

THE CONCEPT OF HUMAN AUTHENTIC LIVING AND ITS SIGNIFICANCE: A PHILOSOPHICAL REFLECTION

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Abstract

This article aimed to explore the concept of the human authentic living. It stresses on the why acting authentically promotes personal well-being and overall fulfilment which then leads to stronger interpersonal relationships. The article was motivated by the growing nature of inauthentic life-styles that most people are living, especially in contemporary times. The inauthentic life style has affected people badly because it causes them to stay away from the truth and true image of themselves. The common definition of authenticity is to live one's life according to one's beliefs, goals and values. One has to identify his or her important values in life, commit to them and work according to them. Authenticity means that one is true to one's principles and values despite the pressure one has to endure in life. When one is true to oneself, he or she has much trust on own judgements and decisions. When one trusts oneself and does what is right, one can realize full potential in life. Heideggerian phenomenology and Sartrean existentialism reveal that the role played by authenticity in prompting the adoption of an authentic attitude, liberates one. It gives one the freedom to break free of learnt behavior and rise to the highest self. Being authentic gives one the confidence to see oneself for who he or she truly is, and bask in one's uniqueness. Consequently, the importance of authenticity for self and society is immense. This article established that authenticity is positively related to life satisfaction and physical well-being. Also, acting authentically promotes personal well-being and overall fulfilment, and leads to stronger interpersonal relationships. The point of departure is that the term "authenticity" refers to being real, genuine, or true. This research was carried out in Library based on philosophical literature. Interpretivism research methodology was employed. Interpretivism is a branch of epistemology that is focused on the assessment of the differences between human as social factors.

Key words: Authenticity, Existence, Happiness, Human Authentic Living, Inauthenticity

Introduction

Extant literature has shown that authenticity is positively related to life satisfaction and physical well-being. The association of authenticity with life satisfaction and human well-being in terms of authentic living remains unexplored. Authenticity allows us to be true to ourselves and make a positive impact in the society. Authentic living results to a healthy life that leads to happiness and success. Previous research has not investigated the philosophical processes that link authenticity to life satisfaction and well-being. Hence, to fill this gap, this article investigated the concept of authentic living in relation to satisfaction and well-being in life.

The Meaning of Authentic Life

The existence of life in the universe has led people to wonder and doubt what a worthy way of living is. Some sociologists, psychologists and philosophers asked how life ought to be lived and some examined the authenticity of life; what it is, and how one can be more authentic in life. There are so many different definitions of authenticity according to philosophers and scholars. However, a common definition of authenticity is living your life according to your

own values, beliefs and goals that you hold most dear and the personal goals that you pursue, rather than those of other people (Antich, 2021). In the first place, one has to identify his core values, commit to living and working according to them (Minima, 1997). Authenticity, in other words, means that one is true to ones' personality principles, and values regardless of the pressure one may endure in life. When you are true to yourself, you have much trust on the judgements and decisions you take. Thus, when you trust yourself and do what you know is right, you can realize your full potential in life.

An authentic person is honest with himself/herself and with others, always taking responsibility of his/her actions, and is always willing to accept the consequences of being true to what one considers to be right (Rinder, 1970). The honest one has the strength and openness to deal with problems in life instead of ignoring them. Authenticity requires self-knowledge and self-awareness. Self-awareness is considered the cornerstone of authenticity. When one live with this kind of self-awareness, one finds it easier to make decisions because one is free to choose things that move one closer to one's values. Authentic people accept their strengths and weaknesses. They are connected to their values, desires and act deliberately in ways that are consistent with those qualities (Catalano, 2000). Authenticity is about being genuine and real. It allows us to connect deeply with others because it requires us to be transparent. The one who is authentic has integrity because he does not hesitate to do the right thing and never has to second-guess oneself (Herbrechter, 2021). He who is authentic is confident in whatever he does. One can trust oneself to make the right decisions. This leads to higher self-confidence, greater optimism, and more satisfactory in life. Authentic life has less stress.

To live authentically is not always easy. At times, being true to oneself creates a fight within oneself and one may go against other people. Authenticity makes people to take the harder road and makes one open up for the possibility for others to hurt him or her. Living an authentic life, has a huge reward than hiding your true color or self (Gunnerson, 2021). When one live authentically, one does not worry much about ones' actions and conducts. To live authentically, means to trust yourself and your motivations implicitly. When we are living authentically, we avoid being in conflict with ourselves and others.

Authenticity and living a complete and fulfilling life are the processes rather than outcomes. Authentic living involves moving in a direction that is most authentic to us as individuals (Ross, 2014). By doing so, we are developing our potentials, experiencing the meaning of life, personal growth and a deep enjoyment or happiness. Authenticity is more identified with *eudaimonia* and gives rise to a flourishing life where we pursue goals that are more intrinsically motivating to us (Silva, 2021). Authentic individuals are more likely engaged in social awareness activities in the society for the betterment of their societies, namely, donating money to charitable organizations, engaging in positive community's initiatives, and expressing their essential selves to provide meaning and purpose in their lives.

The Meaning of Authentic Life Philosophy

Authenticity is not only a concept in psychology, sociology, or in other fields of studies, but also a concept in philosophy. Authenticity is a philosophical concept that denotes the original,

genuine, true state of human existence (Miller, 2021). It is a concept that arises from the insights human beings generally exist or live in an inauthentic way and the genuine sense of self and the relationship with others is lost. The authentic life is more described as a life of joy, value, meaning, freedom, and happiness. The concept of authenticity has been discussed in a broader sense throughout philosophical history. One can say that it started with a famous philosopher Socrates, the father of ancient philosophy, when he asserted that unexamined life is not worth living or know yourself (Webster, 2021). Socrates opened the mind of the people and reminded them of the importance of life as his words seen as attempts to lead others to the discovery of the authentic self and way of life (Nehemas, 2021).

In the field of philosophy, the concept of authenticity is more dealt with by existential philosophers. Existential philosophy has largely been concerned with concept of authenticity and how to achieve it. Many of the existential philosophers have built the element of authenticity into their own philosophical thought. The philosophers have dealt with the concept of authenticity differently and their expositions of their views on the concept are not straightforward. In existentialism, authenticity is described as the degree to which the actions of the people are congruent with their beliefs and desires despite external pressures to conformity (Patke, 2017). The Existential philosophers have dealt with the concept of authenticity as the recovery of the authentic self which requires a radical transformation of oneself and re-examination of cultural contexts, ways of thinking and habitual lifestyles. Authenticity includes the element of one's own unique self (Taylor, 1991). The concept implies the recovery of one's unique identity. When the existential philosophers deal with the concept of authenticity, they emphasize the element and contrast the unique self against the concept of mass where the individual is no more than just a number (Bertrand, 2005).

Some existentialists for example, Heidegger and Sartre claim that a common belief that existence precedes essence (Abulof, 2021). This is to say that human persons are left to decide how they live their lives. Whereas the ancient Greek world believed that each person was born with an essence, that is, a god given purpose to their being. For existentialists, our purpose in life is to be determined by ourselves. Existentialists affirm that the path that leads to authentic living requires human persons to stare their very existence in their face. If one begins to do this, one will realize that the modern world has created a sickness in which people have become far removed from their very being. This is the process whereby one takes a look at world one lives in. Moreover, existentialism affords human persons the introspection and a serious acknowledgement of their emotions (Uriel, 1995). This expression is in agreement with the western philosophical tradition which teaches that our inner compass must be guided by reason and that emotions are just merely a threat to this navigation. Existentialists like, Sartre, Kierkegaard and Heidegger, however, declare that human persons should focus on the felt aspects of life (Uriel, 1995).

Furthermore, when one tries to arrive at self-understanding, one eyes should chase the flickering of emotion and this is the guiding light to one's introspection. Much work of the existentialists, therefore, address feelings such as anxiety, envy and depression. These are the signals from one inner realm on how one reacts to the blows of life. Human persons are always

facing so many challenges in their lives, but the words of Friedrich Nietzsche give them strength as he said, that which does not kill us makes us stronger (Zaine, 1994). If one can attribute one's depression to aimless or tiresome career one should assess whether one's devotion to this occupation is authentic. If one is envious of another, because of his/her wealthy lifestyle, the object of that envy means something to that person. When one's emotions have guided one away from certain areas of life especially towards others, then, one begins to reveal one's purpose. Within the human person, there is a dream of a life more fitting and such a person is authentic to the extent to which one chase it as if it was one's essence.

Authentic life is a life of freedom and human persons are ought to live freely. According to Sartre, those who live in denial of their freedom are living in bad faith (Jacob, 1999). Human persons live in bad faith when they convince themselves that their lives must be a certain way and dismiss the fact that they are frighteningly free. Sartre understands that the amount of freedom one has is frightening as he said, man is condemned to be free; because once thrown into the world, one is responsible for everything he does (Bravo, 2021). Human persons make excuses for their conformity instead of confronting their possibilities. As a matter of fact, the endless freedom in life has been attributed to the feelings of anxiety by the existentialists (Jean, 2000). In order to suppress the feelings, the people go along with the crowd and make unnecessary excuses about how they choose to live. In this regard, authentic life is possible when the people stop making excuses and live in the world of troubles with gratitude to their freedom. If the people forsake their freedom, it inhibits them from the realization of their true selves.

Socrates and Authentic Life

Socrates tried to battle with what it means to live a good life and why should people examine both their own life's and those of others. He argues that examining one's own life is a more fulfilling life path for oneself (Cleary, 2021). Plato in *Gorgias* sees Socrates frequently compare justice to the practice of giving what is due. This comparison has traditionally been taken to express the so-called doctrine of Socratic intellectualism, according to which knowledge of the good necessarily leads to living a good life that is just governed by the *logos* (Jakobsen, 2021).

To understand this let us look into the concept of *Eudaimonia*. *Eudaimonia* (generally translated as "happiness," "flourishing," or "well-being") is a key concept in ancient Greek ethical and political philosophy. Let me explore *eudaimonic* as the well-being (Crespo, 2021), insights from the Greek wisdom tradition that equates well-being with living a virtuous life; that is, a life lived in accordance with four cardinal virtues – wisdom, justice, moderation, and courage. It garners the view that moral virtue is the gateway to happiness and that *being good* and *being happy* are vitally *interlinked*. Drawing upon the moral writings of Plato and Aristotle, it takes as axiomatic that personal flourishing or well-being (*eudaimonia*) or living well (*eu zên*) is the foundation upon which the edifice of workplace well-being is built; for, organizational well-being is the sum total of the well-being of its constituent individuals and *politics is ethics writ large*. The *eudaimonic* happiness is not a passing mood or a fleeting feeling of elation but rather an abiding state of felicity emanating from leading a life that is

worth living – which for the Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle would be a life of virtue or moral excellence.¹ The wisdom of these ancient philosophers is particularly relevant in the present turbulent times when humanity seems to have lost its moral and spiritual bearings.

These thinkers viewed philosophy as a way of life, a sort of spiritual exercise, and as an ongoing project of moral self-development. If “an unexamined life is not worth living,” as Socrates averred in *Apology*, then self-examination – the “regular monitoring and assessment of our own moral progress” – becomes the whetstone on which to hone one’s character and gauge one’s success in attaining happiness and well-being. Being good and doing good then becomes synonymous with living a happy, authentic and flourishing life. For the true end of life, as Plato affirms in many of his dialogues, is not just to live, but to live well; not just to be, but also to be good.

Aristotelian Authentic Life

Aristotle, one of the ancient Greek philosophers, who lived in, 384-322 BC, was considered an ancient Greek scholar in the discipline of ethics, biology and metaphysics, amongst others (Ross, 2014). He developed distinctive philosophy of life. Aristotle believes that people have essence or *telos*, which only acquired and expressed properly through virtuous action, a process that formed the ideal human (Jonathan, 2017). Aristotle identifies the authentic life with the virtuous life which is a life characterized virtue. For Aristotle, one lives authentically when lives according to one’s essence and one does that by living ethically through the choices one makes and the character one expresses. In an ordinary sense, virtue can be defined as a good moral quality in a person or in his or her general qualities and behaviors. It answers the question that many people would like to ask each other as members of the society, namely, how should they live? The answer given by Aristotle is that people should live a virtuous life. And his philosophical was to show how living virtuously would be the best for the people to be authentic in their ways of living.

For Aristotle, virtue is a condition of tranquility of soul and its value is estimated according to its power of producing pleasure and happiness (Jonathan, 2005). He thought that one can have a happy life if he or she is authentic and a virtuous life is an important means for it. The virtues are purely instrumental goods, that is, they are valuable solely for sake of the happiness that they can bring one and not for their own sake. In order to assist one to live authentic life which is possible through the virtues, Aristotle urged the practice of prudence, fortitude and temperance (Jonathan, 2005). These are the virtuous which are needed for someone to be authentic in life. Aristotle considered the virtue of prudence as the most precious virtue, even more than philosophy because from all the other virtues developed. One can live authentically only if one lives prudently. Aristotle thinks that those who live prudently regard themselves free from any fear at all times, and the virtue of prudence does not only help one to be free from any fear but it also helps one to gain the knowledge about how to limit one’s desires (Irwin, 1999).

Not only had a life of prudence that is qualified as an authentic life. Aristotle encouraged people of his time strongly to practice the virtue of fortitude. Fortitude is the virtue that ensures firmness in difficulties and constancy in the pursuit of the good (Thomas, 1957). It strengthens the resolve to resist temptations and to overcome obstacles in life. The virtue of fortitude enables one to conquer fear, even of death. It also enables one to face trials and persecutions. It disposes one even to sacrifice his life in defence of a just cause. Aristotle also considers the virtue of temperance important in one's life. Temperance is a virtue that moderates the attraction of pleasures and provides balance in use of created goods (Smith, 1999). It keeps desires within the limits of what is honorable. Temperance has two important aspects, namely, to moderate the level of sense delight and enjoyment and to moderate the level of sorrow at the absence of such enjoyment (Smith, 1999).

Aristotle thinks that virtuous life results from virtues is necessary for authentic life (Ross, 2014). It means that when one practices virtues one is able to become a virtuous person and indeed, an authentic person. Thus, he considers virtues important in the life of the individuals. In addition, the virtuous people perform virtuous work. Since always try act virtuously, Aristotle thinks that the whole ethical life is properly grounded in virtues (Sandbach, 1967). It is because virtues are habitual perfections of intellect and will which govern the actions of the individuals and such virtues are acquired by one's effort.

Aristotle speaks of two vices which are bad habits just as virtues are good habits for authentic life (Herman, 1965). For him, they are covetousness and pride. Covetousness means tremendously seeking for external and material goods. He thinks that covetousness is a vice within those who are not satisfied with the materials they own. He thinks that they always desire to have more material things and he condemns the life focusing only on material things. Pride means a person inordinately seeks glory, honor and fame. Aristotle thinks that proud people are like the politicians, because they like to be honored in the states not only in necessary matters but also in unnecessary matters.

Aristotle thinks that when one chooses to live non-virtuously, one has no ability to recognize and find happiness and indeed, one's authentic existence. For him, authentic existence is the freedom of the mind and body from pain and of the soul from confusion (Benny, 2012). Since one chooses to live non-virtuously, one cannot be happy and therefore, it results in pain of the mind and body. A non-virtuous person has no right conduct as he always seeks personal advantages. Aristotle and other scholars think that such person's reason is directed towards what is bad both for him and to others. In addition, such a non-virtuous person could get away from doing what God wants from him because his life is not controlled by virtues.

Thomas Aquinas Authentic Life

Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274 AD) was a philosopher and theologian. He states that authentic life is achieved by cultivating friendship as well as several intellectual and moral virtues, which enable us to understand the nature of authentic living and motivate us to seek it in a reliable and consistent way (Avery, 1998). Thomas Aquinas believes that authentic life is a life friend (friendship). He recognizes friendship as an intrinsic good which necessarily involves loving

our friends as we love ourselves (Anderson, 1992). Friendship according to him is from within because it involves the will of the person who is willing to love others. Every act of friendship must aim at certain points where members of that group should enjoy the success of living authentically. The active authentic living and enduring good will for all is always found in friendship and the results are always positive.

Aquinas thinks that authentic living as a result of friendship is most needed when political life fails to deliver people's protection and security. Friends strive for authentic living by providing one another with the greatest security; help each other in different aspects of life (Anderson, 1992). It shows that when Aquinas speaks of friendship, he does not only mean the friendship which is only for living together for enjoyment but also friendship which provides security to one another. Thus, what is emphasized is a life of community where mutual care and support determine and shape the lives of all. Thus, friendship as the means to authentic living binds the world together for the common good for all. It helps society to grow in the wider sense of relations of mutual goodwill and peace among people (McDermott, 1996). Such a life that is guided by friendship will flourish because there is an enduring and mutual love between people. Thus, by cultivating friendship, people can attain happiness in the society. This shows the social value of friendship in society.

Furthermore, Aquinas thinks that friendship is also necessary for self-knowledge, for overcoming too many desires and political disputes. It is also necessary for moral growth because friends share the same basic values and each gains greater self-awareness by observing the other's actions and responses (McInerny, 1996). Since friends differ in many ways everyone grows through emulation of the admirable qualities of others (McInerny, 1996). When we recognize the good qualities in our friends, we try to imitate them for our own good. The good qualities one copies from others make one strong to stand for what is good and avoid what is bad. These qualities help one to achieve peace of mind and body. As a result, one enjoys living authentically and that is the life of happiness.

For Aquinas, friendship is not only between human beings. It is also between God and man. He thinks that friendship which is true requires agreement on both human and divine affairs and a mutual wish for both temporal and eternal happiness (McInerny, 1996). Such friendship involves men and God. Men live authentically by establishing friendship with God which will result in temporal and eternal happiness. Friendship which constitutes temporal happiness exists between person and person. Such friendship can only last for some period of time. Friendship which constitutes eternal happiness exists between men and God. It is an everlasting happiness between men and God.

Soren Kierkegaard Authentic Life

Soren Kierkegaard (1813-1855) was a Danish existentialist philosopher. As a philosopher, a lot of his philosophical work deals with the issues of how one should live as an individual, giving priority to concentrate on human reality over abstracting thinking and highlighting the importance of individual choices and commitments in life. Kierkegaard's contribution to authentic life is that everyone is to become what he or she is. For him, authenticity aimed at

single individual, an ideal of becoming true to oneself by facing reality in all its joy and sadness, by making decisions, commitments and taking responsibilities (Jacob, 1999). When one is becoming aware of true self, one fulfils one's true task and endeavor in life. Authenticity in the view of Kierkegaard, must be understood as a remedy for the danger of being in a condition in which all ultimate values lose their value and being lacking the ethical standards among the individuals.

Although Kierkegaard speaks on how authentic life can be achieved, he sees the obstacles to the society especially to those who seek to live authentically, namely, public, Christianity and press. He is of the opinion that there is unpleasant situation caused by the members of the public whereby the individual significances are lost in the emerging of mass-culture in the modern society. In another words, he has seen this as a process whereby the individual is in danger of having his personal task of making decisions and forming opinions taken away.

For Kierkegaard, "the public", portrays a false sense of unity among members through the pretences of representing the will of many individuals but in reality it limped together many individuals under one opinion without most of them having expressed anything on the subject or even considered the implications of it (Westphal, 1993). Kierkegaard was critical of the press which offered escape from individual and personal experiences into someone else's, turning most of the people into passive onlookers of life (Westphal, 1993). Kierkegaard was also critical on what he calls the essentially Christian, the belief that God had entered time in history, had lost its status as a shocking reality that demands for passionately rejection or being embraced. In this way, one has seen that Christianity, public and press as intervening agencies by blocking the way of the people to true experiences and authenticity.

Martin Heidegger Authentic life

Martin Heidegger (1889-1976) was a German philosopher known for contributions to hermeneutics, phenomenology and existentialism. For Heidegger, being authentic entails a kind of shift in attention and engagement. It is a reclaiming of oneself from the way one typically fall into one's everyday ways of life. It has to do with one's approaches to the world on daily basis. *Da-sein* moves in inevitable manner day by day enmeshment with others and seize upon the glimpses of their truer, uniquely individual possibilities for existence (Martin, 1999). It is quite challenging by bringing ourselves back from our lost-ness so that we become authentic in ourselves.

When the *Da-sein* finds itself, this is a response to the voice or the call of conscience (Martin, 1999). This is a clear and focused listening to and the process of heeding of one's unique potential and capabilities. By doing so, *Da-sein* understands itself authentically and is able to act in the world with others accordingly. This is the type of action that Heidegger has seen to be authentic and ethical in the sense of its indication that we are true to ourselves, hence the language of conscience (Eugene & Stephen, 2019). For instance, in the sessions on human development at institute of learning, namely, colleges, universities etc, the teachers or counselors offer important guidance to their students for the better understanding of themselves in terms of their aptitudes, abilities and interests.

In this way, the students are encouraged to discover their true calling (vocation) and the type of work which are suitable for them and be their own. This calling is so unique and special in Da-sein's existence when there is clarity about the self as the moment of vision. The moment of vision is a phenomenon which in principle cannot be clarified in terms of the now, in which something arises, passes way or is present at hand. In the moment of vision nothing can occur, but as an authentic present or waiting-towards, the moment of vision permits the people to encounter for the first time what can be in a time as ready-to-hand or present-at-hand (Eugene & Stephen, 2019).

The *Da-sein* lets himself/herself come towards itself as its own-most potentiality-for-Being that the futures itself must first win itself, and not from a present but from the inauthentic future. The authentic future is revealed in resoluteness, that is, a kind of existing which is primordial and authentic. But for the most part to be sure, Da-sein remains irresolute, that is to say, it remained closed off in its own-most potentiality-for-Being, to which it brings itself only when it has been individualized. In addition, resoluteness means letting oneself be summoned out of one's lost-ness in "the-they" and carving out one's unique and authentic place in and approach to the world by doing one's work self-knowledge and special intent (Martin, 1999).

Jean-Paul Sartre Authentic Life

Jean-Paul Sartre (1905-1980) was a French philosopher and one of the key figures in the philosophy of phenomenology and existentialism. Sartre agreed with Heidegger that the sense of being thrown into existence and being abandoned is in relation with the belief that no deity can be held accountable for throwing human beings into existence. To be authentic is therefore, not to discover what God might have had in his mind when he conceived human beings before creating them (Rybalka, 1995). This is the reason Sartre writes that there is no human nature since there is no God to conceive of it (Rybalka, 1995). But one is left alone with the responsibility of defining what is good or bad, the kind of action which is best in a given situation and what to make of oneself. Sartre opposed the type of secular morality that seeks to eliminate God as painlessly as possible. Because God does not exist, one alone must suffer the consequences of that assertion which brings anguish because one is left alone and the life demands of him to take the responsibility of the actions and choices one makes. For instance, when one is a coward, one is responsible for one's cowardice. Authenticity in Sartre's view is therefore quite minimalistic because there is nothing human person except what one creates for oneself. One is nothing other than one's own project.

For Sartre, authentic living is achieved when one abandoned one's original choices to coincide with oneself consciously and by free oneself from the identification with one's ego as being in itself. In one's present alienated condition one is responsible for one's ego as one is for any object of consciousness. Sartre insists that one must allow one's spontaneous selfness to replace the "ego" or "me" which he calls as an abusive intermediary whose future prefigures one's future (Liu, 2021). The shift, therefore, is from one's relations of appropriation or being where one focuses on identifying with one's ego in a bad faith where there is no freedom to the relations of existence and autonomy where one attend entirely to one's project and its goal in life. For Sartre, the former is egoistic, while the latter is generous and outgoing. It assumes that

human beings live in a society oppression and exploitation because of the egos but there are always rooms for change.

Authentic Existence

Authentic existence comes from the German word “*Eigentlichkeit*” which is translated in English as real or proper (owned existence) (Eugene & Stephen, 2019). Authentic existence of one is meaningful when exists in the world with others. Man is a being in the world and exists in unavoidable contingency with everything surrounds him. Authenticity enables one to see one’s everyday life in an entirely new perspective. For us to have a broader understanding on authentic existence, we will focus on the contributions of some philosophers on authentic existence, since ancient Greek world. The theory of objective values which was developed in the time Plato and Aristotle, says that the world is a cosmic order for organic things, animals, plants and a divine cause (Walzer, 1967). Man has a special role to play in the hierarchical order, being between non-rational animals and the divine cause. Each individual person is endowed with the rational faculties which sets the natural end, that is, the realization of those faculties. The process of realization demands that some actions should be performed under the conditions which are laid down by the set up or structure of the cosmos. The faculty of reason understands the objective nature of human end and that of the external conditions that should be met. It lays down the general pattern of virtuous actions which lead to happiness and to cultivate the necessary means required to reach the natural end in special circumstances (Lovell, 2000).

The traditional theory states that a being can be identified with the objects which are present before the senses and the mind. This type of theory is objectivistic in its methods and conclusions (Sheppard, 2021). This theory teaches that man is originally endowed with the nature or any fixed self. The self of one and the shared semi-self of the people are constituted by their actions in history. As Sartre puts it, man is nothing other than he makes himself to be (Law, 2021). Man does not exist in a cosmic order which is already established or fixed but in the world which is organized around his own projects that has chosen freely or around the chosen projects of his people that he has accepted freely. Without man, there is no world, value and meaning but man creates and projects them around himself as a lantern project its surrounding light (Venable, 2021).

Martin Heidegger is another philosopher who has contributed much to the notion of authentic existence. According to him, human authenticity is something different from everyday life. To live authentically means that in the face of throw-ness, Da-sein acknowledges and recognizes that he is the being who has to make the choices from the realm of his potentialities (Adam & David, 2021). For Heidegger, authentic existence depends on the mine-ness of one’s action (Walzer, 1967).

The mine-ness of man cannot be separated from ontological existence. This is the expression of I-hood and from its original responsibility. What gives one the personal identity is the mine-ness. Authentic existence deals with concrete uniqueness of the individual; thus, the anonymous “they” which characterized the group of consciousness is replaced by “I”. In this

manner, one affirms and recognizes the responsibility for all one's actions and decisions. Therefore, to live authentically means "to exist", this in turn means to stand out and in Latin means "ex-stare", which means to be outside of something, to withdraw from the world in which one finds oneself and to accept the daily life situations with all limitations (Walzer, 1967). Being authentic consists in a kind of shift in attention and engagement and to the reclaim of oneself from the way one typically falls into one's everyday ways of being. Authentic living does not require some discipline or exceptional effort like in meditation. Being authentic is all about how one approach the world in one's daily activities.

The Reliance of Authentic Life in the Contemporary World

Why talk about the authentic living in the present times? It seems unreasonable, naïve, and romantic in these days of isolation, sadness, and needs of all kinds; days that make it hard for us to see a way out. However, it is precisely because we live in challenging times that it becomes urgent to talk and think about the authentic and good living, its practice, its works and its power to make the human (Suvak, 2021). We go over some of the thoughts produced then and still relevant to our time. The dialogue with the ancients has become extremely necessary because of the difficulty to conceive the good life beyond the narrow limits imposed by present closed model of well-being and its promises of economic prosperity, which are increasingly distant from our daily reality, characterized by the desire for security, by fear, and by the exclusion of differences. In ancient philosophy, many ways lead to the Good and authentic living. In ancient philosophy, the search for the good and authentic living is inseparable from the question of the best way of living available to human beings, a question that must be answered in a practical way. With this special issue we want to retrieve the ancient thought on the good living in regards to authentic life with the purpose of deepening the reflection about the ways to the good life.

In my view, the main key to live a truly authentic life is when one discovers who he or she is. One needs to know one's strengths/weaknesses, likes/dislikes, fears, and most importantly the best version of oneself. When one unveil these above mentioned components, one is able to function fully as unique, original and special individual one was created to be. Since we all live in a society, the social norms should dictate how we should live, behave and most importantly to accept oneself. In addition, there should be a balancing act for each and every one on one's journey towards an authentic life and by doing so, one is able to make the right choices in life.

Conclusion

As seen, this article stresses on the reason why acting authentically promotes personal well-being and overall fulfilment that leads to stronger interpersonal relationships. Heideggerian phenomenology and Sartrean existentialism revealed that the role played by authenticity in prompting the adoption of an authentic attitude liberates a person. It gives someone the freedom to break free of learnt behavior and rise to his or her highest self. Being authentic gives someone the confidence to see self for who someone truly is and hence bask in his or her uniqueness. Consequently, the importance of authenticity for self and society is immense. The point of departure is that the term "authenticity" refers to being real, genuine, or true.

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