

To Live With Inner Consent

An Existential Analytical Approach to a
Fulfilling Life

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S. Freud
1856 - 1939



Where It (id)
was -
shall I be.

I = consciousness

- Motto: „To make conscious what was unconscious“
- Galileo Galilei: „To measure what can be measured and to make measurable what cannot yet be measured“

Berggasse 19
Vienna





Will to
meaning

Viktor
Frankl
1905-1997

- Will to pleasure (Freud)
- Will to power (Adler)
- Will to meaning (Frankl)



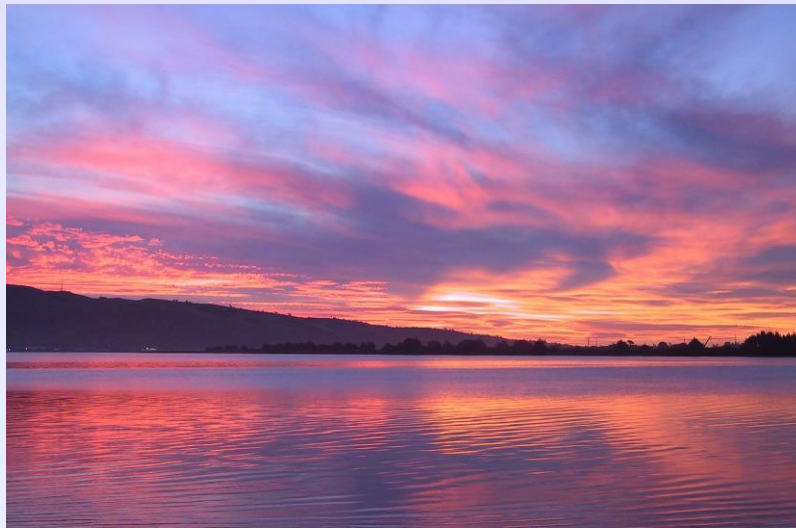


A) Introduction

⇒ Logotherapy

⇒ Development to EA

⇒ Cornerstones of existence



1. The starting point: Logotherapy

- Founder: **Viktor Frankl**, M.D., Ph.D. (1905 – 1997)
- „Man's Search for Meaning“
- Philosophical concept of man
- Logotherapy as practice

Logotherapy

- „Therapy“/treatment through **meaning**
- Counterweight to **psychoanalysis** of the 20ies and 30ies of the last century
- Stresses the **specific human** factor in psth.

LT needed developments to become a full psychotherapy:

- Theory/practice for handling **emotions**, psychodynamics, biography
- Elaborated **psychopathology** & etiology
- **Methods** and techniques

2. Existential Analysis today

- Theory of **emotion** and **psychodynamics**
- Theory of **psychopathology** & etiology
- **Biographical** and trauma work
- 14 practical **methods** and techniques
- Treatment concepts **specific** for diagnosis

EA (after Frankl)

- Logotherapy = mainly *counselling*
- LT: *part* of EA → meaning related problems
- EA = analysis of **conditions of life** in view of the *possibilities* worth realizing = **existence**

Aim of Existential Analysis:

to help the person

to live with

inner consent

to what one is doing

a) Process of consent needs

mobilisation of the
inner self = “person”

b) Process of consent needs
→ „Cornerstones of existence“:

Referring to the *central themes of our life* – to what we have to *deal with* in our life.

Existential Analysis:

Process model

*Power of
the person*

PEA

Structural model

*Basis of
existence*

Fundamental ex.
Motivations

FM

B) The existential fundamental motivations

The four dimensions of existence:

- the *world*
- the *life*
- the *being oneself (person)*
- the *wider context*

The four fundamental realities:

- the *world*: perceiving of facts & possibilities
- the *life*: feelings & values
- the *being oneself*: sensing & being a *person*
- the *wider context*: developing & becoming (*future*)

Result:



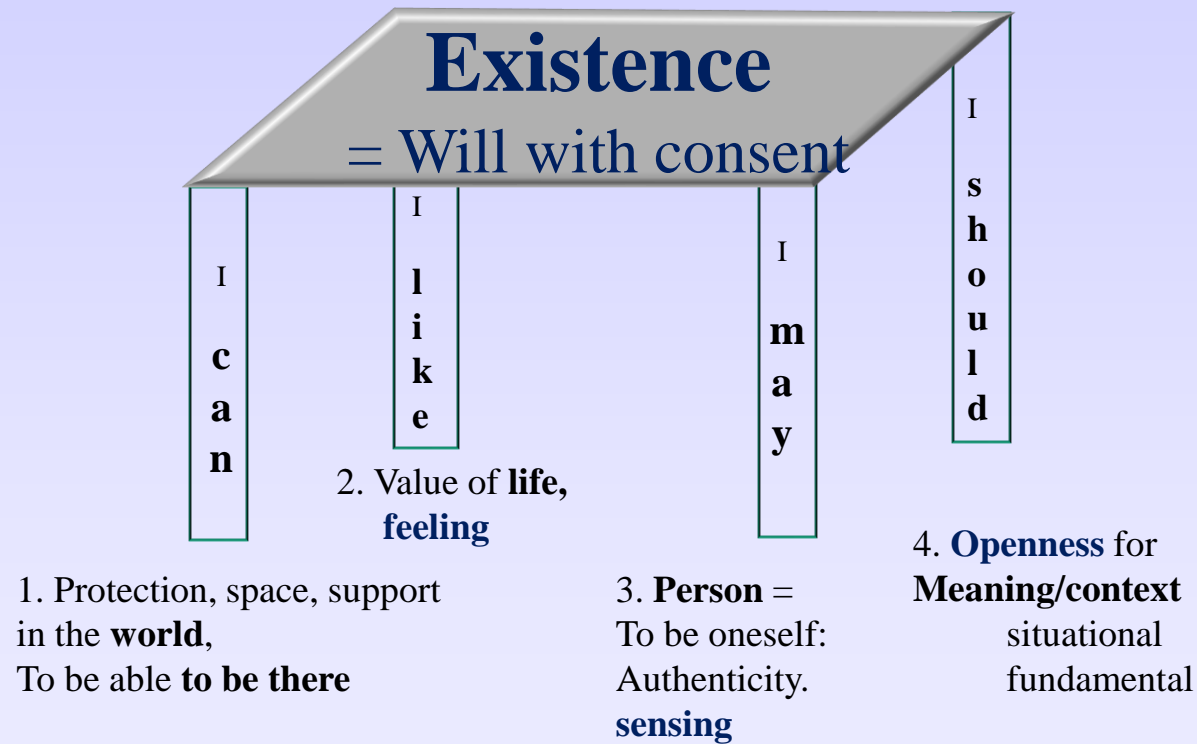
the cornerstones of existence
⇒ 4 fundamental existential
motivations

The four basic activities:

1. To **be able** to be there
2. To **like** to live
3. To **may** be one-self
4. To do what we **should** (are called to)

⇒ **Holistic will**

Overview



1. The *first* existential motivation:

(the *fundamental condition* of existence)

the *ability of being* in this
world

1.1 Basic question:

I am - can I be?

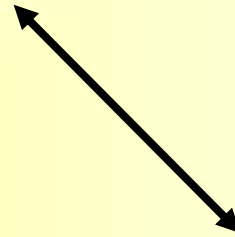
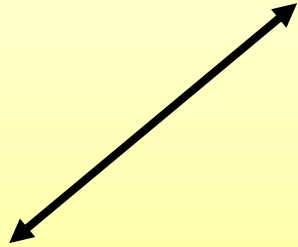
I can:

Enough

power

favorable

circumstances



1.2 Negative consequences:

“I cannot be here” \Rightarrow
anxiety

1.3 Coping reactions:

(defense mechanisms)

1. Basic reaction: avoidance,
flight
2. Paradoxical reaction =
activism: attacking

3. Aggression: hate (= destructive)

4. Freezing reflex:
benumbing, shock

1.4 Personal activity:

Accept,

Endure

1.5 Prerequisites:

➤ **Protection**

➤ **Space**

➤ **Support**

1.6 Psychological activities:

Perception \Rightarrow the given

Cognition \Rightarrow laws &
possibilities

2. The *second* existential motivation:

(the *fundamental condition* of life)

the *ability of relating* to *life*

2.1 Basic question:

I live — do I really *like* to
live?

2.2 Negative consequences:

→ depression

2.3 Coping reactions:

1. Basic reaction: regression
2. Paradoxical reaction = activism:
achievement

3. Aggression: **fury** (= relational)

4. Freezing reflex:

resignation

2.4 Personal activity:

turning towards;
grieving (mourning)

2.5 Prerequisites:

relationship

time

closeness

2.6 Psychological activities:

feeling \Rightarrow relevance for life

experiencing \Rightarrow values

3. The *third* existential motivation:

(the *fundamental condition* of being a
person)

the *ability of being oneself*

3.1 Basic question:

I am myself –
may I be as I am?

3.2 Negative consequences:

hysteria, most
personality disorders

3.3 Coping reactions:

1. Basic reaction: distance
2. Paradoxical reaction = activism:
functioning; punish

3. Aggression: **anger** (setting boundaries)

4. Freezing reflex:

dissociation, splitting

3.4 Personal activity:

**Looking at, drawing
boundaries, encounter
forgive
regret**

3.5 Prerequisites:

attention

justice

appreciation

3.6 Psychological activity:

**evaluating, judging,
positioning,
identifying**

Results:

self-image

ego-structure

ego-strength

authenticity

4. The *fourth* existential motivation:

(the *fundamental condition* for a meaningful life)

the *ability of finding meaning*

4.1 Basic question:

I am there — *for what*
good?

Existential turn:

„I am asked by the
situation“ (Frankl)

4.2 Negative consequences:

Suicidality

4.3 Coping reactions:

1. Basic reaction: provisional life
planless, day-to-day attitude; collective thinking
2. Paradoxical reaction = activism:
ersatz-life; fanaticism

3. Aggression: cynicism; playful,
pleasurable aggression

4. Death imitating reflex: fatalism;
apathy, loss of
interest; nihilism?

4.4 Personal activity:

tuning the situation with oneself

checking the outcome for others/future

4.5 Prerequisites:

structural context

field of activity

value in the future

Existential meaning:

the **most valuable**
possibility of the given
situation

Ontological meaning:

the meaning of **being**

⇒ philosophy

art

religion

4.6 Psychological activities:

act

devote

commit

Life is not “something” —
it is the *chance* for
something.

(V. Frankl)



Thank you for your attention!

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Additional pages on the
processual model

„PEA“

(Personal Existential Analysis)

PEA — to work with the
specific power/potential of
the “person”

Specific potentials of the “person”:

1. to be receptive



An inner world is attainable

An autonomous world is approachable

Specific potentials of the “person”:

2. to be understanding



Connects new / strange information
with own / known

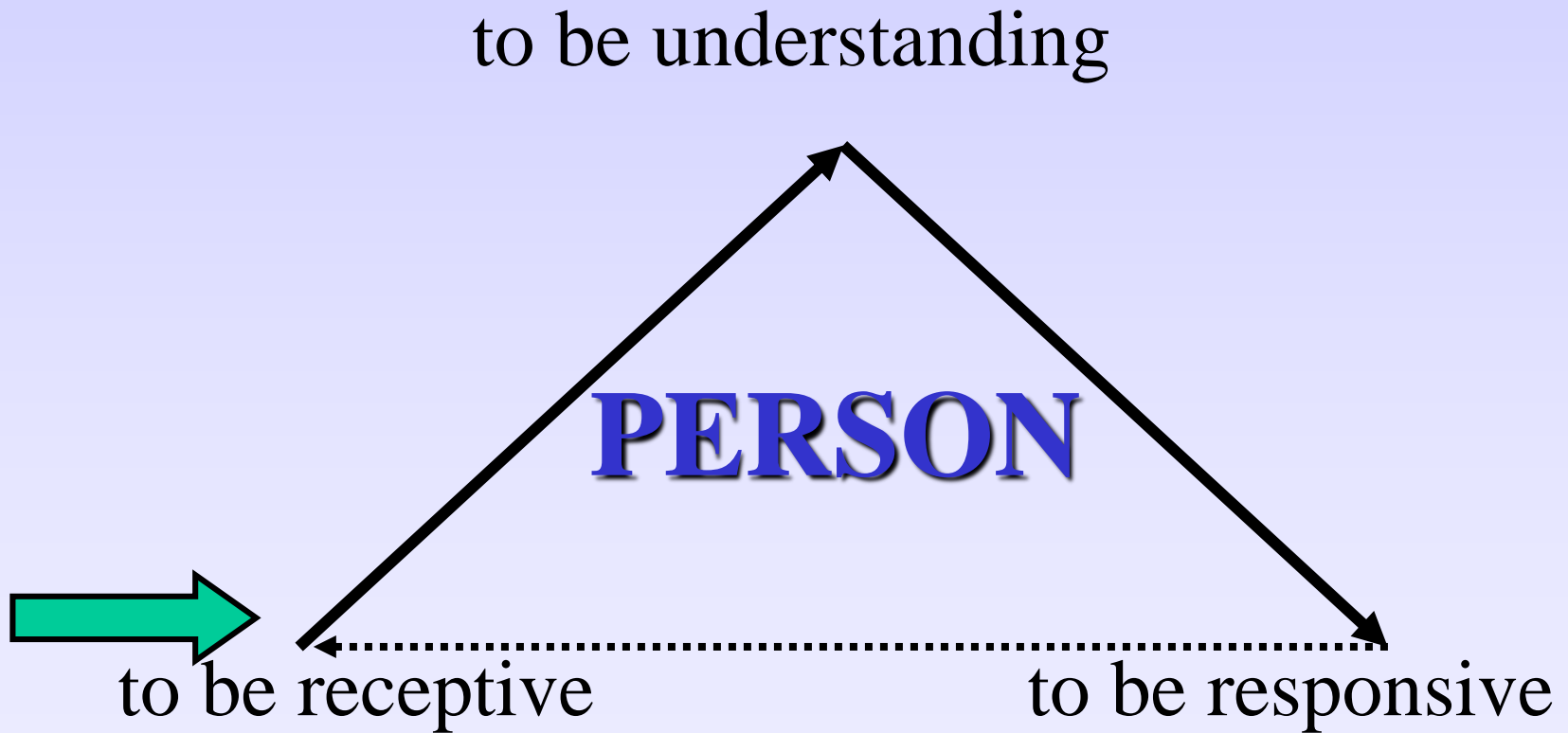
Specific potentials of the “person”:

3. to be responsive



Something new, genuine, original
comes to the world –
corresponding to its demands

[The specific potentials of the person seen as a process]



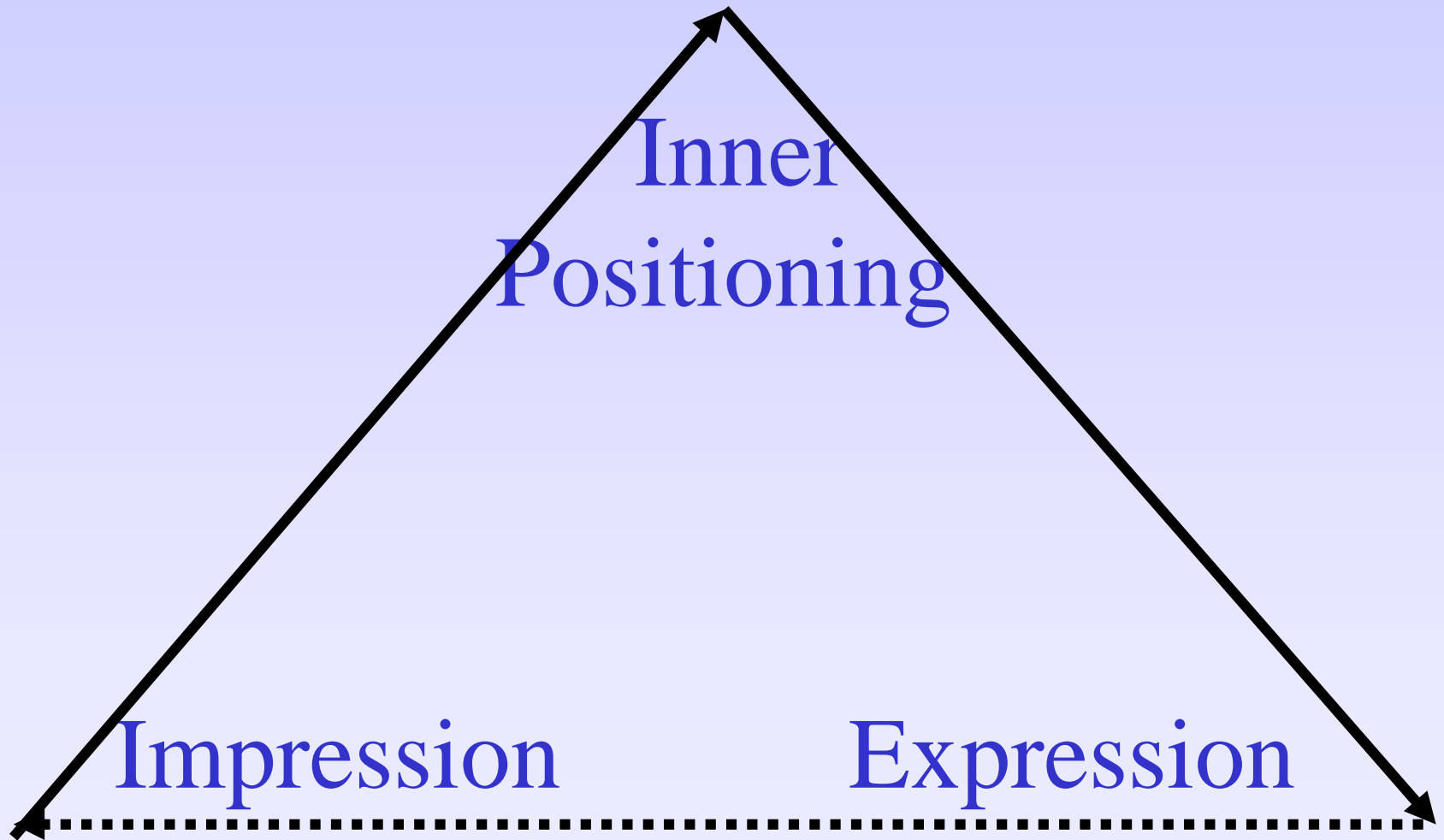
Psychological health:

When a person is able to **realize**
these potentials →

Singularity and **individuality** is
realized →

She or he can be **present** in the
actual situation

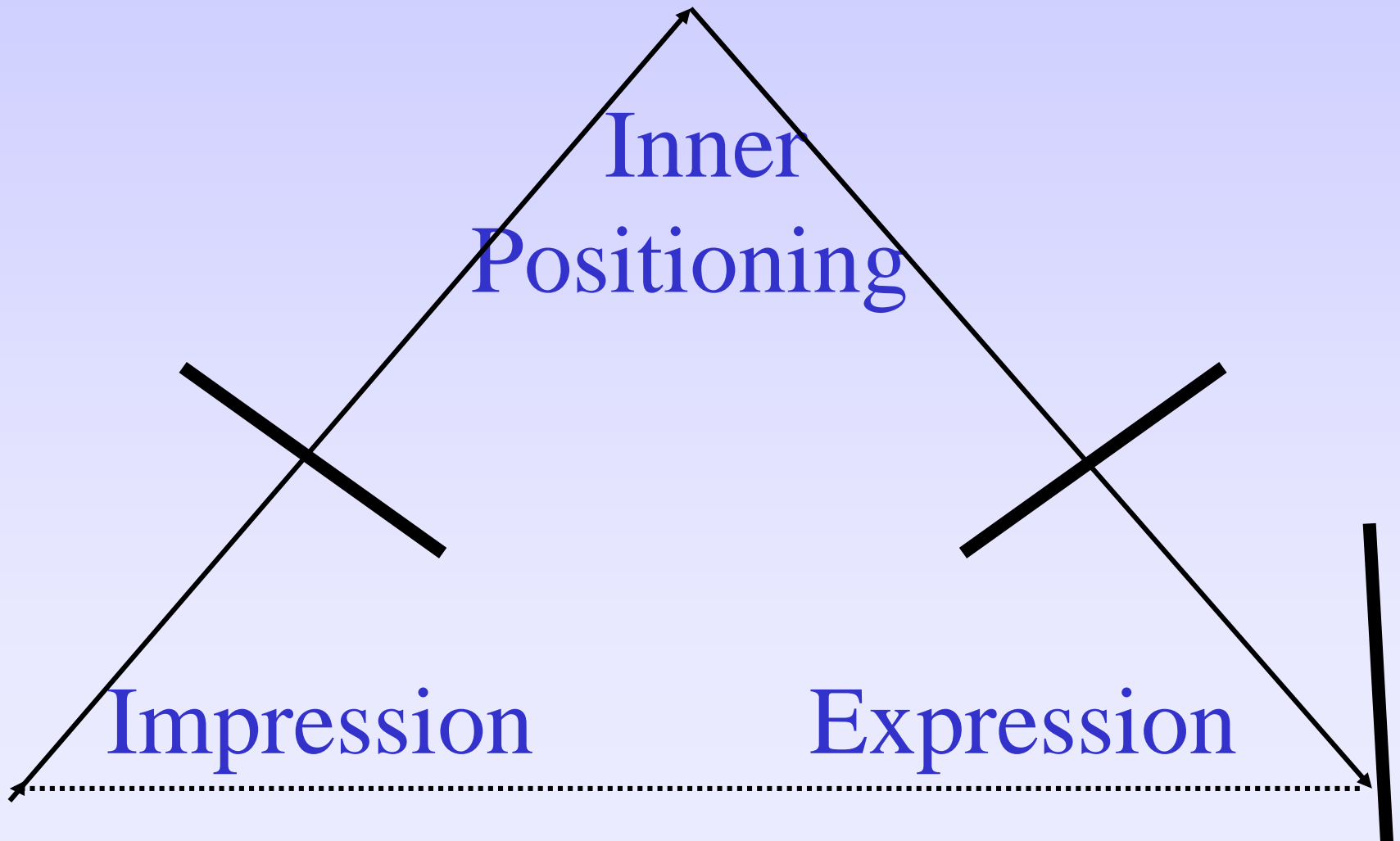
Subjective experience of these potentials:



Hindrance of the personal potentials:

1. **Impression:** one may be confused, overwhelmed, alienated, hurt, anxious...
2. **Inner positioning:** one may be confused, exerted, unsure, thrown...
3. **Expression:** one may be strained, anxious in showing oneself, helpless in realization

Hindrances of the personal potentials:



Result:

To be oneself in each situation

≠ automatic and natural

≠ succeeding always

= endeavour!

Failure \Rightarrow *psychopathology*

The application

Short form:

1. **How is it for you?** E.g. to live without a relationship...
2. **What is your opinion?** E.g. about the fact that you live alone?
3. **What would you do?** E.g. what would you say to a woman who would ask me about that?