I came to know Professor Bill Bartley in 1972, when he contacted me some months after he had participated in The est Training, a personal development programme I had created. He told me that as a result of what he had accomplished for himself in the programme, he had gotten over his persistent insomnia (as he said, a real problem for a thinker and a teacher). He explained that he was interested in exploring with me the ideas expressed in that programme. Given Bill’s stature as a professional philosopher, I was thrilled by the opportunity. He was a rigorous thinker, and the depths to which he interviewed me about my ideas challenged me to express my own ideas more rigorously. In our discussions, Bill introduced me to and helped me to understand the philosophical thought related to the ideas that were presented in the programme, and I used what I learned from him in the programme’s ongoing development.

One of the things I enjoyed in the relationship that was developing between us was discussing (battling over) ideas. Bill had not come to his own conclusions lightly, and he could defend them powerfully. At the same time, he was generous in considering new ideas, but insisted on testing them thoroughly. I learned a lot from Bill, and he and I became friends. He was a highly effective teacher, though he never wore his powerful intellect on his sleeve. He once invited me to speak to one of his classes at California State University, Hayward. Before the class we met in his office, and I waited there alone while he and a colleague left to bring back coffee. When Bill returned I told him that sitting alone in his office I had realized that he what got paid for was reading, thinking, and discussing ideas – and I was completely jealous!

In addition to his erudition and scholarship, Bill was a charming and colourful character. He drove a vintage white Jaguar, and he and his
part of Stephen Kresge collected stunningly beautiful antique silk imperial Chinese rugs and wall hangings that hung in their striking home. Bill even wrote a highly readable article about Lewis Carroll’s logic for *Scientific American* (of all places for a philosopher to be published). Moreover, Bill was a great conversationalist and a wonderful dinner guest.

Once after a dinner gathering, Bill asked to speak to me privately. When we sat down together he said that he would like to write my biography – as he said, the development of the ideas and the person who created the ideas. He warned me that if I agreed what I would be agreeing to would be a full disclosure, warts and all – and with private interviews with my family (including my former wife), my staff, and other people who knew me. He said that I would have no say about what he wrote, and that I would have to be aware that when published, the book might cost me any friendship I might feel for him. Of course, a guy with no formal education – whose only claim to fame was the value people created for themselves out of being exposed to some radical ways of looking at life and self – when asked by a scholar who had done a biography of Wittgenstein if that scholar could write his biography said yes. I was not really worried about the caveats I was agreeing to in agreeing, as I had already been publicly upfront about the many skeletons in my closet.

In addition to the breakthrough of getting over his insomnia, out of his participation in The est Training Bill created another breakthrough for himself from which I came to benefit. He and Sir Karl Popper had been close friends and colleagues – in fact, early in Bill’s career, Popper had been Bill’s mentor. However, a number of years before Bill and I met, he and Popper had ceased all connection with each other over a clash of ideas. But with a new perspective, Bill found in himself whatever was required to repair and re-establish the relationship with Popper. This was for me another expression of Bill as a ‘big person’. He generously introduced me to Sir Karl. I was a bit awed in the presence of the great man, but he immediately put me at ease by discussing some of my ideas that Bill had apparently shared with him. Sir Karl and I actually hit it off, and he was kind enough to have a few more discussions with me when he came to California. He made some powerful contributions to my thinking.

Bill, as you will no doubt already know, died in 1990. My closest colleague and co-author for the last decade has been the Harvard economist, Michael C. Jensen. Then Milton Friedman and I became friends after he made a presentation on Economics for Dummies on the closed circuit satellite network that allowed hundreds of thousands of graduates of The est Training programme to participate. The title of the satellite event (held on 4 April 1987) was ‘This business of money’. One of