

Man's Search for Meaning
by Viktor E. Frankl

On Choosing One's Attitude

"Everything can be taken from a man but ...the last of the human freedoms - to choose one's attitude in any given set of circumstances, to choose one's own way." p.104

"There is also purpose in life which is almost barren of both creation and enjoyment and which admits of but one possibility of high moral behavior: namely, in man's attitude to his existence, an existence restricted by external forces." p.106

On Committing to Values and Goals

"Logotherapy...considers man as a being whose main concern consists in fulfilling a meaning and in actualizing values, rather than in the mere gratification and satisfaction of drives and instincts." p.164

"What man actually needs is not a tensionless state but rather the striving and struggling for some goal worthy of him. What he needs is not the discharge of tension at any cost, but the call of a potential meaning waiting to be fulfilled by him." p.166

On Discovering the Meaning of Life

"The meaning of our existence is not invented by ourselves, but rather detected." p.157

"What matters, therefore, is not the meaning of life in general, but rather the specific meaning of a person's life at a given moment." p.171

"We can discover this meaning in life in three different ways: (1) by doing a deed; (2) by experiencing a value; and (3) by suffering." p.176

On Fulfilling One's Task

"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 any "how." p.127

"It did not really matter what we expected from life, but rather what life expected from us. We needed to stop asking about the meaning of life, and instead to think of ourselves as those who were being questioned by life - daily and hourly. Our answer must consist, not in talk and meditation, but in right action and in right conduct. Life ultimately means taking the responsibility to find the right answer to its problems and to fulfill the tasks which it constantly sets for each individual." p.122

Above quotations reprinted from:

Frankl, Viktor E., *Man's Search for Meaning*, Washington Square Press, Simon and Schuster, New York, 1963.