

## Dr Julien Tempone

### *Pedagogy Statement*

Greetings students,

I would like to begin by expressing the depth of gratitude I feel to be in a position to teach, support and mentor students along the path to becoming scholar-practitioners, psychotherapists, healers and thinkers, in the times to come. I am more than excited to be working alongside you at Ikon, which, as you already know, offers an approach to education that is unique in the Australian landscape. The values that guide my approach to teaching derive from my own experience as a student; a student of eastern contemplative traditions, a student in the renowned philosophy department of the Australian National University, and as a student of the generous teachers who have lifted me up—with special gratitude to my mentor and collaborator Dr Tra-ill Dowie.

In my experience I've found that education has always already fallen short of the mark if its orientation is not transformational. Ikon excels in that the institution uniquely prizes transformational education, and that is why it offers the educational model right for me. I am passionate about sharing with students the transformative model of learning and mentorship that I have had the fortune to receive in my turn. I, like Dr Dowie, appreciate how the twinned Greek concepts of Paideia and Parrhesia prove relevant more than ever today.

Beyond the contemporary misappropriation of the notion of self-optimisation—to mean the sculpting of some egoic ideal—the notion of 'Paideia' describes the more profound maturation available to the subject through the death of their preconceived ideas: the offer of life renewed, as a snake sheds its skin. Transformative education serves this ambition: the evolution of the subject through their figurative death, the ongoing revolution in the notion of autonomy and self-sovereignty—in short, freedom. Paideia serves as a foundational pillar of my educational vision, as it is self-interrogation and critique of suppositions through dialogical engagement which allows the subject to arrive at insight into the world anew. In Wilfred Sellars terms, such critical-reflexivity cultivates a capacity to call into question the various 'myths of the given' that we receive, often wholesale and anti-critically, from our culture. The establishment of an environment which values authentic and honest expression is, however, essential to facilitate the self-reflective core of Paideia. As such the virtue of 'Parrhesia'—describable as fearless, frank speech—is a critical prerequisite for Paideia. Parrhesia—the obligation to truth-telling—is a cultural mode much under attack at present. Yet it proves critical to achieving transformational critique, of both ourselves and our institutions.

Throughout my education I reached out to philosophers, scholars and contemplative practitioners who inspired me, and I have always been amazed at the sheer generosity of spirit with which I've been received. It is a privilege to take this attitude forward by supporting others through the initiatory steps into the realms of inquiry. I am committed to supporting you, as my student, to exploring the depths of psyche, of questioning assumed modes and of charting unknown territory. Transformational learning is, however, a mutual commitment. My ambition is to serve as the kind of mentor I had the honour of receiving myself. And for those who are willing to take up the mantle of apprenticeship, my mind and my passion, are to hand, for your growth.