

READING 1.1.2**A Brief History of Logotherapy**

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The history of a new school of thought is, in its first phase, largely the history of its founder, following step by step as the new line of thought is developed. In its second phase, the views of the founder find acceptance and gather disciples. Then, in a third phase, the followers of the founder apply and expand these ideas to test, then deepen and modify them as they feel it necessary and justified. The flowers which grow from the original seeds may often surprise the founder. Freud, Marx, and Jesus would be astonished to see all the things that have been said, written, and done in their names. At this moment the history of Logotherapy has reached the threshold between its second and third phases, with the founder fortunately still actively participating and watching the developments of his Logotherapy, offering guidance and criticism.

Viktor E. Frankl's writings are to a large extent autobiographical. We can see how his thoughts from the earliest beginnings have developed, both chronologically and systematically, until they became what is often referred to as the third Viennese school of psychotherapy—Sigmund Freud's being the first and Alfred Adler's the second.

Frankl, with his usual sense of humor, gives us in *An Autobiographical Sketch* (Frank 1981a, p.144) what might be said to be the exact "birthday" of Logotherapy. One evening, he recalls, before falling asleep at the age of four, in 1909, a frightening thought struck him: "One day I, too, will die. I will no longer be alive. What, then, is the meaning of my living?" From that day on, this thought returned to him again and again and he felt compelled to find a satisfactory answer to this question.

By the age of 14, Frankl had already studied the writings of many *Naturphilosophen*, like Wilhelm Oswald and Gustav Theodor Fechner. At that time Frankl wrote a school paper, "We and the World Process", in which he expressed the conviction that there must exist a universal balancing principle, both in the macrocosm and in the microcosm. At 15, while still in high school, Frankl attended evening classes in the people's college—something akin to adult education schools. The courses he took were "Applied Psychology" and "Experimental Psychology." Soon courses in Freud's psychoanalysis followed, given by the well-known Freud disciples Paul Schilder and Eduard Hitschmann.

These studies motivated Frankl, then still attending high school, to write to Sigmund Freud, who promptly replied, and a protracted correspondence developed. This correspondence would be of historical interest now, but all of it was lost when Frankl was taken to the concentration camp. During that time Frankl sent an article to Freud, who accepted it for publication in his *Internationale Zeitschrift fur Psychoanalyse* (Frankl, 1924). By the time the article was published, however, Frankl had already come under the influence of Alfred Adler and his school of Individual Psychology.

Nonetheless, Freud's influence was apparent in Frankl's graduation paper, a project assigned to all students in Vienna to prove that they were qualified for university study. Frankl's paper was entitled, "About the Psychology of Philosophical Thinking" and was completely psychoanalytically oriented, in line with Freud's theories, explaining human nature strictly biologically and therefore reductionistically.

At the age of 17, Frankl was asked to give a lecture in a philosophy seminar at the people's college. He selected for his topic "The Meaning of Life." Already in this lecture Frankl developed two main points of his future theories: (1) that life does not answer our questions

about the meaning of life, but rather puts those questions to us, leaving it for us to find the answers by deciding what we find meaningful; and (2) that the ultimate meaning of life is beyond the grasp of our intellect, but is something we only can live by, without ever being able to define it cognitively.

Frankl's seeking was in fact reflected in his society as a whole. Those first few years after the end of the First World War were years of great soul-searching in Austria, both individually and as a nation. The Habsburg Empire, having played an important role in Europe for many centuries, had collapsed, creating an "existential vacuum," which the new Austrian republic was attempting to fill. An empire of 60 million people had been reduced to a small nation of six million. Vienna's magnificent educational, cultural, and economic institutions—the universities, academies, theaters, operas and concert halls, the publishing houses, banks and insurance companies, administrative and industrial complexes—were to serve one-tenth of the population they had served before. Out of the six million Austrians, two million still lived in Vienna as before, a swollen head for that small body. The existential question in everyone's mind was: "Has this new miniature Austria a right to exist? What shall be the meaning for this new Austria? Just where can meaning be found?"

Every Austrian had to confront the task of readjusting his or her life to the new situation. What did life mean for the large number of aristocrats now that the emperor's court was gone? What did life mean for the equally large number of well-educated professors, state officials and writers, who already during the Habsburg monarchy had admired German culture, writers and musicians, especially Richard Wagner? More than ever, they were debating whether the new meaning for Austria and the Austrians would be to become a part of a "Greater Germany." The majority of Austrians were strongly conservative, religious, mostly Catholic, looking for ways to preserve their old values and traditions. In opposition to these conservative Austrians who formed the government, were the Social Democrats, concentrated in Vienna, who saw it as their task to form a liberal, socialistic, and anti-traditional society, with equal rights for all leading to freedom of opinion, freedom from dogmas, and freedom for academic research. This, to the Social Democrats, was to be the new meaning of life in the new Austria.

It is therefore not surprising that in those years of soul-searching, Alfred Adler established a school of psychology looking for meaningful concepts which would allow more individual freedom. Adler had been one of Freud's most important disciples. Freud had even considered him the crown prince of the psychoanalytical movement. By this time, he had been separated from the Freudian school for a few years. Freud's psychoanalysis was based on what until then was considered the only possible way for a psychology to gain scientific recognition: it was a biologically anchored system in which everything was explained by the laws of cause and effect. Actions or decisions by a free will were thereby excluded from consideration, and all human behavior was explained by urges and drives, reduced to reaction, not action. Cause and effect served to explain hysterics and neuroses as the illnesses of a sick person.

Alfred Adler rebelled against this concept. In his medical research, he had found that certain bodily "conditions," or bodily inferiorities, do not necessarily bring about the expected "effects." Contrary to the biological expectations, by an act of will the patient could counteract illness, inferiority, and overcome the effects psychologically. Adler concluded that humans have a creative power which elevates them above the animal level and thereby makes them different. This difference allows them to choose which conditions in life they will accept or reject as decisive for their life. They can make use of their free will in selecting the means by which they reach their chosen goals. Life offers choices, but each individual decides on what is meaningful. These ideas were heresy in Freud's opinion; they were "metaphysical" and "unscientific." Consequently, Adler was expelled from the Psychoanalytic Association.

Adler went on to complete his own system, Individual Psychology. This new school of psychology fitted very well in the conditions then prevailing in Vienna. Its Social Democratic government introduced liberal programs in education (except for the universities which were outside their control), social welfare, nursery and childcare. Counseling centers for children, students, and young workers were established. Because Adler himself was a Social Democrat, his theories found quick acceptance in and support from the Viennese school administration. It was Adler's position that the lifestyle of each individual was formed during the first few years of life and that during this time, one could do much to help form a positive, courageous, co-operative view of life and to prevent negative, timid and uncooperative attitudes.

The new liberal school system in Vienna already had introduced greater student participation in school work, and even some degree of co-administration with the students, called *Schulgemeinde* (student community). Adler also requested that students receive individual counseling to foster a sense of personal responsibility for their attitudes at school, their actions, and their motivation toward meaning in their lives. Such views found a sympathetic ear in Frankl.

Before graduating from high school, Frankl had followed Freud's theories, but new concepts were forming in his head. Frankl's idea that individuals had to find their own meaning in life differed sharply from Freud's reductionist and mechanical views of the human being. When Frankl entered the University of Vienna, to start his medical studies, he first considered becoming a dermatologist or a gynecologist, but then decided to become a psychiatrist. Already in his first year at the University, Frankl, who had become a Social Democrat like Adler and in 1924 president of the Social Democratic student movement, was attracted to Adler and his Association for Individual Psychology. Frankl became one of its youngest members and in 1925 published his first article in the *Internationale Zeitschrift fuer Individualpsychologie*, with the title "Psychotherapie and Weltanschauung" (Frankl, 1925).

A few years after joining the Association of Individual Psychology, Frankl became well-known and well-liked in that group. He was invited to read papers at meetings, among them the 1926 International Congress for Individual Psychology in Duesseldorf, Germany, when only 21 years of age. In this paper, and more so later on, Frankl developed ideas which were to some extent outside the traditional framework of Adler's system of thinking. Frankl's deviation from the generally accepted views of Individual Psychology began with his interpretation of neuroses. Adler maintained that individuals develop neuroses when they feel, in their subconscious, that they cannot reach the goals they have set for themselves. Adler considered the neurosis a "trick," and "arrangement" to cover up failure. This explanation did not fully satisfy Frankl, who maintained that a neurosis did not always have this "arrangement" character, but could also be a genuine expression of the person.

Adler did not like this "deviation" of Frankl. Also, at this time Frankl was influenced by Rudolf Allers and Oswald Schwarz, both members of the Association of Individual Psychology, but also independent and critical minds. When Allers founded his "Sinnesphysiologisches Laboratorium," (Sensory Physiological Laboratory), Frankl started work there. Schwarz, considered the founder of psychosomatic medicine, appealed to Frankl's own way of thinking. Soon, Frankl encountered the works of the philosopher and phenomenologist Max Scheler, whose *Formalism in Ethics*, with its existentialist views, became a kind of bible for Frankl.

Allers and Schwarz left the Association of Individual Psychology. Frankl intended to remain within the Association and tried to serve as mediator in the conflict between Adler on the one hand and Allers and Schwarz on the other. But throughout the attempted rapprochement, Frankl continued to refer to Schwarz as "my great teacher." Still within the Association of

Individual Psychology, Frankl started to publish his own individual psychological magazine under the heading, *Man in Daily Life*. Adler no longer spoke to Frankl, but messages reached Frankl asking him to resign from the Association. Frankl resisted but, finally, to his great chagrin, was expelled from the Association—in the same way Adler himself had been expelled by Freud from his Psychoanalytical Association. (So far, at least, no one has been expelled from the Institute of Logotherapy!)

Even today, Frankl still feels an attachment to Adler's Individual Psychology. Some Adlerians, like Wexberg, Dreikurs, and Adler's daughter Alexandra, preserved their friendship with Frankl through the years. In 1969, Frankl gave a lecture in Berkeley and, during the question period, I wrote down my question: "During your lecture I found a lot of similarity with Alfred Adler's views. What would you say are the differences?" Frankl picked my question among many and replied: "I was the Benjamin of the Adlerian Society in Vienna as a young man of 20. If I had not been expelled by Alfred Adler due to going a few steps further than he, I probably would still be an individual psychologist. On the other hand, I hope Alfred Adler, if he were still alive today, may well be agreeable to my new concepts."

The main difference between Frankl's Logotherapy and Adler's Individual Psychology lies in their views about the meaning of life. Adler, when breaking with Freud, recognized the importance of free will in choosing one's goals. Adler maintained that a person's choice of goals could not be predicted or explained even if one could know all components positive and negative, that influenced the person as a child. But once the person has chosen those goals, Adler believed, the law of cause and effect will come into play, but controlled not by one's past, but rather by one's chosen goals. Frankl, for his part, insisted that human beings are motivated by their will to meaning, to reach out, to self-transcend. Frankl himself explained the differences in these words: "in contrast to Freudian psychoanalysis, Adlerian individual psychology views man as a being directed to goals rather than driven by drives, but the goals, upon closer scrutiny, do not actually transcend man's self or his psyche. Rather, they are conceived of as *intropsychic*, insofar as man's strivings are, in the final analysis, seen as mere devices to come to terms with his feelings of inferiority and insecurity" (1978, p. 61).

Around 1929, Adler began to speak about the "meaning of life" and about the creative power of the individual which could be applied independent of prevailing conditions. But Frankl went much further. He declared the dimension of the human spirit to be the essence of humanness.

There is no doubt that Adler, in his last years, began to deepen his thoughts in the direction into which Frankl had moved so much earlier and which had brought about Frankl's expulsion from the Adlerian circle. In 1931 Adler wrote his book *What Life Should Mean to You* and in 1933 another book, *The Meaning of Life*. Also in 1933 Adler wrote, in cooperation with Ernst Jahn, *Individual Psychology and Religion*. In a recent book, Henry Jacoby, an individual psychologist and contemporary of Frankl, commented: "That the Marxist individual psychologists were disappointed with Adler's position and considered it an outcome of petty bourgeois thinking could be explained from the political situation at that time. His (Adler's) interpretation that to speak of establishing a society of *Gemeinschaft* (co-fellowship), and that this can be done from a viewpoint of eternity, not as something for the moment but as an eternal task, showed greater wisdom than the political impatience of those years did show" (Jacoby, 1980, p. 129). This view is quite close to Frankl's views of the meaning of the moment and ultimate meaning. If such a strongly Marxist individual psychologist as Henry Jacoby could come so close to Frankl, it could well have happened that Adler himself, if alive, might be closer to Frankl's views today, thereby vindicating Frankl's expression of that hope in his 1969 lecture in Berkeley.

In 1929, no longer belonging to the Adlerian Society, Frankl established his own youth

counseling centers for “youth in distress,” primarily students and the unemployed. He taught classes in the people’s college in “psychohygiene.” At the University of Vienna, even before completing his medical studies, Frankl was permitted to apply psychotherapy to patients coming for help to the psychotherapy department of the university. During this period, as Frankl himself has stated, he began to learn from his patients what their true problems were and developed a therapy to help them.

Through this direct contact with patients, Frankl discovered early indications that the problems of his contemporaries in the thirties were shifting from repressed sex to repressed meanings. This finding has been discussed at length in his later writings: “In contrast to the findings of Sigmund Freud, man is no longer sexually frustrated. . . but rather ‘existentially frustrated.’ And in contrast to the findings of Alfred Adler, his main complaint is no longer a feeling of inferiority, but rather a feeling of meaninglessness and emptiness, which I have termed “existential vacuum” (1978, p. 95).

During the thirties, Frankl developed many of his new concepts for which he gradually coined new terms, such as ‘existential vacuum’ (Coined in 1955, although the condition was described in publications that date back to 1946), ‘self-transcendence’ (1949), and ‘paradoxical intention’ (1939). The term Logotherapy was first used by Frankl in a lecture presented in 1926 at the Academic Society for Medical Psychology. He later used the term *Existenzanalyse*, but when his works after World War II were translated into English, the English translation “existential analysis” was found to be identical with Binswanger’s *Daseinsanalyse*. Frankl therefore went back to using the term Logotherapy.

After obtaining his doctorate in psychiatric medicine, Frankl worked in a neurological hospital in Vienna, where he became director of the department for female suicidal patients. In 1937, Frankl started a private practice as specialist in neurology and psychiatry. A few months later, Hitler occupied Austria. Although he had a visa to immigrate to the United States, he decided to remain with his parents in Vienna. He accepted the directorship of the Neurological Department of the Jewish Rothschild Hospital in Vienna, all other opportunities for work being closed to him.

With the threat of the concentration camp hanging over his head, Frankl hurried to put on paper the essence of his thoughts and theories in a book manuscript to which he gave the title *Aerztliche Seelsorge (Medical Ministry)*. When he was taken to the concentration camp in 1942, Frankl had the manuscript with him, but it was taken from him, with everything else he carried. His ideas seemed to be irretrievably lost. However, during an attack of typhoid fever, equipped only with a pencil stump that an inmate had given him as a present for his fortieth birthday and utilizing the back of some forms which a friend had stolen from the camp bureaucracy, Frankl reconstructed the main ideas of the lost manuscript in shorthand notes. He managed to hide these notes until the liberation. The book was published in 1946 in German under its original title, and in 1955 in English with the title *The Doctor and the Soul*.

Frankl considers his experiences in the concentration camps a validation of the concepts on which Logotherapy is based. The camps offered a severe testing ground for the three basic tenets of Logotherapy- (1) that meaning is available even under the most devastating circumstances, (2) that the will to meaning is a stronger motivation for survival than the will to pleasure and the will to power, and (3) that no one can take away our freedom to find meaning by either changing a meaningless situation or, where this is not possible, by changing our attitude toward an unchangeable fate. Also confirmed was Frankl’s belief in the human capacities for self-transcendence and self-detachment. The inmates who had something to live for were pulled through the most miserable life situations, and those who could attain distance from their immediate problems were on their way to overcoming them.

Thus, the insights which Frankl conceived in his youth on purely intuitive grounds have been validated first in the concentration camps of the second World War, later in Japanese, Korean and North Vietnamese prisoner-of-war camps, and more recently by an increasing number of research projects (Frankl, 1981b).

After having spent 2½ years in four concentration camps, Frankl returned to Vienna. His wife and his entire family, except for one sister, had perished. But he survived due to the inherent power of his ideas which, he realized, were more needed than ever in a world that was in a shambles. The immediate result of this realization were one play and one book. The play, *Synchronisation in Birkenwald*, was written in shorthand, within nine hours. The book, *Ein Psychologe erlebt das Konzentrationslager*, (*A Psychologist Experiences the Concentration Camp*), was written within a few weeks but was likewise produced under the impact of his experiences. Both works deal with the subject of the defiant power of the human spirit in facing unavoidable suffering. The play was performed in 1977 by the Institute of Logotherapy in Berkeley using the title, *Synchronization in Buchenwald*. The book *From Death Camp to Existentialism*, later changed to *Man's Search for Meaning*, is undoubtedly Frankl's most influential work, having sold more than two million copies in the United States and been translated into eighteen languages.

The next fifteen years have proved to be the most creative in the development of Logotherapy as an international movement. Frankl became the head of the neurological department of the Poliklinik Hospital in Vienna where he practiced and refined the methods of Logotherapy on thousands of patients. He also went back to the University to earn a second doctor's degree in philosophy. He realized that the strength of Logotherapy was based on a well-thought-out existential philosophy of life that must be lived to be therapeutic. Frankl has remarked that he is the product of three schools—medicine, philosophy, and the school of life (i.e., the concentration camps).

During these fifteen years, Frankl authored some 20 books and numerous articles, refining, polishing, strengthening and expanding the structure of Logotherapy. Many of these books are heavily philosophical or medical, and most have not been translated into English. In the sixties, Frankl started to spread the message of Logotherapy through tours that took him to all continents and repeatedly to the United States, where he has been guest lecturer at more than 140 universities and colleges. A recent survey by the Institute of Logotherapy has established that Logotherapy, in one form or another is being used as a teaching or counseling tool in more than 60 schools of higher learning.

Viktor Frankl has been a visiting professor at Harvard, Southern Methodist, Stanford, and Duquesne universities and in 1972 was appointed Professor of Logotherapy at the United States International University in San Diego where he taught the winter quarter for seven years. In 1977, "The Viktor Frankl Library and Memorabilia" was established at the Graduate Theological Union in Berkeley, and in the same year, the Institute of Logotherapy was founded, also in Berkeley, under Joseph Fabry the Institute's executive director. It is currently providing training for professionals who wish to use Logotherapy to supplement their own approaches. Fabry also is the editor of the *International Forum for Logotherapy*, an annual journal published by the Institute. The First World Congress of Logotherapy was held in San Diego in November 1980, and was attended by 300 participants from twelve countries. This present volume contains the major papers given at the Congress.

Thus, the third phase of Logotherapy's evolution has begun. Psychiatrists, psychologists, physicians, social workers, counselors and educators explore new fields of study with the tools of Logotherapy. New insights, new formulations, and new testing methods of their discoveries drawn from their own experience and practice are being set forth which are not necessarily accepted by Frankl in every detail. The ongoing academic research and

scientific testing of the tenets of Logotherapy sharpens its tools for future use. James Crumbaugh's *Purpose in Life* and *Seeking of Noetic Goals* tests have been applied at many research centers and universities the world over. Other tests include the Logotest by Elisabeth Lukas, and the "Scale to Measure Attitudinal Values as Defined by Viktor Frankl" by Bernard Dansart, and others listed by Frankl (see his opening address in this volume). These tests have enabled doctoral candidates to do research work for their dissertations concerning Logotherapeutic concepts. This brings about what Frankl calls a needed "rehumanization of psychotherapy" in many of the psychology and education departments staffed by scholars trained in methods strictly following analytical or behavioral thinking. Although Logotherapy does not consider itself to be in competition with other schools, but rather an adjunct enhancing their own methods, Frankl feels that Logotherapy makes a contribution to psychotherapy by stressing the specifically human dimension of the human spirit which still is widely neglected in the therapeutic approach. By rejecting Logotherapy as "not scientifically provable," psychotherapy relegates to Frankl a treatment similar to that given by medicine to Freud and Adler early in this century in Vienna. Some behaviorists, however, are starting to read Adler and recently also Frankl and are realizing that there might be something therapeutic in such an individually unique, a basically unrepeatable, and therefore "unscientific" motivation like the will to meaning. The trend toward holistic medicine makes the Logotherapeutic inclusion of the dimension of the human spirit in the therapeutic process more acceptable. And an increasing number of therapists see the human being not as merely *abreacting*, as in the psychoanalytic view, nor as merely *reacting* to stimuli as in a behavioristic approach, but as *acting* according to their will. Although it may be blocked by physiopsychological obstacles, the will nonetheless can take a stand toward, and even against, the limitations of body, mind, and circumstances.

One of the exciting developments in this third phase of the history of Logotherapy is the large and continuously growing number of dissertations about concepts and applications of Logotherapy. They represent research done in universities of the United States, Canada, and Germany as well as in such countries as Italy, France, Spain, Argentina, Brazil, and Mexico. Some of this research is in education, a field until recently occupying the position of a "stepchild" in Logotherapy. This development promises to have far-reaching effects in terms of serving to strengthen the will to meaning among the young and to help them develop purposeful attitudes toward their learning and their lives. This may open the door to a fourth phase in the history when, through the influence of Logotherapeutically trained teachers and Logotherapeutically aware parents, a generation will grow up fortified against the dangers of the existential vacuum and existential frustrations caused by the nihilism and reductionism prevalent today. Thus, such problems as *noögenic neuroses*, alcoholism, drug abuse, violence, and suicide also can be decreased proportionately. By presenting an educational approach that aims at making children aware of meanings and values, Logotherapy in its final phase may do more than cure the sick; it will help the healthy live a more meaningful life. Appropriately, then, education has been designated as the special interest of the Second World Congress of Logotherapy.

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