



The Structure of Existence –

a Phenomenological Basis for all Psychotherapies

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Content

1. Background
2. The existential goal
3. The existential dynamics
4. The existential turn
5. Positioning: Inner consent
6. Fundaments of existence



1. Background



S. Freud
1856 - 1939

Where It (id)
was -
shall I be.

I for Freud = consciousness

- Freud's Motto: „To make conscious what was uncounscious“

I for Freud = consciousness

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

Berggasse 19
Vienna





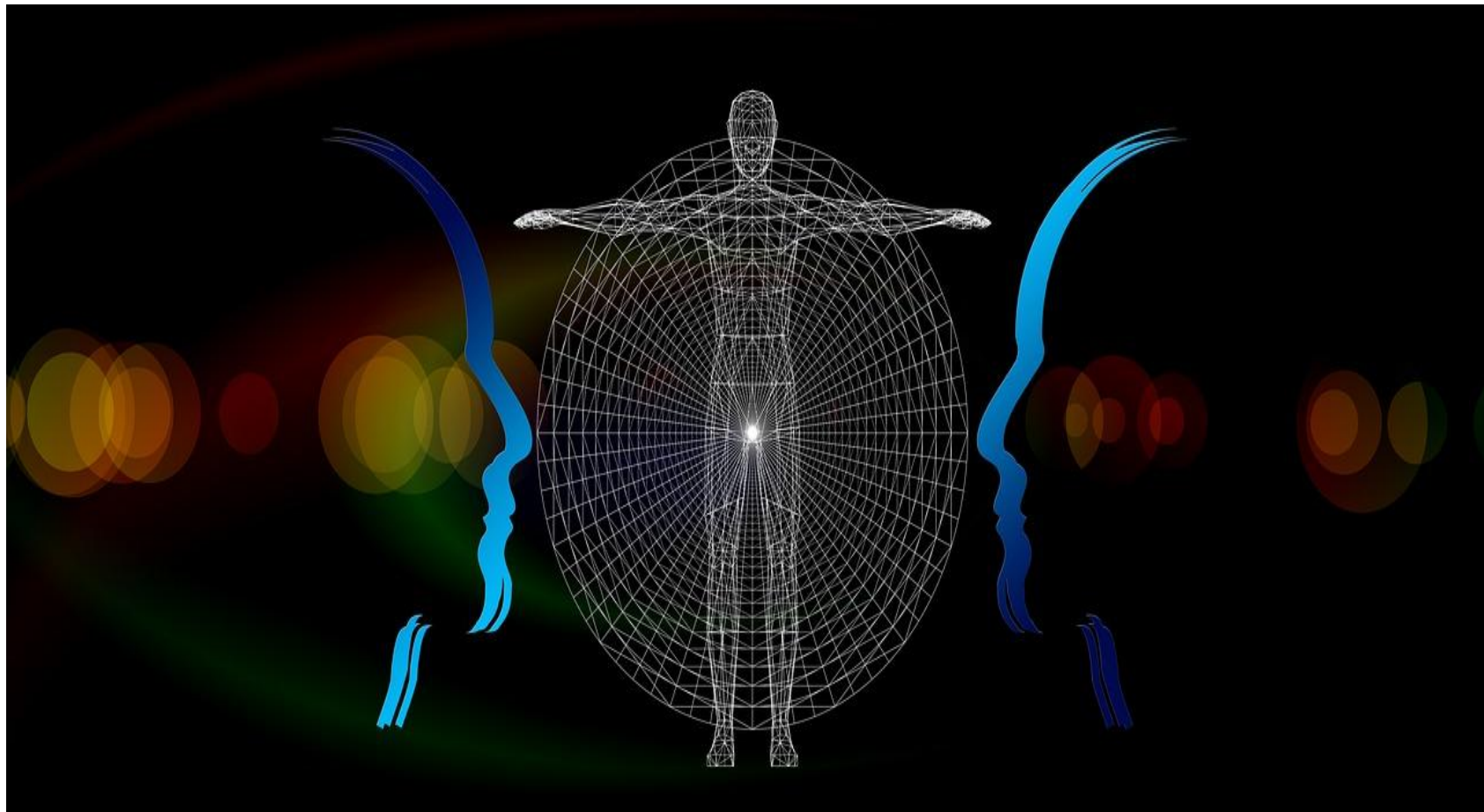
Will to
meaning

Viktor
Frankl
1905-1997

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



2. The existential goal





to help people
to live with
inner consent
to what they are doing

Längle 2021

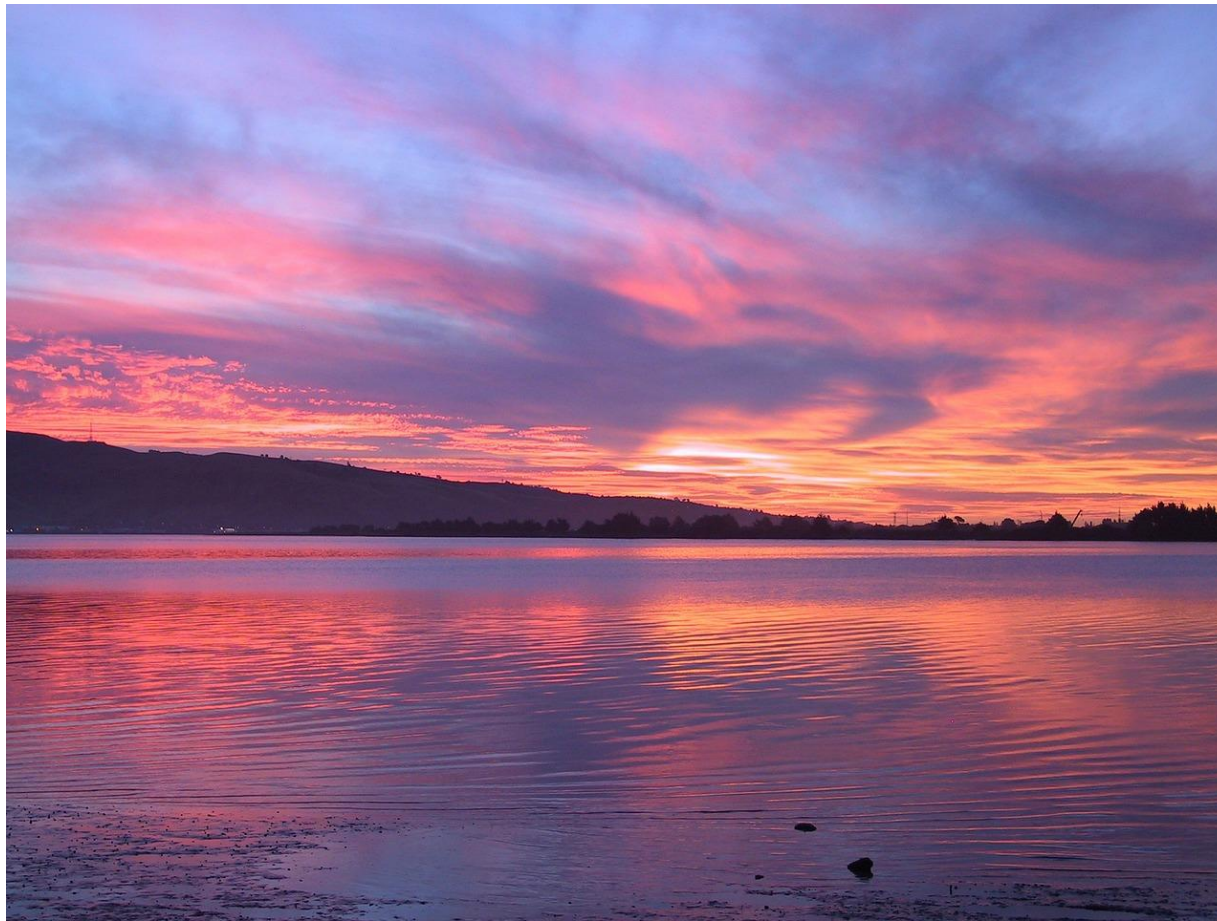


What is „inner consent“?

**= inner felt „yes“,
a con-“sent“**



3. The existential dynamics





3. The Existential Dynamics

**Being human = Being-in-the-
World**

(Heidegger)

(= Dasein)

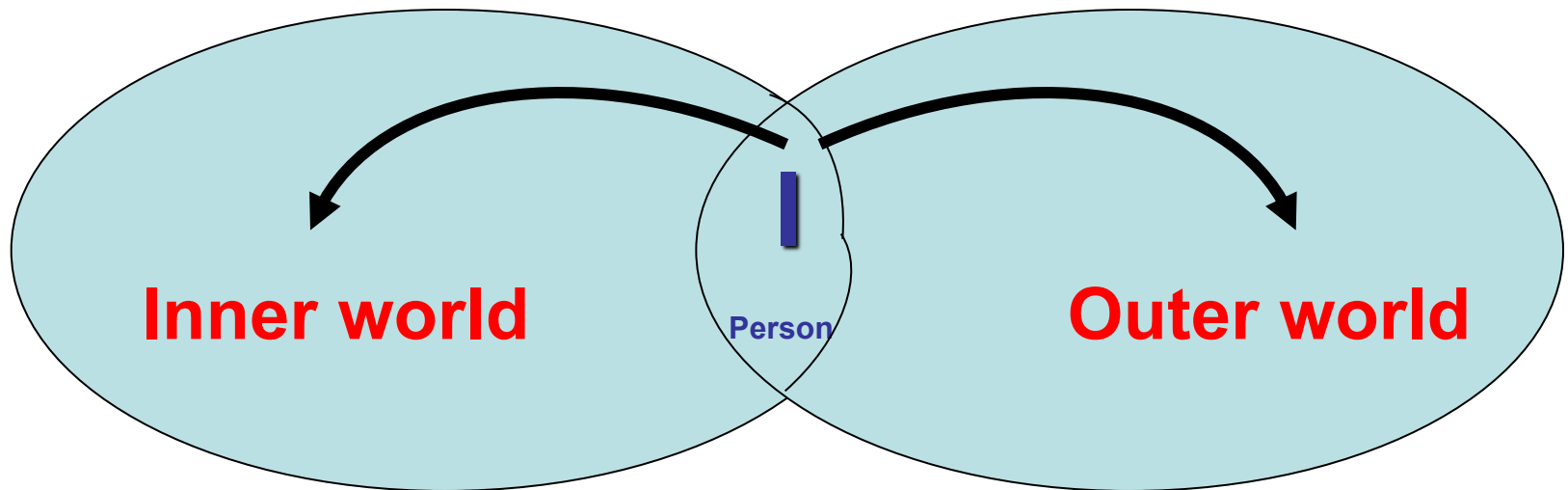
**Being-in-the-World =
dialogical:**

→ to deal with the *other* and
with *oneself*

= Existence



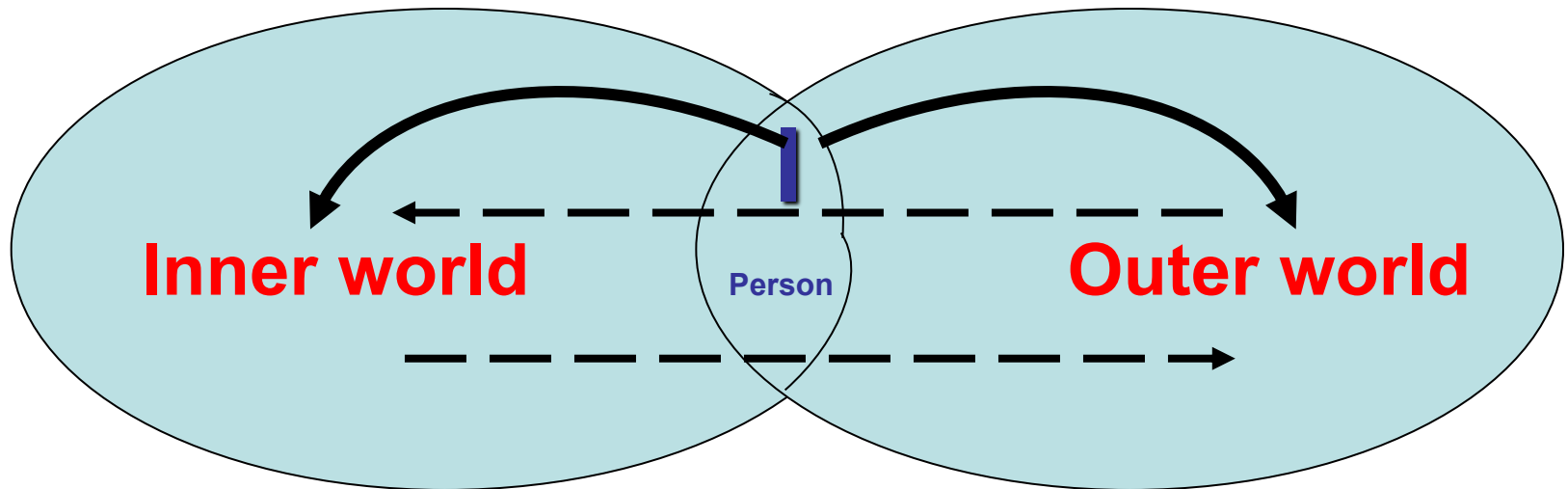
3. The Existential Dynamics



Being human means to always stand in two worlds simultaneously and inseparably.



3. The Existential Dynamics



Person stands in continuous inner and outer dialogue – on the basis of **phenomenological openness**

Fundament:

The Person's capacity to see what is **essential** to them

- what *resonates* with them
- what *matters* to them actually
- with what they feel congruent



4. The existential turn

A result of living essentially,
„phenomenologically“



Phenomenological attitude:

= let oneself **being asked** by the actual situation instead of claiming from it [V. Frankl]



4. The existential turn

Instead of **aiming / asking** for
what you want...

Let yourself being asked by
the situation (V. Frankl)

→ **See yourself as the decisive
center of your world!**



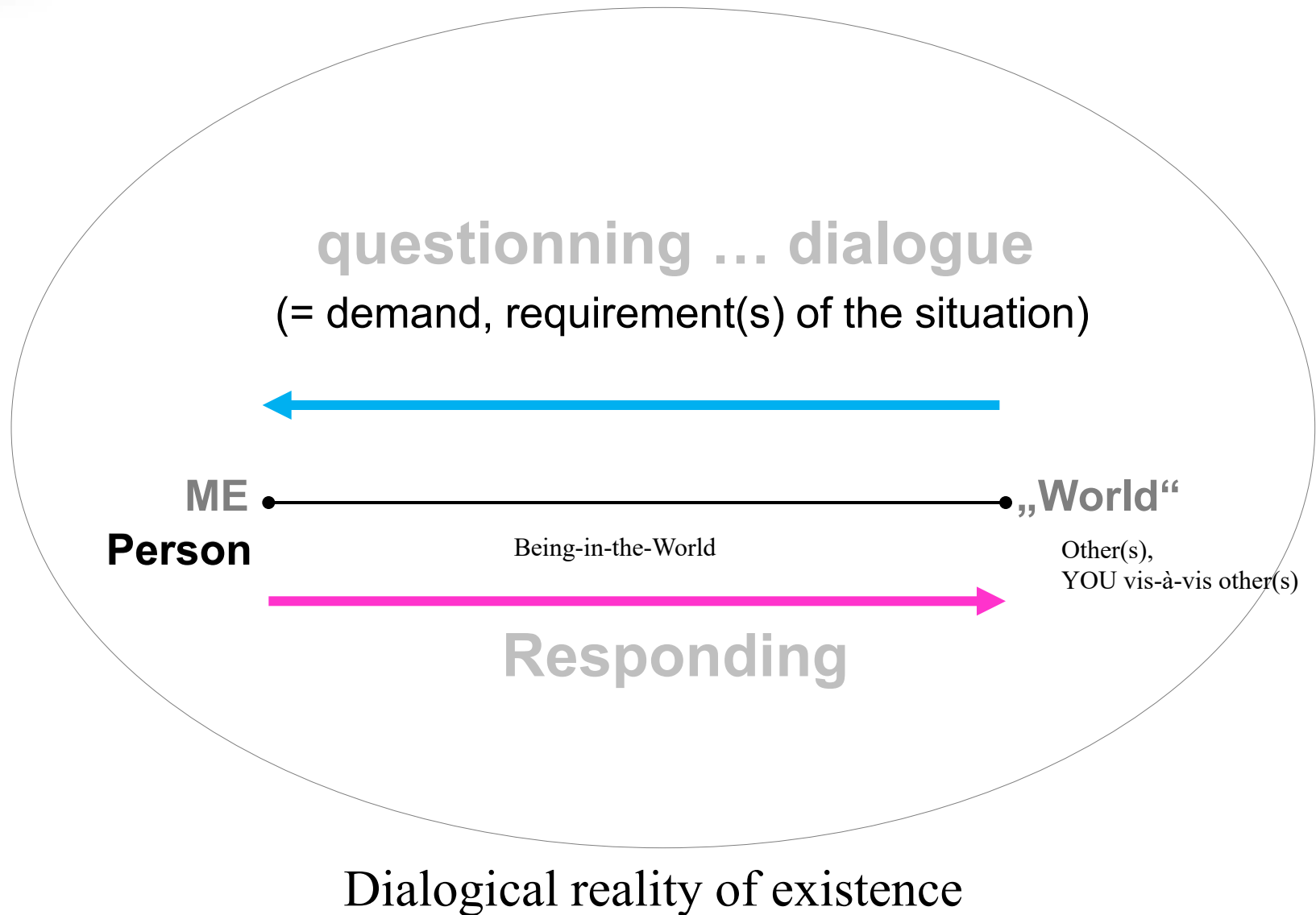
4. The existential turn

questionning, asking...dialogue towards me
(= demand, requirement(s) of the situation)





4. The existential turn





4. The existential turn

In other words...

Being human means:
⇒ **being questionned**



4. The existential turn

In other words...

Being human means:

⇒ **being questionned**

to live means:

⇒ **giving answers**



5. Positioning oneself

= Inner consent

needs openness towards
the inside + continuous
inner and outer DIALOG



- Actualisation of personal **freedom**
- Activation of **oneself**
- Making oneself **present** and participating



- actualisation of personal freedom
- Activation of oneself
- Making oneself present and participating

→ **com-mitment**

→ **inner fulfillment**

The inner consent am I!



Consent is based on the
„Cornerstones of existence“:

What are the *central themes of our life*?

What do we have to *deal with* in our life?



6. The Existential Fundamentals





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*)



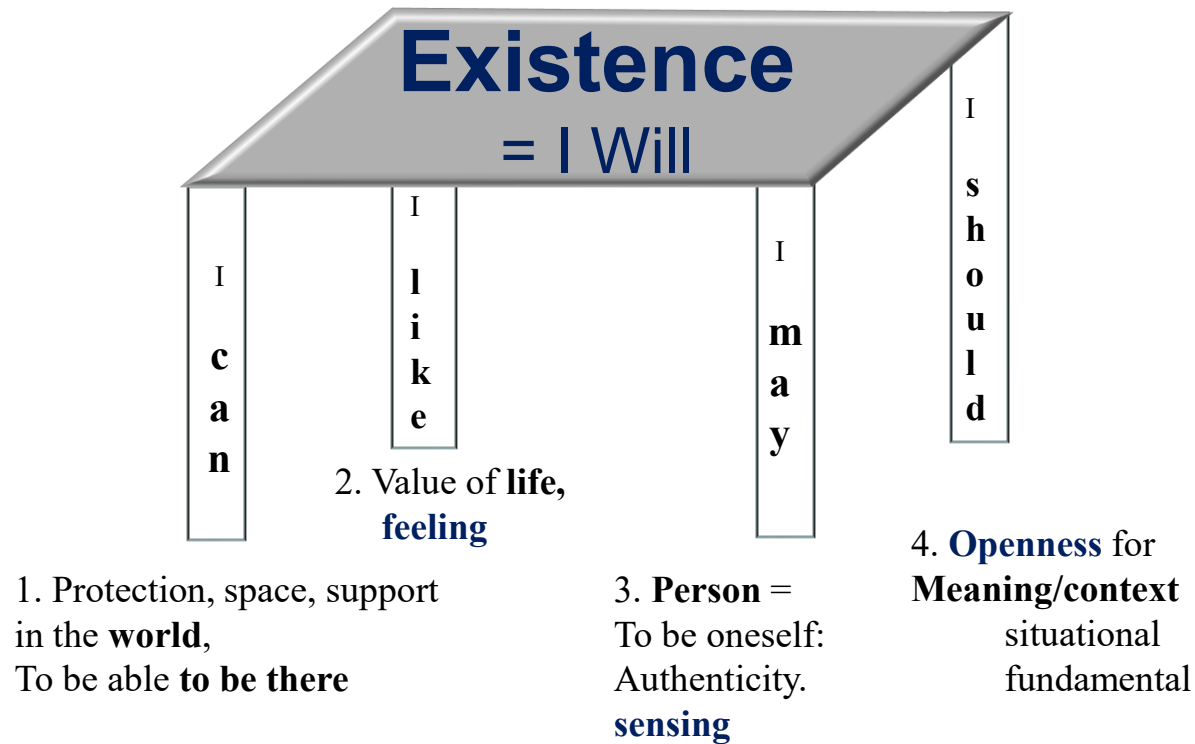
The four fundamental existential activities:

1. I **can** be
2. I **like** to live
3. I **may** be myself
4. I do what I **should**

⇒ **Holistic will**



Overview





Result:



the cornerstones of existence

⇒ 4 fundamental existential
motivations



The first fundamental condition for a fulfilling existence

To be **able** to **be** in this world



6. The existential fundamentals

The first fundamental condition
for fulfilling existence

a) Fundamental question:

I am – can I be?



6. The existential fundamentals

The first fundamental condition
for fulfilling existence

b) Negative consequence:

“I can not: be here”

⇒ **Angst**



6. The existential fundamentals

The first fundamental condition
for fulfilling existence

c) Own activity:

acceptance and endurance



6. The existential fundamentals

The first fundamental condition
for fulfilling existence

d) Precondition:

Protection, Space, Support



The second Fundamental Condition for a fulfilling existence

The ability to **relate**



6. The existential fundamentals

The second fundamental condition
for fulfilling existence

a) Fundamental question:

I am – do I like to live?



6. The existential fundamentals

The second fundamental condition
for fulfilling existence

b) Negative Consequences:

Life is cold

⇒ **Depression**



6. The existential fundamentals

The second fundamental condition
for fulfilling existence

c) Own activity:

Turning towards and grieving



6. The existential fundamentals

The second fundamental condition
for fulfilling existence

d) Precondition:

Relationship, Time, Closeness



The third Fundamental Condition for a fulfilling existence

The ability to be oneself



6. The existential fundamentals

The third fundamental condition
for fulfilling existence

a) Fundamental question

I am myself – **may** I be so?



6. The existential fundamentals

The third fundamental condition
for fulfilling existence

b) Negative consequences:

To lose oneself and the own

⇒ **Hysteria**



6. The existential fundamentals

The third fundamental condition
for fulfilling existence

c) Own activity:

**Looking at and drawing
boundaries**



6. The existential fundamentals

The third fundamental condition
for fulfilling existence

d) Preconditions:

Attention, Justice, Appreciation



6. The existential fundamentals

The third fundamental condition
for fulfilling existence

e) Result:

**Self-image
Ego-strength
Authenticity**



The fourth Fundamental Condition for a fulfilling existence

The capacity to find **meaning**



6. The existential fundamentals

The fourth fundamental condition
for fulfilling existence

a) Fundamental question:

I am there – **what for** good?



6. The existential fundamentals

The fourth fundamental condition
for fulfilling existence

b) Negative consequence:

Without meaning – we will, no
orientation

⇒ **danger of addiction,
Suicidality**



6. The existential fundamentals

The fourth fundamental condition
for fulfilling existence

c) Own activity:

**To bring oneself into
concordance with the situation
and to dedicate (commit)**



6. The existential fundamentals

The fourth fundamental condition
for fulfilling existence

d) Preconditions:

Field of activity

Structural context

Value in the future



6. The existential fundamentals

The fourth fundamental condition
for fulfilling existence

e) Result:

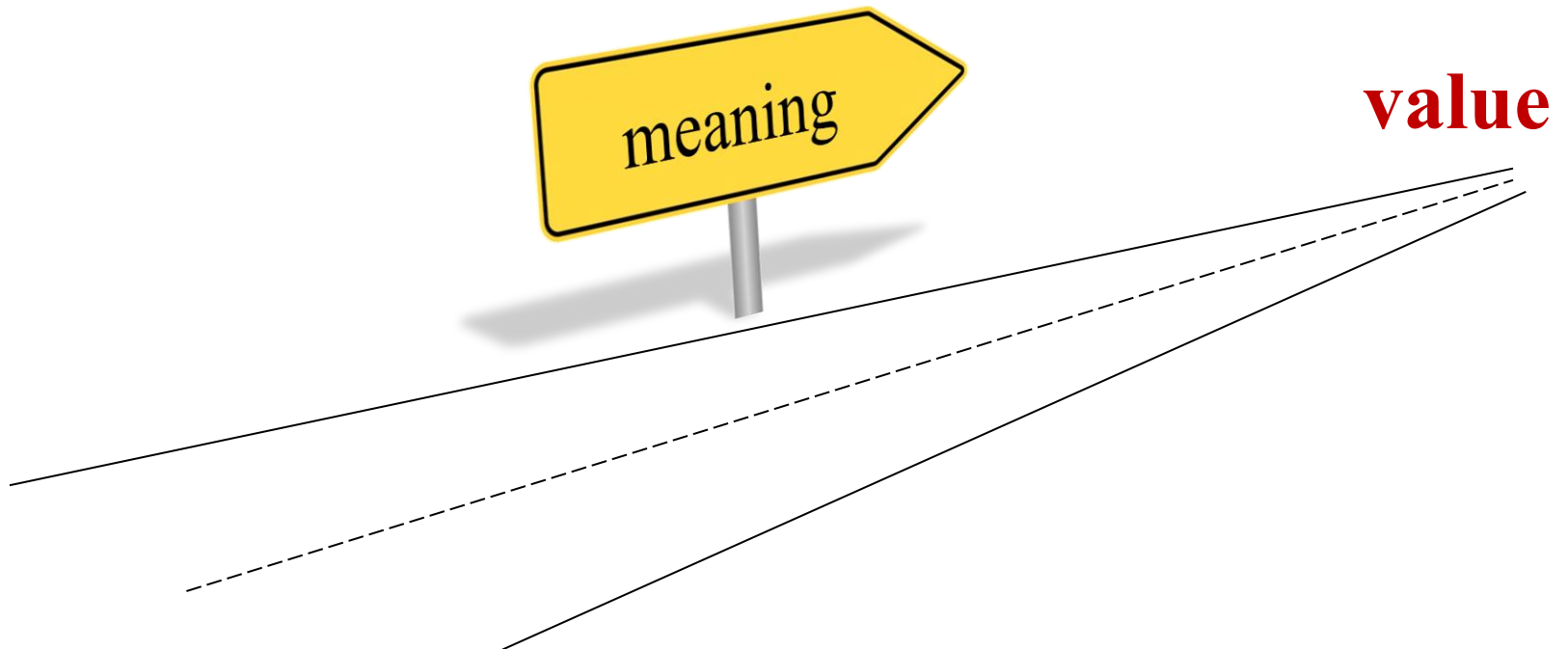
Existential meaning =
to devote to the **most valuable**
possibility of the situation



6. The existential fundamentals

Existential Meaning:

Meaning alignment to a value





Summing up:

1. CAN
2. LIKE
3. MAY
4. SHOULD

→ **WANT**



Result:

→ **Commitment**

FLOW

Inner Fulfillment



Fian

Final perspective:

Answering life



Fian

Final perspective:

Answering life

with inner commitment leads to



Fian

Final perspective:

**Answering life
with inner commitment leads to
inner fulfillment**



Thank you for
your attention!

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