

WHO AM I? I have come to the end of my 'panharmonicon'. I just read the whole lot again, probably for the hundredth time. As always I made dozens of little and not so little changes. I may have replaced a word or a phrase with a better one ... or added a footnote, a reference. I also may suggest you read other essays in the context of the one you had just been reading. **Jacqueline Maley**, in the SMH, 'The world is falling apart. Over to you Tay-Tay ... No pressure': *"When the world demands we take a stance, for writers this means the constant editing of what you have already done, recasting of past words according to the instincts of the present moment. Reconsidering things about which we're unsure, not having fixed positions, is the work of artists."*

I often send you to the appendix, with its cornucopia of additional wisdom, as distilled from other writers' outpourings; or indeed more of my own writings, to clarify points in my essays that need elaboration. Some subjects veer from philosophy into current affairs, like the ones that we are forced to deal with right now, at the times of war, toward the end of 2023: JIHADISM, PUTIN. **RELIGION** and related topics appear in the appendix too. I was asked why this subject matter is so prominent in my writings. I responded saying that religious indoctrination, their intolerance and falsehoods - alongside war - are the most loathsome undertakings curtailing human wellbeing. So, in short: I am an atheist and a pacifist; and a believer in pluralism and open-mindedness.

Of all the '...isms' I refer to in my PHILOSOPHY essay, which is the one that I relate to the most? Well, it is EXISTENTIALISM. If anything, I'm an existentialist. While I follow many BUDDHISM principles - especially ZEN ones - I wouldn't call myself a Buddhist; indeed, as interested as I am in all of them, I'm not an adherent to any religion or philosophy - though STOICISM appeals to me.

To clarify my position I wrote WHAT I BELIEVE ... but there is probably more to What One Is, than one's beliefs. On page XIV I evoke Jiddu KRISHNAMURTI and Albert EINSTEIN - to me the greatest men ever. So, once I was asked, *"what do you think, is there merit in any belief?"* I responded with quoting both Krishnamurti and one of my favorite science writers, Paul DAVIES: **REDUCTIONISM**: *"True reality lies with the fundamental building blocks of the world; and the great edifice of human achievements, of values and culture is - at rock bottom - no more than illusory embellishment ... to maintain otherwise is sentimental twaddle."* K elucidates: *"To find the truth you need an EMPTY mind."* My favourite K book is, *"Freedom from the Known."*

Krishnamurti said again and again, humanity needs a REVOLUTION ... of all human minds. That revolution begins with us getting real about our BELIEFS. K: *"All our beliefs are illusions, they have no validity at all."* This means we have to free ourselves of all that we know ... all our opinions, our biases, prejudices, misconceptions and especially mis- and dis-informations.

That is how we find THE TRUTH. K again: *"The truth is a pathless land."* Do not follow a path laid out by the gurus of this or that religion, or any other 'influencer'. The last entry on my 'To Do List for this life' reads: *"Do not follow a system - or a leader. Make your own way. Be free."* While you're on the List: *"Maintain doubt. Don't be certain about anything. Question everything."*

MONTAIGNE's declaration that, *"I am myself the matter of my book"* at the time was viewed as self-indulgent. Be that as it may, I probably also can be described as self-indulgent as I keep referring to my own writings for a guide to understanding who I am. Is it self-indulgent for me to keep reading my book and - while I apply updates - have my principles, my values confirmed?

The last pages are designed to be torn out ... go ahead, use them as a fridge chart or give-aways to friends, colleagues. The 'To Do List' may be an inspiration ... subscribing to just a few points, things may become more clear: TRUTHs more true, or less so; dogmas may appear debatable, or downright false; beliefs may be easier to question, to re-evaluate ... potentially to reject entirely.

So this is what I am: A seeker of truth and an aspirer to ENLIGHTENMENT ... whatever that is; one who tries to get a grip on what REALITY is. That requires this point on the List: 'Don't Lie'. Getit? It's said we lie many times a day. All of us. No exceptions. To most lies we assign a colour: White. They're white lies, trivial, of little consequence. We may get asked, "How are you?" "Good."

What a lie! Ok, moving right along: Perhaps more pertinent is: Get Real. KNOW YOURSELF. Well, it turns out I am a lot more than what I've talked about so far. I am a lover, to my wife and a lover of my children and grandchildren. And besides being a lover of truth, I'm a lover of humanity. I walk around, I look: I love the diversity of humans I see ... colours, races, traits. All and sundry.

So, Who Am I? I am all of the above; but above all of the above, I am a lover ... a lover of life.