

## **The Forum**

### **An ethics reading-discussion group**

Am I living a good life?

Is it a life that matters?

These may seem like old-fashioned questions, or tricky riddles without answers, but they are critical queries in a seemingly tumultuous world grappling with urgent issues. Can ethics play a role in addressing the challenges facing us? This reading-discussion group will explore these questions, and the many others that arise in trying to answer them. Our goal is to bring together a diverse group of curious people who want to discuss, explore, debate and learn how ethics can play a role helping us live good lives that matter and in so doing, create a just society.

### ***The Starting Point***

Our time calls for renewal of the moral imagination, both individually and collectively.

We are, at once, facing pressing questions about the rise of toxic populism, crassness in public discourse, existential environmental crises and assaults on the weak, marginalized and vulnerable. However, our societies seem incapable of responding to these challenges in robust and meaningful ways.

How did we get to this state of affairs? Can we turn things around? We believe that ethics can play a critical role in this regard. Because Individuals are the building blocks of communities and the broader society, we must begin with them. Individuals who live examined and ethical lives may be the key to rejuvenating the moral imagination and creating an ethical society.

Today, ethics seems to have been swept to the margins not only of philosophy, but also of politics, general social discourse and day-to-day life. As a result, we have lost something important to us as individuals, to our communities and the broader society. The absence of ethics allows selfishness, power, ego, vanity, materialism and tribalism to fill the vacuum.

Is this reading group just some kind of navel-gazing self-help project? Certainly not. While our starting point involves engaging with ethics as individuals, we will not stop there. When individuals begin to implement ethics in their daily lives they can influence the nature and content of public ethics, goods and values within society at large. In turn, this can mobilize action on social justice in order to build a just society.

Yes, it's all a bit dreamy, but we believe that individuals acting ethically are the roots of the tree that is the just society we aspire to grow. And, it all begins with one person, then another, and another.

### ***Scope & Content***

- Wide range of reading -- including philosophy, literature, issue-focussed non-fiction, biographies, history, religious tracts etc.
- Guest speakers, writers

### ***Method***

- Frequency of meetings - once monthly in a room in downtown Toronto
- Venue - either food
- Format - online Facebook discussion group with readings posted from Project Gutenberg. Can use that standard text to
- How readings chosen
- How meetings are run
- Social media to organize?

### ***Membership***

- Open to all

### ***Rules of Engagement***

- Open-mind, listen, be ready to change your views, discuss and debate with respect