



## What is EXISTENTIAL ANALYSIS and LOGOTHERAPY?

**The aim of Existential Analysis:** to discover a way of living that enables us to give **inner consent** to our actions ("affirmation of life").

### Definition:

**Existential Analysis** can be defined as a phenomenological and person-oriented psychotherapy with the aim of guiding a person towards experiencing freely (both mentally and emotionally). EA aims at enabling a person to make authentic decisions and to discover a truly responsible way of dealing with life and the world. Existential Analysis can be applied in cases of psychosocial, psychosomatic and psychologically caused disorders in both experience and behaviour.

The psychotherapeutic process utilizes a phenomenological analysis of emotions, considered to be the centre of experience. Biographical work and empathic listening by the therapist contribute to an improvement in emotional accessibility and understanding.

**Logotherapy** is a method of counselling that focuses on the quest for meaning.

### The four existential fundamental motivations:

Viktor Frankl considered the search for meaning to be our deepest motivation. Developments in Existential Analysis led to the discovery of three existential (or personal) motivations that precede the motivation for meaning. Together these four motivations lead to profound and enduring personal discovery:

1. We are motivated by the **fundamental question of existence**: I exist – *can I be* in this world where I live? Do I have the necessary space, protection and support? When we experience these we feel accepted and this in turn enables us to embrace an accepting attitude toward ourselves. A deficit can lead to anxiety.
2. We are motivated by the **fundamental question of life**: I am alive – do I *like* this? Do I experience fulfilment, affection, an appreciation of values? Feeling the value of *my* life is a deep awareness that it is good to be alive ("that I am here"). Deficits can lead to depression.
3. We are motivated by the **fundamental question of "self"**: I am myself – but do I feel free to be myself? Do I experience attention, justice, appreciation, esteem, respect, my own worth? Deficits at this level can lead to a histrionic complex of symptoms and to the main personality disorders.
4. We are motivated by the **question of existential meaning**: I am here – for what purpose? What is present today that may make my life part of a meaningful whole? What do I live for? A deficit can lead to addiction and suicidal tendencies.

The main theme of Existential Analysis is *dialogue* ("interaction"). We dialogue or interact with the four existential challenges: *world, life, self, context and future (meaning)*.

### Training:

A full training in existential analysis takes five to six years and comprises of theory, practice, self-experience and supervision.

A detailed curriculum can be found at:

[www.existenzanalyse.org](http://www.existenzanalyse.org)

### Literature

#### Frankl V.

The Will to Meaning,  
Man's Search for  
Meaning,  
The Doctor and the Soul

**Leading a meaningful life means doing what we sense and recognize as being valuable.**