

The standard way of understanding Frankl's logotherapy is as follows:

1. **Search for Meaning:** The central premise of logotherapy is that human beings have an innate desire to find meaning in their lives. This search for meaning is considered the primary motivating force for individuals. Frankl argued that even in the face of suffering and difficult circumstances, people can find purpose, which gives them a reason to live and overcome challenges.

2. **Freedom of Will:** Logotherapy emphasizes the importance of free will and personal choice. Frankl believed that individuals have the freedom to choose their responses to life's situations, no matter how dire or challenging those circumstances may be. This sense of freedom and responsibility for one's choices is central to logotherapy.

3. **Three Main Sources of Meaning:** Frankl identified three primary sources of meaning that individuals can tap into:

- **Creative values:** Finding meaning through creative and productive endeavors, such as art, work, or personal accomplishments.
- **Experiential values:** Discovering meaning in the experiences of life, such as relationships, encounters, and nature.
- **Attitudinal values:** Choosing one's attitude towards unavoidable suffering and finding meaning in the way one responds to difficult situations.

4. **Paradoxical Intention:** Logotherapy employs a technique called paradoxical intention, where clients are encouraged to face their fears or issues in an exaggerated manner, often leading to a reduction in anxiety or symptoms. By humorously exaggerating their concerns, clients can gain a new perspective and reduce the power of their fears.

5. **Application in Psychotherapy:** Logotherapy is commonly used in psychotherapy and counseling. Therapists help clients explore their values, beliefs, and personal meaning. The therapeutic process involves helping individuals identify their unique sources of meaning and align their lives with these values.

6. **Focus on the Future:** Logotherapy tends to focus on the future and the potential for personal growth and fulfillment, rather than dwelling excessively on past traumas or unresolved conflicts.

We can contrast Frankl's approach to psychiatry with that of his friend / mentor Sigmund Freud:

Compare / Contrast	Sigmund Freud	Viktor Frankl
Philosophy and Focus	Developed psychoanalysis, which emphasizes the unconscious mind and early childhood experiences.	Founded logotherapy, focusing on the search for meaning in life.
View of Human Nature	Pessimistic view; humans driven by unconscious instincts, with unresolved conflicts causing psychological distress.	Optimistic view; humans seek meaning and purpose, with the capacity to choose their responses.
Approach to Therapy	Psychoanalysis involves exploring the unconscious through techniques like free association and dream analysis. The goal is to bring unconscious conflicts to consciousness.	Logotherapy helps individuals discover meaning and values in life, particularly in the face of suffering.
Legacy	Highly influential in the history of psychology, with lasting impact, though many specific theories have been revised.	Significant influence in existential psychology, emphasizing the importance of finding meaning in life, especially during existential crises.

According to our reading, Frankl offers (or Bailey's interpretation of Frankl offers) a way to make some progress on the debate between subjective and objective meaning. After surveying a number of subjectivists and objectivists about meaning and life, Bailey offers the following four points that have been overlooked by commentators on Frankl:

1. Contra the objectivists, volition toward some end is the driving force behind the realization of meaning;
2. Contra the subjectivists, not all ends have equal value, even less are capable of motivating sustained striving;

3. The will to achieve certain ends requires substantial motivation, but pursuing the ends themselves can generate further motivation.
4. Meaningfulness, in the existential sense, is not a directly targetable goal; it can only be pursued by looking for objective grounds for seeking some other end. In other words, meaning is a fortuitous consequence of the willful pursuit of objectively valuable ends. It is the effect of an agent giving herself to a valuable activity. (pg 12)

Preceding this list, Bailey summarizes Frankfurt's claims about meaning and how they relate to different kinds of value: In Frankfurt's account, meaning is important insofar as it depends on:

1. The agent's evaluation of the goals of the activities;
- 2.
3. whether she finds the means to her ends or the activities involved in pursuing them intrinsically engaging and well-suited to her character.

Frankfurt was marking some key distinctions in his analysis:

- something is a final good if it is good for its own sake;
- not everything that is good is a final good;
- some things are good merely as means.

So, on Bailey's Frankl-styled hybrid account, our lives gain meaning when we *strive* (pg 14) for that which is worth striving for. That which is worth striving for (is good for its own sake in Frankfurt's terminology) can be understood as the distinction between things which are intrinsically valuable versus things which are instrumentally valuable.

Type of Value	Description	Examples
Intrinsic Value	Intrinsic value refers to the inherent worth or value of something in and of itself. It is valued for its own sake, independently of any external factors or its usefulness for achieving other goals.	Personal happiness, love, inner peace, knowledge, and the well-being of living beings (such as individual human lives). These things are valued for their inherent importance.

Instrumental Value	Instrumental value, also known as extrinsic value, refers to the value of something as a means to an end. It is valued because it serves a purpose or contributes to achieving a goal or desired outcome.	Money, education, a tool, a job, and physical fitness. These things are valued because they help achieve or facilitate other objectives, such as financial security, personal development, or a particular task.
--------------------	---	--

We are still, however, left with a problem: how do we know which things are intrinsically valuable so that we can strive for them and have a meaningful life? This is a long standing issue in the value literature. One way of trying to solve this issue was offered by G.E. Moore over 100 years ago. Moore says:

“In order to arrive at a correct decision on the question [what things have intrinsic value] it is necessary to consider what things are such that, if they existed by themselves, in absolute isolation, we should yet judge their existence to be good;” (Moore, *Principia Ethica*, 187)

- Does this test help us isolate what is of intrinsic value?
- If so, does this help us find meaning in our life?