Alfried Längle

From Viktor Frankl's Logotherapy to Existential Analytic psychotherapy *

ABSTRACT

The paper begins with a description of Viktor Frankl's Logotherapy and Existential Analysis. Frankl's intention was to combat psychologism and introduce the spiritual dimension into psychology making use of philosophy in the psychotherapy. The central or key concepts of Logotherapy are presented: the attitude and categories to discover meaning, and Frankl's therapeutic techniques.

In order to address the practical psychotherapeutic application of Logotherapy, a need to develop additional methods became urgent. These first evolutionary steps in development became a revolution within the ranks of Logotherapy when practical phenomenological work revealed that psychopathology has a much broader basis; that the causes of psychological disorders cannot be defined solely as a lack of meaning. This critique led to the development of a new phenomenologically based psychotherapy, called Existential Analysis (EA). EA is structured around a broader understanding of existence that includes a complex four dimensional motivational system to apply specific and genuine therapeutic methods. In addition, EA has a coherent psychopathological and diagnostic framework with corresponding thematic interventions. These theoretical advances bring Existential Analysis closer to Carl Rogers' approach than to classic Logotherapy.

The central aim of Existential Analysis is to help people live with inner consent in all that they do, and to see themselves in dialogical relation with the world and themselves.

Keywords: Logotherapy, Existential Analysis, Frankl, Meaning, Fundamental Existential Motivations

"He who knows a 'why' for living, will surmount almost every 'how'."
[Frankl's (1967, 103) reformulation of Nietzsche]

Introductory remarks on Frankl's work

The "Third Viennese School of Psychotherapy" was founded by Viennese psychiatrist and neu-
rologist Viktor E. Frankl (1905-1997) during the 1930's in order to supplement the depth
psychology of Sigmund Freud and Alfred Adler (Soucek 1948, Hofstätter 1998). At an early
age, Frankl established a personal correspondence with Sigmund Freud. However, Frankl
stepped back from his training in psychoanalysis because of fundamental differences in anthro-
pological understanding. He moved to Alfred Adler's school of Individual Psychology and was
trained by Rudolf Allers and Oswald Schwarz (Frankl 1995; Längle 1998a). As early as 1927,
Frankl started to combat a trend within Individual Psychology that he identified as "psycholo-
gism"; a "pseudo-scientific procedure [that] presumes to analyze every act for its psychic origin,
and on that basis to decree whether its content is valid or invalid". (Frankl 1973, 15) Frankl's
response was to strive for „humanistic goals" in psychotherapy, focusing on purpose, meaning
and values as the noblest aim of any psychotherapy. Thus he considered the "will to meaning"
the primary human motivation; the active search for orientation along existential values. He
often contrasted the "will to meaning" with the psychodynamics of Freud's "will to pleasure"
and Adler's "will to power" (1963, 154; 1988, VII f.).

Frankl's theoretical shift resulted in his being expelled by Adler himself from the school of
Individual Psychology. Frankl then worked alone and by the 1930's he had developed his own
view of what a psychotherapy should contain. He named his psychotherapeutic approach
Existential Analysis and Logotherapy. The creation of the term existential analysis was designed
to contrast psychoanalysis; he presented it as a parallel analysis. However, Frankl vehemently
distanced himself and existential analysis thematically because he posited that psychotherapy
should not be about the analysis of the psyche with its instincts and pre-personal needs but
rather, the enlightening of the conditions for a meaningful existence (Frankl [1959] 1987, 59ff;
1982, 39ff.]. In order to identify the practical application of his existential anthropology, Frankl
chose the philosophical term logos to denote "sense" or "meaning". The practice of Logotherapy
focused on treatment that concentrated on the discovery of meaning(s) and orient the patient
towards the future. Frankl's intention and belief was to complement the libidinous "depth psy-
chology" with the search for meaning centered "height psychology" (Frankl [1938] 1987, 18).

During World War II, Frankl was imprisoned in several concentration camps, which – in some
sense – provided a crucial and existential experiment of his theory (see Frankl 1946). After his
liberation in 1945, he actively published and lectured at over 200 universities across several
continents. His unique theoretical contributions became wide spread throughout North and
South America. In 1983, one of the first institutions of Logotherapy opened in Vienna – the
Society for Logotherapy and Existential Analysis (GLE) was founded with Frankl as honorary
president. Following Frankl's resignation from the GLE, ABILE was founded in 1994 and
remains the one society in Austria today that both represents and provides training in the
original Logotherapy of Viktor Frankl.

The origins of Viktor Frankl's Logotherapy

As early as age 17, Frankl had conceived what he considered to be an ideal structure of psychotherapy. Influenced primarily by the philosophy of Kierkegaard, Frankl believed that the combining of philosophy with psychology provided the best access to illuminating the causes and expressions of human suffering, in particular the suffering that emerges from an unchangeable fate. His idea was to equip psychotherapy with a broader understanding of human existence. For this purpose, philosophy was needed.

Frankl would later explain this integration as follows: "What is needed is an immanent critique of the philosophy of life of the patient, with the assumption that we are in principle willing to take the discussion to a pure world view basis. (…) a philosophical worldview (Weltanschauung) (is) a possibility in psychotherapy (…), occasionally also necessary. Similar to the overcoming of psychologism in philosophy by logicism, it will be necessary within psychotherapy to overcome the actual psychologistic deviations with a kind of logotherapy. This would mean the inclusion of ideological confrontation in the totality of psychotherapeutic treatment (…) just in the form of an existential analysis, which starts from the undeniable primary fact of human responsibility, the essence of human existence, (…) in order to contribute, from this point, to the spiritual anchoring, to give him support in the spiritual.

In many cases, such an existential-analytically oriented psychotherapy may quite deserve the description as a non-specific therapy (… because they do not) start at the specific cause of his suffering." (Frankl [1938a] 1987, 25f).

Frankl (ibid. 27f) saw the indication of a psychotherapy such as existential analysis "in all cases, especially where the patient imposes on us the plight in his worldview, his lack of support and his struggle to find the meaning for his life." And it was further required in cases, whereby the logotherapeutic "… approach, so to say, is to throw over-board the burden of light neurotic symptoms from the spiritual center of the person (… or respectively to help those), who suffer substantially from an insurmountable fact, an inevitable fate (…) by dealing with their philosophical questions."

In another publication from 1938, Frankl [(1938b) 1987, 35] gave a more concrete definition of the relation of Logotherapy and existential analysis to psychotherapy: "Such existential analysis (…) ought in contrast - rather, in addition to the previous psychotherapeutic methods – to include the totality of the human being, that is it ought to consciously transcend the psychic realm; it ought to see the neurosis, as any mental suffering, not only rooted in the psychic or physiologic, but also as much in the spiritual (and …) ought to follow the conflict up to the spiritual sphere of world-view decisions in order to enable a solution also from the spiritual. Only then, when oriented at the spiritual and having become existential analysis, will psychotherapy exhaust all therapeutic options; when it sees behind the psychic suffering the one who is wrestling spiritually."

While studying at Alfred Adler's School of Individual Psychology, Frankl became acquainted with the philosophy of Max Scheler through his principle teacher, Rudolf Allers. Through the study of Scheler's work (1980), "Der Formalismus in der Ethik und die materiale Wertethik", Frankl found exactly what he was looking for: a philosophical anthropology. Scheler's phenomenology of values, his phenomenological attitude and procedure, his analysis of love and feelings, his view of the human being as a spiritual being resonated perfectly with Frankl's own personal search and convictions, particularly the importance of meaning, an issue which had pre- occupied him since childhood (Frankl 1995, 9 (engl. p. 29), Längle 2013a, 149). Scheler's writings and philosophy had such a great influence on Frankl that he founded his therapeutic practice on it and referenced it directly as he began publishing and practicing Logotherapy. Frankl's Existential Analysis and Logotherapy can legitimately be considered an application of Max Scheler's philosophy (Wicki 1991). Spiegelberg (1985) considered Frankl's condensation of Scheler's theory of values into three main categories (see below) as a specific phenomenological contribution of Scheler's work that made Logotherapy more applicable.

Before encountering Scheler's philosophy, however, a personal experience led Frankl towards humanistic psychology and existential-phenomenological psychotherapy. This was his encounter with Paul Federn, the General Secretary of the Freudian movement in Vienna. Freud was aware of Frankl's desire to be trained in psychoanalysis so arranged for a meeting for him with Federn. Frankl rarely disclosed the details of this meeting to the public. He shared this story with me and I felt it was worthy of inclusion in my book on Frankl which was published after his death. (Längle 2013a). During the personal acceptance interview, Frankl was profoundly struck by Federn's overtly impersonal and technical behavior which he felt lacked the basics of human encounter. This experience, coupled with his developing formulations on the importance and impact of the human encounter in the therapeutic setting, led to a definitive split with Freud's psychoanalysis and the commencement of his psychotherapeutic training with Adler. Frankl's intuitive reaction to Federn's behavior - a "technical" attitude towards human relationships and one that inhibited real, or authentic, encounter – was the birthmark of what would later became Frankl's Existential Analysis and Logotherapy (Längle 2013a, 46ff).

The Existential Proof – The Deportation to the Concentration Camps

The expulsion from Adler's school in 1927 marked the beginning of a turbulent period in Frankl's life. Adler expelled Frankl because of his constant emphasis on the "spiritual dimension" expressed primarily through an individual's search for meaning. This expulsion deprived Frankl of the basis for his work and took him away from opportunities to exchange with a scientific community. These negative consequences were further compounded by the isolation brought on by the growth of the national socialist movement and its hostility towards Jews. During this time, despite being the darkest in Frankl's life, he published his first articles

on Logotherapy and Existential Analysis and he wrote his first book on Logotherapy. Just as he finished the book, he and his family were deported to the concentration camps. He lost not only the manuscript (having hidden the manuscript in the lining of his coat) but most devastating, he lost his family. Frankl barely survived those years himself. The 2 ½ years he spent in the concentration camps forced him to experience what he had only conceptualized theoretically up to that point: the importance of purpose and meaning in order to overcome difficult life situations. His testimonies and reflections, as a psychologist, from those years in the concentration camps were published as Man's Search of Meaning (1946) (1963). This book became a longtime best-seller in North-America.

Frankl [(1946) 1963, (1946) 1973] attributed his survival of the horrors in those camps to three values that corresponded with his basic concept of finding meaning. First, his relationship to his family; a relationship he kept alive during those years in his heart and mind. Second, Frankl's determination to re-write his lost manuscript. He credited the creative and mental challenge of re-creating this manuscript from memory as an important factor in keeping him alive. And finally, Frankl acknowledged his strong faith in god.

A worldwide impact

In the decades following the war, Frankl published extensively and accepted invitations from over 200 universities around the world. He received 28 honorary doctoral degrees, he was a member of the Austrian Academy of Science, Professor at the Vienna Medical School and the United States International University in San Diego. He was also considered by many as a national moral conscience for post - war Austria.

Despite his personal success and prestige, Frankl's Logotherapy (spread predominantly through the popularity of his essay on his experiences in the concentration camps which appeared in the appendix of his book Man's Search for Meaning), although well-known, was infrequently applied. Apart from the respect he was accorded personally, as a holocaust survivor, Frankl's logotherapy encountered a lot of critique and resistance (e.g. Jaspers in Fintz 2006; Görres, 1978, 33). Critics often argued that Logotherapy was too philosophical, educational, cognitive, and did not fully consider the psychodynamics and non-spiritual parts of the human being. For a brief period Frankl was in a close contact with Irvin Yalom, who came to see him in Vienna, but no collaboration arose. While Frankl had contacts with many psychotherapists and philoso-phers, he preferred to work on his theory alone. Consequently, no school of Logotherapy was developed until the first institute opened its doors in 1979 in Berkeley, CA, guided by an immi-grant Viennese lawyer and journalist, Joseph Fabry. A society was finally founded in Germany, also around 1979, and in 1982 the Society of Logotherapy and Existential Analysis (GLE) was founded in Vienna (currently the largest of its kind worldwide), with Frankl as the honorary president and psychiatrists and psychologists making up the institute's trainers and therapists.

What Logotherapy has to offer

Etymologically, Logotherapy is "meaning therapy" (the Greek term "Logos" also means "meaning") or a "psychotherapy centered on meaning" (Frankl 1963, 153ff). Finding meaning has always been the main indication of Logotherapy. The search for meaning evokes a person's freedom and responsibility. According to Frankl, a person is not merely a physical being with psychological drives. He believed a third dimension of the human psyche, which he identified as the spiritual dimension, had to be included to address the uniquely human qualities and capabilities that cannot be subsumed or reduced to physical or psychological processes. These uniquely human qualities bring human beings "into existence". Through this spiritual dimension, an individual is experientially open to the offerings and needs of life. A central tenet in Frankl's Logotherapy is the belief that each human being is fundamentally questioned by life. Frankl (1963, 122, 172f) called this view a "Copernican turn" in the attitude to life and a general key for finding meaning: "It is life itself that asks questions of man. (…) it is not up to man to question; rather he should recognize that he is questioned, questioned by life; he has to respond by being responsible; and he can answer to life only by answering for his life." (Frankl 1973, 62) In addition to this general attitude of openness, Frankl described three categories of values that are necessary in leading to existential meaning (experiential, creative and attitudinal values) and how the loss of value produces an "existential vacuum" (Frankl 1963, 167f); a sign of the frustration of the "will to meaning". A frustration of the "will to meaning", our primary motivation according to Frankl, has the potential to produce specific symptoms such as aggression, depression and addiction. Frankl's contribution to psychological anthropology by developing a unique concept of the human being also has to be considered central to his work. Frankl's (1967, 1973, 1988) theory illuminated the spiritual aspect of human life, the singular dignity and potential of "personhood", our existential freedom and responsibility, our moral conscience, and the religious striving for an ultimate meaning.

Frankl (1972, 1983, 1997) also enriched clinical work with his technique of paradoxical intention, the first method in psychotherapy to recognize the therapeutic benefits of and formally implement humor in the treatment of anxiety. Apart from this well-known technique he developed: a therapeutic attitude for the treatment of anxiety and depression, dereflection, and gave broad practical advice and clinical understanding for the treatment of anxieties, obsessive-compulsive disorders, depression, psychosis, psychosomatic disorders. He also described a specific form of neurosis, noogenic neurosis (Frankl 1963, 160). Many of his clinical descriptions were not connected with Logotherapy, but taken from the vast experience Frankl had as a clinician and psychiatrist. One could easily conclude that with these tools, Logotherapy had enough of a foundation and had been developed sufficiently for application as a general psychotherapy.

It was on this basis, and a trust in the effectiveness of logotherapeutic practice, that we continued in the GLE to work with what Frankl taught and wrote. Frankl always suggested collaboratively applying methods of other psychotherapies with Logotherapy. In other words, seeing Logotherapy as a roof on the house of psychotherapy. He often repeated that psychotherapy was already invented, it simply lacked the spiritual dimension which he intended to include thereby expanding the therapeutic offering. Indeed, Frankl had intended Logotherapy to act as a supplement to the psychotherapies of the 1930's rather than be a comprehensive theory on its own. Logotherapy was thought of as a corrective for a growing trend towards "psychologism", by concentrating on individual suffering from the perspective of a loss of meaning [Frankl 1938a, b, (1946) 1973, 1967, 1988].

While adding methods of other psychotherapies to our clinical practices, the common base in our work as logotherapists, however, was the existential analytical anthropology and the logotherapeutic search for lack of meaning. As a consequence, logotherapeutic practice became quite heterogeneous – some applied a more psychodynamic basis but most applied behavioral methods, or took some techniques from Gestalt or from the systemic approach. The broadest consensus was the use of Carl Rogers' (1951) basic variables for psychotherapy. One person who invested a great deal of time on the therapeutic application of Logotherapy was Elisabeth Lukas. She worked on a specific application of Logotherapy for dealing with life in general (life education), with suffering, and in family dynamics. She combined behavioral methods thoughtfully with Logotherapy and by doing so, developed several new techniques (e.g., the technique of Modulation of attitudes) (Lukas 1980, 96ff).

The Experience of LT in Practice

After about two years of practicing, during and after training in Logotherapy, members of the newly formed GLE-society in Vienna discussed their experiences openly. There was a broad consensus that Logotherapy was useful as an anthropological map and as such it appeared very helpful in counseling. We heard similar assessments from other Logotherapists abroad. However, there were also limitations which we had all encountered: Logotherapy could hardly be used as psychotherapy in a modern sense – it was no more than an anthropological background for the application of other psychotherapies; essentially it did not provide specific tools. These realizations were the impetus for a series of broad developments undertaken by the Society for Logotherapy and Existential Analysis in Vienna, particularly in the areas of motivation and methodology, developments which eventually led to the formation of Existential Analysis as it exists now.

Facing the Problems in the Application of Logotherapy

Only with the founding of the GLE and the implementation of a program of training did we become aware of how embarrassing this situation was. What we had at that time did not correspond to a full training in psychotherapy, as was intended. Consequently, this authors' interest was explicitly focused on involving as much anthropological basis as possible in the practical work and to reduce foreign methods only to the degree that we could still provide good help to the patients.

What proved particularly difficult was the fact that we did not even have a method for working with people suffering from a lack of meaning. The first initiative, therefore, was to develop such a method as a basis for genuine logotherapeutic work. The direction was found by stringently applying Frankl's (1982, 21f, 255) definition of existential meaning, enlarged slightly by the inclusion of values. Thus, meaning was understood as "the most valuable possibility in a given situation" (Längle 2007, 48). The method derived from this theoretical foundation was called Meaning Finding Method – MFM (Längle 1988). On the basis of this method it was possible to develop a test measuring the degree of lived meaning (i.e. the self-rated meaningfulness of one's life). The test was named the Existential Scale – ES (Längle, Orgler 1990) and was later published after having been Rasch analysed and found to be unidimensional even with a probabilistic and not Gaussian distributed stochastic population of N = 1028 (Längle, Orgler, Kundi 2000).

Subsequently, a method for the application of the logotherapeutic motivation was needed – the will to meaning (Frankl 1963, 154ff; 1988). The next development focused on the will, on the deepening of motivation, and clarification of situations of un-decidedness and weak will. From here, the Will Strengthening Method – WSM was born and published (Längle 2000a).

Questioning the Logotherapeutic Foundation in Psychopathology

Following these first stages of expansion (still acknowledged by Frankl) we entered a new crisis, this time more fundamental and critical to the concept of Logotherapy. The question arose whether all or at least most psychopathology can really be understood by the concept of Logotherapy, that is, through the perspective of a substantial loss of meaning. Was it, as Frankl (1938a, 19; 1938b, 32) had pointed out, in referencing C. G. Jung among others, that neurosis is the soul which has lost its meaning and nothing more?

Despite Frankl's contention that Logotherapy was important in the healing of all disturbances, our experience showed that the lack of existential meaning exhibited more as the result of many different causes, such as the suffering underlying deficits, conflicts and problems. A lack of existential meaning is often not indicative of a psychopathological state but rather an overall feeling that the direction of life is missing existential values. Thus, it is a measure of the quality of life and contains no further information about the reasons or causes of why it is diminished or improved. We began to recognize that suffering from a lack of meaning often has to do with

an insufficient perception of reality, values, and of oneself; these factors are further compound-ed by a lack of openness within the individual.

This detection inspired us to look for a dynamic access to an individual in order to work on the development of more openness. If people are sufficiently open, they can be reached by the values of the world, their will can be moved, the meaning of the situation can be found, and the tools to fulfill their meaning can appear in a given situation. The difficulty was in finding a way to develop a better phenomenological capacity in patients. We began to train patients in small situations, accompanied by the therapist, through a perceptual exercise of dialoguing with an object. The Phenomenological Dialogue Exercise, or "Chair Method", gained shape and was first presented in 1987 (Längle published in 2000b).

This method worked not only in opening perceptive capacity towards objects but also towards oneself. It also applied constant positioning and dialogue enhanced by the therapist. It was therefore reasonable to use the same basic dialogical paradigm of Existential Analysis in the treatment of anxiety and depression. So the Method of Personal Positioning (PP) (Längle 1997a) was developed; a resource oriented method for dealing with anxiety and negative thinking in depression.

Frankl accepted the developmental changes in Logotherapeutic work up to this point (we increasingly referenced these changes as existential analytic work to denote the progression of the development of these methods), although he was not happy with the development of the phenomenological exercise.

By the end of the 1980's the critical assessment of the Logotherapeutic capacity, strength, and understanding of psychopathology and development of new methods brought about a new level of understanding and access to the patient. A substantial change became necessary and turned out to be revolutionary in the field of Logotherapy. In the spring of 1991 Frankl decided he could no longer support these developments and withdrew from our society. He pointed to three specific reasons for stepping back from his position as the honorary president of the GLE (Gesellschaft für Logotherapie und Existenzanalyse Wien): The biographical work in psy-chotherapy, the development of the method of Personal Existential Analysis and the require-ment of more than 200 hours of self-experience (at that time).

The Turn Towards Phenomenology – PEA

The main development in the 1980's was a more stringent application of phenomenology in practice. A parallel development started for both the structural model of existence (see below) and the processual model for working through of problems, deficits or trauma: the Personal Existential Analysis – PEA (Längle 1993, 1995, 2000c).

The development of this method arose through the concept of the person – from the strin-gent phenomenological attitude in practice – and from the experience made with these basic ingredients. In this light, the person appears from outside: in his/her impressiveness, in his/

her taking a stand and positioning her/himself, and in eventually giving one's own answer. These are the basic elements of any dialogue and they happen in any encounter, otherwise we don't call it an encounter. Applying introspection to what appeared outside as impressiveness – positioning – expression, the process the person goes through can be described by different movements. In the first step the person receives an impression through what he/she is experiencing. This produces specific feelings, inner movements and contains a content which is intuitively captured and forms the center of reaction and behavior. After having caught the wave from outside, the person starts to restructure him/herself by taking up the inner (counter-)movement, trying to incorporate and understand the content, taking a stand towards it and finding one's own inner movement as the basis for one's will about dealing with the content.

Finally the person prepares his/her activity and expression: choosing the content she/he wants to bring into the world, the context, the means, the time, always considering possible feedbacks and reactions of the others, and checking if oneself is able to deal with that.

To come to such a process it first needs a good and clear description of the situation and of what was happening to the person.

The indication of this processual method, central to EA, are all those experiences which are not understood, are alien to oneself, occupy consciousness and/or feelings or lead to rehearse, or simply hurt (i.e. traumatic experiences, deficits, overwhelming experiences etc.).

The result of a successful application of PEA is a better understanding of the situation, of oneself and others, finding one's own position, and the freeing of one's own emotionality which is no longer absorbed or pre-occupied by the original experiences. It also leads to the discovery of one's personal will and the motivation for action and planned activity.

This method consists of multiple steps of applied phenomenology that lead to the progressive development of clear steps for action. The result is the restructuring of the person, accessing their resilience and authenticity.

The Substantial Change of EA: the Concept of the Fundamental Existential Motivations (FM)

The phenomenological approach in practice brought to light a deeper view of the structure of existence. Instead of up-holding the will to meaning as the only motivational force and the concept of meaning as the only content of existence, it became evident that behind pathology there are at least three more dimensions which form the fundamental structure of human existence and lead to deep motivational movement.

Pathology turned out to be symptomatic of an array of unfulfilled conditions of existence. A fulfilling life needs a balanced interaction between an individual's world and themselves as well as the greater contexts of their lives. To check and assess this balance in connectedness and exchange (intra and interpersonal), individuals are disposed with a phenomenological capacity:

a feeling of inner consent associated with what one plans to do or what they are actually doing in the present moment. Giving consent means to be in congruence with the fundamental structures of existence. Over the years, Phenomenological Analysis with patients has shown that this inwardly given (felt) consent is a highly complex achievement wherein the individual brings together all the relevant layers of their existence into one simple "yes" (what we term "affirmation" – Längle 2013). Inner consent, the agreement or affirmation, of what one does or experiences, comprises a fourfold "yes":

1. An acceptance of what is given (connection with reality);
2. A turning towards values and relationships (connection with life);
3. Seeing oneself authentically and others as unique persons (connection with the person); and
4. Discovering oneself within a greater, valuable context and engaging in process of positive becoming – human existence is a process of becoming (connection with meaning).

The world (structured reality, the "givens"), life, being oneself as a person and being active in and/or contributing to greater contexts constitute the four fundamental dimensions of existence. As we relate to each dimension of existence there are four corresponding motivations. We term these the four fundamental existential motivations. Their fulfillment (i.e., leading a life with inner consent) is considered to be the basis for existential fulfillment (and deeper happiness) in life. This structure of existence, reflected in human motivation, forms the structural model of EA.

Human beings are primarily oriented to seek and discover answers with inner consent to each of these dimensions. These four categories have historical analogies in Binswanger (1946), Boss (1963), Maslow (1954), Yalom (1980) and and later analogies like Epstein (1993 - c.f. also Grawe, 1998) and van Deurzen (2010) and a philosophical basis in Heidegger's "Existentialien" (Heidegger 1926; Längle 2004). Frustration at these deeper levels of motivation leads to disturbing experiences such as: insecurity, apathy, emptiness, disappointment, boredom, meaninglessness (Frankl 1967; 1973; 1987; Längle 1995; 2000c; Kolbe 1992; Kundi et al 2003) and finally to psychopathology (for a historical overview cf. Frankl 1997).

Because these four structural dimensions give rise to a fully lived existence, human activity tends to orient itself (motivate itself) towards accessing, empowering or strengthening a relationship to them. They can be described in more detail as follows:

1. The basic motivation of the human being is rooted in being itself. The Fundamental Question of Existence is: I am – can I be? "To be" depends on both the concrete circumstances (facts) of one's existence as well as the subjective power to bare or change the actual conditions of one's life. For its completion it needs three prerequisites: protection, space and support. The experience of being able "to be" is profound when one feels they are accepted. This in turn enables a person to embrace an accepting attitude towards themselves and others. A

deep feeling of acceptance generates a sense of security about one's very existence. Disturbances at this existential level lead to anxiety problems and form the psychic component of schizophrenia (Längle 1996, 1997).

2. Another form of motivation derives from being alive and having to deal with life. Thus the Fundamental Question of Life is: I am alive – do I like to live? It is subjectively feeling the value of life, its attractiveness including lust and suffering. The focus centers on an individual's personal relationship to life based on their experiences. The prerequisites for experiencing the value of life are: having relationships, time, and closeness. These experiences foster the ability to have feelings and bring quality to one's existence. Feeling and experiencing the value of one's life at a deeply personal level resonates with the fundamental value of existence: the profound feeling that it is good that "I" exist (it is good that "I" was born). The inability to come to terms with this dimension turns life into a burden; to live without feeling the value of life; to literally not like living is the existential equivalent of depression (Längle 2003a,b).

3. It is a great challenge to be oneself, to become a person. To connect with this third dimension one has to relate to the judgment implied in the Fundamental Question of Being Oneself: I am myself – may I be as I am? Do I feel I am allowed and encouraged to be the way I am, and to behave the way I do? For this, one must experience attention, respect, justice and appreciation (esteem); these are the prerequisites for self-worth. To feel distinctive and unique raises the ethical dimension because each individual is identified as author of his or her actions. The pivotal judgment a person adopts enables them to actively "hold one's own"; to delineate their identity from another's and facilitate encounter and connection (i.e. to recognize and respect another person's worth). Disturbances at this level lead to the histrionic complex of symptoms and to the main personality disorders. (Längle 2002a, b; Tutsch 2003; Furnica 2003 54-67).

4. Human beings are inevitably exposed to the Fundamental Question of continuous development to and change: I am here – but for what purpose? In which greater contexts am I integrated or do I want to belong? What do I live for? What is the question implied in my situation – what shall or even ought I to do? As human beings, we strive to understand greater contexts within a meaningful whole. The prerequisites for finding existential meaning are having a field of activity, structural context, and values waiting to unfold in the future. This type of "existential meaning" (Längle 1998b) may be found in: (1) creative values like societal or ambient tasks, worthwhile and required work or fulfilling valuable duties; (2) experiential values such as enjoying pleasant situations, interpersonal encounters, nature, art and; (3) attitudinal values; the adopting of positive attitudes towards unchangeable situations (Frankl 1973, 43f).

Apart from "existential meaning" there is "ontological meaning" (Frankl 1963, 187; Längle 1998b). This relates to the meaning of being itself (e.g. the meaning of one's life). Ontological meaning does not depend on an individual's activity but is set by being itself. These meta-

questions find their answers in philosophy, faith or religion. It was one of Frankl's theoretical achievements to connect ontological meaning with existential meaning (and thus connect it to the realm of psychology) by introducing the "existential turn" (Frankl 1973, 72). By experiencing (and feeling) meaning, an individual is motivated to act and becomes increasingly connected to the world through the detection of a personal meaning in each and every situation (the personal experience of being meaningfully embedded in life itself – the "turn" towards life). Disturbances at this level lead to an inclination towards suicide and dependency (Debats 1996; Harlow et al 1986; Längle, Probst 1997; Nindl 2001; Waisberg 1994; Wong, Frey 1998; Zika 1992).

Final remarks

Today Existential Analysis can be described as a phenomenological and person-oriented psychotherapy (in many respects it comes close to the concepts of Carl Rogers – 1961, 1966). The word "existence" lies at the core of Existential Analysis. Existence, from an EA-perspective, denotes an integrated or "whole" life. From this perspective, human existence is characterized by the capacity to make authentic decisions (being conscious of one's freedom and responsibility in a meaningful context).

The aim of Existential Analysis is to guide an individual toward leading and experiencing their life authentically and freely. This is accomplished through practical methods: by continually bringing "inner consent" into focus while working on the prerequisites of the existential fundamental motivations and by phenomenologically processing an individual's problems, traumas and conflicts with the processual model of PEA (setting back the interpretation or explanation of experiences and symptoms). In addition, EA has established almost a dozen other specific methods for stimulating personal resources or treating specific disorders (Längle 2008). Although the focus of EA lies on actual experience, feelings, and subjective positioning, the overall integrity of human existence also demands biographical work in order to gain perspective on the future (meaning).

The aim of Existential Analysis could be summarized as such: to help people recognize and come to terms with their behavior and emotions and to live with "inner consent". While this description resonates with the Rogerian concept of congruence (Rogers 1961, 1966), Existential Analysis places more emphasis on the active decisions and commitments of the individual rather than the accompanying mood or organismic feeling.

On the basis of these developments, the GLE society in Vienna renounced the use of the term Logotherapy and after 1982 called this psychotherapy "Existential Analysis". The Austrian ministry of health officially recognized this form of psychotherapy in 1982 after proving the coherence of theory, practice, methodology and empirical data available to date (official recognition came later in Switzerland from the canton of Berne, the Czech Republic, and Rumania). There are also training institutes and/or societies in other countries such as:

Germany, Poland, Russia, Canada, Mexico, Chile, and Argentina. The new and expanded anthropology and understanding of existence together with the development of the methods and the dominant application of phenomenology completely changed the training program. Training required a strong focus on self-experience in order to illustrate this procedure and prepare students to become open and self-aware enough to be able to work with the phenomenological attitude. A full training in EA currently lasts five to six years completed on a part-time basis (www.existenzanalyse.org).

The empirical effectiveness of EA has also been shown in several investigations such as: Ascher et al. (1985) for Paradoxical Intention, Becker (1985) for the impact of Logotherapy on psychological health, Görtz's (2001) survey on empirical research in Existential Analysis, Laireiter et al. (2000) on the satisfaction of patients, Längle et al. (2000) on compared effectiveness with other methods in a hospital setting for addictive patients, Längle et al. (2005) and on the effectiveness of Existential Analysis in a multi-centric explorative field study, Regazzo et al. (2008) in couple therapy. It is evident that this new approach requires more empirical investigation and clear case studies according to modern criteria of investigation. Further, the openness towards the use of other methods of psychotherapies also needs a critical assessment of the potential deficits in the EA-methodology and anthropology in addition to analyzing the appropriateness of the foreign method.

Today, however, Existential Analysis can be considered an independent and major development in psychotherapy. Existential Analysis has evolved from "Logotherapy as a supplement to various psychotherapies" into a full-fledged psychotherapeutic method (Längle, Görtz 1993; Stumm, Wirth 1994; Stumm, Pritz 2000).

References

Ascher LM, Bowers MR, Schotte DE (1985) A review of data from controlled case studies and experiments evaluating the clinical efficacy of paradoxical intention. In: Weeks GR (Ed) Promoting change through paradoxical therapy. Homewood, IL, Dow Jones-Irwin, 216-251

Becker P (1985) Sinnfindung als zentrale Komponente seelischer Gesundheit. In: Längle A (Hrsg) Wege zum Sinn. Logotherapie als Orientierungshilfe. Munich: Piper, 186-207

Binswanger L [(1946) 1958] The existential analysis school of thought. In: May R, Angel E, Ellenberger HF (eds) Existence. New York: Basic Books

Boss M (1963) Psychoanalysis and Daseinsanalysis. New York: Basic Books

Crumbaugh J C, Maholick L T (1969) The Purpose in Life Test. Munster, Indiana: Psychometrics Affilates

Debats DL (1996) Meaning in life: Clinical relevance and predictive power. In: British Journal of Clinical Psychology 35, 503-516

Ellenberger HF (ed) Existence. New York: Basic Books

Epstein S (1993) Emotion and self-theory. In: Lewis M, Haviland J (eds) Handbook of Emotions. New York: Guilford, 313-326

Eysenck HJ, Eysenck SBG (1964a) Manual of the Eysenck Personality Inventory. London: Univ. London Press

Eysenck HJ, Eysenck SBG (1964b) The Eysenck Personality Inventory. London: Univ. London Press

Fintz AS (2006) Die Kunst der Beratung. Jaspers' Philosophie in sinnorientierter Beratung. Bielefeld: Sirius

Frankl V [(1938a) 1987] Zur geistigen Problematik der Psychotherapie. In: Frankl V: Logotherapie und Existenzanalyse. Texte aus fünf Jahrzehnten. Munich: Piper, 15-30

Frankl V [(1938b) 1987] Seelenärztliche Selbstbestimmung. In: Frankl V: Logotherapie und Existenzanalyse. Texte aus fünf Jahrzehnten. Munich: Piper, 31-35

Frankl V [(1946) 1963] Man's Search for Meaning. New York: Simon & Schuster

Frankl V (1967) Psychotherapy and Existentialism. Selected Papers on Logotherapy. New York: Simon & Schuster

Frankl V [(1946) 1973/1982] The Doctor and the Soul. From Psychotherapy to Logotherapy. New York: Random House, 1973. (German: Ärztliche Seelsorge. Vienna: Deuticke, [1946] 1982. After 1987: Frankfurt: Fischer).

Frankl V (1982) Ärztliche Seelsorge. Vienna: Deuticke

Frankl V (1983) Theorie und Therapie der Neurosen. Munich: Reinhardt

Frankl V [(1959) 1987] Logotherapie und Existenzanalyse. Texte aus fünf Jahrzehnten. Munich: Piper

Frankl V (1988) The Will to Meaning. Foundations and Applications of Logotherapy. New York: Nal Penguin

Frankl V (1995) Was nicht in meinen Büchern steht. Munich: Quintessenz [english: recollections – an autobiography. Cambridge: Basic Book, 2000]

Frankl V (1997) Psychotherapie in der Praxis. Munich: Piper

Furnica C (2003) The "Para-Existential" Personality Disorder. In: European Psychotherapy 4, 97-106

Görres A (1978) Kennt die Psychologie den Menschen? Fragen zwischen Psychotherapie, Anthropologie und Christentum. Munich: Piper.

Görtz A (2001) Weitere empirische Forschungsarbeiten zur Existenzanalyse seit 1995. In: Existenzanalyse 18, 1, 59-60

Grawe K (ed) (1998) Psychologische Therapie. Göttingen: Hogrefe

Harlow LL, Newcomb MD, Bentler PM (1986) Depression, self-derogation, substance use, and suicide ideation: Lack of purpose in life as a mediational factor. In: Journal of Clinical Psychology 42, 5-21

Heidegger M ([1926] 1962) Being and Time. Oxford: Blackwell

Hofstätter PR (1957) Psychologie. Frankfurt a.M.: Fischer,

Kolbe C (ed) (1992) Biographie. Verständnis und Methodik biographischer Arbeit in der Existenzanalyse. Vienna: GLE

Kundi M, Wurst E, Längle A (2003) Existential Analytical Aspects of Mental Health. In: European Psychotherapy, 4, 87-96

Laireiter AR, Schirl CF, Kimeswenger I, Längle A, Sauer J (2000) Zufriedenheit mit Existenzanalyse. Ergebnisse einer katamnestischen Feldstudie zur Patientenbeurteilung von existenzanalytisch-logotherapeutischer Psychotherapie. In: Existenzanalyse 17, 3, 40-50

Längle A (1988) Wende ins Existentielle. Die Methode der Sinnerfassung. In: Längle A. (Hg) Entscheidung zum Sein. V. E. Frankls Logotherapie in der Praxis. Munich: Piper, 40-52

Längle A (1993) Personale Existenzanalyse In: Längle A (Hrsg) Wertbegegnung. Phänomene und methodische Zugänge. Vienna: GLE-Verlag, 133-160

Längle A (1995) Personal Existential Analysis. In: Psychotherapy East and West. Integration of Psychotherapies. Seoul: Korean Acadamy of Psychotherapists 1995, 348-364

A. Längle: From Viktor Frankl's Logotherapy to Existential Analytic psychotherapy

Längle A (1996) Der Verlust des Zusammenhalts. Psychopathologie und existentielle Themen in der Schizophrenie. In: Existenzanalyse 13, 13-22

Längle A (1997a) Die personale Positionsfindung (PP) in der Angsttherapie. In: Hofmann P., Lux M., Probst Ch., Steinbauer M., Taucher J., Zapotoczky H.-G. (Hg.). Klinische Psychotherapie. Vienna/New York: Springer, 284-297

Längle A (1997b) Die Angst als existentielles Phänomen. Ein existenzanalytischer Zugang zu Verständnis und Therapie von Ängsten. In: Psychotherapie, Psychosomatik und Psychologie 47:227-233

Längle A (1998a) Viktor Frankl. Ein Porträt. Munich: Piper

Längle A (1998b) Zur ontologischen und existentiellen Bestimmung von Sinn. Analyse und Weiterführung des logotherapeutischen Sinnverständnisses. In: Csef H, ed. Sinnverlust und Sinnfindung in Gesundheit und Krankheit. Gedenkschrift für Dieter Wyss. Würzburg: Könighausen und Neumann, 247-258

Längle A (2000a) Die Willensstärkungsmethode (WSM). In: Existenzanalyse 17, 1, 4-16

Längle A (2000b) Phänomenologische Dialogübung ("Sesselmethode"). In: Existenzanalyse 17, 1, 21-30

Längle A (2013a) Viktor Frankl – eine Begegnung. Vienna: Facultas-WUV

Längle A (2000c) (Ed) Praxis der Personalen Existenzanalyse. Vienna: Facultas Längle A (2013b) Grundlagen der Existenzanalyse. Vienna: Facultas WUV

Längle A (2002a) (ed) Hysterie. Vienna: Facultas University-Press

Längle A (2002b) Die grandiose Einsamkeit. Narzißmus als anthropologisch-existentielles Phänomen. In: Existenzanalyse 19, 12-24

Längle A (2003a) Wertberührung – Bedeutung und Wirkung des Fühlens in der existenzanalytischen Therapie. In: Längle A, ed. Emotion und Existenz. Vienna: Facultas University-Press, 49-76

Längle A (2003b) Burnout – Existential Meaning and Possibilities of Prevention. In: European Psychotherapy 4, 107-121

Längle A (2004) Dialogik und Dasein. Zur Initiierung des psychotherapeutischen Prozesses und der alltäglichen Kommunikation. In: Daseinsanalyse 20, 211-236

Längle A (2008) Existenzanalyse. In: Längle A, Holzhey-Kunz A: Existenzanalyse und Daseinsanalyse. Vienna: UTB (Facultas), 29-180

Längle A (2013) Lehrbuch zur Existenzanalyse – Grundlagen. Wien: facultas.wuv

Längle A, Görtz A (1993) Antrag für die Anerkennung der Existenzanalyse als methodenspezifische Ausbildungsrichtung für Psychotherapie. Vienna: Federal Ministry of Health

Längle A, Görtz A, Rauch J, Jarosik H, Haller R (2000) Effektivitätsstudie zur Existenzanalyse. Explorativer Vergleich mit anderen Psychotherapiemethoden im stationären Setting. In: Existenzanalyse 17, 17-29

Längle A, Görtz A, Probst C, Probst M, Lopatka C, Kubin M, Steinert K (2005) Wie wirksam ist existenzanalytische Psychotherapie: ein Projektbericht zur Existenzanalyse. In: Psychotherapie Forum 13, 2, 54-60

Längle A, Orgler Ch (1990) Existenzskala. Handanweisung zum Test. Vienna: GLE-Verlag

Längle A, Orgler Ch, Kundi M (2000) Existenzskala ESK. Göttingen: Hogrefe-Beltz

Längle A, Probst C (ed) (1997) Süchtig sein. Entstehung, Formen und Behandlung von Abhängigkeiten. Vienna: Facultas University-Press

Nindl A (2001) Zwischen existentieller Sinnerfüllung und Burnout Eine empirische Studie aus existenzanalytischer Perspektive Existenzanalyse 18, 1, 15-23

Maslow AH (1954) Motivation and Personality. New York: Harper & Row

Lukas E (1980) Auch dein Leben hat Sinn. Logotherapeutische Wege zur Gesundung. Freiburg, Herder

Regazzo LD, Längle A, Regazzo G (2008) Efficacia della Psicoterapia Analitico Esistenziale: Esperimento, Studi e Ricerche. Padua: Cleup

Rogers C (1951) Client-centered therapy: Its current practice, implications and theory. London: Constable. ISBN 1-84119-840-4

Rogers CR (1961) On becoming a person. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 50-56

Rogers CR (1966) Client-centered therapy. In: Arieti S (ed) American handbook of psychiatry, vol. 3. New York: Basic Books, 183-200

Scheler M (1980) Der Formalismus in der Ethik und die materiale Wertethik. Berne: Franke

Soucek W (1948) Die Existenzanalyse Frankls, die dritte Richtung der Wiener Psychotherapeutischen Schule. Deutsche Medizinische Wochenschrift 73, 594

Spiegelberg H (1985) Die Rolle der Phänomenologie in Viktor Frankls Logotherapie und Existenzanalyse. In: Längle A (ed) Wege zum Sinn. Logotherapie als Orientierungshilfe. Munich: Piper, 55-70

Stumm G, Wirth B (eds) (1994) Psychotherapie. Schulen und Methoden. Eine Orientierungshilfe für Theorie und Praxis. Vienna: Falter

Stumm G, Pritz A (eds) (2000) Wörterbuch der Psychotherapie. Vienna: Springer

Tutsch L (2003) Of the Phenomenology and Therapy of Narcissistic Personality Disturbance. In: European Psychotherapy 4, 71-85

van Deurzen E (2010) Everyday Mysteries: A Handbook of Existential Psychotherapy (2nd Ed.). London: Routledge

Waisberg JL, Porter JE (1994) Purpose in life and outcome of treatment for alcohol dependence. In: British Journal of Clinical Psychology 44, 49-63

Wicki B (1991) Die Existenzanalyse von Viktor E. Frankl als Beitrag zu einer anthropologisch fundierten Pädagogik. Berne: Haupt

Wong PTP, Fry PS (eds) (1998) The Human Quest for Meaning. A Handbook of Psychological Research and Clinical Applications. Mahwah: Lawrence Erlbaum

Yalom ID (1980) Existential Psychotherapy. New York: Basic Books

Zerssen v D (1976) Depressivitäts-Skala. Manual. Weinheim: Beltz

Zika S, Chamberlain K (1992) On the relation between meaning in life and psychological well-being. In: British Journal of Psychology 83, 133-145

Correspondence address

Alfried Längle, M.D., Ph.D., hon.D.

President of the International Society for Logotherapy and Existential Analysis

Ed. Suess-Gasse 10 I A-1150 Vienna

alfried.laengle@existenzanalyse.org | www.existenzanalyse.org