

## What is EXISTENTIAL ANALYSIS and LOGOTHERAPY?

**The aim of Existential Analysis:** to discover a way of living that enables us to give **inner consent** to our actions ("affirmation of life").

### Definition:

**Existential Analysis** can be defined as a phenomenological and person-oriented psychotherapy with the aim of guiding a person towards experiencing freely (both mentally and emotionally). EA aims at enabling a person to make authentic decisions and to discover a truly responsible way of dealing with life and the world. Existential Analysis can be applied in cases of psychosocial, psychosomatic and psychologically caused disorders in both experience and behaviour.

The psychotherapeutic process utilizes a phenomenological analysis of emotions, considered to be the centre of experience. Biographical work and empathic listening by the therapist contribute to an improvement in emotional accessibility and understanding.

**Logotherapy** is a method of counselling that focuses on the quest for meaning.

### The cornerstones of existence – the four existential fundamental motivations:

Viktor Frankl considered the search for meaning to be our deepest motivation. Developments in Existential Analysis led to the discovery of three existential (or personal) motivations that precede the motivation for meaning. Together these four motivations lead to profound and enduring personal discovery:

1. We are motivated by the **fundamental question of existence**: I exist – *can I be* in this world where I live? Do I have the necessary space, protection and support? When we experience these we feel accepted and this in turn enables us to embrace an accepting attitude toward ourselves. - A deficit can lead to anxiety.
2. We are motivated by the **fundamental question of life**: I am alive – do I *like* this? Do I have access to my emotions? Do I feel my emotions, feel their value? Experiencing the value of *my* life makes me aware that it is good to be alive - "that I am here". - Deficits can lead to depression.
3. We are motivated by the **fundamental question of "self"**: I am myself – but do I feel free to be myself? Am I *allowed* to be who I am? Do I experience attention, justice, appreciation, esteem, respect, my own worth? Do I feel I have the right to be *me*? - Deficits at this level can lead to a histrionic complex of symptoms and to the main personality disorders.
4. We are motivated by the **question of meaning**: I am here – *for what* purpose? What is present today that may make my life part of a meaningful whole? What do I live for? - A deficit can lead to suicidal tendencies, aggravate addictions and other dependencies.

We are continuously challenged and questioned by the four existential motivations – *world, life, self, context and future (meaning)*. The practice of Existential Analysis relies on *dialogue* as the main therapeutic tool to explore these challenges at the individual level.

### Training:

The training program to become a **psychotherapist** in existential analysis is 4 years in duration and comprises theory, practice, self-experience and supervision.

A shorter training of 2-3 years is available and leads to a **counselling diploma**.

A detailed curriculum can be found at:

[www.existential-analysis.org](http://www.existential-analysis.org)

### Literature

#### Frankl V.

The Will to Meaning,  
Man's Search for Meaning,  
The Doctor and the Soul

#### Längle S., Wurm C.

Living Your Own Life:  
Existential Analysis in  
Action (Karnac 2015)

**Existential fulfilment is the result of a life with "inner consent".**