

Victor Frankl's Logotherapy: A Survivor's Liberation

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The purpose of this dissertation is to examine the experience of three writers who endured extreme personal trauma in the course of their lives, and, who have written—in some cases extensively—about their approach in coping physically and psychologically with the duress. The dissertation focuses in particular on the work of Viktor Frankl and his Logotherapy theory and examines how the elements of the theory may be found in other survival texts. Analysing Primo Levi's, *The Drowned and the Saved* and Terry Waite's, *Taken on Trust*, this dissertation will identify how Logotherapy can be used as a means to overcome adverse personal circumstances; by detaching oneself from one's immediate situation and ultimately surviving the experience in a positive manner. However, it will also look to how logotherapy may be used as a strategy in a somewhat pessimistic manner; if, for example, it is applied to situations where one may be forced into behaving immorally whilst under authority. The dissertation will examine the validity of logotherapy's meaning centred approach and determine different interpretations of its application to the captive prisoners' survival.

During his time in captivity, Frankl endured torturous conditions both mentally and physically. However, within this time he also discovered that meaning could still be found, if one could condition one's mind to see beyond one's circumstances. For Frankl, this was experienced in momentary thoughts of "bliss"; such as the "contemplation of a beloved" (Frankl, 2004, 49). Frankl believed that love was one of the ultimate powers for freeing the human spirit (Frankl, 2004, 49-51). However, Frankl had to endure and witness suffering before he would discover this epiphany:

"A thought transfixed me: for the first time in my life I saw the truth as it is set into song by so many poets, proclaimed as the final wisdom by so many thinkers. The truth—that love is the ultimate and the highest goal to which man can aspire. Then I grasped the meaning of the greatest secret that human poetry and human thought and belief have to impart: The salvation of man is through love and in love. I understood how a man who has nothing left in this world may still know bliss" (Frankl, 2004, 48-49).

Additionally, Frankl also found refuge in detaching himself from his situation by visualising a normal existence of his life on the outside: "In my mind I took bus rides, unlocked the front door of my apartment, answered my telephone, switched on the electric lights" (Frankl, 2004, 50).

To turn his adversity into his advantage Frankl began to look at the concentration camp as a laboratory (Kimble, 2013, 3) and contemplated how he could use this experience of suffering to help other people. He applied his psychiatrist techniques and the foundations of his working theory (logotherapy) as a coping mechanism and also began to teach its values to fellow inmates to aid their survival (Redsand, 2006, 2). Frankl had a belief that acceptance and finding meaning in their suffering could uplift a prisoner, which in turn, would give him/her mental resilience (Batthyány, 2016, 141-146), and thus a stronger capacity in surviving. He noticed how the ones who had a belief in something greater, something that gave them a meaning and stimulated their faith in the future, were the ones who were physically stronger: "the prisoner who had lost faith in the future—his future—was doomed" "he let himself decline and became subject to mental physical decay" (Frankl, 2004, 83).

Consequently, Frankl discovered his own meaning from the belief that he had a responsibility to survive, so that he could help others find their meaning in life, and thus avoid "existential frustration"; which is when one falls into despair from being frustrated by

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not knowing what the meaning of their life is (Frankl, 2004, 106). Furthermore, Frankl realised his purpose through his profound theory, and the primary research of this dissertation; logotherapy.

From the Greek word *logo* Frankl coined the term Logotherapy; which translates as “meaning” (Frankl, 2004, 104). Since its development, logotherapy has been widely influential and following “Sigmund Freud’s “psychoanalysis”, and Alfred Adler’s “individual psychology”” logotherapy is considered to be the “Third Viennese School of Psychotherapy” (Batthyány, 2016, 197). Frankl developed the logotherapy theory after growing increasingly frustrated with psychoanalysis lack of “human” elements; believing psychiatry was too regulated and furthermore too “reductionist” (Marseille, 1997, 1) in its approach to the spiritual dimension of the human being. In other words, Frankl believed that psychiatry neglected the authentic and “spontaneous human encounter for methodological reasons” (Längle and Marisyskes, 2006, 7), in that, it ignored the individuals’ innate quest for meaning in life by failing to go beyond the set of customary procedures that psychiatry thus far entailed. Frankl was motivated by this negative aspect and began to think of a new form of psychiatry that would do justice to the human spirit. He embarked on creating a new psychoanalytical theory that would serve to analyse the human instinct to search for meaning in life (Figurski, 2012, 89-90), and thus developed the logotherapy theory as a “meaning-centred psychotherapy” (Frankl, 2004, 104). However, despite logotherapy’s early process of development, it would not be until the “late 1960s” that its “spiritual” concept would be methodically “reintroduced” to “psychology and psychotherapy” through “transpersonal psychology” (Marseille, 1997, 1...citing Sutich 1969); which is a psychology that looks at the spiritual dimensions of existence (Cortright, 1997, 9).

Consequently, logotherapy is sometimes viewed as an existential psychiatry, or existential analyses, and so it is interesting to note that Frankl had previously named the theory *Existenzanalyse* (Frankl, 2014, xiv). According to Frankl, logotherapy is a psychology that relies on the defying “power of the human spirit” (Kaslow et al 2002, 338) to discover a ‘meaning’ in all circumstances; that “man’s search for meaning is the primary motivation in his life” (Frankl, 2004, 105). The meaning is what the individual sees as their purpose to life; it is the desires and goals that one strives to achieve in order to feel fulfilled, as Frankl asserted: “logotherapy focuses on the future, that is to say on the meanings to be fulfilled by the patient in the future” (Frankl, 2004, 104). Logotherapy, therefore, focuses on the evidence from the individuals’ experience of giving freedom to the human spirit (Bulka, 1998, 88). The spirit, however, as Frankl maintained, while although not opposed to religion, is not to be mistaking for a religious meaning, and so, to separate logotherapy from religious connotation Frankl refers to the spirit as “noetic” (Frankl, 2014, 5) or *nous* which “is Greek for thought or understanding” (Costello, 2016, 5) (Marx, 1977, 10-12).

Logotherapy suggests that human beings have a unique capacity to choose an attitude—usually a positive one—and take action to respond to their life in the best way possible no matter the circumstances (Frankl, 2004, 113-114). According to Frankl, “when we are no longer able to change a situation we are challenged to change ourselves” (Frankl, 2004, 116), and so while there may always be external forces that we cannot control in life, what we do have control over is our internal force and how we choose to react. Therefore, once we can take a step back, once we can find a meaning in our circumstances, we can, in turn, discover a purpose that encourages us to strive for the future. Despair can only be eliminated by the strength of the mind. The mind is our power and force for survival; logotherapy works in assisting the liberation and well-being of the mind through powerful positive techniques (Netzer et al, 2016, 235).

As with many theories, however, logotherapy has not come without its criticisms. Rollo May, for instance, who was an American existential psychologist, had, like Frankl, a

major role in the development of existential psychology throughout the twentieth century (Soggie, 2016, 71-72). However, this professional connection did not refrain May from arguing that Frankl's logotherapy theory was borderline authoritarian (Bulka, 1998, 5). May insisted that logotherapy's techniques, of ascribing the patient a goal to achieve when the patient could not find a meaning for him/herself, essentially negates the patients' freewill and responsible role of expressing their "own original ideas" (Fave, 2006, 422). This then, according to May, reduces the individual's self-worth, and thus devalues their personal strengths, which in effect, could have the opposite impact on the patient's well-being (Bulka, 1998, 5). However, May, who refuted Frankl's theory—which bases its premises on the individuals' freedom and responsibility of actions to aid well-being—did not, according to Frankl, seem to grasp the meaning of logotherapy (Bulka, 1998, 5). In response, Frankl maintained that logotherapists did not influence the patient in any way, especially in ascribing goals, as this would mean that they were not logotherapists (Frankl, 2011, 121). Logotherapy left it entirely to the patient to take responsibility in finding their meaning, as Frankl asserted: "logotherapists do not claim to have the answers" (Frankl, 2014, 46). Furthermore, according to Frankl, it is the "psychoanalytic practitioner" who is the one that "influences people" especially vis á vis "their moral and ethical conduct" (Frankl, 2014, 47). He does not deny, however, that logotherapists may, if they feel the need, "persuade" their patient to see the meaning, but in response to May's argument he maintains, that the logotherapist does "not pretend to know what the meaning is" (Frankl, 2014, 47-48) or moreover does not instil a proposed meaning into the minds of their patients.

May might not have agreed with some of logotherapy's techniques, but he did, however, in a sense advocate the logotherapy theory in his works. For instance, May, like Frankl, has frequently stated that the creative value (maintained as one of the main concepts to the principles of logotherapy) can derive from facing suffering. Focusing on the meaning of anxiety (Mayo, 2016, 86), May, like Frankl, believed that through suffering you can find creativity and meaning (Junge, 1998, 239). In other words, May believed that the anxiety of death, that is, when one is faced with the "threat of death" or "loss of freedom" (Mayo, 2016, 86) (in captivity for example), forces us to actualise our creative selves, thus empowering us to overcome the situation as we find meaning within our circumstances (Cell, 1984, 9-11). Yet he contradicts his argument on logotherapy believing that the responsibility of therapists is to help individuals to find their meaning through how they can contribute to the society that they live in (Corey et al, 2018, 183). Evidently, this is also an element of the logotherapy theory where Frankl believed; that through the logotherapy technique individuals could discover their meaning or purpose in life (Frankl, 2004, 114-115). Thus, viably supporting that May did not seem to fully interpret the concept of logotherapy.

For Frankl, there are ways that we discover our meaning. He theorised three specific values that we embody to attain our purpose. These are; "creative values", "experiential values" and "attitudinal values" (Frankl, 2014, 49). The first, "creative values", is what we can do to express our talents for the enjoyment of another or to help someone in need, for example, it is what one "gives to the world" (Frankl, 2014, 49). The creative value is an achievement; and so, it can also be in the way we create a triumph in times of suffering, i.e it is what one "takes from the world" (Frankl, 2014, 49). This indeed is exemplified by Frankl who decided to use his time in captivity as an opportunity, to test his new logotherapy theory on an empirical basis (Redsand, 2006, 4).

"Experiential values" is the second value and is based on what we choose to take from our encounters; a love perhaps, but it is also the value of how we chose to experience life, be it from "nature, culture" etc... (Frankl, 2014, 48). From the captive prisoner's perspective this is how one "takes a stand" to one's adversities (Frankl, 2014, 49). Frankl, rather than seeing his surroundings as discouraging, instead, conditioned his mind to only see the

pleasures; such as enjoying the beauty of nature (Frankl, 2004, 50-51). This method of mind control links into the third value; the “attitudinal value”, where our adverse personal circumstances are determined by the stand we choose to take to overcome them; taking responsibility for our choices (Frankl, 2014, 49).

Indeed, antithetically, these circumstances may not always change for the better just because of the positive manner we may choose to ascribe to them, but it does however, contribute in making adverse conditions more bearable to endure. Frankl chose a resilient attitude in the sense that he sought to find meaning in his suffering. Moreover, responsibility and freedom of choice, therefore, play a major role in logotherapy and the concept of finding meaning in life (Frankl, 2004, 113-114).

Terry Waite CBE was born in “Bollington Cheshire” in 1939 (Waite, 2016, 73). He is an English humanitarian and author (Simpson, 2007, vi). Waite, like Frankl, experienced arduous conditions whilst held in captivity. In 1980 he was appointed the envoy for the Archbishop of Canterbury, Robert Runcie (Kushner, 2003, 398) and throughout the 1980s he worked as a hostage negotiator; successfully negotiating the release of numerous hostages held in captivity throughout the Middle East (Waite, 2016, ix, x). However, in 1987, Waite, while negotiating the release of Irish and British hostages in Beirut Lebanon, was himself, taken captive; a position he would endure for 1,763 days, a period of five years (Waite, 2016, 448); four of the five years he spent in solitary confinement (Waite, 2016, xii). On the day of his captivity, Waite had initially believed that he was being taken to see hostages that had taken ill (Waite, 2016, 4), however, this would prove to be misleading (Waite, 2016, 5-9). Duped into his incarceration, Waite, was essentially “taken on trust”. A phrase he aptly entitled his prison autobiography.

These adverse circumstances imposed on Waite would, however, prove to become somewhat of a life transcendence. Waite quickly decided that he would not be defeated by his time in captivity and began to look at coping mechanisms to help him survive. Firstly, he looked at three important resolutions that he would retreat to on days of despair: not to regret what had happened to him, not to get over-sentimental about not seeing his family and friends and also to refrain from self-pity (Waite, 2016, 9) (Waite, 2016, 368): “I chose to enter this ring. No one told me to. My choice, my responsibility” (Waite, 2016, 26). From this, we see how Waite applied the “attitudinal value” of logotherapy (Batthyány, 2016, 199) as he consciously chose to mentally prepare himself for his arduous days ahead. Waite exemplified courage by facing his adversity on his own terms, making sure to take responsibility for himself and refrain from blaming others for his circumstances. By this, he demonstrates logotherapy’s concept of the “freedom of will” where man takes it upon himself to choose one’s attitude on how they are going to respond to one’s predicaments (Batthyány, 2016, 198). Although he may have been physically imprisoned, Waite, like Frankl, chose to focus on remaining mentally free, something which would have been difficult to do without the deliberate intention of conditioning oneself to detach from one’s circumstances: “I swear that whatever is done to my body, I will fight to the end to keep my inner freedom” (Waite, 2016, 14); facing fear is essential to one’s survival as it regains control and furthermore builds resilience (Batthyány, 2016, 134-135).

Waite decided that he had to divert any anger he possessed about himself and his captors and learn how to use the force of anger in ways that might be creative to him (Waite, 2016, xii, 250). This helped him see that he still had a measure of freedom (Waite, 2016, 25-26). To obtain control and to focus his mind away from his physical conditions, Waite decided that he needed to keep his brain alive and not deteriorate; if he could help it: “A deliberate act of reconstruction might help keep my mind alive and prevent me from deteriorating into a frightened, cowed specimen of humanity” (Waite, 2016, 25). He became creative and began to write his now acclaimed bestselling book, *Taken on Trust*, entirely from

his head (Waite, 2016, xii). From this we see how he applied the “creative value” of logotherapy (Frankl, 2014, 49). Waite was engaging with his circumstances but also using the time as an opportunity to create something valuable; such as utilising his mind to write his book: “I wrote in my imagination” (Waite, 2016, xii). By doing so Waite was able to dissociate from his confined environment, and through his inner thoughts he travelled to the various places he had seen throughout his life. Not only did this pass the time within captivity it also gave him a sense of value to his life as he was able to reflect on past achievements, and thus find meaning within his current circumstances: “In repeating my story, I am affirming my existence; convincing myself that I am a person with a past, with relationships” (Waite, 2016, 255).

This also helped him to realise the purpose for the process of his future book: “I always managed to return to my story and thus was enabled to preserve my sanity and identity” (Waite, 2016, xii). By focusing on a goal or future project that could only be fulfilled by him, and him alone, Waite could experience an element of pleasure from his time in captivity (Soggie, 2016, 20-21). As Frankl maintains, “happiness can never be pursued but rather it must ensue” (Frankl, 2004, 140). Reflecting the “attitudinal value” Waite exemplifies that even in the most meaningless of situations one is still “capable of finding fulfilment” (Frankl, 2014, 53).

During his time in captivity he practiced arithmetic (Waite, 2016, 110). He did this as a way to utilise his brain and keep his brain exercised in order to build mental strength (Waite, 2016, 140). By doing this he was able to expand his memory from keeping his brain active (Waite, 2016, 229). He also used this form of mental resilience when detaching from thoughts of loved ones; “At times when I thought of my family and friends, the process became too painful and I had to retreat for a while into fantasy or mental arithmetic” (Waite, 2016, xii). Waite consciously utilised his brain as a coping mechanism to survive. Rather than succumb to his circumstances he knew he had a “meaning” to survive; what was limited to him physically was not limited to him mentally. During his time in captivity he found hope in the power of prayer bringing him inner peace (Waite, 2016, 188, 384, 398, 464). The books that he would eventually receive from his captors gave him great pleasure and appreciation for his time in solitude (Waite, 2016, 145). From this he realised how appreciative he was of music and books especially since he was deprived of them for so long: “good language like good music has the capacity to breathe harmony into the soul” (Waite, 2016, 463). This exemplifies the “experiential value” of logotherapy (Frankl, 2004, 115) as Waite deeply immersed in the beauty of the language within the books that he eventually received from his captors; something he took for granted before captivity. He also took notice of nature when he managed to catch a glimpse of flowers through a “minute crack” of the metal shutter in his area of confinement (Waite, 2016, 267). He savoured the beauty of the flowers; something he claimed he would never have taken pleasure in before: “I never took notice of flowers before, but now they appear exquisitely beautifully (Waite, 2016, 267). Here he was realising the “meaning of life” concept of logotherapy (Frankl, 2014, 48).

It is important to note, however, as Frankl maintains, finding meaning has to also come from the “attitudinal value” as it is how one projects meaning from what they see from their subjective perspective (Frankl, 2014, 40-43). For example, the person who possessed the flowers that Waite saw across the street, might take pleasure in having them, but, however, may only passively appreciate them; just as Waite had done before captivity. Now though, Waite attaches a new meaning, a more intensely appreciative meaning, because he has been deprived of nature for so long. They are not just flowers anymore they are “exquisitely beautiful” (Waite, 2016, 267). Waite expresses the “experiential value” from the feeling he obtains by taking an attitude to embrace the momentary experience of bliss (Frankl, 2004, 115).

Frankl maintains meanings come from the spiritual aspect of the human being which he argues is “trans-subjective” because human beings find their meanings from things that touch their spirit (Frankl, 2014, 41); be it good or bad. From this perspective “man’s search for meaning” (Frankl, 2004) is always to seek fulfilment from whatever it is they are attaching a meaning too, but this fulfilment will only ever come from within, before they can eventually see it without (Tymieniecka, 2012, 63-65) (Kimble, 2013, 144-145); thus, meanings come from our “spiritual nature” (Battyány and Russo-Netzer, 2014, 161) they are discovered rather than invented (Frankl, 2014, 41). As Waite begins to realise his appreciation for the things that he may have taken for granted before, he is, in essence, self-transcending as he is motivated by the “meaning of life”; that is, the experiential values that are attached to the “meaning of life” (Frankl, 2004, 115). By taking the time to appreciate the experience of simple things Waite detaches his mind from his circumstances, even if it is just for a moment; this therefore, facilitates in keeping his mind focused on survival as it makes him see that life is meaningful whatever the circumstances (Waite, 2016, 250-251): “perhaps I need this period of solitude” “I must live it as fully as possible” (Waite, 2016, 251). Waite credited his time in solitary confinement as having the most positive effect on him, spiritually, emotionally and self-liberating, where he realised his ultimate potential and how creative he could be by spending time alone. He continues to appreciate some time in solitude and believes it is one of the most important aspects to living a positive life (Waite, 2016, 458).

Because of Waite’s mind detachment he was able to keep his strength up when his physical strength was deteriorating. His psychology changed as he developed a resilient mindset in keeping control of his thoughts so as not to fall into despair (Waite, 2016, xxi): “I won’t so mad I will press on” (Waite, 2016, 330). His behaviourism became calm as he planned out part of his day, so he could keep a structure and develop a routine, this helped him to keep focus of his situation (Waite, 2016, 229). Here Waite demonstrates his faith in his future, Frankl noticed in the concentration camp that if a prisoner “lost faith in the future, he was “doomed” (Frankl, 2004, 82). With no belief the prisoner would lose spirit and therefore would begin to deteriorate, and thus “became subject to mental and physical decay” (Frankl, 2004, 82).

Waite also expressed the importance of humour which he found to some degree within captivity. He recalled how the language barrier for requesting books resulted in the captor bringing him books on captivity and how to escape. While although subdued to similar circumstances, illustrated by the book, Waite found humour in the captor not realising what he had given him (Waite, 2016, 360). Frankl also believed that humour was essential to the human spirit especially when one needs to detach from one’s current adverse circumstances. Humour provides a sort of liminal space to the suppressed individual:

“To detach oneself from even the worse conditions is a uniquely human capability. However, this unique capacity of man to detach himself from any situations he might have to face is manifested not only through heroism, but also through humor” (Frankl, 2014, 4).

However, throughout the book Waite demonstrates how he did let his mind wander at times as long as he remembered to keep himself disciplined. He could not change his situation, but he could respond to it in his own way and change his perception of it. He declared that looking back he does not regret his time in captivity because it awakened in him the capacity to utilise his brain in ways he never knew he could, for this he was grateful (Waite, 2016, x). Waite proclaimed that his “inner journey” helped him to discover his true self, which in turn, was the reason for his survival. Through the harmony he discovered by reciting the language of prayer and other exercises (Waite, 2016, 464) Waite learned how “suffering need not

destroy” (Waite, 2016, xii), because out of suffering something creative can emerge”. This proves Frankl’s concept on how you can find meaning in suffering (Frankl, 2004, 116-119).

Conversely, however, Primo Levi had a different perspective to his time spent in captivity than that of Frankl and of Waite, for Levi, “there were no ‘beautiful words’ in the lagers” (Levi, 2013, xiii). In his book *The Drowned and The Saved* Levi illustrates how meanings can have a darker side when under the trauma of captivity; such as, for example, the meanings that the “privileged prisoner” found from their occupation in the concentration camp. He also determines that surviving the concentration camps cannot solely be down to having faith; that is to say the meaning that is found from faith. For Levi, surviving was also based on a certain amount of luck: “the best historians of the lagers emerged from the very few who had the ability and luck to attain a privileged observatory without bowing to compromises” (Levi, 2013, 10).

Primo Levi was an Italian Jewish chemist, born in 1919 in Turin Italy (Homer, 2001, 1). In 1943 while working for an anti-fascist resistance group, Levi was arrested and deported to Auschwitz (Alexander, 1994, 131). There was said to be 650 Italian Jews in the concentration camp in Auschwitz (Lester, 2005, 9), Levi was one of twenty that survived. His expertise as a chemist was what possibly saved him from the gas chambers (Levi, 2013, 157). *The Drowned and the Saved* depicts a different story to that of Waite and Frankl. While although it can be argued that there are elements of logotherapy conveyed by Levi, he also conveys the complexities of where one may seek meaning in times of distress; especially when in survival mode (Levi, 2013, 36). Levi demonstrates that it is not as simple to discover a true meaning as one may think. For example, in *The Drowned and the Saved* Levi discusses how the “privileged prisoners” were a minority in the concentration camps but were a majority amongst the ones who survived (Levi, 2013, 36-38). To be a “privileged prisoner”, however, you had to be willing to take on arduous jobs; sometimes having to torment fellow prisoners (Levi, 2013, 37). It could be argued, while although it may seem extreme, that the prisoners practiced the “attitudinal value” of logotherapy since they detached their emotions and made a choice on how they were going to survive (Cole, 2016, 84-86). They were assigned this position; they did not ask for it, and hence it was up to them to take a stand for survival or face immediate death by refusing (Aharony, 2015, 170) “attitudinal value” (Frankl, 2014, 49). As logotherapy is based on the premise that your choice should be of a positive manner towards a futural purpose, it might be suggested that for these minority prisoners, it was, it seemed, the best way possible to respond in order to survive. Subconsciously, they may have been fulfilled by the meaning of the “knowing” that they had a better chance of survival whilst occupying the position of the “privileged prisoner”. To some degree this may have brought comfort or freedom to their spirit whether they would have realised it or not. Subsequently, their mentality would have become resilient as they discovered an uplift in the “will to meaning”; what Frankl theorises as the key to survival (Kimble, 2013, 144-145). These “privileged prisoners” which Levi was referring to, were the Sonderkommando not be confused with the Sonderkommando (SS) (Doel, 2017, 51). The Sonderkommando would not have wanted to be violent towards other prisoners it was just another mode of survival. By obtaining this position it was simply their “meaning to existence” (Frankl, 2011, 114). The Sonderkommando still only had the same chance of survival as the other prisoners, but it was in this hope that they garnered from their position, that it might be suggested they found their meaning; i.e the meaning of hope was therefore their “meaning of life” one of the concepts of logotherapy. As Levi proclaimed: “they were the poor devils like ourselves, but who, for an extra litre of soup, were willing to carry out these ‘tertiary’ functions” (Levi, 2013, 41). “They were rarely violent, and they were not saved from the discipline (Levi, 2013, 41) and suffering of everyone else; their hope for life was substantially the same as the underprivileged” (Levi, 2013, 42)

Furthermore, this exemplifies Levi's understanding of choice and the different ways that people may respond to their situation especially in captivity. From this perspective some may argue that the concept of logotherapy could be dangerous as it can be applied to different dimensions of meaning; that is to say a meaning that may seem immoral. However, it might be suggested that Frankl would indeed dispute this fact, for the simple reason that logotherapy's positive "meaning centred" premises, was, nonetheless actualised by the "privileged prisoners"; even if this meant their "meaning" for survival was discovered in the hope they gained from a position that may have been morally opposed to: "one is actualised depending on decisions but not on conditions" (Frankl, 2004, 135). However, Frankl did not believe that any of the "privileged prisoners" deserved this kind of recognition, since, he maintained, that some became worse than the (SS): "we watched and witnessed some of our comrades behave as swine while some behaved as saints" (Frankl, 2004, 135). For Frankl resulting to violence would be the complete opposite of what logotherapy entails as this would only occur when the individual is in the depths of despair from wallowing in the "meaningless" of life (Frankl, 2014, 61-71). Frankl theorised that this "will to power" was a substitute for the "frustrated will to meaning" (Frankl, 2004, 112). In other words, it was not a true meaning as the true meaning is "frustrated" from not yet being discovered, thus it is trapped in anguish (Frankl, 2004, 111-113). But, however, the quest for meaning is the original search for discovery, and, for the privileged prisoners, as Levi indicates who were not violent (Levi, 2013, 41), perhaps it could be argued that this search for meaning was discovered from the position that may possibly preserve their life; it was simply an innovative meaning to be found in a situation that made it impossible to find meaning in anything else. Since meanings are subjective which are found when felt through the human spirit, they are therefore, "discovered rather than invented" (Frankl, 2014, 41). From this perspective, it was possible to discover meaning in just the "knowing" of a chance of survival (an original quest) (Frankl, 2014, 43) something the "privileged prisoner" had first felt from the security they gained from their occupation; a discovered meaning in a stronger hope for survival despite their arduous tasks. It might also be suggested that these "privileged prisoners" had a loved one they were focusing to survive for (Frankl, 2004, 116) which, as mentioned before, Frankl theorised was a key element of logotherapy and the "will to meaning" (Frankl, 2004, 105-106):

"A man who becomes conscious of the responsibility he bears toward a human being who affectionately waits for him, or to an unfinished work, will never be able to throw away his life. He knows the "why" for his existence and will be able to bear almost anyhow" (Frankl, 2004, 87-88).

In truth, it is this position that perhaps helped them discover their purpose which was to fight another day within the camp. Actualising their meaning through how strong they valued their lives. The meaning to life was just to be alive, a "meaning-mindset", which in turn, motivated them to live another day. There are different modes of survival and for these prisoners it was detaching themselves from their usual morals and principles "apathy was a necessary mechanism of self-defence" (Frankl, 2004, 40). By emotionally detaching the prisoners exemplify logotherapy's prospect of choosing how to react to suffering. (Frankl, 2004, 113-114). This argument of finding meaning in a more pessimistic manner, juxtaposes with Frankl's. But since the meaning, after all, was ultimately a survival mindset, both Frankl and Levi are consistent with each other. Here we see the universality of meaning and the evidence of Frankl's "trans-subjective" (Frankl, 2014, 41) as the individual has an out of body experience from the spirit of the meaning that is found in both good and bad assessments; thus, contributing to their survival. Frankl stated from his own apathetical experience, this became part of their current immoral world:

“while my cold hands clasped a bowl of hot soup from which I sipped greedily, I happened to look out the window. The corpse which had just been removed stared in at me with glazed eyes. Two hours before I had spoken to that man. Now I continued sipping my soup” (Frankl, 2004, 35).

Levi’s own experience in captivity, however, can be seen to support Frankl’s theory on logotherapy. While although he may not have consciously known that he was practicing the values of logotherapy (especially since logotherapy was only in its process of creation) he conveys in *The Drowned and the Saved* evidence of its techniques. For example, Levi was always an intellect before being captured by the Nazis. He never worked too much in manual labour and so during his time in captivity he was able to learn how to work like the labourers he passionately believed were just as equal to him in society “Did I not want equality? Well, then, I had got it” (Levi, 2013, 149). By detaching himself from the hardship of his circumstances and the simple difficulties he was now facing in having to work in a way that others would have learned from childhood, Levi was able to find meaning in his tasks: “It was possible to find some dignity in manual labour, even in the most onerous, and it was possible to adjust to it” (Levi, 2013, 150). From this perspective Levi was practicing the “creative value” of logotherapy but also the “experiential value” (Frankl, 2014, 49) as he was both experiencing how manual labour can bring some meaning to his identity whilst learning “fundamental things” which he did not give much thought to before his captivity; such as how to “handle a pick and a shovel” in the process (Levi, 2013, 149).

Levi also expressed how he utilised the “mental behaviours” he gained from his chemistry profession within the camp (Levi, 2013, 158). It could be argued that this helped him to momentarily detach from his circumstances as his mind was focused on imaginary outcomes from various different scenarios he envisaged in his head, and not that of the arduous conditions he was in fact creating these scenarios from. Levi found that he sometimes looked at the Lager from an educational point of view and saw it as a “university” (Levi, 2013, 159) as it taught him how to assess man in a way that he would not have so aptly done before. Because of this, he became more open-minded to the world which thus, contributed to his intellect (Levi, 2013, 159). Levi also determined that “the aims of life are the best defence against death” (Levi, 2013, 167); the everyday tasks that he preoccupied himself within the camp helped him detach from the idea of possible death “I never had time to devote to death I had many other things to keep me busy” (Levi, 2013, 167). By separating from the physicality of the camp and structuring his mind on normal life routines Levi altered his psychology, which in turn, altered his behaviours, and furthermore would have contributed to his survival.

Additionally, *The Drowned and the Saved* also conveys how when the spirit is lifted from the knowing that there is meaning to be found, the individual develops an interior strength which then extracts from their behaviours; therefore, their will to survive becomes stronger in their actions as they discover that survival is their “will to meaning” (Frankl, 2004, 105-106). Levi maintains how the prisoners who had faith in something greater than themselves showed signs of living better within the camp (Levi, 2013, 164). From a logotherapy point of view these prisoners were, in essence, self-transcending as they had already discovered their meaning from within. They believed that there was a meaning to their time in captivity which gave them a sense of clarity and thus a more positive outlook on their surroundings. Their positive psychology therefore was emanated without, subsequently giving them physical strength, thus demonstrating why it appeared to Levi that they lived better. While Levi may have been an atheist himself, he too found comfort in keeping faith at being a “non-believer” of religious faith a time when it would have been difficult not to surrender to prayer (Levi, 2013, 163-164), thus holding on to the meaning of his existence (Soggie, 2016, 42).

Levi may convey a more negative outlook to how one may have survived within captivity, however, there are elements of logotherapy to be found within his own personal growth as a survivor. From his experience he discovered his future occupation as an author. Levi wrote in a systematic style where he detaches from emotions to deliver the story of Auschwitz that the purpose he found in his survival was to write about the injustice of the camps:

“I believe in reason and discussion as the supreme instruments of progress. Thus, when describing the tragic world of Auschwitz, I have deliberately assumed the calm and sober language of the witness, not the lamenting tones of the victim or the irate voice of someone who seeks revenge. I thought that my account would be more credible and useful the more it appeared objective, the less it sounded overly emotional; only in this way does a witness in matters of justice perform his task, which is that of preparing the ground for the judge. The judges are my readers” (Levi, 1986, np)

This dissertation has demonstrated that meaning can be found in the midst of all suffering, through the application of the values and techniques as expounded by Viktor Frankl’s, logotherapy theory. When faced with arduous circumstances we tend to become overwhelmed by our condition and cannot see a light into the future. But, as Frankl suggests if we obtain a focus and determination, changing the way we look at our severe conditions by trusting the process and believing in the future, we can, in turn, find a meaning in the suffering, and thus condition our minds to overcome adversity.

For Waite, it was how the attitudinal, experiential and creative values of logotherapy could be used as technique in actualising personal growth. Re-discovering a positive relationship with himself and a strength of character that he may never have had the opportunity to do if it were not for his suffering. Levi’s story suggests that there are both positive and negative ways of applying logotherapy’s technique in the ultimate search and discovery of meaning. We see the application of logotherapy’s attitudinal value from the privileged prisoner who focused on their future as a meaning to survival which helped them detach from their arduous tasks. For Levi, the application of logotherapy’s creative value can be seen from his endeavour to realise his purpose in seeking justice for the victims of Auschwitz, which he achieved from writing: “it is very likely that without Auschwitz I would never have written” (Battersby, 2015, np).

Additionally, researching Viktor Frankl’s logotherapy theory demonstrates its significance in understanding contemporary world issues with anxiety and sufferings that some may endure from everyday life. Logotherapy has become an integral technique in cognitive behavioural therapy (Netzer et al, 2016, 236-241) with new developments in teaching training and palliative care (Breitbart, 2017, 171-179). What Frankl had discovered almost one hundred years ago has proved to be a sustainable and feasible theory, exemplifying that the most powerful force to our well-being is finding a meaning that resonates from within; as it is from this mentality of believing in something other than ourselves that ultimately gives meaning to our everyday existence. As Frankl maintained, “the unique meaning of today is the universal value of tomorrow” (Frankl, 2014, 43), logotherapy’s meaning centred theory, can according to Frankl, Waite and Levi be demonstrated as a survivor’s liberation.

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