophy has sought the "best" answer, but the time has come for the emphasis to change.

4. Creative Philosophy

One major contribution of philosophy is its grasp of reality based on a wider range of options, presenting better options for social issues. If the path toward better options becomes clear, the significance and meaning of these options can be explained thereafter.

Moreover, issues in the area of the arts are no longer limited to questions of what is the way to appreciate artistic works; the major topic here is the issue of how to widen the transferability of experience of artworks and how to extend the possibilities of experience and connect to a new reality. This is, in so many words, an issue of the "act of creation."

However, can philosophers acquire creative techniques and put them into practice? Naturally, this is too much to ask. How could this be possible? If this is possible, they would be better off turning in their philosopher credentials and becoming artists.

What they can do, however, is build experience in individual settings, working with creators to produce ideas and collaborate in the building of experience as creative coordinators. This "work of philosophy as coordination" provides hints for being within the creative process with creators, being able to provide various ideas suited to the moment therein, and when the work has progressed from there and the artwork is complete, being able to discuss its meaning as universally as possible. In actuality, it is important to not become a "critic"

toward the artist.

Collaboration with artists sounds like a promising phrase. However, can it really be brought about? Without abilities helpful to the artist, the philosopher is not even needed. As far as the artist is concerned, having nothing more than a critic around is a nuisance no one asked for as well as a handicap; artists hope that critics of this kind will complete their observation swiftly and be off. Training is necessary in some contexts for philosophers of all kinds. Without being needed by the artist, there is no possibility of becoming a coordinator, and the collaboration will be nothing more than a pretty daydream. For philosophers, involvement with artists is always an "experiment."

First, let us consider what is essential in philosophy. In many cases, while working with an artist, it seems that what the artist needs is a partner who has a vast store of knowledge sufficient to produce responses suited to the issues facing the artist at every turn. The artist's work is to create artwork, not to study on their own. Artists are under no illusion that studying will enable them to create good artwork. They also know very well that they attain creativity through discarding knowledge.

Most artists cannot work as Leonardo da Vinci did, studying on their own to acquire the knowledge they need. **This is when a special position near the artist can be filled by someone who can provide the needed ideas at the time they are needed as well as engage in suitable conversation to provide advice. This is considered a "catalyst" of the artist's creative work. If the philosopher can, by virtue of their qualifications, fill this position as "catalysts," then they are doing sufficiently creative work. However, without accumulated experience and near-daily extensive study, performing this role is not easy. The catalyst must be someone who has undergone a form of training that other friends or acquaintances do not possess.**

5. Philosophy for Health

Health here refers not to the medical absence of illness or injury but to the state in which someone is able to use their capacities to the full. This cannot be reached or maintained without endless repetitions of fine adjustment. For example, in the case of central nervous disorders like strokes, it is difficult to return to the pre-stroke state even through extensive rehabilitation. Medical treatment makes repeated attempts to return the patient to their pre-illness state. This is, in name only, the basis of medicine. However, in almost all cases, the treatment hits a wall after achieving a certain amount of improvement. It is believed that there are "capacity development programs" that explore how to use capacities to the full given the state of a person. These programs would be focused on maximizing the patient's capacities under the conditions as they are, not as they were. In this case, the pathological condition is an individuality that is formed by repeated individuation; the individual is thus formed in the direction where one's capacities can be maximized. It seems appropriate to define the task area of philosophy as the repeated guidance and direction toward the state of health in this sense. This will then extend the perspectives and options of rehabilitation.

Even in the case of mental illness, it is often better to shift toward the direction most effective in developing an individual's potential as is rather than trying to cure the illness. It is not uncommon for students with mild mental illnesses to come seeking advice from me as their professor. Some of them cannot adapt to philosophy. These students enter my office and let loose with aggressive counterarguments and disagreements regarding philosophy itself or philosophy professors in general. The window of the office has been known to vibrate with their vehemence sometimes.

It is wrong, at times like this, to try and understand what they are saying, nod along, or feel sympathy. Of

course, arguing back is also meaningless. The students are not trying to make an argument. They are trying, subconsciously, to change something within themselves. The surface layer of this process is speech. Further, they wish that they could change something in themselves.

One must speak to them so as to change the aspect of their experience and try to draw out another aspect. After one student had gone on for some 30 min, she seemed to reach a natural break. Using her name (here a pseudonym), I murmured "You really are St. Naoko." After a prolonged silence where seemingly time itself had stopped for some 5 min, she burst into tears, her face covered in tears and mucus, and like a different person, and she began a slow, quiet account of her early childhood. By using the metaphor "St. Naoko" to refer to her passionate speech, I attempted to draw out a new aspect. Here the metaphor is used as a method of converting the aspect on which her experience was operating.

One common situation is that someone's efforts toward self-healing only deform and further tangle the situation, making them suffer even more. For example, problems between siblings can become even worse if treated as issues of the individual or as universal social problems. The problem of social maladjustment, traditionally called neurosis, can be considered as one in which the sufferer's desperate attempts to remedy the deviation between their own self-image and the assessment of society backfire and lead to an excess burden instead. It emerges among professors of philosophy as well from time to time. This is when the professor in question believes himself or herself to be the world's leading philosopher and feels dissatisfied with the world's failure to agree. It is not difficult to see where this misalignment in assessment comes from. No one is actually going to be considered literally the world's greatest philosopher. The gap here between individual self-regulation and social self-regulation is difficult to eliminate.

Over the last few years, more and more students of philosophy have expressed curiosity about "God." This is not a sign of religious faith. Religious believers are already living with and beneath their God. In a sense, their own experiences may be consistently those of God or permeated with God, if you will. However, many students are curious about "God." Knowing about God and living with God are two entirely different things. Their motivations may vary, some in search of the experience of transcendence, others in need of a narrative of self-regulation, still others longing for something infinite beyond their own limitations.

Therefore, providing guidance to people in these situations must also. In any case, fixed or excess self-justification and mechanical repetition are likely. Guidance toward the place where the student's own experience can most easily act is required; that context, however, often seems to be a move toward "self-stabilization." In such a case, we have to resort to trial and error on a case-by-case basis.

Learning philosophy requires time and effort. It takes vast time and patience. Philosophical knowledge is formed by dragging it out piece by piece. Studying Aristotle requires vast effort, while studying Kant requires tremendous time.

What has been learned through language must then be discarded. In philosophy, it is by discarding knowledge that one masters the most. In any situation, one wonders about discarding what has been mastered. That is how it is. Some things are remembered even after having been discarded. These things that are indelibly remembered may be small memories of individual moments, clear feelings of struggling to understand, being strongly moved, being in despair, or even the skills of using experience in learning. This is the process of not only mastering but also internalizing knowledge. At this stage, it is already no longer knowledge per se. When we forget what we have learned, knowledge becomes a part of ourselves.

Knowledge is formed through the accumulation of the experience of mastering individual aspects of knowledge. We learn many perspectives, viewpoints, and attitudes, discovering much about the world and its people. However, these are simply facts. We master the latest knowledge, apply it once, and produce a result

of some kind. In most cases, this is reduced to a memory within a few years. This too must be forgotten. Anyone will move forward when placed within the vast blank of forgetfulness. As we move forward, the things once forgotten are naturally incorporated, synthesized, and organized. This is the typical experience of philosophy, and it is a test in every individual circumstances.