

1. THE IMPORTANCE OF PHILOSOPHY

I dreamt last night that my friend Walter was training a group of youngsters to overcome their phobias. As an exercise he has taken a dozen teenagers to a public swimming pool with a low diving board and he is making them jump, one by one. One of the boys stops midway along the plank and freezes. The lineup is getting longer.

- What’s wrong, asks Walter.
- I won’t jump, screams the boy.
- Why not? Look at you. You are young and strong. Look at those muscles.
- I know. Physically I can do it. But what about the philosophical point of view?
- What about it?
- I have to think.
- You have exactly five seconds. One, two, three ...
- Wait! What if you don’t really exist and I am just dreaming you? And what if when I jump I wake up and you disappear? Think about it. You have five seconds. One, two, three, four ...
- Wait!

The boy jumped and I woke up.