

**Logo Therapy - Is Life Worth Living?**

\*Mr Santhosh Kumar J & \*\*Dr Rebecca Samson

*“Life Can Be Pulled By Goals  
Just As Surely As It Can Be Pushed By Drives”*

- Viktor Frankl

**Introduction**

**Logo therapy** means “Therapy through meaning”. It's an active-directive therapy aimed at helping people specifically with meaning crises, which manifest themselves either in a feeling of aimlessness or indirectly through addiction, alcoholism or depression. Logo therapy also employs techniques useful for phobias, anxiety, obsessive-compulsive disorders and medical ministry. Other applications include working with juvenile delinquents, career counselling

and helping all of us find more meaning in life.<sup>1</sup>

**Major concepts of logo therapy**

1. **Freedom of will:** Not only freedom from some negative condition but also freedom to something rewarding.
2. **Will to meaning:** Striving to find a meaning in one’s life is the primary motivational force.
3. **Meaning of life:** One can always discover meaning in life regardless of life’s circumstances.<sup>1</sup>

1	Freedom & Responsibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Logo therapy emphasizes the responsible &amp; meaningful use of freedom.</li> <li>• Human existence can only be understood in terms of responsibility.</li> <li>• The will to meaning is based on a sense of responsibility.</li> <li>• Responsibility means meeting the demand quality of every situation.</li> </ul>
2	The will to Meaning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It is the primary motivation for living.</li> <li>• Everyone needs to find the true meaning of one’s own life.</li> <li>• Will to meaning is essential for resilience and well-being to the extent that it means one’s capacity to live in spite of pain &amp; suffering (similar to the will to live, “sei no yokubo”, in Meaningful Life Therapy)</li> </ul>
3	Meaning of Life	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Life has meaning under all circumstances. It is our responsibility to respond to life’s demands.</li> </ul>



		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Each person must discover the meaning potential of each situation.</li> <li>• The ultimate meaning lies in its pursuit.</li> <li>• The situational meaning can be experienced through three avenues of value.</li> </ul>
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**Therapeutic Techniques In Logo Therapy**

1. **Paradoxical Intention:** Indicated in compulsive disorders and anxiety in which the client is guided to overcome their obsessions or anxieties by self-distancing and humorous exaggeration, thus breaking the vicious circle of symptom and symptom amplification.
2. **Dereflection:** Indicated in sexual disorders and sleeplessness in which sensations of anxiousness or sadness will be increased and amplified by self-observation, making them more noticeable. It is the purpose of dereflection to break this neuroticizing circle by drawing the client's attention away from the symptom or the naturally flowing process.
3. **Socratic dialogue:** Certain attitudes and expectations may be obstacles to meaning fulfillment which alienate the person from meaningful potentialities. Through this technique, the individual is guided to perceive their unrealistic and counterproductive attitudes and to develop a new outlook that may be a better basis for a fulfilled life.<sup>2</sup>

**How Logo Therapy Works?**

**Logo therapy**

- Helps the clients in detecting their specific and individual meaning.
- Helps in perceiving and removing those factors that hinder them in pursuing meaningful goals in their lives,
- Enables clients, in the context of the techniques of Paradoxical Intention and Dereflection, to cope with their symptoms and to regain control and self-determination,
- Assists the individual in realization of meaningful goals in their lives,
- Provides the client with room for autonomous action even in the face of somatic or psychological illness,
- Guides in achieving the openness and flexibility that will enable the individual to shape their day-to-day lives in a meaningful manner.<sup>3</sup>

**Techniques in Logo therapy**

- The human being is an entity consisting of body, mind, and spirit.
- Life has meaning under all circumstances, even the most miserable.
- People have a will to meaning.
- People have freedom under all circumstances to activate the will to find meaning.
- Life has a demand quality to which people must respond if decisions are to be meaningful.

- The individual is unique.<sup>4</sup>

### Three basic pathways to meaning

- ✓ **Creative value:** Giving something to the world through creativeness.
- ✓ **Experiential value:** Receiving something from the world through appreciation and gratitude.
- ✓ **Attitudinal value:** taking a heroic stand towards suffering and fate.<sup>4</sup>

### Sources of Meaning

There are 8 sources of meaning and the good life

1. Achievement
2. Acceptance
3. Transcendence
4. Intimacy
5. Relationship
6. Religion
7. Fairness
8. Positive emotions

### The Search for Ultimate Meaning

- It is a matter of choice or presupposition.
- Such a global belief is more adaptive than the alternative that life has no ultimate meaning.
- It is a life-long process; we can only approximate ultimate meaning.
- It is closely related to theistic beliefs.

### Situational Meaning

“Every situation, every unrepeatable moment, offers a specific meaning potential. To respond to these meaning offerings of the moment is to lead a meaningful life”

- There is meaning potential in every situation.
- The search for situational meaning can be facilitated by our global belief in ultimate meaning & enduring values.<sup>4</sup>

### A Meaning Mindset

- Meaning Mindset represents a basic value orientation different from the happiness or success mindsets.
- You cannot really practice Logotherapy without embracing a Meaning Mindset.
- A Meaning Mindset facilitates the discovery of meaning potentials in every situation.

### Meaning vs. Success Mindset

#### Existential Vacuum

- Modern life is characterized by meaninglessness, boredom & alienation.
- Many people seek to assuage inner emptiness through distractions, escape & addiction.
- Such attempts only serve to increase it.
- Existential vacuum may lead to both the tragic triad & neurotic triad.

**Existential Anxieties**

1. Loneliness or alienation.
2. Freedom of choice (basic ontological crisis)
3. Death anxiety.
4. Meaninglessness (Related to the above three)

Many psychiatric symptoms such as depression and anxiety are manifestations of the underlying existential anxieties.<sup>2</sup>

**7 REASONS FOR MEANINGFUL LIVING**

1. Discover the purpose & direction of your life
2. Understand who you are and why you are here
3. Know and pursue what really matters
4. Have a sense of freedom and responsibility to do what is right
5. Become authentic and kind in relating to others
6. Develop the resilience to survive anything life throws at you
7. Live a vital and fulfilling life in all circumstances.<sup>4</sup>

**Research Review**

Delavari H and Nasirian had done a study to evaluate the effectiveness of Logotherapy on anxiety and depression among mothers of children with cancer. The participants of this study were 30 mothers of children with cancer, hospitalized in Shahid Sadoughi hospital in Yazd. The study findings indicated that logotherapy training reduces anxiety and depression and the effectiveness range of this therapy is almost 20% on anxiety and 53% on depression. The study concluded that logotherapy has a significant effect on reducing anxiety and depression in mothers of children with cancer. So, it is

necessary to pay more attention to effective non-pharmacologic treatments for reducing anxiety and depression. Logotherapy also can be an effective aid to mothers.

**Conclusion**

Logotherapy is philosophy of life. As such, it can be used in every profession and walk of life. Today it is being used by educators, counselors, ministers and business managers, etc. we can all use it in our daily life, when dealing with our family, friends or colleagues!

Accepting that our life is a consequence of our choices made in the past, our future will consequently be shaped by the choices we make today!

Every day we have many possibilities from which to choose within our area of freedom. We must choose the most responsible option; make the best choice, not only for ourselves, but also the people around us then happiness and meaningful fulfillment will ensure.

**References**

1. Corey, G. (1996). Theory and practice of counseling and psychotherapy. Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole.
2. Frankl, V.E. (1984). Man's search for meaning: An introduction to logotherapy. New York: Simon & Schuster.
3. Jones, S. & Butman R. (1991), Modern Psychotherapies: A Comprehensive Christian Appraisal, Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press.
4. <http://www.logotherapyinstitute.org/life-and-works.html>