

IN CONVERSATIONS WITH THE GREAT PHILOSOPHERS

One-Page Synopsis

Roger Kuperways | Popular Philosophy / Personal Growth | Approximately 168,000 words

In *Conversations with the Great Philosophers* brings 63 of history's greatest philosophers, psychologists, and thinkers out of the classroom and into living conversation.

Written for the general reader, the book explains complex ideas in plain English and asks a practical question: What can these thinkers teach us about how to live? Rather than presenting philosophy as a chronology of theories, each chapter introduces a thinker as a person, explains the thinker's achievements and central ideas, and explores not only what that person thought, but how that person thought.

Each chapter then becomes a conversation. Roger Kuperways questions the philosopher; the philosopher answers; then the roles reverse and the philosopher questions Roger. A third participant is always present: the reader. The exchanges invite readers to decide where they agree, where they disagree, and how they themselves would answer. *Practical Philosophy* connects the thinker's ideas to ordinary life, while sections on the thinker's Method and the Point of the Method show readers a way of thinking they can try for themselves.

The same Timeless Questions are posed across the book, creating a conversation that stretches across centuries and traditions. Socrates, Marcus Aurelius, the Buddha, Confucius, Spinoza, Kierkegaard, Nietzsche, Simone de Beauvoir, Viktor Frankl, Hannah Arendt, and many others confront enduring questions about happiness, failure, fear, self-improvement, purpose, death, mistakes, and the pressures of modern life. Their answers frequently conflict. The book does not attempt to decide which philosopher is right; it allows readers to compare radically different minds and discover which ideas speak most powerfully to their own lives.

The book can be entered anywhere. A reader may turn to Socrates for questions about self-knowledge, Epicurus for fear of death, Marcus Aurelius for adversity, Frankl for meaning, or Nietzsche for the courage to create a life of one's own.

The Appendix provides accessible guides to the branches, history, traditions, schools, tools, and methods of philosophy. In the Coda, thinkers from different centuries gather for one final imagined evening together, questioning and challenging one another and ultimately turning their questions toward the reader.

At its heart, *In Conversations with the Great Philosophers* is an invitation rather than a textbook. Kuperways, who left school at fourteen and once believed philosophy belonged only to academics, approaches these thinkers as someone who had to discover philosophy for himself. His purpose is to remove the intimidation surrounding the subject and bring its great questions back where they began: into human conversation. The philosophers provide the ideas, Roger joins them at the table, and the reader is invited to pull up a chair.