

# Preface

The phrase Personal Flourishing is emerging as a keyword for consistent personal growth not only in the overlapping areas of philosophy and psychology, but in the field of business ethics scholarship. The similarities between the terms growth, maturity, and flourishing—which have always been used to refer to human development—have evolved such that it makes sense to devote to them a systematic treatment gathered from different disciplines working together. The human person clearly develops within an ordered structure and towards a direction that, particularly for human beings, evidences that there is some common understanding regarding the most suitable conditions for growth.

Important movements in psychology in recent decades suggested and implemented proposals to establish the different contexts that will allow humans to develop in such a way. The development necessitates important distinctions between the subjects studied. And some subjects more fully reflect this growth than others, i.e. problem-centeredness, mindfulness, and practical tools to develop positive attitudes. The significance of the results evinced by such benchmarks of development means the disciplines contributing to the study of human flourishing clearly have a prescriptive nature. Furthermore, the outcome of these studies indicates that certain attitudes (for individuals) or conditions (for organizations) are more appropriate than others and, therefore, should be sought out or encouraged.

Besides the question of measuring the added value of good personal and collective attitudes and practices, it is very relevant that psychology of organizations is rediscovering the importance of the meaning of life. Reflecting on these issues helps us see the value of connecting the desire to survive in difficult situations with normal life, especially in the workplace. It encourages attitudes that help one lead a better life, a more stable career and, above all, the vital connection of various areas of life in a full unity of meaning. Human beings flourish and are fulfilled in a synthesis of family, work and social life.

The texts in this volume face a number of issues related to the evolution of the exchange between businesses and psychology. The book centers on the idea that this exchange should be ordered toward promoting an organizational culture closer to the integral development of the person.

This work is part of an endeavor of Markets, Culture and Ethics Research Centre, of the Pontifical University of Santa Croce (Rome) to center attention and interdisciplinary work on a profound view of human work and collaboration. It is our hope that this effort of blending research and educational experience with a wide view of the human person would contribute to improving the way practitioners and scholars approach to human behavior. This cross-fertilization process was cultivated through collaboration from workshops and meetings in Barcelona, Washington, and at an important milestone at the “Personal Flourishing in Organizations” conference in February 2014 in Rome.

The authors are academics who have actively collaborated with entrepreneurs and business leaders—L.M. Calleja, M. Guillén, R.A. Gahl, A. Ribera, L. Ceja, B. Engelland—and a professional business and life coach who is also an academic—F. Bergamino. J.L. Guillén and J. Fontrodona’s chapter is co-authored by a practitioner and an academic. All of the texts establish bridges between classical Greek thought, psychology, and recent literature on proper business management.

This book would not have been possible without the steady work and unfathomable patience of Miss Viviana Spagnuolo who not only corresponded with the authors but also coordinated the translation of some texts, and completed, corrected and refurbished numerous references throughout the whole manuscript. All the contributors are indebted to her and my first acknowledgment goes to her.

I also keenly thank Dr. Jennifer Miller for her translation of Chapter “[How Close Are Contemporary Ideas on Human Flourishing and the Classical Philosophy of Man?](#)” and Elizabeth Reichert for her assistance during the last stages of the composition of the manuscript.

My gratitude also goes to several colleagues of the Pontifical University of Santa Croce, especially to Luis Romera, its former President and Martin Schlag, cofounder of MCE Research Centre. Their support and collaboration during the last eight years made possible the different initiatives linked to this book. I also want to thank the authorities of the School of Philosophy of the University for allowing this project to flourish.

I thank on behalf of all the contributors the publisher Springer for accepting our volume in their prestigious house, and particularly Dr. Maria Cristina Acocella, for her kind assistance during the editing process.

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Juan A. Mercado

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