MEANING OF LIFE AND PEDAGOGY

IMPULSES OF THOUGHT BY VIKTOR E. FRANKL

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THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE SEARCH
FOR THE MEANING OF LIFE FOR PEDAGOGY

INTRODUCTION

The search for the meaning of life has accompanied humanity since the beginning of its existence. Questions about the meaning of one's own existence and the purposefulness of the existence of the world appear in human consciousness with varying intensity. Everyone asks themselves questions such as: Who am I? What am I living for? What is the meaning of life? These questions especially arise when human existence is affected by an event involving misfortune or suffering, or when a person finds oneself in a difficult or uncertain situation. The issue of the meaning of life is of interest not only to so-called ordinary people but also to researchers of philosophy, sociology and representatives of other scientific disciplines, including psychology and educational studies. However, from a practical point of view, there remains the important question of how to revive the issue of the meaning of life in upbringing, in educational activities and in pedagogical thinking, and how to help people embark upon a goal-oriented path, a path of fullness of being and life. Such a proposal can be presented by attempting to read the pedagogical implications in the thought of the forerunner of the concept of logo-theory and logotherapy, Viktor E. Frankl, who was a psychiatrist, psychotherapist and philosopher, creator of the third Viennese school of psychotherapy.

According to V.E. Frankl, the meaning of life is the ability to find and perform specific tasks that prove to be unique to each individual. These tasks are not accidental, and the involvement in their implementation results from a calling and a sense of responsibility. He often and willingly

quoted Friedrich Wilhelm Nietzsche: "He who has something to live for can endure almost anything"[1].

The main thesis that determines the perspectives of analysis in this work is as follows: the question of meaning is of great importance for pedagogy. When trying to emphasize this thesis more strongly by presenting appropriate arguments, the thought and work of V.E. Frankl become particularly important. Of course, these connections are important and possible, assuming that we consider them from the perspective of philosophical-transcendental pedagogy. Paying attention to this starting point appears important because each type of pedagogical orientation contains, in one way or another, its philosophical assumptions regarding the nature of humans, their meaning and their place in the world. This results in a specific type of explanation and argumentation of the key problem of the question of meaning and its connections with pedagogical theory and practice contained in the work. If, for example, the question of meaning were to be researched and analysed in relation to education, or "meaning" as an obligation were to become the subject of research, then the adopted methodological perspective of philosophical-transcendental pedagogy would determine the method and course of the research used.

The philosophical and pedagogical category of meaning as a specific horizon of human existence can be treated as a challenge, a way of thinking and as a reality. It can be treated as a challenge, because in order to authentically experience a relationship with another person, one would need to take a step towards them and meet them. One must leave their monological fortification, abandoning a certain way of thinking, and experience dialogicity with the other human as a person, whereby human action emerges and reflects their attitude to reality. It is impossible to achieve goals or to fulfil ideals without breaking patterns and without changing one's frequently instrumental treatment of others. It can be treated as a reality, because the phenomenon of meaning, in Frankl's approach, is something truly connected with the core of man,

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1   All quotes in the present book are own translations.

with the core of one's human matters, something rudimentary and irreplaceable by anything else. The category of meaning understood in this way is something whose presence or absence, authenticity or mystification, affirmation or deprecation has a real and measurable impact on the quality of every person's life. The personal dimension of meaning, as Frankl emphasized, shapes the types of references and connections, relationships and motivations, thus constituting a specific form of interpersonal interactions.

The method proposed by Frankl is therefore centrally focused on human as a person who is oriented towards meaning and needs meaning, despite being often unaware of this reality. Logotherapy is, apparently, a psychological and psychotherapeutic direction which openly admits its connections with existential and transcendental philosophy. Frankl himself, when building and developing his therapeutic project, often referred to the philosophical reflection of authors such as Saint Thomas of Aquinas, Max Scheler, Georg W.F. Hegel, Reinhard Gehlen, Baruch Spinoza, Nicholas of Cusa and others. The anthropological assumptions of logotherapy are therefore included explicitly in the reflection and should not be sought indirectly, as is the case in other psychological directions.

As a subject of pedagogy, a human being, due to susceptibility to education in the process of becoming a full person, should be guided by the principle of freedom and perceive one's own self-determination, autonomy, maturity and the ability to make judgments if one does not want to be reduced to an object or tool in the hands of others. The common ground between the existential analysis proposed by Frankl and philosophical-transcendental pedagogy pertains to treating the individual in one's full personal and integral dimension. However, such an approach to reality is only possible to the extent to which we may demonstrate the distinctiveness of Frankl's existential analysis in relation to psychoanalysis and experimental psychology. These two directions – in his opinion – significantly narrow the overall image of human beings, disregard their spirituality and valuation, and, above all, refer mainly to subconscious states. Meanwhile, the "Franklian sense" has constitutive anthropological foundations and in this approach it applies to pedagogy

in its theoretical and practical dimensions. Therefore, the main goal of this work is to show the significance of this question in the educational process of an individual's development.

Reflection on Frankl's thought in the context of connections with pedagogy leads to the belief that the issues of the meaning of life are among the fundamental ones that people try to pose and solve. However, these are problems that cannot be resolved through institutional recommendations or scientific investigations alone. Questions related to the meaning of life constantly remain open and assigned to the sphere of lived experience. Ultimately, it always turns out that they enter the path of the mystery of life and death, which cannot be explained by means of rational intellectual premises. However, the modern human, entangled in the process of rapid existential and civilizational changes, feels a constant need to seek and experience it.

Frankl's theoretical investigations into meaning also demonstrate its connections with values and valuation. From the perspective of the search for the meaning of life, it should be assumed that they are arranged in a specific hierarchy: higher and lower, important and less important values. The higher and highest ones determine the basic directions of human life and the essence of humanity depends on them. Lower values, on the other hand, are the basis of human existence and are a necessary condition for achieving higher values. Therefore, lower values cannot constitute the true goal of life, but are only the means to achieve it. Their importance ultimately depends on which other higher values they serve, because from these they derive their additional nobility and purposefulness. In this way, a human being, finding the ultimate meaning of life, confirms it through specific choices of specific values, which are his or her indirect and partial goals.

In his proposal, Viktor E. Frankl clearly emphasized the primacy of moral values over material ones. At the same time, he pointed out the importance of basing one's evaluation on religious, permanent, unchanging and objective values. He made finding the true meaning and purpose of life dependent on them. They do not confine human beings

to temporal life only. On the contrary, they open them to supernatural reality.

For Frankl, apparently, religion proves to be an autonomous value, but it also fulfils many other important functions in one's personal life, as well as influencing social life. It can significantly help a person to function better both internally and in taking up external activity. It seems important to emphasize that religiosity, i.e. the subjective attitude to religion as a set of certain truths, dogmas, a system of norms of conduct and rituals that regulate the attitude towards God, may play an important role in shaping a person's personality and attitude to life. Religious values are an important reference point and guide in personality development. They may contribute to its development to varying degrees, depending on the place they occupy in the personality structure. Thanks to them, people can satisfy their needs and find answers to basic questions about the existence of humanity and the world. It is on them, just like on needs, that the meaning of human life can be built.

The issue of the meaning of life is extremely important from an existential perspective. This is an issue worth taking up, especially in the current moral crisis. Such crises often lead to a loss of the meaning of life. In a rapidly changing world, the circles of people who succumb to feelings of meaninglessness in life are expanding, and the number of so-called existential frustrations increases. The crisis of the meaning of life and the feeling of meaninglessness arise in contemporary conditions as a result of various disappointments, but also, above all, as a result of negative changes in the sphere of values and norms.

The questioning of values and the identity crisis that a significant number of people, especially young people, are going through today oblige us to overcome it and make new efforts in the field of research and scientific inquiry. The global crisis, which has affected the economy, politics, culture, morality, religiosity, and finally humans themselves, demands special integration, cooperation, a sense of responsibility and creative dialogue in the field of building a new order and a new normative order, especially the institutions responsible for the upbringing of the young generation.

From a practical point of view, an important problem arises: how to revive the issue of the meaning of life in upbringing, in education (not only in the religious sense but also in broader pedagogical thinking) and how to help people find the fullness of being and life. It is worth maintaining interest in the issue of the meaning of life, both in theoretical considerations and practical activities.

The present work does not aim to comprehensively and fully exhaust the problem of the relationship between pedagogy and V.E. Frankl's proposal from the perspective of the question of meaning. Instead, in the author's intention, it is a contribution to further in-depth research, which may ultimately lead to treating the category of "meaning" and "meaning of life" as an important topic for contemporary exploratory pedagogy.

The formal and substantive structure of the work will be determined by two main parts: the first contains the theoretical background of the assumptions of Frankl's theory and method which result from the analysis of the human existential situation and the characteristics of the category of meaning. Therefore, there will be described (in chapters one and two) the symptoms of the loss of the sense of meaning in relation to the duties that a person is supposed to fulfil, as well as goals and values that exist and which a person should set and pursue. In addition, the causes of the crisis of meaning will be presented, a feeling of a limited or closed life perspective, development prospects, a feeling of inner emptiness and boredom, which weaken a person's vital forces as well as depriving them of strong motivation and hope for the future. Perceiving the world as absurd and meaningless is a direct path to potentially serious personality disorders and, in general, to the intensification of phenomena that fall within the scope of social pathology. The contemporary youth counterculture movement, the increase in drug addiction, crimes and aggressive behaviour in stadiums and streets seem to be closely related to the experience of existential frustration. The subsequent chapters (fourth and fifth) will focus on the issue of meaning as a possible way out of the existential crisis, as well as on the dialogical and personalistic principle characterizing its essence.

The second part of the work will be entirely devoted to the peda-gogical validation of Frankl's logotherapy and showing the importance of the question of meaning for educational interactions. The discussion on the mutual relations between psychotherapy and pedagogy has been conducted for a long time in a particularly controversial way. While some participants of the discussion are convinced of the need to relate these fields to each other, others claim that there is a fundamental incon-sistency between the psychotherapeutic and pedagogical approaches to the problem. Moreover, there are also positions that see V.E. Frankl's existential analysis as a special case of pedagogy, or possibly further de-velopment taking place within it. In the second part, these relations will be analysed, while taking into account the necessary assumptions influ-encing the formulation of problems and questions about the meaning of life. The concept of the dissertation and the limits outlined in it for updating V. Frankl's psychological and therapeutic thought, as well as its application to pedagogy, require the adoption of a specific research model. It will be based on the basic assumptions of Jean Piaget's genetic structuralism, namely on the analysis of the genesis and stages of pro-cessing knowledge in its entirety from a lower to a more advanced level (J. Piaget 1977, p. 46f.). In the models of this reconstruction of education-al theory, the following phases of analysis can be distinguished: the gen-esis of a specific theory, the transformation of the structure of a given theory or its components, and the updating of pedagogical concepts from the past (W. Ciczkowski 1995, pp. 75–76). The scientific thought of J. Piaget was placed by Zbigniew Kwieciński, next to John Dewey and Lawrence Kohlberg, in the trend of reconstructionists seeking harmo-ny between the past and shaping the courage to create a new social reality, combining the common good with the good of the individual (Z. Kwieciński 2000, p. 42f.).

The methodological approach applied in the dissertation is called triangulation in social research. It most often includes categories such as description, explanation, design and evaluation, as well as understand-ing and interpretation (S. Palka 1999, p. 13). The compilation of these categories allows one to strengthen the authenticity of the analysed

problems, in addition to contributing to feedback in the creation of richer knowledge about pedagogical phenomena and processes (S. Palka 1999, p. 15). Thanks to triangulation, it is possible to obtain confirmation of analyses and statements, as well as obtaining greater reliability of the conclusions drawn from them. Among many possible methods, theoretical and methodological triangulation was applied in the dissertation (K. Konarzewski 2000, p. 44). The former takes analyses from various theoretical sources as the basis for interpretation, while the latter employs a compilation of various research methods for analysis. In this case, the monograph method was of primary importance, while other methods, i.e. biographical, hermeneutic and phenomenological, played a complementary role in the work.

The choice of the monograph was determined by the fact that it consists in describing one selected issue through comprehensive criticism of the sources and their interpretation (B. Miśkiewicz 1971). In the case of this work, the main analysed issue will be V.E. Frankl's concept of logotherapy and its importance for pedagogical theory and practice. The sources of this research method lie in historical and ethnographic sciences, and more precisely in the area of cultural anthropology. The above-mentioned scientific disciplines use the discussed research method to describe a specific section of cultural and social reality, individual, group or the entire social system.

The monographic method will be complemented by the thematic biography method (J.K. Helling 1990, p. 16ff.), because it would be difficult to analyse Frankl psychologically without capturing the contexts and connections of key events from his life, especially his experience of concentration camps. This method assumes the capture of a certain area of human activity and, although it does not constitute an independent topic in the work, it certainly allows for a comparison of the main lines of V.E. Frankl's creativity and professional activity (scientific, didactic) with specific events in his biography and with the professor's struggles with the socio-political reality (mainly World War II and the post-war years), determined by the era in which he lived.

Both methods seem objective and are not susceptible to accusations of unscientific nature, because in their essence they use historical and biographical facts without changing their semantics. It was the hermeneutic method that was important for analyses, especially of source texts. In the first sense, it is, of course, a method of critical examination, explanation and internal interpretation. In the presented case, it will be to obtain information about the importance of V.E. Frankl's intellectual thought, with particular emphasis on its usefulness for contemporary exploratory pedagogy, but in a historical context. After all, history can become a determinant of life if only the right questions are asked of it (J. Gnitecki 1993). Therefore, hermeneutics as the science of understanding through its reflexivity and connection not only with the written source, but also with pedagogical experience, is the basis for constructing meanings with a broader scope (A. Krause 2004).

During the analysis of V.E. Frankl's compact works and articles in the field of logotherapy, the question of its pedagogical and educational values and the ways of making them present was considered important. The question of extending the subject of research from the field of psychology to strictly pedagogical ground was also justified, looking for relations, connections and the validation of questions of meaning in pedagogy.

The problem of the specificity, depth and educational nature of the meaning of life in pedagogy remained relatively difficult methodologically and analytically. A supporting phenomenological method served to resolve it due to its basic postulate of "returning to things", i.e. direct experience of what is given (J. Gnitecki 1993, p. 52). This method made it possible to show the sense and significance of individual phenomena included in V.E. Frankl's therapeutic project adopted for analysis. Z. Kwieciński postulates, using the phenomenological method, "drawing maps of paradigms and theories" (Z. Kwieciński 2000, p. 47). This is a method transferred by Roland G. Pulston from the sociology of science to compare representative trends in pedagogy over longer periods of time and to study the connections (relations) of social changes with changes in pedagogical theories (R.G. Pulston 1993, pp. 25–30).

The presented diversity of methodological procedures allows for this type of theoretical reflection, which is closely related to praxeology. It shows the problems of educational practice often associated with fundamentalist thinking, inappropriately stimulated and "behind" in the perspective of the most advanced planes of theoretical thinking, which were reconstructed in the first decade of the 21st century.

The analysis of the central philosophical category of the meaning of life in this work seems important because, paradoxically, what is undisclosed and inconspicuous turns out to be what is the most constitutive of the human condition and the manifestations of human coexistence with others. Awareness of the need to search for the meaning of life shows the need to approach the process of upbringing and education from the point of view of the basic truths that constitute the form of human existence. The words of Tadeusz Gadacz express this extremely well:

> There are truths that can be learned from a book, which can be reached through intellectual speculation. There are also truths to which there is no theoretical answer. They can only be known through personal testimony and your own life experience (T. Gadacz 1991, p. 47).

PART I
HUMANS AND THEIR EXISTENTIAL PROBLEMS.
SEARCHING FOR ANSWERS
IN THE PROPOSAL OF VIKTOR E. FRANKL

The meaning of life lies in a creative attitude to your own existence, in holding your own fate in your hands and directing your spiritual existence towards objective values. What satisfies the human is the development of personal relationships and of being a person, and not just mastery of the maternal world.

Kazimierz Popielski

The first part of the book is a theoretical basis for analyses that seek meaning, as well as the correlation between V.E. Frankl's logotherapy theory and contemporary educational studies. There will be presented here the existential perspective of today's human, often overwhelmed by a post-normative ethical void and the loss of a sense of meaning in life and the understanding of the reality surrounding him. This perspective would seem necessary in order to fully understand the sources and basis for the development of the therapeutic method of the Viennese psychiatrist. Structurally, this part consists of four chapters. The first is an attempt to show the connections between Frankl's biography, his personal experiences and his professional experience. It turns out that his intellectual path was strongly determined by significant events in his life, especially his stays in concentration camps, which – as he asserts – he survived exactly because of his attempts to understand the meaning of both life and death.

The second chapter presents a phenomenological perspective of existential crises and their causes, leading to the loss of the meaning of the depth of life, neurotic behaviour and existential emptiness. In the third chapter, the category of meaning will be considered as a possible and even necessary way out of the existential crisis. A special place will also be assigned here to the category of conscience, which, due to its subjective nature, is rather ignored in building the human value system, while in Frankl's theory it is considered a key organ of meaning.

The last chapter of this part of the work conveys the personalistic, subjective and, above all, dialogical dimension of the meaning of human life towards the Other.

The desire and need for meaning in life – as Kazimierz Popielski emphasizes – is indeed a human need. It constitutes a problem only in the *Homo sapiens* species, and therefore only for and in humans. This type of ontic quality and demand manifests itself not only as a need, but also as the dynamism of searching, a desire resulting from "something" more, a feeling, will, pursuit. Saint Augustine expressed it with a reflection indicating a "restless heart", Blaise Pascal – with a religious experience "piercing, like lightning, like an igniting fire", Sister Teresa of Calcutta – searching for and collecting dying paupers in the streets, Janusz Korczak – going with his children to a concentration camp, and Maksymilian Kolbe – replacing on death row the husband and father of a family in despair (K. Popielski 2008, p. 139).

VIKTOR E. FRANKL AND HIS THEORY

> *The need for meaning in life is a property of normal, adult
> human beings that causes one to function properly, provided
> the values which are or may be considered by them to give
> meaning to life exist in their life's activity, which in practice
> means that without them their life's endeavour is too weak
> in relation to capabilities, undirected and assessed negatively
> by them.*
>
> Kazimierz Obuchowski

Frankl's psychotherapeutic method and thought cannot be understood in isolation from his personal biography. It marks turning points for a lifetime of experience, but also for a scientific career. Born into a Jewish family on March 26, 1905 in Vienna, as one of three children[1] of Elisa Lion and Gabriel Frankl, he very quickly experienced the stigma of his own origins. Already during World War I, the Frankl family shared the fate of many other Europeans, suffering horrific poverty and hunger (V.E. Frankl 1997, p. 8), and during World War II they experienced their Semitic origins in a peculiar way. Viktor was an intellectually brilliant and curious child. During junior high school, he was interested in the philosophy of nature and read Wilhelm Oswald and Gustav Theodor Fechner. The marriage of philosophy and psychology did not remain alien to him for the rest of his intellectual path. He passed his high school leaving examination in 1923, writing a thesis on the psychological aspects of

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1 The oldest brother, Walter August, was born on July 26, 1902, the younger sister Stella Józefina was born on April 30, 1909.

Arthur Schopenhauer's[2] philosophical thought. At the same time, he became interested in Sigmund Freud's psychoanalysis, which resulted in their meeting in person.

The development of V. Frankl's psychotherapeutic thought, strongly related to his personal experience, can be divided into four main periods. Each of them has its own characteristics, leaving an imprint on his scientific interests.

Viktor E. Frankl – biographical elements

1. Caring for young people (adolescence)

As a young student (1924–1930), Frankl belonged to the Alfred Adler Society of Individual Psychology, founded in 1912. As part of this affiliation, he was particularly interested in the psychosocial condition of contemporary youth with various types of life problems. He looked for the causes and factors determining the accumulation of their pathological behaviour, which would often lead to conflicts with the law, escapes from home and, finally, suicide. The young Frankl was looking not only for the sources of such behaviour but, above all, he wanted to find preventive solutions. This resulted in the publication in 1926, at the age of only 21, of a series of four articles in which he emphasized the need to create youth counselling centres for young people with difficulties[3]. According to Frankl's proposal, these were to be private centres, but free of charge and guaranteeing anonymity, unlike the centres already existing in some schools, where young people were largely subject to control,

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2   The original title was: *Psychologie des philosophischen Denken*. See: A. Batthyany, K. Biller, E. Fizzotti (eds.), *Viktor E. Frankl. Gesammelte Werke, Band I, ... trotzdem Ja zum Leben sagen Und ausgewählte Briefe 1945–1949*, Böhlau Verlag, Wien – Köln – Weimar 2005, pp. 25–26.

3   These were the following articles: *Über die Notwendigkeit der Schaffung von Jugendberatungstellen*, „Zeitschrift für Kinderschutz, Familien – und Berufsfürsgore" 1926, vol. 18, no. 7, pp. 130–132; *Schafft Jungendberatungsstellen*, „Die Mutter" 1926, vol. 2, no. 39, p. 8; *Gründet Jugendberatungsstellen*, „Der Abend" 1926, vol. 12, no. 2000, p. 7; *Über die Notwendigkeit individualpsychologischer Jugendberatung*, „Gemeinschaft" 1926, vol. 1, no. 8–9, pp. 5–6.

especially by teachers. Less than a year later, such counselling centres for young people were opened in Vienna, the result of cooperation between teachers, doctors and Frankl's friends[4]. After 1927, he published a number of articles describing the effectiveness of the activities of these centres (Z. Formella 2006, p. 387).

Noteworthy is a text from 1935 (8 years after the opening of the first centre), in which Frankl summarizes his own initiative. It presents the most important problems affecting young people attending these centres, especially those related to the lack of sexual education, family conflicts, school and economic difficulties as well as personality disorders (Z. Formella 2006, p. 388). Above all, however, he emphasizes the importance of personal contact between therapists and clients, openness and honesty, which facilitate therapy and a return to a life free from internal and external conflicts.

This first youthful period of Frankl's life and activity, marked by his concern for educationally difficult youth, was interestingly summarized by E. Fizzotti, a friend and heir to the idea of logotherapy. During his stay at the Logotherapy Congress in Argentina in 1998, a year after V. Frankl's death, he described him with the words: *"un giovane don Bosco – ebreo viennese – a young priest Bosco – a Viennese Jew"*. The analogy to the preventive system created by St. John Bosco seems particularly appropriate when it comes to working for lost youth looking for their place in life (Z. Formella 2006, p. 388).

2. Development of psychological thought (beginning of professional career)

This period of Frankl's biography covers the 1930s until 1942. During this time, he obtained education in medicine (1930), and then completed

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4 Frankl's collaborators included psychologists Charlotte Bühler and Erwin Wexberg, as well as city councilor Julius Handler. Frankl's initiative was also taken up outside Vienna, creating similar institutions in Zurich, Dresden, Chemnitz, Prague, Brünn, Teplitz--Schönau. Also interesting is the fact that in 1930, for the first time in Vienna, no case of suicide among school youth was recorded. See E. Fizzotti (ed.), *Viktor E. Frankl. Le radioci Della Logoterapia. Scritti giovanili 1923–1942*, LAS, Roma 2000, p. 150.

specialization in neurology and psychiatry (1936). It was also a period of his intensive medical practice, initially at the University Clinic in Vienna under the supervision of prof. Otto Pötzl, and then at Maria Theresien Schlössl under the supervision of prof. Josef Gerstmann.

> In 1933, he was transferred to the Psychiatric Clinic Am Steinhof, on the outskirts of Vienna, where he analysed cases of neuroses, obsessions and phobias, which he dealt with personally. After Hitler's annexation of Austria in March 1938, the situation of the Jews living there deteriorated rapidly. Many of them were looking for opportunities to go outside the borders of the country or continent. V. Frankl also tried to obtain an exit visa for his family, but to no avail. Forced to stay in the country, he accepted the position of head of the neurological department of Rothschildspital (1939–1942), reserved exclusively for Jewish patients. It seemed to have been the most effective way to guarantee the family's safety when deportations to concentration camps began (Z. Formella 2006, p. 388).

In the clinic, apart from the therapeutic prevention of suicide attempts, the number of which increased significantly after the occupation of Vienna by the Nazis, he also gained his first experience in neurosurgery. At the same time, risking his own life, he opposed in his medical practice the euthanasia program for mentally ill people introduced by the Nazis. He was actively helped in this by Otto Pötzl, who, being an anti-Semite and NSDAP supporter, risked virtually everything. Frankl emphasized that without his involvement it would not have been possible to save the lives of many Jews (V.E. Frankl 1997, p. 55).

Just days before the United States entered World War II, Frankl received a visa to that country. Making the decision to flee and leave his family in war-torn Europe was extremely difficult for him. Ultimately, what determined Viktor's decision to stay with his family was a piece of marble found by his father in the ruins of a synagogue destroyed by the Nazis bearing the inscription "Honour your father and your mother, so that you may live long in this land..." (Exodus 20:12) (cf. M.H. Hall 1968). Frankl remained in Austria and soon married Tilly Grossner, a nurse working at the same clinic. They were one of the last Jewish couples allowed to marry.

Two aspects of his activity are particularly worth emphasizing during this period. The first concerns practical clinical work. During this time, Frankl developed and applied specific therapeutic techniques in psychotherapy. Particularly noteworthy here is the technique known as *paradoxe intention* (so-called paradox), which was primarily the result of his medical practice and only later of theoretical reflection. To put it simply, it consisted in visualizing the events in the patients' lives that they feared the most and repressed from their consciousness. However, he was of the opinion that in therapy it is not the methods and techniques that are most important, although they play a substantial role, but the real, living relationship between the doctor and the patient. The essence of this relationship should be personal contact emphasizing its subjective dimension, negating the instrumentality of medical activities. The analysis of the current existential state of the patient, treated personally, allowed Frankl to create deep and unique relationships, revealing the real sources of the disease, thus facilitating the design of effective treatment.

The second aspect of Frankl's activity concerns the reflection based on values, which, gradually refined, became the theoretical basis of his logotherapy. This was the result not only of the experience gained in medical practice, but also of many intellectual meetings with people playing a significant role in the medical, psychological and philosophical environment. In the years 1938–1939 he published articles in which he addressed the issue of spirituality in psychotherapy. He was concerned not so much with the religious values of a human being as a person, but with universal, most human values. In publications from this period, he used the term *logotherapy* for the first time, understanding it as a search for the *logos* of life, the meaning of life, integrating the effectiveness of therapy. Similarly, for the first time he raised the problem of *existential analysis*, contrasting it with traditional psychoanalysis. Frankl was of the opinion that this analysis, referring to the discovery of unconscious states of consciousness and using so-called depth psychology, is not as effective in treating patients as logotherapy, the "psychology of heights", oriented on values and the person. It does not exclude the

past, but integrates it with the current state and a look into the future. By considering one's experiences, often traumatic ones, emphasizing and separating basic values, a person is directed onto goals, ideals, tasks, duties and rights (Z. Formella 2006, p. 390).

In 1939, Frankl published the article *Philosophie und Psychoterapie. Zur Grundlegung einer Existenzanalyse* with a deep philosophical dimension, in which he emphasized the philosophical foundations of psychotherapy. In it, he talked about psychotherapy with a human face, that is, one that helps the patient not only discover the trauma of the past and the traces it has left, but also enables one to see the possibilities, resources, and energies found in a person that need to be recognized and named. According to Frankl, this was supposed to help a person open up to the future and forget about the reductionist past.

The second period of Frankl's biography described here, both from the point of view of clinical practice and philosophical reflection, distinctly outlined the further development of his intellectual path and allowed him to adopt specific attitudes in the upcoming difficult moments of his life. Undoubtedly, a major contribution to the formation of Frankl's thought in this period was made by reading the philosophical writings of Max Scheler, Karl Jaspers and Martin Heidegger, who emphasized, among other things, the fundamental role of personal relationships in interpersonal contacts. The coming years of his life were to convey the significance of personal experience with other humans and with oneself, especially in traumatic situations.

3. Experience of war and concentration camps (personal tragedy)

In the three years between 1942 and 1945 alone, Frankl spent time in four Nazi concentration camps. In September 1942, together with his wife and parents, he was deported to the Theresienstadt camp, where his father died in February 1943 at the age of 82. In 1944, he was transported to Auschwitz. He was accompanied on this "migration" by his wife Lilly (she disappeared without trace in the Bergen-Belsen camp). Immediately after his arrival, he was forced to abandon the manuscript

of his book *Ärzliche Seelsorge*, sewn into the lining of his clothes. In October 1944, his mother died in the gas chamber at Auschwitz. After a short stay in this camp, he himself was transferred to the Kaufering III camp and then to Türkheim, from which he was liberated in April 1945[5]. These were years of the most dramatic experiences and experiences of human fate, which left their mark on Frankl's further life.

After the war, in Vienna, he met again with his former professor and colleague Otto Pötzl, who on seeing the tragic mental state of his student and friend, especially after receiving confirmation of his wife's death, encouraged him to sign a blank form. He then turned it into an application for the position of head of one of the departments of the Polyclinic of Neurology in Vienna. Frankl received the position and worked there for the next 25 years. At that time, the director of the clinic, Otto Kauders, convinced V. Frankl to make the final edits to the book titled *Ärztliche Seelsorge*[6], which became a turning point in his "return to normal life".

Frankl's camp experiences, as well as those of other inmates, only confirmed his intuition about the faith in the depth of the human interior and human self-transcendence. Frankl himself is proof that a human being is able to experience the most tragic moments of life provided one is aware of the existence of values and approach towards these values. According to Frankl, this shapes an attitude of unwavering faith in a positive change of a traumatic, even extreme (concentration camp) situation, even though externally one has no influence on such a change. This is similar to the analogous therapy of the so-called positive thinking

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5 You can read about V. Frankl's camp fate in his book, which he wrote after confirming the news of the death of his father, brother and wife in December 1945, entitled *Ein Psycholog erlebt das Konzentrationslager*, published in Poland entitled V.E. Frankl, *Psychologist in a concentration camp*, PAX, Warsaw 1962. This book is probably his most famous book. In the United States alone, its edition titled *Man's Search for Meaning* has sold over 9 million copies.

6 The book was published in 1946 and this year alone it was reprinted three times. It was also the basis for awarding Frankl with the degree of habilitated doctor. The beginning of this book is significant, starting with the Bible verse: „They who sow in tears will reap in joy" (Ps 126:6). With these words, Frankl wanted to say that after suffering in the camp, he found the joy of completing his work, which seemed to be lost forever in Auschwitz.

in the treatment of incurable diseases, e.g. cancer. The point is not to see yourself as a victim, but to emphasize that despite everything, in the most difficult moments of life, a person can maintain one's own dignity and ability to fight. This aspect, apparently, has a therapeutic dimension. During his three years in Nazi camps, Frankl had a unique opportunity to personally verify the strength and effectiveness of value-oriented therapy in future tasks. Their presence helps a person to reject unintentional sins.

However, Frankl was most interested in the fundamental question of whether suffering and death themselves have any meaning at all. If this were not the case, the camp as a lived experience would also be meaningless. As he wrote:

> Since if the meaning of life consisted in saving it or not, and depended on favourable chance, such a life would not actually be worth living at all (V.E. Frankl 1979, p. 171).

A human being is deprived of everything in the camp and is left only with internal freedom consisting in adopting one or another attitude towards fate and the surroundings.

> Spiritual freedom, which cannot be taken away from a person until the last breath of his life, also gives him the opportunity to shape his own existence in a meaningful way for the rest of his life (V.E. Frankl 1947a, p. 94).

This statement emphasizes the role that Frankl assigned to hope in finding the meaning and content of life. When it starts to run out, then the end is near. He often heard from his fellow prisoners that they no longer expected anything good from life.

> However, such people needed to be clearly told that it is not about what else can be expected from life, but about what life expects from each person individually. Only a few camp prisoners admitted their inner freedom and were able to undertake the task of accomplishing the values that resulted from suffering. And even if it was only one person, it would be enough to witness the fact that a person can be internally stronger than his external fate (V.E. Frankl 1947a, p. 95).

And he further concluded:

> We are concerned with the meaning of life as a whole, which also includes death. In this way, not only the meaning of "life" appears, but also the meaning of suffering and dying; this was the meaning we were struggling for then (V.E. Frankl 1947a, p. 110).

The lack of a way out of the camp and the ever-present danger of death caused almost everyone – even for a short time – to entertain the thought of committing suicide. In the first days of their stay in the concentration camp – as Frankl wrote – people were in a state of shock, and death did not terrify then. Gas chambers were not something terrible as they were seen from the perspective of being replaced by suicidal death. After some time, this initial panic-like attitude gave way to a kind of indifference. Everything that was being experienced in the camp and had to be watched only bounced off the prisoners. Still later, a state of hypersensitivity appeared, expressing itself in aggression. Frankl describes that the most shocking spiritual experience in the camp was that no one knew when the end might come. This led to a feeling of having no prospects for the future. The world outside the camp fences seemed unreachable, unreal, simply alien. However, the long-awaited moment of leaving the camp finally came. At first, everything seemed as if it were just a beautiful dream that was hard to believe. Many days passed before those released from the camp found themselves in a state of joy at this fact; they just needed to learn to experience joy again. The necessity to re-learn joy was not only an affective and emotional problem, but also an ethical one, namely a question about the need for meaning. A person who becomes a victim cannot, apparently, avoid solving the dilemma of adopting a specific attitude towards this fact. However, one can choose the best solution: not to hide behind evil, not to wait and observe silently, not to feel sorry for oneself, not to reopen wounds, not to close oneself off, but to open up to the future, to values and goals. This illustrates the process of a person's internal transformation regardless of the possibility of changing the external conditions of one's life.

Frankl repeatedly emphasized that logotherapy was not the result of his war and camp experiences, as some researchers of his method

would have it. It only found practical and personal verification of its effectiveness in the conditions of a concentration camp, refined in Frankl's scientific publications after the end of the war (V.E. Frankl 1997, p. 55; E. Fizzotti 2005, p. 323f.).

Of course, in the third stage of Frankl's biography described here, other important aspects of his intellectual development are also worth emphasizing. One of them is the concept of individual responsibility, to which he returned many times in later years. It concerned the post-war problem of the collective responsibility of the German nation for the murder of humanity. According to Frankl, it is much more significant to accept individual responsibility for one's own wicked acts than to blame everyone for them. In such a situation, it is easy to make simplifications and false accusations. Another aspect of this problem, emphasized by Frankl himself, which is the result of the camp experience, is the responsibility of an individual for what one does, regardless of their race, nationality, profession, or religion. One of the most touching and rich fragments of his memories is the one in which he uses personal phrases: "I saw it", "we experienced it personally", "we saw with our own eyes what a human being is capable of" (V.E. Frankl 1962). A human being was able to build crematoria in which he burnt people, but at the same time a human being was able to enter these crematoria with his head held high, reciting the Jewish death prayer *Shema Israel* or praying with the words *Our Father* (V.E. Frankl 1949).

Frankl emphasized that it was important to be aware of what was happening around him. This, of course, concerned the camp conditions, the awareness of danger and lurking death, but at the same time maintaining one's dignity to protect oneself from humiliation resulting from fear. In one of his books, V. Frankl refers in this context to Maksymilian Kolbe (V.E. Frankl 1949; E. Romeo 1998), who was for him an example to follow of the courage to sacrifice one's own life to preserve the life of another. This confirms his thesis that life is worth as much as it is a gift to others.

What was important for Frankl was every one's awareness and personal conviction about the meaning of one's own life. I have a task to

accomplish, which in a sense becomes my life's goal. I live in hope of being able to achieve this goal. At the same time, my life is not an end in itself. I don't see my life as an opportunity to achieve pleasure or success, but I perceive it as an opportunity to give myself to others. This is where I see the meaning of my life. At the same time, my gift is not only life itself, but also suffering, sacrifice, work, my actions, experiences, everything that a person can experience as a gift towards another person. This is a profound meaning that becomes a value (V.E. Frankl 1949; Z. Formella 2006).

4. "Return" to personal and professional life

At the end of 1945, the fourth stage in V. Frankl's life begins. This is the period of his full involvement in professional and scientific activities. After overcoming his personal crisis, at the beginning of 1946 he devoted himself entirely to his professional and writing activities, as well as to giving university lectures and conferences all over the world. An important moment in Frankl's life was his second marriage in 1947 to Eleonore Katharina Schwindt, who became his true companion not only in his personal but also in his scientific life.

He worked at the Polyclinic of Neurology in Vienna (1946–1971) as a doctor for 25 years, where he had personal contact with patients and colleagues. This allowed him, above all, to verify his ideas in the field of psychotherapy. He also continued to educate himself, which resulted in, among others, obtaining a habilitation in the field of neurology and psychiatry (1948) and a doctorate in philosophy, based on a thesis entitled *Der unbewußte Gott. Psychoterapie und Religion* (1948).

As a writer, he achieved extraordinary things during this time. In the years 1946–1949 he wrote 8 books. Most of them were soon translated into other languages: *Ärzliche Seelsorge* (1946), *Ein Psycholog erlebt das Konzentratioslager* (1946), *...trotzdem Ja zum Leben sagen. Drei Vorträge* (1946), *Die Psychotherapie in der Praxis. Eine kasuistische Einführung für Ärzte* (1947), *Zeit und Verantwortung* (1947), *Die Existenzanalyse und die Probleme der Zeit* (1947), *Der unbewusste Gott* (1948), and *Derunbedingte Mensch* (1949). This was a great achievement for the post-war era,

considering the conditions in which he lived and worked. Immediately after the war, eight families lived in his apartment. He had only a small room for scientific work, which even lacked a chair. Of course, his wife, Elly Frankl, supported him tirelessly in his determination, copying and organizing his records and notes.

Lectures given at the University of Vienna resulted in the book *Homo patiens. Versuch einer Pathodizee* (1950), in which he described the case of a suffering man from the perspective of logotherapy. The anthropological foundations of logotherapy were described by Frankl in his next book: *Logos und Existenz. Drei Vorträge* (1951). Another publication titled *Die Psychotherapie im Alltag. Sieben Radiovorträge* (1952), was created in cooperation with Otto Pötzl and described the physiology of a person's mental condition during a crisis. His other more important books are: *Pathologie des Zeitgeistes. Rundfunkvorträge über Seelenheilkunde* (1955); *The Doctor and the Soul. From Psychotherapy to Logotherapy* (1955); *Theorie und Therapie der Neurosen* (1956); *Das Menschenbild der Seelenheilkunde. Drei Vorlesungen zur Kritik des dynamischen Psychologismus* (1959); *From Death-Camp to Existentialism. A Psychiatrist's Path to a New Therapy* (1959); *Man's Search for Meaning. An Introduction to Logotherapy* (1963); *The Will to Meaning. Foundations and Applications of Logotherapy* (1969); *Psychotherapie fűr den Alltag. Rundfunkvorträge über Seelenheilkunde* (1971); *Der Wille zum Sinn. Ausgewählte Vorträge über Logotherapie* (1972); *Der Mensch auf der Suche nach Sinn. Zur Rehumanisierung der Psychotherapie* (1972); *Der leidende Mensch. Anthropologische Grundlagen der Psychotherapie* (1975); *Der Mensch vor der Frage nach dem Sinn. Eine Auswahl aus dem Gesamtwerk* (1979); *Die Sinnfrage in der Psychotherapie* (1981); *Logotherapie und Existenzanalyse. Texte aus fünf Jahrzehnten* (1987); *Was nicht in meinen Büchern steht* (1995). Each of the above-mentioned items has its own history of creation and significant scientific value supported by the author's personal and emotional experience.

Frankl's international activity was also important during this period. It started with lectures and conferences in 1954 at universities in the Netherlands, London and Buenos Aires. In 1961, at the invitation of Gordon Allport, he gave a series of lectures on the theory and practice

of logotherapy at Harvard University in the United States. He also lectured at Southern Methodist University in Dallas (1966) and at Duquesne University in Pittsburgh (1972). Thanks to him, in 1970 in San Diego, California, the first Department of Logotherapy and the first Institute of Logotherapy in the world were established at the United States International University. In the same year, V. Frankl was honoured with the first of many honorary doctorates awarded to him by Loyola University in Chicago[7].

In his autobiography, Viktor Frankl mentions an extremely moving moment in his life, which was his private audience with Pope Paul VI in 1970. The Pope greeted Frankl and his wife in German, and then, continuing his statement in Italian, he appreciated the importance of logotherapy for the Catholic Church and for all humanity. When saying goodbye, he once again addressed Frankl with the words: "Please, pray for me" (V.E. Frankl, E. Fizzotti 1987, pp. 89–90). Everyone who knows the biography of V. Frankl and his works has no doubt that he was a deeply religious man, but in his own personal way. He was original in this too, that is, he was himself.

Viktor Emil Frankl died on September 2, 1997. He was buried in the Hebrew sector of the Zentralfriedhof cemetery in Vienna.

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7   V. Frankl received a total of 29 honorary doctorates. They were awarded to him by the following universities: Loyola University, Chicago (1970); Edgecliff College, Cincinnati (1970); Rockford College, Illinois (1972); Mount Mary College, Wisconsin (1984); Universidade Federal do Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil (1984); Universidad Andrés Bello, Caracas (1984); University of South Africa (1984); Universidad del Salvador, Buenos Aires (1985); Universidad Catolica Argentina, Buenos Aires (1985); Universidad de Buenos Aires (1985); Universidad Francisco Marroquín, Guatemala (1985); Universität Wien (1986); Universidad Nacional de Cuyo, Argentina (1986); Universidad Nacional de Entre Ríos, Argentina (1986); Universidad Nacional de San Luis, Argentina (1986); Universidad del Aconcagua, Argentina (1986); Universidade de Brasilia (1988); University of Haifa, Israel (1988); Internationale Akademie für Philosophie in Liechtenstein (1989);Universität Kopenhagen (1989); University of Pretoria, South Afrika (1990); Universidad Gabriela Mistral, Santiago de Chile (1991); University of Santa Clara, California (1991); University of Ljubljana, Slovenia (1992); University of Prague, Czech Republic (1994); Catholic University of Lublin, Poland (1994); University of Salzburg (1994); Semmelweis-Universität, Budapest (1996); Ohio State University, Columbus (1997).

Let us try to briefly summarize the characterized stages in V. Frankl's life. They have a common point of reference, a denominator that connects them, a thought that runs through them. It is a deep faith in other humans and the courage to take on life's challenges. It is worth mentioning and paying attention to the fact that Frankl was passionate about mountains from a young age and enjoyed high-mountain climbing, which was fraught with risk. This helps to understand his passion for taking up challenges and achieving his goals and tasks. The fact that at the age of 67 he completed a pilot course in California and obtained an airplane pilot's license (1972) show that he had no conservative attitude or fear of new challenges. It is also one of many testimonies about his strong personality structure, which he built throughout his life.

He was characterized by a specific internal dynamism that allowed him to overcome many difficulties. The very fact of recognizing the value of a human being as a person, beyond any divisions, regardless of affiliation to religion, race, nation, or political group, was an act of great courage during the Nazi era and after the end of the war. Frankl's declared lack of acceptance of the concept of so-called collective responsibility was an example of great civil courage.

Still during V. Frankl's lifetime, the Viktor Frankl Institute[8] was established in Vienna (1992), which published its magazine for 6 years. It includes, among others, those involved in logotherapy around the world: Herbert Hunter, Giselher Guttmann, Franz Vesey, Eugenio Fizzotti, members of the Frankl family: Gabriele Frankl, Eleonore Frankl, Katharine Vesely, members of the scientific committee: Javier Estrada, Robin Goodenough, Dawid Guttmann, Dmitry Leontiev, Elizabeth Lukas, Hiroshi Takashima. There are also magazines devoted to logotherapy in Spain, Mexico, the United States, Argentina, Japan, Germany, Italy, South Africa, Austria, Brazil, and Switzerland. Logotherapy formation centres were also established in every continent.

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8   Currently, news about him, along with a very rich archival resource about V. Frankl and logotherapy, can be found at the Internet address: https://www.viktorfrankl.org.

The influence of V. Frankl's concept on the development of psychological thought in Poland is also significant. Kazimierz Popielski[9], associated with the Catholic University of Lublin, is one of the pioneers in this field, who was also able to personally contact and talk to V. Frankl many times. He is the author of many studies in the field of logotherapy and the related field of psychology. The most important include, among others, such works as: *Man – an open question* (Lublin 1987), *Noetic dimension of personality. Psychological analysis of the sense of meaning in life* (Lublin 1993) and *Psychology of existence. Values in life* (Lublin 2008). Another continuator of V. Frankl's ideas is Marian Wolicki[10], associated with Wrocław. The following works from the field of interest to us should be mentioned here: *The human in the existential analysis of Viktor Emil Frankl* (Przemyśl 1986); *The existential-analytical concept of self-transcendence and its theological-pastoral applications* (Przemyśl 1993); *Philosophical foundations of existential analysis and logotherapy* (Wrocław 2001). Another centre dealing with Frankl's intellectual thought is Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań. A doctoral thesis was created there by Arleta Chojniak under the supervision of prof. Krystyna Zamiara's, entitled *The idea of a person's self-transcendence in the personality concept of V.E. Frankl* (2001)[11]. There is also no shortage of references to V. Frankl's achievements in written

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9   Kazimierz Popielski – professor, researcher at the Catholic University of Lublin, Institute of Psychology. In his research, he is interested in logotherapy, personality psychology, social psychology, health psychology, and psychotherapy.

10 Marian Wolicki – researcher at the Pontifical Faculty of Theology in Wrocław, head of the Department of Pastoral Psychology at this Faculty. The main directions of his research are: general psychology, philosophical psychology, contemporary trends in psychology, in particular existential analysis and logotherapy, personality psychology, social psychology, psychology of marriage and family, psychology of religion.

11 Two main research problems were addressed in the doctoral dissertation. The first is expressed in the question about the status of Frankl's concept, that is, whether we are dealing here with a scientific (psychological) or non-scientific concept? The second research problem can be reduced to the question about the specificity of Frankl's concept of a human being, especially in relation to humanistic psychology in its organismic version. The result of this research is also the book: *Human and meaning. Frankl's concept of self-transcendence*, Poznań 2003.

works and articles in the field of psychology, psychotherapy, formation, pedagogy and pastoral theology.

Frankl's method remains absolutely valid. His thought, however, can be criticized for lacking any clear formational proposal. On the one hand, the justification may be the fact that Frankl himself never intended to create his own psychological school, although he was asked to do so many times. He constantly emphasized that his task was to provide reflections that help rebuild reality. It should also be noted that in his theoretical developments he was not a model of systematicity and transparency of ideas. The consequence of this is the polarization of positions on his ideas among followers. In recent years, some attempts have been made to coordinate logotherapy around the world, especially at the initiative of the Dutch, Swiss and Austrian communities, but they have not had much effect.

Nevertheless, what remains valid is his deep humanistic message and faith in humanity. Faith in the meaning of every person's life and in their personal involvement in their own and others' lives is also fundamental. He often recalled Rabbi Hillel's statement, consisting of three questions that, from the perspective of logotherapy, could be translated as follows (P. Avot 1993, pp. 69–70):

– If I don't do it, who will?
– If I don't do it now, when will I do it?
– If I do it only for myself, then who am I?

Frankl's theory in isolation from the views of Sigmund Freud and Alfred Adler

Viktor Frankl, as a thinker and scientist, placed himself on the border of psychiatry, psychology, psychoanalysis and philosophy. He was strongly critical of depth psychology because, in his opinion, it completely failed to take into account an important dimension of human functioning, namely the search for meaning. Therefore, he proposed, as previously mentioned, the theory of so-called altitude psychology. It was intended to constitute a common ground for investigations on

the border between psychotherapy and philosophy, taking into account both the categories of meaning and values. Thus, Frankl's attempt to re-humanize psychotherapy led to a sharp conflict with A. Adler, as a result of which he left the Association of Individual Psychologists.

Frankl distanced himself equally from psychoanalysis and individual psychology, accusing them both of neglecting the spiritual dimension of a person, which he regarded as often more important in therapy than the physical or mental dimension. This does not imply, however, that he did not see their advantages. He attributed the value of courage to A. Adler's individual psychology as a way of overcoming a person's sense of low self-worth. In turn, he attributed the feature of substantiveness to psychoanalysis. In Frankl's view, however, this leads to the objectification of human beings, who are therefore seen as a kind of mechanism. The structure of the human psyche composed of various drives, as Adler believed, makes this sphere of man not only atomized, but also anatomized. According to V. Frankl, this led directly to human depersonalization.

Frankl therefore proposed an existential analysis in which the category of responsibility occupied a special place. He understood human existence very deeply as developing a sense of responsibility, and thus set himself the goal of educating people in the awareness of their own responsibility. While psychoanalysis attempted to reintroduce into consciousness the elements of drives that had been repressed into the unconscious, the task of Frankl's existential analysis was to shift man's spiritual elements from the unconscious to the conscious. The dimension of the unconscious has thus been expanded not only to include the sphere of drives, but above all to include the sphere of the human spirit.

Therefore, depth psychology was more or less a psychology of the unconscious external world, not of the unconscious self. The superior instance that determines whether something will be conscious or will remain unconscious is itself unconscious.

> But in order to make the distinction, it must somehow be able to make the distinction itself. Only the spiritual element is able to do everything – both deciding and distinguishing. And it is in this sense that it turns out once

again that the spiritual element not only can be unconscious, but should be conscious at every stage,

wrote Frankl (V.E. Frankl 1991, p. 25).

An important difference between Frankl's concept and other psychotherapeutic directions is that his proposal, in the temporal dimension, is oriented towards the future, filling it with goals that can be achieved. Meanwhile, traditional psychotherapy is generally focused on the diagnosis of mental disorders that have their origins in the past.

> Inheritance, upbringing, environment – in short, the past – all are important to describe the process of someone becoming human. Without such knowledge, an individual cannot be understood. However, no one has to remain a prisoner of their own past, but can say that they want to become different (T. Hahn 1994, p. 37).

Logotherapy therefore places an emphasis on the future as a "place" where "everything is possible", especially the realization of personal goals, intentions and desires.

From a historical point of view, Freudian psychoanalysis as the first great system of psychotherapy emphasizes the biological needs of sexuality and aggressiveness rooted in the psychic instance of the world. He defines these needs as drives that require release. In opposition to these drives, he distinguishes an immaterial entity whose task is to comply with internally adopted norms and values. In this way, psychoanalysis tries to explain the phenomenon of conscience, which is done on the basis of instinctive human nature. In turn, the third instance, namely the human "I", contains an indirect link between the external world and the immaterial instance and is responsible for humans' adaptation to the surrounding reality (Z. Freud 2022; cf. C.S. Hall, G. Lindzey 2001).

Freud did ask questions about meaning, but in a different sense than in V. Frankl's logotherapy. He tried to explain the meaning of neurotic symptoms and for this reason he analysed the unconscious of mental life. According to him, difficult and unpleasant contents of a person's biography are suppressed and pushed into the unconscious. The task of psychoanalysis was therefore to make the unconscious

conscious. The process of an element becoming unconscious can there-fore be reversed. Freud perceived the unconscious as a repressed part of consciousness. In his opinion, unconscious processes are revealed in behaviours, dreams, fantasies, hopes and underlying motivations. Neuroses are seen as a compromise between conflict-generating drives and demands from the outside world, our "I" and the immaterial entity that limits the human "I" through consciousness. Within psychoanalysis, two important elements can be distinguished, namely repression and transference. The counteraction to repression is awareness, because – according to Frankl's statement – "where the external world is, there should be my 'I'" (V.E. Frankl 1982a, p. 13). However, he expressed the specific quintessence of psychoanalysis, which allows for combining the principles of awareness and transference, in the words: "where the external world is, there should be my 'I', but my 'I' becomes such only in relation to the 'you'" (V.E. Frankl 1982a, p. 13). This formulation fits very clearly into the attitude towards other people presented by V. Frankl, emphasized even more in the statement:

> [...] when we accept people as they are, we influence them badly. And when we treat them as if they were who they should be, we direct them where they should go (V.E. Frankl 1982a, p. 15).

The second major direction that undoubtedly had an influence on V. Frankl's proposed concept was Alfred Adler's individual psychology. The latter understood the meaning of life in two ways. Firstly, he had in mind the meaning that every person seeks and finds in his life. According to Adler, however, this depends to a significant extent on one's sense of value and assessment of the world around oneself. Secondly, he under-stood meaning as a category outside the realm of human experience. He wrote: "Human life is meaningful, or relatively has meaning, when it is guided by goals for the good of humanity as a whole" (A. Adler 1986, p. 11). Moreover, the meaning of life can only be realized in community, together with others.

Adler believed that the main driving force behind people's actions is the pursuit of power as a form of compensation for an inferiority

complex. This complex arises in early childhood due to the child's feeling of weakness in relation to adults and the environment. Methods of compensating for an inferiority complex influence the development of human character traits, while the inability to compensate gives rise to mental disorders and diseases. Adler also believed that the feeling of inferiority can have a positive influence because it is a motivating factor for an individual's development. He also distinguished two goals of life. The first is a sense of community, which comes down to the development of the individual and society at large, based on a sense of empathy and identification. The second is private intelligence, responsible for overcoming one's imperfections by gaining an advantage over other people. Adler emphasized the first goal as an effective means of combating the feeling of inferiority. So, according to him, from early childhood, a person experiences – due to one's shortcomings – a sense of low self-esteem, which they compensate for by striving for advantage and power over others. This awareness of one's own shortcomings and the need for compensation already influences the development of an individual *life plan* in childhood, which sets the ideals and directions of the individual's actions, as well as shaping their personality. The task of education is to help the individual harmonize one's development in order to overcome both the feeling of low value and the desire for advantage over others, which is apparently difficult to achieve. A particularly valuable area for compensating for the feeling of low self-worth may be social activity, in which an individual has the opportunity to demonstrate one's own value (A. Adler 1992; cf. C.S. Hall, G. Lindzey 2001).

Individual psychology therefore tried to make the patient realize that behind excessive striving for one's own importance lies a feeling of inferiority that needs to be overcome. Adler ascertained that being human means: "having a feeling of inferiority that constantly demands overcoming" (A. Adler 1986, p. 55).

The concept of suppression in psychoanalysis corresponds to the concept of arrangement in individual psychology. A patient with neurotic disorders tries to free himself from responsibility by attributing it to the symptoms. Therefore, individual psychology saw its task as shaping people's responsibility for their states and behaviours.

In individual psychology, neurosis meant limiting one's own "I" by being responsible (cf. V.E. Frankl 1982a, p. 11). Environment and up-bringing were key determinants of people's approaches and attitudes towards the community.

"To be human means to be conscious and responsible", wrote Frankl (V.E. Frankl 1982a, p. 11). Both psychoanalysis and individual psychology perceive, each in its own way, only one aspect of being human. They differ not only in their categories, but also in their end goal. The aim of psychotherapy is to introduce a compromise between the demands of the unconscious and the demand for reality; it attempts to adapt the individual's natural drives to the external world.

Individual psychology, in turn, demands not only adjustment, but also the shaping of reality. Frankl asked an essential question as to whether a third category – fulfilment – should be added to the category of adaptation and shaping or not. He believed that there exists a substantial difference between shaping and fulfilment since, even if the external shaping of one's life turned out to be successful, internal fulfilment did not necessarily occur at the same time. Fulfilment, or finding meaning, is focused on those values that each individual person should realize through the uniqueness of their existence and the peculiarity of their fate. Frankl discerned another difference between psychoanalysis and individual psychology in the fact that the former is oriented towards the latter in a causal relationship, while the latter is oriented towards the future and purposefulness.

Psychoanalysis presents man as a being mastered by the pleasure principle, which is paramount in his life. In individual psychology, however, the fundamental principle comes down to the desire to overcome. The pleasure principle therefore aims to maintain or restore internal balance, homeostasis. For Adler, this means that the essence of being human is having a feeling of inferiority that aims to overcome this state.

Frankl, in opposition to the views of Freud and Adler, represented a completely different position. He was of the opinion that human life is not meant to maintain internal balance or compensate for the feeling of lower self-esteem. Human existence is about much more than any internal states:

> [...] the whole human expresses oneself as such only in the service of a cause or in love for a certain person, and realizes oneself only having transcended one's own self (V.E. Frankl 1981, p. 170).

It is also worth mentioning the analytical psychology of Carl Gustav Jung. In his concept, he divided the psyche into the conscious and subconscious spheres. Subsequently, he divided the latter into the individual unconscious and the collective unconscious, which consists in the inherited experiences of the entire human race. Its components are archetypes (T. Panahi 2004, pp. 136–140) – the most primary ideas or forms of things, similar in all people, related to universal themes. Some archetypes are developed to such an extent that they can be considered separate systems within the psyche or personality. These are anima, animus, persona and shadow. He called the process of the development of self by the term individuation, which involves gradually expanding the field of consciousness with the content of the subconscious. Jung distinguished two types of distribution of psychic energy: outside (extraversion) and inside the subject (introversion). These two types of attitudes coexist in every person. He also distinguished four mental functions: thinking, feeling, intuition, and experiencing. They occur in humans together, with one of them being dominant (C.G. Jung 1997; cf. C.S. Hall, G. Lindzey 2001).

Jung's psychotherapy was decisively dominated by Freud's psychoanalysis. Jung absorbed all his essential thoughts and made them the basis of his psychotherapy. According to Jung, a person develops with a focus on a certain future. "The future gives meaning and purpose to life, it is the driving force of all action" (H. Hamer 1998, p. 247). Jung defines neurosis as "the suffering of a soul that has not found its meaning".

Frankl did not question the fact that contemporary psychotherapy is based on the three pillars described above: Freud's psychoanalysis, Adler's individual psychology and Jung's analytical psychology. However, he sought its essence in the conditioning of physical states and symptoms by mental and spiritual states. According to him, every psychotherapist is constantly confronted with the question of the meaning of life. Mere knowledge of how life's doubts develop psychologically does not

seem to be effective in psychotherapy. It is necessary to constantly an-
alyse a person's existential situation in order to understand it. He wrote:

> Yes, there are patients who at the end admit with relief that the issues
> that tormented them were dealt with to one extent or another on the pages
> of this or that work on existential philosophy. And by making this statement,
> they emotionally distance themselves from this issue, rationally objectifying
> it (V.E. Frankl 1982a, p. 22).

Thus, psychotherapy in the form proposed by Freud or Adler be-
comes, in the face of all spiritual aspects, insufficient or even incom-
petent in solving human life problems. Frankl was of the opinion that
when psychotherapy relies on a certain judgment about the "accuracy"
or "inaccuracy" of a certain worldview, it exposes itself to the error of
psychologism. This approach tries to draw conclusions about the va-
lidity or invalidity of the spiritual content contained in it from the fact
of the psychological creation of an act. Therefore, according to Frankl,
psychologism should be overcome in psychotherapy, precisely through
logotherapy[12], which focuses on enabling a person to know and accept
oneself and one's meaning as part of a certain whole, including the real
world in which one must function.

However, logotherapy should not replace psychotherapy. Rather, it
should effectively complement it. A mentally ill patient is less confront-
ed with the question of the meaning of existence than the doctor treat-
ing him. This question, according to Frankl, is significantly overlooked
by doctors and therapists. They practice psychologism, the weakness of
which is the lack of translation of the phenomena of man's spiritual life
into mental life. When dealing with psychopathology, they do not pro-
ject the spiritual element onto the plane of the sick psyche, thus causing
a loss of clarity of the obtained image. On giving up the analysis of the
patient's spirituality, they are never able to determine whether some-
thing is a cultural achievement or just a neurotic symptom. It makes

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12 Logotherapy (from the Greek *logos* – reason, word, science) is a specific, non-invasive
  therapy for personality disorders based on making the patient aware that even in ex-
  treme situations he or she is a person who decides and can give their life meaning, that
  an individual is a spiritual, free and responsible person.

no difference whether it shows signs of a melancholic's mood close to suicide or a neurotic's similar mood – only a state of depression will be noticeable. Logotherapy is therefore about overcoming the approach of psycho(path)ologism in order to perceive the essence of man in his entirety. Logotherapy offers such an opportunity. Frankl wrote:

> Without the use of drugs and without the aid of affective transforma- tions, logotherapy tries to influence the spiritual struggles taking place in the patient with the help of spiritual weapons (V.E. Frankl 1947b, p. 10).

According to the theoretical foundations of logotherapy, each indi- vidual personally decides how to behave in a given situation. Although biological, psychological and sociological factors determine the human condition, they cannot take away the freedom of choice.

The basis for life satisfaction lies in the appropriate recognition of the tasks facing an individual and their implementation. They are divid- ed into three types:
– work and achievements;
– experiencing goodness, truth, beauty and positive feelings towards other people, especially love;
– bravely enduring inevitable suffering.

Each time you take responsibility for one of the above tasks, you feel a sense of meaning and satisfaction in your life.

Logotherapy also obviously reveals the concept of man proposed by Frankl. He advocates an anti-reductionist approach to understanding man. This means that one cannot be reduced to a series of physiological, biological or psychological categories according to which it is "nothing other than...". Such approaches reduce the specifically human dimension of man, which is his *spirituality*. Humans as spiritual beings experience exclusively human values and feelings, such as: freedom, responsibility, love, suffering, fear, the sense of the inevitability of death, and the sense of meaning. According to Frankl, a human being is a unity, but to say that one is a psychophysical unity does not suffice. What is corporeal and what is mental is supplemented with a spiritual dimension, which, unlike the previous two, is not biologically or biographically determined.

What is spiritual in a person constitutes the essence of a person; only by realizing one's spiritual nature can a person lead an authentic existence. Thanks to this property, a person is able to rise above one's conditions, such as disease and suffering, and oppose one's own psychophysical body.

A human being, according to Frankl, is an irreducible unity, manifested in three dimensions: somatic, mental and spiritual. Together, the somatic and psychic dimensions create a psychophysical unity. Psychoanalysts, starting with Freud, Adler and Jung, contributed greatly to the understanding of these two dimensions, especially the psychological dimension, but they neglected the spiritual dimension, constitutive of human beings. Frankl distinguishes three characteristic features of human nature.

Spirituality is the first and most essential feature of man. It is what distinguishes man from animals. Spirituality reveals itself phenomenologically through self-awareness, but is stimulated by the "spiritual unconscious". Unconscious spirituality is the basis of all consciousness. The ego is not ruled by the *id*, but by the spirit. Spirituality is the main human attribute and from it a person draws consciousness, love, moral conscience and aesthetic sensitivity.

Freedom is the second characteristic feature of human nature. When asked who a human is, Frankl answers that a being who always decides who he is now and who he will be in the next moment. Human freedom manifests itself in relation to biological, sociological and psychological conditions. A human being, despite remaining under the influence of all these conditions, is free to accept or reject them, as well as being free to make decisions. Even if a person is dependent on external conditions – says Frankl – one has freedom, in that they can adopt an attitude towards these conditions. Life is not an empty, meaningless existence, and its shape is determined by the individual, who can rise above biological, sociological and psychological conditions into the sphere of spirit. Man also has this freedom in a state of neurosis and psychosis. The case of the genius – Nobel Prize winner Nash – seems to confirm this thesis, as he confided that schizophrenia was a kind of shelter for him from the world, which he perceived as alien and hostile.

Responsibility is the third characteristic feature of human nature. Human freedom does not only denote freedom from, but also freedom to do something, which, according to Frankl, conveys responsibility. A human being is responsible for oneself, for one's conscience, for God. Logotherapy tries to make people fully aware of responsibility and therefore logotherapy must make one aware of making a free choice in the matter of "why", "for what", and "for whom". A human being has to understand himself in order to be responsible because the existence of responsibility forms the basis of human existence. Responsibility implies obligation, and obligation can only be understood in terms of meaning, the meaning of human life (K. Popielski 2008).

Frankl does not understand man statically, but processually. According to him, in a human there always exists mutual counteraction between being, on the one hand, and possibility or duty, on the other. This discrepancy between being and essence characterizes all human life, and the task of human beings involves reducing this discrepancy, that is, to bring human beings closer to essence. "Be the one that only you and you alone can be and have to be". What Frankl expresses is not only the imperative to become oneself, but also that the meaning of life consists in realizing or updating one's essence in many forms of existence, which Frankl identifies with the search for meaning. This search is accompanied by an increase in tension rather than a state of balance. However, such tension is not pathological according to Frankl. On the contrary, it is almost necessary for mental health, because it is based on a certain degree of gap between the way things are and the way they should be.

What a person needs first and foremost is not tension reduction or homeostasis, but "noodynamics", i.e. spiritual dynamics. This process of searching for and giving meaning to life, as well as realizing three types of values, takes place within three spheres.

To explain his understanding of humans, Frankl introduced into his theory the concept of dimensional ontology with a geometric metaphor, defined in the form of two laws. The first law of dimensional ontology states that one and the same thing, projected from its own dimension

to a dimension lower than its own, is reflected in such a way that its re-flections contradict each other. To illustrate this law, Frankl recalls a glass, which is an open cylinder. A glass projected onto a plane parallel to its base gives an image of a circle; when projected onto a plane perpendic-ular to its base, it gives an image of a rectangle. A circle and a rectangle, although they are projections of the same figure, contradict each other. Additionally, both figures are closed figures, while the glass is an open object. If, instead of a glass, we considered a human being, and its various projections were sciences such as biology or psychology, it would turn out that what they say about a human being is a far-reaching reduction, shortening a human being by a dimension that is specifically human.

In the second law of dimensional ontology, different things project-ed from their dimensions onto one and the same dimension lower than their own are reflected in such a way that their images do not contra-dict each other. Different people projected onto the plane of biology or psychology can be classified as the same nosological unit, as a result of which what is individual and special for them is blurred and reduced (e.g. talent).

Meaning in Frankl's theory is therefore inextricably linked to the cat-egory of understanding the existential situation from the perspective of one's own spirituality, responsibility and freedom, as well as orientation to values. Arno Anzenberger claims that:

> [...] the word responsibility indicates the obligation of a person who has free-dom to answer when asked about his decisions (A. Anzenberger 1998, p. 143).

Meanwhile, psychotherapy, which is mainly focused on psychoanal-ysis and individual psychology, ignores the categories of meaningfulness and valence, the spiritual element, and therefore the logotherapeutic logos, focused on existential analysis. Frankl believed that the task of psychotherapy had long ceased to consist only in restoring a person's ability to work and enjoy the joys of life, but also in making him capable of enduring suffering and illness. Neogene neurosis (noogenic as Frankl called it) is nothing else than a decrease in the sense of meaning in life, mainly related to a failure to realize values. A sense of meaninglessness,

in turn, according to Frankl, is the basis of mental disorders such as anxiety (also disintegrative), depression, neurosis, and a sense of worthlessness. This process occurs when the sense of meaninglessness in life loses its situational character with the characteristics of a short-term mental phenomenon, becoming a pathogenic factor that perpetuates the existential crisis and the tendency to isolate oneself from reality or to distort its image. According to Frankl, logotherapy is the only effective way to recreate the orientation towards meaning (V.E. Frankl 1982c, p. 52). However, the patient must realize that his or her recovery is certainly determined primarily by the "sickness of the spirit". We read in Frankl:

> The patient should be helped and directed to stop making judgments about values and worthless things, the meaning and meaninglessness of his existence, resulting from his sadness, fear, and aversion to life. Such judgments are ensued by the sick emotional sphere of life, and the thoughts evolving from this do not have to be correct (V.E. Frankl 1982b, p. 218).

The relationship between the therapist and the patient is considered extremely important in logotherapy. It should be characterized by full mutual trust, patience and faith in the effectiveness of logotherapeutic interactions.

From the characterization so far, what clearly emerges is not so much the opposition of Frankl's thought to Feud's psychoanalysis and Adler's individual psychology, but rather its quite obvious supplementation with the element of human spirituality in the search for the meaning of life. However, human spirituality is understood here not as a practice of everyday life (e.g. religiosity), but as an existential category. Frankl defined it as a process or set of mental processes that are an adaptive response to the awareness of the existential condition. These processes result from the cognitive, emotional and social abilities characteristic of humans.

Other psychologists with a humanistic orientation or those inspired by the thought of existential philosophers (e.g. Søren Kierkegaard, Karl Jaspers, Paul Tillich) also understand spirituality in this functional and dynamic way. In this understanding, spirituality does not always appear under this name. If the terms used in such concepts are treated as

synonyms or closely related terms, spirituality or its manifestations include: the search for meaning as in Frankl, self-realization as in Abraham Maslow, transgression as in Józef Kozielecki, self-creation as in Zbigniew Pietrasiński, or the development of biographical perspective as in Adam Niemczyński (A. Maslow 2001; J. Kozielecki 1998; Z. Pietrasiński 2009; A. Niemczyński 1980).

All the theories mentioned for comparison are similar to Frankl's theory in the sense that, like logotherapy, in the understanding of spirituality they accept the evolutionary hypothesis of the existence of human abilities in the repertoire. They emphasize something that makes spiritual life possible. Depending on individual preferences and starting premises, spirituality may be defined as referring to transcendence in the noun sense ("supernatural", ontological) or only to the process of transcendence. Then, the purpose of search and reflection is to show spiritual transformation, its conditions and consequences. In terms of the development of spirituality proposed by Frankl, as an existential category, one can interpret the search for the lost meaning of life, as well as the possibility of overcoming the fear of existential anxiety associated with the most difficult experiences.

THE LOSS AND CRISIS OF MEANING. A PHENOMENOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

> *The meaning of life as a complex experience of anthro-*
> *pological-psychological, medical, holistic and final character,*
> *means that a number of goals, values, aspirations and refer-*
> *ences in the cognitive process and in emotional-affectional*
> *experience are connected into a whole important and signif-*
> *icant in life.*

<div align="right">Kazimierz Popielski</div>

Existential void

The existence of a modern person, especially a young one, is un-doubtedly characterized by the phenomenon of loss, crisis and existential emptiness. This is evidenced by the results of empirical research and the literature on the subject (see H. Świda-Ziemba 2005). This phenomenon affects people in most countries of Western civilization and culture, but also in post-communist countries. In the case of the latter, the situation in question appears paradoxically to be more difficult. Regardless of the fact that there is an opportunity to use completely unattainable devel-opment and career opportunities, it is accompanied by the temptation to live without barriers and the need to exist in the changeability of such a world. This, in turn, with its stunning pace and lack of predictability, has permanently introduced uncertainty and a kind of emptiness into people's lives. Paradoxically, uncertainty has become the only certainty, as Zygmunt Bauman writes:

[...] today [...] if there is anything you can be sure of, it is that customs, life-styles, titles for pride and reasons for shame, features that are worth having and those for which you have to pay, recipes for brilliant careers and recipes for professional failures, identities that one would like and those that should be avoided – all this and everything else will change or be turned upside down many times before a person reaches the end of one's own life. And we can also be confident that this certainty of impermanence is the only one that can be trusted without any doubt (Z. Bauman 2011, p. 14).

Later, analyzing the condition of modern man, he emphasizes one's brokenness with the words:

How can one plan one's life as a pilgrimage to a destination if the holy shrines have no permanent address, if they wander around the world on their own, if one desecrates and sacrifices alternately, but always in a time incomparably shorter than the pilgrimage would require? How to invest in securities for the sake of distant royalties when you only know for sure that if not tomorrow, then the day after tomorrow they will devalue or melt away in inflation? How to prepare for a "lifelong" profession, a profession as a life's vocation, if the laboriously acquired qualifications are transformed from one day to the next from an asset to a liability, and if professions, positions and workplaces evaporate without a trace, and today's expert opinion awaits the sad fate of superstition tomorrow (Z. Bauman 2011, p. 43).

The sense of meaninglessness described by Bauman, in its typical manifestations, is what Frankl calls "existential emptiness". Its illustration can be found in the words of letters addressed to him by young people, which, despite the passing of time, have not lost their relevance. On the contrary, they can perfectly illustrate the current situation of many people:

I am 22 years old, I have obtained an academic degree, have a luxury car, actually I am financially independent, I can use sex and prestige according to my own desires, and I ask myself only one question: what's the point? (V.E. Frankl 1978, p. 11).

This excerpt from an American student's utterance characterizes the meaninglessness of existence among contemporary academic youth and the clinical form of existential emptiness:

> Here in America, I am surrounded on all sides by young people my age who, with a feeling of doubt, are looking for the meaning of life. One of my best friends recently died because he was unable to find this meaning (V.E. Frankl 1990, p. 11).

The quoted statements are confirmed in the research and publications of Kazimierz Popielski, Teresa Borowska, and Janusz Mariański, in which they perfectly characterize the size and scope of the phenomenon of existential void, documenting it with the results of empirical research (cf. K. Popielski 2007; T. Borowska 2005; J. Mariański 2004).

Frankl points to the two most important conditions of the phenomenon of existential void: the first is the so-called loss of instinct, the second is the "loss of tradition". He writes about it as follows:

> Unlike the animal world, instincts do not tell humans what they should do; nor can tradition tell them anything; therefore, they often do not know what they really want (V.E. Frankl 1973, p. 178).

Every era has its own neurosis, being the result of existential emptiness according to Frankl. "Classic" neuroses are becoming less common, while a new type is becoming more and more common – frustration with the need to strive for meaning. However, the concept of existential void is not very clearly defined by Frankl himself. At times he talks about the sense of meaninglessness and lack of purpose in life, as in the above-quoted excerpt from *Existential Emptiness*, but in *Homo patiens* (1997, pp. 56–59) he writes about the pathology of the spirit of our times, the symptoms of which are a fatalistic, collectivistic, fanatical and makeshift attitude. In turn, in *Unconscious God* (1978, pp. 119–120), Frankl states that the results of existential frustration are: conformism, characterized by doing what others do; totalitarianism, meaning doing what others want; and noogenic neurosis (from the Greek *nous* – reason, sense, spirit), consisting of a person's loss of a sense of meaning. However, a semantic analysis of these effects of frustration reveals not so much difference but rather compliance with the four symptoms of the pathology of the spirit of our times. Conformism is included in a collectivistic attitude, totalitarianism in a fanatical one, and noogenic neurosis

in a fatalistic and partially provisional attitude. In this work, taking into account these semantic connections, it has been assumed that the four symptoms of the pathology of the spirit of our times are the effects of existential emptiness and frustration and together or individually constitute a sign of noogenic neurosis, which will be discussed in the second part of this chapter. This interpretation of the concept seems transparent and methodologically correct.

Frustration resulting from existential emptiness causes a person to become more and more focused on what others do, or one is filled with a completely unjustified desire to fulfil the demands of others. Assuming that both of these phenomena, namely a kind of conformism and thoughtless adaptation to existing conditions, are in fact the result of existential emptiness, a fundamental task for the practice and theory of education arises, concerning the preparation of a young person to enter adulthood. Martin Heitger writes:

> What is perceived here is the principle underlying all types of pedagogy, which in this way defines its original task – supporting a person as a subject in developing his or her own personality – that is, developing his or her ability to make judgments and to think, being ready to take responsibility and to take action oriented towards meaning (M. Heitger 1983a, p. 142).

Alfried Längle sees the source of the above-mentioned forms of behaviour, i.e. conformism or totalitarianism, in an internal lack of orientation. They are an attempt to escape from shaping the ability to make decisions. From the perspective of educational activities, Kant's idea of "self-deserved minority", immaturity that a person is called to abandon, is emphasized here. The freedom to make decisions can become a burden because it requires orientation to a specific way of overcoming difficulties. However, humans by nature constantly succumb to the temptation to escape from freedom understood in this way, relying conformistically on the decisions of others or instead relying on freedom or even wantonness (A. Längle 1991, p. 29).

This type of arbitrariness and disintegration of personality, however, is alienation, something worthless in itself, aimed at a short-term direct personal goal. Längle also believes that from the period of living

in conditions of freedom, all that remains is a sense of wasted time that could be creatively filled with life tasks.

Filling this void, however, requires a person's own involvement and action in transforming reality and searching for orientation. A therapist, like an educator, can only become an accompanying person in the educational process. From a pedagogical point of view, however, the questions "how?" and "for what?" which arise seek orientation that goes beyond the question of its mere possibility. Orientation in itself does not say anything about the conditions for its implementation and the goals consistent with it. The pedagogical justification for determining the conditions for defining a person's life orientation evokes further questions related to values tied in relation to the category of meaning. This will be discussed later in the work. At this point it is worth mentioning that Frankl was fully aware of the danger of transferring the hierarchy of values of the therapist to the patient. However, in this respect the responsibility of both would be helpful (V.E. Frankl 1978, p. 43). Therefore, if Frankl considers logotherapy itself as "education for responsibility" (V.E. Frankl 1972, p. 73), a question inevitably arises about the role of pedagogy in relation to this task. Karl Dienelt understands education for responsibility – based on Max Weber's views – as "meaning-oriented general education", which, in turn, must be understood as a condition for "education for meaningful behaviour in the field of culture" (cf. K. Dienelt 1970, p. 248 et seq.). Education for responsibility is linked to the issue of education for properly understood freedom and anthropological conditions of these categories. Demonstrating the relationship between pedagogy and existential analysis requires an anthropological perspective.

The outlined problem of existential void also requires an explanation of the term "noogenic neurosis" introduced by Frankl on this occasion, which in his opinion is its result. In the context of the search for meaning, it seems necessary to characterize its causes, emphasizing not only their medical, but also their pedagogical justification.

The loss of meaning as a neurotic phenomenon

In addition to the extremely precise and exhaustive definition and classification of neurotic diseases (cf. V.E. Frankl 1981, pp. 42–140), Frankl points to the contemporary "disease of our times", which he also calls "the disease of the zeitgeist" or "the pathology of the zeitgeist" in various variants. While in Freud's times we dealt with sexual frustrations, today we mostly deal with existential frustrations. In Adler's times, the patient suffered from a sense of low self-worth, but today he suffers from a great sense of meaninglessness, accompanied by a sense of existential emptiness.

What has recently increased is not the frequency of neuroses, but their clinical picture – the set of symptoms characteristic of them has changed. Frankl defines the enormous pace of modern life as an attempt to intoxicate oneself. "Humans escape from inner loneliness and emptiness, and during this escape fall into inner confusion" (V.E. Frankl 1981, p. 136).

Frankl defines existential frustration as "failure to fulfil the desire to achieve meaning" (V.E. Frankl 1981, p. 136). This need for meaning is opposed on the one hand by the pursuit of power, as Adler put it in his individual psychology, and on the other hand, by the pursuit to satisfy drives, i.e. the principle of satisfying sexual needs given in Freud's psychoanalysis. The desire to satisfy such needs occurs only when we are faced with a lack of sense of meaning. It is in the existential void that the sexual drive finds conditions for its development. Existential disappointment is then most often compensated by a kind of sexual intoxication. The existential vacuum finds its exemplification there, or remains suppressed or masked in various ways.

The increasing automation of life has brought about an increase in the amount of free time that needs to be filled with meaningful content. However, this becomes a problem for a person experiencing existential frustration. Inactivity becomes the main cause of spiritual illness, which Erich Fromm expressed in the phrase:

> We talk about actively spending free time, but it could be more accurately described as 'a state of passivity in free time'! (E. Fromm 1999, p. 36).

This is a structural analogy to Frankl's "existential void", characterized by inaction and devoid of the essential content of life.

The lack of ability to actively manage free time equally affects both the young and older people who have retired. They have difficulty finding their place in life and they succumb to existential frustration related to the excess of time that they cannot fill with meaningful content. In this context, Frankl also points to the problem of increasing crime, especially among young people, resulting from boredom. Citing various studies on this problem, he writes:

> [...] in countries with a high standard of living, a significant part of young people commit criminal acts primarily out of boredom, which is becoming an increasingly important problem of our times (V.E. Frankl 1981, p. 137).

He also points to another type of "disease of our times" called the "manager's disease" (cf. V.E. Frankl 1973, p. 116f.). This is characterized by a premature physical and mental breakdown of people performing responsible institutional functions, who strive for power and possession while at the same time relinquishing at the same time the search for meaning, which is "to be" rather than "to have". In Frankl's opinion, "neuroses related to unemployment" are of a similar nature (cf. V.E. Frankl 1987a, p. 158f.), in which what comes to the fore is not depression but apathy, lack of initiative, interest in the environment, and ultimately the inability to use the help offered. Another special neurotic case, described by Frankl as a loss of meaning, is the so-called "Sunday neurosis". It occurs when there is a break in regularly performed professional and non-professional activities. Of course, it most severely affects so-called workaholics who find no meaning in rest and activities unrelated to their profession.

Escaping the emerging emptiness in terms of goals, content and meaning of one's own existence, the so-called "working man" throws himself into activities related to the weekend, thus wanting to drown out the feeling of inner loneliness. The "Sunday neurotic" indulges in

various types of entertainment and sports events, where his "refuge" and compensation for doing nothing becomes voyeurism and various opportunities to inactively observe others. This, according to Frankl, is a typical way of escaping from the fear of "what may happen when I do nothing". The greatest fear that fills a person is the neurotic thought of the possibility of dying during one's own passivity. Therefore, searching for various types of nervous stimuli not only compensates for a certain lack, but also causes their increase and intensity. Frankl writes:

> This type of person runs away from what he or she fears most, the certainty of one's own death, that is, from what the existential void makes unbearable. […] Death as the end of a period of life can only terrify those who have not fulfilled the purpose of their life. […] Thus, this type of person seeks escape in the false belief that nothing could happen to him or her personally, while death and disasters always affect "others" (V.E. Frankl 1987a, p. 165f.).

Frankl further points out that another form of neurotic escape from existential emptiness is mimetic behaviour similar to the characters of novels and films, with whom neurotics somehow identify, giving them a chance to be satisfied with the fact that someone else, even if it is a fictional character, acted exactly as he himself or herself would have behaved. In such cases, there are always reasons to rest on your laurels or be satisfied with what you have achieved. Rather, the opposite happens. Life poses new challenges, and our conscience is confronted with new demands, and we ourselves are unable to be satisfied with what we achieve as creators and consumers. This is because

> […] every day, every hour demands new actions, as well as creating the possibility of experiencing something new (V.E. Frankl 1987a, p. 166).

Frankl, conducting research, showed that existential frustration in general, and the so-called Sunday neurosis in particular, could result in suicide (cf. V.E. Frankl 1981, p. 137). This situation is not due to illness, difficult financial situation, conflicts in professional life or other types of problems. As it turns out, the cause of Sunday neurosis and the most noticeable form of its consequences are boredom and inactivity. However,

it particularly affects people who lack higher values and perspectives on their own lives. From a pedagogical point of view, the task of educating for values emerges, and the ability to make one's own decisions regarding valuation becomes of great importance. An important pedagogical task is the ability to decide which values, in terms of the possibility of opening new perspectives of the meaning of life, are omitted in favour of faith in the progress of technology and natural sciences, or which are even consciously distorted in order to achieve the best possible consumer attitude. Frankl writes on this subject:

> The escalating number of suicides that we are dealing with nowadays confirms that in the existing social conditions, despite the prevailing material prosperity, existential frustration may occur. An industrial and consumerist society becomes frustrated when searching for the meaning of life (V.E. Frankl 1987, p. 37).

Heitger points out the urgent need for learning values, combined with upbringing in a pluralistic-democratic society, by saying:

> Education in the context of the challenges of our times can only be understood within the framework of the intention of self-determination, in learning to value, but not in submission to a predetermined system of values and its ideology (M. Heitger 1983a, p. 168).

Or as Ines M. Breinbauer puts it: "We need to teach not values, but valuation" (I.M. Breinbauer 1994, p. 54). Humans cannot avoid the question of valuation and the fact of one's individual decisions in the field of valuation – either due to one's personal "orientation to meaning" or as a result of the need to adopt a specific orientation towards the multitude of forms of society, without at the same time suffering damage and without being subject to either confusion or manipulation and false identification or emptiness, as defined above. If orientation to meaning or the "search for meaning" fails, a type of neurosis in the meta-clinical or paraclinical sense may develop, which Frankl refers to as syndrome neuroses. From a pedagogical point of view, a person who is a "neurotic case" fails to attain adulthood. A closer look at the relationship between

the category of meaning and adulthood will become more relevant in the second part of this work, where more detailed concepts of "meaning" and "questions of meaning" will be analysed.

In addition to neurosis in the strict sense of the word, which is a mental illness, there are also known neuroses in the general sense, for example somatogenic, noogenic and sociogenic "(pseudo-)neuroses". However, all of them are neuroses in the clinical sense of the word, and in the case of syndrome neuroses they belong to "quasi-neuroses". This type of distinction may be of vital importance for the discussion on the relationship between pedagogy and therapy (cf. W. Gross 2003, p. 26f.). If they are treated separately, the elements regulating the effectiveness of education in pedagogy will be different from the elements regulating and conditioning health in therapy (cf. M. Heitger 1983a, p. 21). However, from the perspective of searching for meaning, the competences of educational and therapeutic activities seem to be convergent and interpenetrating. However, it should be noted that neither pedagogy nor therapy replace each other, but instead only complement each other. While maintaining the elements constitutive of each discipline, they may prove helpful in fulfilling their tasks. As Gross emphasizes: "[...] for example, therapy creates conditions for the implementation of pedagogical activities" (W. Gross 2003, p. 27ff.). He points to a particularly close relationship between pedagogy and existential analysis, drawing attention to the elements in the presentation of human existential analysis, which formed the basis for the possibility of interpreting and analysing pedagogical interactions. In this way, in existential analysis, humans are considered, first of all, "not as determined, but as free", which implies that educational activity is essentially possible. Secondly, humans should not be perceived as definitively "formed" beings, but rather as constantly changing beings in the process of creation, in which one can be supported by pedagogical means. This process would have to take place taking into account a person's freedom and own responsibility, as fundamental features of modern education (W. Gross 2003, p. 33ff.).

Since, as noted earlier, loss of meaning is a neurotic phenomenon, at this point it is worth characterizing the structure of noogenic neurosis,

its functions and basic symptoms. Noogenic neurosis refers to purely cognitive personality disorders and illustrates the process of a person "locking oneself" into one of the four or more symptoms described below. According to the interpretation adopted here, it is a structure consisting of four more or less interdependent symptoms. In this structure, we can distinguish the centre, i.e. the dominant symptom, and peripheral symptoms of lower or negligible intensity. This makes it possible to prepare a profile of the neurosis and provide its structural description. However, the appearance of one or more symptoms is not accidental. They fulfil specific roles, and therefore their existence is bound to be functional. Each of them is a reaction to a sense of loss of meaning, but not only that. Each of them also, or perhaps above all, denotes an illusory way of searching for meaning. A description of the symptoms will allow this regularity of "closing the mind" to be seen.

The first path involves adopting a fatalistic attitude towards the world. Biological, psychological and sociological determinants obscure human freedom and give rise to a neurotic acceptance of fate and neurotic fatalism. It is a hidden form of escape from responsibility and freedom. This attitude is expressed in a lack of hope and life goals worth striving for, in submission to external events, and in a sense of the insignificance of life, which is ruled – according to this attitude – by chance. Humans are understood here as billiard balls bounced by various external forces. The sense of overwhelming destiny proves so strong that it paralyzes the motivation to act constructively. One gets the impression that one lives only next to what is happening "here and now", that life passes us by. In the case of this attitude, the paradox may be the fact that the feeling of meaninglessness can apparently satisfy the need for meaning. Reconciling with fate, with any fate weighing over life, gives a person a false sense of understanding, as well as justification for not taking up the tasks and duties that people, as social beings, should fulfil.

A collectivist attitude is the second possible path. According to Frankl, people who lose their sense of meaning may choose to immerse themselves in the mass, even though they are currently overwhelmed by the mass. They stop seeing themselves as free and responsible beings.

The individual is afraid of feeling separate, of emphasizing one's own view, of opposing the unfair opinion of the majority. The category of opposition, so important in defending one's dignity, has little value here because it is considered an expression of naive rebellion. What counts is how others perceive you, whether they accept you or not. Others are at this point the source of self-worth and identity. David Riesman's "radar orientation", i.e. a strong sensitivity to signals coming from the external environment, is the result of adopting a collectivist attitude. This attitude also manifests itself in self-alienation, which he described as Herculean, consisting in losing oneself in things and being completely focused on others (E. Mounier 1987, pp. 121–130). Blending in with the crowd and compulsively seeking recognition in the eyes of others allows us to satisfy the need for meaning and is therefore a very important source of motivation. The meaning of each individual – according to Frankl – is always related to the community (V.E. Frankl 1973, p. 70). In a community, each individual, because he or she is unique, is irreplaceable. This is the difference between a community and a "mass", which constitutes a unified whole. The community needs the existence of the individual for its own sake, while the mass only absorbs the individual. By escaping into the mass, a person loses the most important quality – responsibility (V.E. Frankl 1973, p. 72).

The third way to search for an apparent meaning is to adopt a fanatical attitude. While the fatalist and collectivist mainly ignore their own personality, the fanatic mainly ignores the personality of other people. Authoritarianism, expressed in an attitude of intolerance towards "others", in prejudices and stereotypical thinking, in contempt for human weakness and in an instrumental and Machiavellian attitude towards people, is a set of constitutive features of this attitude. Moral rigorism and a low degree of criticism are features that complement the image of a fanatic. Having power allows you to compensate for the need for meaning. It gives an illusory sense of power and importance. The pursuit of power and maintaining it becomes an end in itself. It subordinates almost all the activity of a person who desires it.

The fourth and final way of searching for apparent meaning is a provisional attitude. It manifests itself in the lack of making long-term plans for the future, in perceiving life as a theatre on the stage of which one only has to play one's role, at the lowest possible cost and as pleasantly as possible. This is a typical "use" attitude. Contacts with people are superficial, devoid of trust and intimacy. The lack of a sense of responsibility for oneself and others, the lack of belief in the existence of true love and the treatment of sexual intercourse as something casual, separate from experienced emotions, complete the characteristics of the provisional attitude. Living on the "surface" and focusing on "using" and "taking" is also deceptive. It does not lead to where it was supposed to lead, that is, to finding or discovering authentic meaning. All that becomes found is a sense of apparent, impermanent meaning and dissatisfaction with the life lived in this way. This result does not merely boil down to adopting a provisional attitude towards life. All four paths are, according to Frankl, entangled in the antinomy of aspirations. This means that the more we immerse ourselves in these paths towards "light", the more we begin to wander blindly into the darkness. However, when looking for the causes of such irrational behaviour, he points to the social and political spheres that leave an imprint on a person's psyche and personality (V.E. Frankl 1982a).

In the case of pedagogy and its characteristic stages of development in the upbringing process, it can be safely said that all the aforementioned symptoms of noogenic neurosis occur when the student matures into self-awareness and reaches adulthood. In this context, we can notice the close relationship between pedagogy, logotherapy and existential analysis, taking into account its problems and the resulting scope of influence. The lack of meaning in both areas may be equally considered the cause of its loss, regardless of whether we are dealing with the goals of upbringing and education or the goal of promoting health. The issue of meaning is equally fundamental in both cases and cannot be abandoned. Peter Amann, in the context defined by Frankl, also points to the relationship between team neuroses and a rejected personal sense of conscience, because "[...] only a personal understanding of conscience

can constitute a sufficient condition for the effectiveness of education" (P. Amann 2002, p. 123; cf. K. Popielski 2008; A. Szostek 2003). In this way, neurosis may lead not only to a psychological conflict, but also to a spiritual one, for example a conflict of conscience. On this basis, it becomes understandable that a person, as long as he or she is capable of conflict of conscience, will be protected against fanaticism. On the other hand, looking at it the other way round, a person becomes a political fanatic and thus suffers from team neurosis to the extent that he or she is capable of listening to the voice of their conscience again and find themselves able to overcome the collective neurosis that troubles him. Here we can also see the reason why Frankl describes conscience as an "organ of meaning". Therefore, while coexistence between collective neurosis and clinical health is possible, "[...] there is an inverse proportionality relationship between collective neurosis and noogenic neurosis" (V.E. Frankl 1981, p. 140). Thus, the four symptoms of team neurosis mentioned above can be reduced to escape from responsibility and a fear of freedom, which, according to Frankl, create components of human spirituality. He also states that today's human has an aversion to spirituality, which in turn constitutes the essence of modern nihilism.

According to Frankl, neuroses must have their roots not only in the psychic zone, but also in a dimension beyond it. He calls it the noetic, or spiritual, dimension and talks about noogenic neurosis in the cases when the etiological cause of a given neurosis is ultimately a spiritual problem, a moral conflict or an existential crisis (cf. V.E. Frankl 1987a, p. 147). Therefore, we talk about noogenic neurosis when the patient, in addition to the noticeable sense of meaninglessness, also develops open clinical symptoms of a neurotic nature. The starting point for Frankl is *horror vacui*: if there is a transparent (existential) void, symptoms penetrate it and thus want to fill it. According to Frankl, noogenic neurosis can take any clinical neurotic form: alcoholism, depression, coercion, being punished, excessive sexual attractiveness, audacity. The aspect that distinguishes noogenic neuroses from ordinary mental neuroses is that the symptoms are manifestations of a failed striving to find meaning (I.D. Yalom 2011).

The crisis of meaning is also reflected in the aforementioned behavioural patterns.

Thus, unlike psychoanalysis, the spiritual dimension of a human is the ability that constitutes the condition for one's orientation towards meaning. In other words, the diagnosis of existential frustration or simply noogenic neurosis requires opening a person's personal essence, which, thanks to its self-transcendence, is constantly searching for meaning (V.E. Frankl 1979, p. 119). Therefore, the following question can also be posed here – to what extent do neuroses, even when they are called noogenic, concern pedagogy? Do they not rather belong to the field of psychiatry, psychotherapy and medicine? It seems that the phenomena of collective neuroses described above may become the subject of interest in the field of pedagogy, considering the fact that the question of meaning concerns a human being in his or her personal dimension, and, together with this, the person asking about meaning is a constitutive subject of the principle of dialogue in existential-personalistic pedagogy.

Frankl points to a certain danger, which, in contrast to "psychologism" and "pathologism", he calls "noologism" (cf. V.E. Frankl 1987a, p. 147f.). Noologism would occur if the spiritual sphere was seen as the only scope of human existence and therefore the only cause of neurotic ailments.

> This means that not every neurosis is noogenic, not every neurosis arose because of a conflict of conscience or because of a problem with valuation (V.E. Frankl 1987a, p. 147).

The existential frustration underlying noogenic neuroses may be so widespread that it cannot be pathological in itself. For this reason, it requires the sympathetic support of the somatopsychic tendency to be called pathogenic. Therefore, every existential frustration seems, to a small extent, pathogenic, just like every neurotic noogenic disease. Existential frustration and noogenic neurosis are not to be dealt with only by doctors and therapists. They concern pedagogical influences to an equal extent. Regardless of the diagnosis of pathogenic conditions,

a person is susceptible to education and as such should be subject to the upbringing process, perhaps even more so in the case of the accumulation of neurotic and pathogenic factors. Moreover, people described above as existentially frustrated cannot be solely entrusted to therapy and medicine, because for them it might not be only about pathology, but about a state of spiritual suffering in a life perceived as meaningless. However, assuming that

> […] each person should be provided with education and independence, not only in the intentional sense, but also in the form of a permanent obligation, supporting the education of each person to the widest possible extent (M. Heitger 1983a, p. 180),

there is a particular need for educational support for those who consider their lives meaningless, who suffer from an inner emptiness and who are affected by a crisis of meaning. Thus, in the practice of interaction, both pedagogy and therapy find common ground and meaning. This sense is always understood in one's existence as a person (cf. M. Heitger 1983a, p. 21f.).

Winfried Böhm commented on Frankl's theory as follows:

> His logotherapy, however, is understood not as an attempt to give meaning, but as assistance in one's own search for meaning, for example by presenting examples of existential answers to the question about meaning. For Frankl, searching for meaning means giving meaning to yourself and your life (W. Böhm 1992, p. 147).

Böhm here attributes Frankl's theory exclusively to pedagogical significance. Thus, as in pedagogy and transcendental philosophy, humans are understood as remaining in a state of freedom and responsibility for themselves. If humans encounter themselves on the spiritual plane and thereby experience their ability and freedom to decide, it is not that they *are*, but that they are constantly *becoming*. They are not determined about anything to the extent that they are constantly able to be different as well. Accordingly, their form of existence is not so much real as always optional. This is a pedagogically non-deterministic concept of human beings, according to which one remains a free being regardless of one's temporal dimension.

Possible causes of the crisis of meaning

The term "crisis of meaning" means fundamentally everything that has been characterized so far as part of analyses concerning the essence of the search for the category of meaning. Therefore, it will equally be an existential vacuum, a sense of lack of meaning, existential frustration, a sense of inner emptiness or a collective and noogenic neurosis. At this point, a question should be posed about the most noticeable causes of this crisis, currently being experienced by humanity.

One of the basic causes of the crisis of meaning is the loss of hope. When a person stops experiencing one's own life or the surrounding world as meaningful, or at least loses the ability to have hope, it will be difficult for him to escape a crisis which may even lead, in extreme circumstances, to suicide.

> The hope of a life emphasizing human values is threatened by the unrestrained progress of science and technology and the ruthless exploitation and destruction of the natural environment,

wrote Heitger (M. Heitger 1984, p. 14; cf. D. Buksik 2010; K. Olbrycht 2000). Along with a lack of alternative possibilities in terms of finding meaning, possible paths are narrowed down, leading to the disappearance of appropriate perspectives (cf. K. Popielski 1996; S. Głaz 1998). Therapy or pedagogy are thus reduced to behaviour, biologism, psychologism, sociology, etc. (cf. J. Michalski 2006).

Another cause of the crisis of meaning results from natural-technical thinking, as well as from an excess of material values and a simultaneous lack of spiritual orientation. Activities aimed at use, profit and recognition distort the understanding of meaning and result from the need to adapt to the era of production and consumption. All these factors reduce the spiritual element to a specific tool, thus reifying human beings (cf. L.A. Pervin 2002). Lawrence A. Pervin writes about it in this way:

> The complete transformation of every area of existence into the area of means leads to the liquidation of the entity that should use these means. This gives modern industrial society its nihilistic aspect (L.A. Pervin 2002, p. 29).

The ideas of the purpose of life understood as happiness, health, wealth would again be valid only if it constituted the basis for further spiritual and material development. This self-denial of human subjectivity in a way programs its own senselessness. In this respect Kant's thought seems essential, as he stated:

> Therefore, I will say this: humans and every rational being in general exists as an end in themselves, and not only as a means to be used at will according to the will of this or that person [...]. All objects of inclination have only a conditional value, because if there were no inclinations and needs rooted in them, their object would be worthless [...]. The practical imperative will therefore be as follows: act in such a way that you always perceive humanity, both in yourself and in every person you meet, always as an end and never only as a means (I. Kant 2004, p. 79).

For every activity that wants to be considered pedagogical, this also means, in the context of posing the question of meaning, negating reductionist and reifying attitudes in the upbringing process, as well as negating adaptive training. Upbringing cannot treat human beings instrumentally. Instead, in accordance with Kant's view, it should recognize human beings as ends to themselves and thus also recognize their sovereignty in freedom, self-determination and responsibility. This is important for the reason that for much of its history, pedagogy remained a tool in the hands of those in power and was at the service of the state's directives (cf. Z. Kwieciński 2005; M. Heitger 1996, p. 42; M. Nowak 2000).

When searching for an answer to the question of meaning, one must take into account its freedom from external influences and manipulations. It should be a personal and self-responsible process, as Frankl emphasizes in the words: "Meaning cannot be given from the outside, it must be found" and continues further that "meaning must be found, but it cannot be created" (V.E. Frankl 1979, p. 155). However, he also emphasizes at this point the need to provide help, support and companionship in the search for meaning, especially in life's crisis situations:

> No psychiatrist, psychotherapist or logo-therapist is able to tell a patient what meaning is, but they are certainly very good at conveying that life has its meaning (V.E. Frankl 1979, p. 158).

The same applies to the upbringing process. No educator has a ready-made recipe for a successful life and functioning in society, yet with a philosophically and existentially defined concept of man, he or she is able to convey to pupils a sense of their anthropological foundations, which is dependent on the fact that it is not a reductionist and reifying concept and that the aim of education is not to create a human being as a perfectly educated product, much less a tool in the hands of social and political power (cf. J. Tarnowski 2007; M. Nowak 2005; M. Heitger 1996, p. 42). It is a known fact that not every pedagogy can meet the requirements related to the meaning of human life in the same way, which is often related to its own understanding of science and its anthropological basis. This includes, for example, functional pedagogies in which there is no room for human freedom and dignity.

Alessandro Manenti puts it as follows: "A human is a machine to the extent that it represents a complex system, guided by specific rules" (A. Manenti 2006, p. 48). Education is distorted here and comes down to the legitimate control of social conditions. With this view of education, the dimension of human meaning ceases to exist – it does not raise any questions about the meaning of life, as it is obviously predetermined. In this approach, the specifically human aspect of meaning, understood as its connection with the core of man, is completely omitted.

In addition to the examples already mentioned here of possible causes of collective or individual crises of meaning, one can cite various personal "experiences of fate" as well as "extreme" and borderline situations (K. Dąbrowski 1996, p. 82f.). Another cause can be found in E. Fromm's concept of the forms of "possession" or "forms of existence of human existence" (cf. E. Fromm 1999, p. 73ff.). Fromm characterizes the syndrome of human egoism, reducing its phenomenon to the wish to "be an individual" in the following way:

> A society based on the values of profit and property takes on the character of a society oriented towards possession, and as soon as the dominant pattern of behaviour is consolidated, none of its members want to remain on the side-lines. To avoid the risk of being isolated, everyone adapts to the

majority, which is not internally integrated by anything other than its mutual antagonism (E. Fromm 1999, p. 108).

What becomes visible here is not so much the phenomenological but rather the interpretative aspect of meaning. Regardless of whether a person is at a given moment, using Fromm's categories, "oriented towards possession" or "oriented towards being", he or she is constantly in situations which "[...] in reality related to meaning, may for one represent an opportunity or a limitation, an advantage or a harm". Situations change in various ways, but "[...] you will never be able to get out of one situation without entering another" (K. Dąbrowski 1996, p. 82). The "existence in a given situation", mentioned here, based on K. Jaspers, also equally applies to a person who lives in an "existential void". In connection with the causes of the crisis of meaning, it should be emphasized that, paradoxically, "[...] it is precisely the person living in prosperity who is aware of their own existential problems and emptiness" (E. Lukas 1999, p. 76). The rational way out of such a predicament pertains, to use Frankl's words, to the possibility of an "existential turn", or "release towards existence". Before doing so, however, it is necessary to present the phenomenological attitude and the associated method, characteristic of existential analysis.

Phenomenological attitude

As is known, the word "phenomenology" itself comes from Greek (*phainomenon* and *logos*), but its use in the field of philosophy is associated with Johann Heinrich Lambert (1728–1777). He defined phenomenology as the science "about phenomena in external view" (J.H. Lambert 2008, p. 238). As in the ancient Greek, "phenomenon" meant the same as "simple phenomenon" – as opposed to complex "reality". Modern phenomenology, whose creator is considered to be Edmund Husserl (1859–1938), was later developed primarily by Max Scheler (1874–1928) and Martin Heidegger (1889–1976) (cf. A. Bronk 1998; W. Chudy 2009).

More than a school of philosophy, it pertains to the basic methodology of phenomenological thinking. It was Husserl who authored the

maxim: "Let's go to the thing itself", i.e. objects, people, all living be- ings, human products, phenomena as such and their symptoms, various worlds, structures, etc. (cf. W. Chudy 2009, p. 259).

Frankl applies his phenomenological thinking about meaning to existential analysis and logotherapy. In the former he emphasizes more the person undergoing treatment and his or her individual existence, while in the latter he indicates the method of treatment. Frankl's main goal was to create an alternative to both Freud's psychoanalysis and Ad- ler's individual psychology. In this way, the third Viennese school of psy- chotherapy was established, dealing primarily with patients suffering from noogenic neurosis, unnoticed by both previously existing schools. "Logotherapy" is defined here as a method implemented in the cases of noogenic neuroses.

> In such a context, "logos" does not mean reason or logic, but "mean- ing". Logotherapy attempts to overcome the subjective emptiness of lack of meaning by trying to help people suffering from existential frustration in searching for meaning in life (E. Lukas 1997, p. 56).

It is important to note here that Frankl's work can be considered a contribution to the field of applied philosophy of life, which becomes important for every person, especially in the face of challenges they face.

> Frankl himself was forced to subject his philosophy to a severe ex- perimentum crucis (during the Nazi period, he spent many years as an interventionist in a concentration camp, and his almost entire family was exterminated). Therefore, it can be undoubtedly stated that his proposal of logotherapy has no precedent in any other currently widespread philosophy of life (E. Lukas 1997, p. 57).

In his tribute to Frankl's work, Elisabeth Lukas also points to another of his books: "nevertheless, you have to say 'yes' to life (*A Psychologist Survives a Concentration Camp*)" (cf. V.E. Frankl 1982) and sees it as one of the greatest "human documents" of our times (V.E. Frankl 1982, p. 68).

The specificity of phenomenological thinking in logotherapy lies in its connection with the "natural" and "scientific" attitudes. The natural attitude is characteristic of pre-scientific behaviour, which is a certainty,

generally never questioned. Such an attitude is not adopted naturally, but becomes subject to historical transformation under the influence of events taking place in various fields of science, which, as part of mediation, become available in a larger public forum. In this way, various judgments and "prejudgments", especially in the fields of natural sciences and technology, acquire a meaning specific to the self-understanding of individual people. A new function of phenomenology is thus created, when from the perspective of the natural sciences there emerge such quantities as: a person, my "I"; the relationship between "I" and "you"; and a specific world. Human beings are reduced to material quantities, such as physical symptoms, chemical changes occurring in the body, mono- or polysynaptic reflexes in the nervous system, etc. Thus, they become objectified (cf. W. Chudy 2009, p. 77). The same also applies to psychoanalysis, which attempts to explain human existence in a "meta-psychological" way. Freud therefore talks about the "dissolution of the psychic personality", about the zones of our "I", the world of objects and the sphere beyond our "I" (cf. Z. Freud 1995, p. 51f.). Thus, he qualifies the human phenomenon using a product of psychic energy and then reduces it to a play of forces. Frankl rightly accused such thinking of reductionism, claiming that psychoanalysis "[...] reduced human existence to the dimension of the existence of an object" (V.E. Frankl 1991, p. 87). Due to the above scientific-empirical attitude, the phenomenological attitude leads to far-reaching additions, seeking the depth of the essence of things. A human being as a whole is something other than the body as an object of natural observation and treatment. For therapy, this means including the spiritual sphere in its process, not limiting itself only to vegetative and animalistic talents, but specifically human ones.

Within the subjective view of human beings, in one's being a person, from the phenomenological perspective, the "category of meaning" – as an anthropological property – becomes particularly important (cf. K. Popielski 2007). If a human being, from a pedagogical point of view, due to their ability to educate themselves, sets himself or herself as the goal of education, this will only be possible by reducing objectification and controlling human actions (cf. K. Wojtyła 2003). However,

it is necessary here to see humans holistically as body-mental-spiritual unities. The phenomenological attitude entails a clear focus on humans as a phenomenon in "being exactly as one is, and not otherwise". This is a feature of the phenomenological method. This fact, however, does not prevent us from asking about the specificity of phenomena as such. Heidegger discusses three "basic elements" of phenomenology: reduction, construction and destruction (cf. M. Heidegger 1994, p. 88f.). The question is therefore how a certain phenomenon exists in its characteristic form that distinguishes it from other phenomena. In the reduction procedure of natural sciences, these differences tend not to be respected or are treated as irrelevant. Thus, reduction turns out to be a "reversal" of the view from the everyday attitude, conditioned by interest and a scientific attitude. Destruction, in turn, defines the struggle of phenomenology with the appearance of obviousness – in the natural and scientific attitude.

> In destruction there is an indication that cannot be eliminated to interpret phenomena in accordance with their properties and to constantly remain open to updates of one's own interpretations (M. Heidegger 1994, p. 90).

However, construction is perceived as a certain provocation in relation to the misunderstanding in which we wrongly perceive objects and other people around us as objects and, moreover, we take this misunderstanding as something obvious.

> If destruction is aimed at the "naivety" of prejudices, and reduction is aimed at phenomena as such, then construction is aimed at those who practice in the "logos" of phenomenology. [...] construction in the phenomenological sense tends towards a broader, holistic view (M. Heidegger 1994, p. 90).

This is an approach that results from a double decision: to abandon superstitions and engage with phenomena. This attitude has nothing to do with passivity or escaping from the world, but instead involves a specific openness and offering one's time to others. It becomes vital because of the inquiry into meaning and the search for meaning.

Phenomenology then allows itself to be separated, according to Max Horkheimer, from explanatory and interpretive methods. He presented this difference in the following story:

> A beggar dreamed of a millionaire. When he woke up, he asked the psychoanalyst about it. He explained to him that the millionaire symbolized his father. 'It's peculiar,' the beggar replied (quoted in: A. Längle 1987, p. 56).

The phenomenological approach to logotherapy and existential analysis allows us to understand their distance from the interpretive and explanatory approach, as well as defining a specific anthropology. In view of this, the following statement of Frankl is understandable:

> [...] a man in the street does not consider himself a war zone [...] where a civil war is taking place between my "I", the world of matter and what is beyond us. However, for this man, life is a chain of situations that he must process in an appropriate way, depending on the circumstances, and each time they have a fully defined meaning, relating to him and fully encompassing him. The original self-understanding tells him that he must use all possibilities to extract this meaning and follow it (V.E. Frankl 1978a, p. 30).

Therefore, if phenomenology translates such self-understanding only into scientific language, without making its own judgments about the value of any states of affairs, it does so in a way corresponding to a simple statement of the state of affairs relating to the further existence of a person in the street. Logotherapy then translates the knowledge developed by phenomenology about the possibilities of finding meaning in life

> [...] again into the language of a modest and simple person, in order to also support their desire to find meaning in life (V.E. Frankl 1978a, p. 61).

In the light of the above analyses, W. Böhm stated that human freedom is guaranteed within logotherapy. It is about a personal search for meaning, not about trying to impose it from above. In his opinion, therefore, logotherapy is distinct from psychoanalysis and anti-pedagogy. It involves the child's self-becoming, humanistic psychology, and the natural tendency to self-realization. In this, he sees the pedagogical

concept of "self-formation" guaranteed and observed as a permanent and fundamentally never-ending process of self-transcendence. Frankl's position on logotherapy and existential analysis in relation to pedagogy becomes clear in the following statement by Böhm:

> The pedagogical concept of self-formation is therefore related to something other than natural becoming and the state of passivity, namely it is a permanent and essentially endless process of self-transcendence; in the process of education, a person constantly exceeds his own boundaries (W. Böhm 1992, p. 147; cf. W. Śliwerska, B. Śliwerski 2008).

Assuming that meaning in a given person's life must be considered a pedagogical obligation, Frankl poses a question not only about human purposefulness and the phenomenon of meaning in the aspect of illness and health, but also goes beyond the existence of these, creating a common ground for therapeutic and pedagogical activities. Thus, in the process of searching for meaning, Maria Meyer's words on purposefulness become important:

> [...] purposefulness requires a decision in the pursuit of rights, it is valid at every moment and guarantees valid values. Purposefulness calls us at every moment, it never ceases (M. Meyer 2003, p. 79).

With the approval of this thesis, meaning as purposefulness enters the scope of pedagogical practice and theory, and the question about meaning thus appears to be particularly significant for this scientific discipline.

MEANING AS A WAY OUT
OF EXISTENTIAL CRISIS

The functional meaning of life exists only when some-thing matters because of some external goal. Subjective meaning is born in subjective experience and has reference and importance in a specific life and for a specific individual. Objective sense occurs when objectively meaningful actions or references lead to the existence of the subjectively experi-enced sense of meaning, it exists in itself and is not dependent on any external purpose.

Kazimierz Popielski

In this chapter, the main line of analysis will focus on the phenom-enon of meaning as a possible basis for overcoming the causes and sources of the existential crisis described in the previous chapters. There will be shown factors that facilitate the need to search for the essence of meaning. Therefore, special attention will be paid to the category of human free will as the "will to meaning" and freedom as a condition for the self-responsible search for it. The links between logotherapy and pedagogy will also be emphasized more than before due to the analyses carried out regarding the value and purposefulness of educational and, to a lesser extent, therapeutic interactions.

The way out of existential crisis

There is no single way out of the crisis of meaning. There are as many of them as there are people who need to find it. Each person has

a different sensitivity, susceptibility and determination to change his or her existential situation. The will itself to change is conditioned by various factors of not only an internal but also of an external nature. Therefore, they are subjective, personal and individual in character. According to Frankl, the most important condition for the possibility of meaning, not only in the therapeutic but also in the pedagogical dimension, is human free will, in other words, internal consent to fill the lack of meaning. Will includes cognitive, axiological and evaluative activities directed towards and in the good.

What does the concept of will mean? According to Alfred Petzelt, it is guided by the same principles as human activity:

> When we notice activity directed towards things, we talk about cognition. However, when we perceive activity related to our "I", we talk about will or desire, that is, about the bond between a certain principle and a fact, in which the will demands the right to dispose of itself (A. Petzelt 2003, p. 176).

According to Petzelt, one of the functions of education is to foster proper decision-making about oneself, because its absence is a sign of our times. The aim of pedagogy is to influence people in such a way that they acquire the ability to make personal decisions and do not remain indifferent to the problems of everyday life. The development of the will, its maturation as part of learning and upbringing, is determined by

> [...] the need to submit to the motivation of absolute good [...]. In such a case, learning to manage oneself means learning free will (A. Petzelt 2003, p. 176).

Petzelt clearly draws attention to the fact that the desire of having oneself to one's disposal is related to the question of the importance of what one wants to do. The validity criterion also suggests addressing the problem of valuation in the process of therapy and education (cf. A. Petzelt 1991, p. 39; K. Denek 2000; J. Tischner 2005). Building up the will therefore means building the ability to distinguish good from evil, the rules of correct behaviour from the rules of reprehensible behaviour (cf. C. Taylor 1996, p. 158f.). In this way, the connection between free will and responsibility is revealed, which, in relation to the "will of meaning",

activates the desire to seek an answer to the question of the meaning of existence.

As the analyses so far have shown, meaning should first be desired and only then felt as a duty of life. In this order of reaching meaning, Frankl sees the possibility of reaching good (V.E. Frankl 1978, p. 28). Educational support for the sense of responsibility is therefore simultaneous support for the sense of existence, thus overcoming the existential void (V.E. Frankl 1978, p. 29).

According to Frankl, the power of existential analysis lies precisely in its emphasis on will in finding meaning, which psychoanalysis and individual psychology have omitted. He expresses the following view on this matter:

> The formation of the will to do something, or the will to exercise power, begins only when the will to search for meaning experiences some frustration – in other words: the principle of experiencing pleasure has no lower dimension than the pursuit of meaning in relation to neurotic motivation (V.E. Frankl 1990, p. 72).

On this basis, we can also talk about something like a "neurotic will to have meaning". According to Frankl, Freud and Adler lost their original orientation to meaning precisely because they built their theories on the basis of research on neurotics.

However, the idea of "arousing the will to have meaning" should not be misunderstood as an "appeal to will". "Appealing to the will to have meaning" here rather means looking at the issue of meaning independently and leaving the desire for it to personal will (cf. V.E. Frankl 1979, p. 224f.). When the will to have meaning is appealed to within the framework of pedagogy, it does not happen through encouragement or persuasion, but also by showing the way in an atmosphere of trust, conviction and faith (J. Michalski 2001).

At this point, it seems reasonable to present the category of freedom from the perspective of logotherapy. A human being is subject to many conditions. These include biological, psychological, social, historical and cultural conditions. However, these conditions do not completely determine everything about us. Humans retain a certain degree

of indeterminism, which allows us to talk about the basic dimension of freedom as a characteristic feature of human existence (V.E. Frankl 1998, pp. 29–42).

The emphasis on human freedom distinguishes logotherapy completely from the psychoanalytic approach, according to which a human is a being governed solely by internal drives, i.e. drives rooted in his or her biological layer (V.E. Frankl 1998, p. 48). It also distinguishes it from behaviourism, which assumes that a person is guided only by external stimuli (cf. T. Wilk 2003). Frankl emphasizes that by recognizing freedom as a specifically human phenomenon, the existence of the influence of heredity and environment on human action is not denied. What is denied is the statement that a human being is governed solely by drives and/or external stimuli:

> We do not deny the existence of the driven life, the world of drives in a human being. Just as we do not deny the existence of the external world, we also do not deny the existence of the internal world. We are not solipsists […] because of the world around us, nor, in a figurative sense, solipsists because of the world inside us. However, we emphasize the fact that man as a spiritual being not only sees himself as opposed to the world – the world around him and his inner world – but also takes a position towards the world. […] Both towards the world of nature and society, towards the external environment and towards the biological, psychophysical internal world, man takes a position at every moment of his existence (V.E. Frankl 1998, p. 282).

In certain situations it seems as if a person is not really free. These are situations in which he or she has voluntarily resigned from his or her freedom. Nevertheless, he or she is then and remains free voluntarily:

> A person can indulge his urges, but this yielding to the drives is a matter of his responsibility. […] Then, too, a person retains freedom, but he uses this freedom not to be free, but to become dependent. Man has the freedom to rise to a state of freedom or has – to an equal extent – the freedom to become dependent on drives, […] the freedom to renounce his freedom (V.E. Frankl 1998, pp. 283–284).

Having defined the role of the will to meaning and freedom in Frankl's theory, it is worth taking a look at the titular paths, i.e. varieties

of meaning that can fill the void of human existence with content. Frankl distinguishes three ways of giving the sense to life. It is the meaning of work, the meaning of love and the meaning of suffering. They belong to human nature and are accompanied by the implementation of various types of values. However, their types will be discussed in the next section when analyzing and discussing the essence of meaning.

The meaning of work. Responsibility for life is responsibility for the attitudes one adopts towards tasks. It should be shown powerfully, Frankl emphasizes, and not so much declaratively, but in action. What seems most important is the awareness of responsibility for one's unique and personal tasks, "mission" or vocation. The implementation of creative values usually coexists, or rather should coexist, with human work. Work is the source of meaning and value, the uniqueness of the individual and his or her contribution to society. The most important factor here is not so much the type of profession, but the way in which someone works. A neurotic constantly complains about the bad nature of his or her job, changes it frequently, and expects self-fulfilment. Work seems to him or her only a means to earn money for a living, yet not only that. It is also, and perhaps above all, a kind of shelter. Escaping to work, into the hustle and bustle of everyday life, allows you to drown out your inner voice and allows you to remain in a constant rush and with unfulfilled hopes. These people do not know the real purpose of life. They are so busy that they do not notice the pointlessness of what they are doing. They run away from each other, but in vain. On Sunday, when the mad rush stops for 24 hours, all the meaninglessness and emptiness of existence appears before their eyes. Commercialized entertainment provides a heaven for these Sunday neurotics. It allows you to forget about your true self, at least for a short time. The existential importance of work is seen in what the author of *The Doctor and the Soul* calls "the neurosis of unemployment". The most significant symptom of this disease shows in apathy, a feeling of uselessness and emptiness, which is discussed in the second chapter of the work. A person feels useless because of being unemployed. Without a job, one may believe that his or her life is meaningless. For neurotics, unemployment becomes an excuse for all

their failures, which in turn leads to them shirking responsibility both for themselves and for others. It is more likely that unemployment may be the result of such a neurosis than the approach that such a neurosis may be the result of unemployment. According to Frankl, unemployment is not an unconditional destiny, because there always exists the possibility of engaging in various forms of activity and adopting a life-affirming attitude. Work is only one way of giving meaning to life and it depends on the person, what his or her attitude will be, whether positive and hopeful, or apathetic and hopeless. Learned helplessness and demandingness – as effects of the past system – are an example of narrowing the life perspective to one's own, too egocentrically perceived needs.

The meaning of love. Love is one of the values related to experience, it is an authentic experience of another person in all his or her distinctiveness and uniqueness. In love, the beloved person appears to us in his or her constitution as unique and unrepeatable, being just as he or she is. Love cannot be something deserved, because it is a form of attachment that is reflected in the world of human values in a special way as a spiritual bond. However, a person as a partner may react differently to the three spheres of the human personality, i.e. the physical, mental and spiritual levels. The most primitive attitude is the sexual attitude, directed at the physical level. The erotic attitude, commonly called falling in love, refers to the psychological level. Love, on the other hand, is the third attitude, directed at the spiritual level of the beloved person. It is the spiritual aspect that makes the relationship unique and distinctive, and unlike the physical and mental aspect, it is something necessary and everlasting. True love, says Frankl, is experienced as valid once and for all. Unfortunately, this form of experiencing another person is something extremely rare and disappearing, and what begins to dominate is mechanical sexuality. Love, like work, is one of the ways of giving meaning to life. Our life, says Frankl, would be sad and impoverished if its meaning depended on whether or not we experienced happiness in love. A person who neither loves nor is loved can still shape his or her life in a highly significant way through suffering, which Karol Wojtyła so often reminded and evidenced in his everyday attitude (cf. K. Wojtyła 2003).

The meaning of suffering. People can assign meaning to their lives by fulfilling what Frankl calls creative values, by carrying out tasks, by shaping the world. They can also give meaning to their lives by realizing values related to experience, i.e. by experiencing God, Truth and Beauty, or by getting to know one unique human being – in love. However, when this experience is impossible, a person can give meaning to his or her life by the way he or she faces fate and worry. Worry and suffering protect a person from apathy and boredom. They result from an active, affirming attitude to life and thus can lead to development and maturity. By suffering and enduring suffering, a person grows internally and his or her moral strength increases. The sufferer is no longer able to shape his or her fate externally, but masters it internally. Human existence ultimately means suffering – says Frankl – the essential destiny of man is to suffer: to be *homo patiens*. A suffering person discovers this truth beyond good and evil, beauty and ugliness, and while experiencing it ineffectively the sufferer experiences an ordinary and clear vision of the truth that is very close to him or her. Frankl distinguishes suffering from exaggerated martyrdom. Whoever suffers truly and sincerely never puts their suffering on display. The sufferer is not comfortable with talkativeness and can rather remain silent, because true suffering is suffering in silence. The destiny of the sufferer, however, is to create suffering if possible and to endure it if necessary. Without the limits imposed by fate, our freedom would be meaningless because freedom can only be freedom in opposition to fate, a free attitude towards fate. The constant conflict between human inner and outer destiny and his/her freedom lies in the nature of life.

The above description clearly shows that the ways of filling the existential void with meaning are located in the third, distinguished human dimension, i.e. the spiritual one. As noted earlier, according to Frankl, the three dimensions of human life are the bodily, psychological and mental or spiritual dimensions (V.E. Frankl 1958, p. 34). In the first dimension, the most important thing for a person is the functioning of his or her body. Illness, hunger, thirst, the experience of cold or heat, sexual deprivation as well as all kinds of physical deficiencies strain human life and

vitality thus causing all other emotions or problems to lose their impor-
tance and value. The second dimension denotes the mental one, which
in earlier concepts included everything that is not physical, hence also
metaphysical elements. Frankl, however, limited this second dimension
to forces that are expressed in drives and emotions. These forces are not
subject to free will, they are subject to their own rules. All self-knowl-
edge and knowledge about the world coming from the psychological
and spiritual dimensions is assessed by the mental dimension in terms
of how important it is for survival. The psychodynamic process trans-
forms this information into the form of affects, moods and emotions and
therefore has protective functions for existence.

Frankl added a third dimension, which he initially called "spiritual"
and later "noetic". The Greek word "*nous*" means "spirit" or "mind"
(V.E. Frankl 1985). Today we prefer to talk about it as a "personal" dimen-
sion. According to Frankl, a positive way out of the crisis, finding mean-
ing and the path to it require the efficient functioning of all dimensions,
not only the third one, i.e. considering a person as a whole psychologi-
cal-physical-spiritual being. However, it is the third dimension that is in-
volved in answering the question of whether something is true or false,
valuable or worthless, free or enslaved, just or unjust, responsible or ir-
responsible. The answers to these questions contain our sensitivity and
conscience, and in the answers to such questions we show ourselves as
the people we are. This dimension touches the deepest core of a human,
the individual. This "person within us" is what makes a person truly hu-
man and distinguishes us from animals. Frankl's three dimensions are
not separate from each other, but because a human is a whole, they
interact with each other.

Deficiencies in the existential, personal dimension may have somatic
effects, such as muscle tension resulting from a tormenting conscience.
These dimensions may be in some opposition, which forces the person
to make a choice. Therefore, the same events can simultaneously bring
pleasure and be experienced as bad or inappropriate. Even though
these dimensions influence each other, they do not merge with each
other. The physical and mental dimensions are closely related; both

are determined, that is, subject to certain rules and sometimes escape conscious control. Therefore, they are analysed using scientific methods (the methodology of natural sciences). In existential analysis, their relationship is described as psychophysical parallelism. For example, anxiety originating from the mental dimension has effects in the form of somatic symptoms. Conversely, heart palpitations can cause anxiety if we do not properly deal with them using the third, personal dimension.

While the first two dimensions are determined to some extent, the third, personal dimension is "inherently" free. That is why Frankl writes about a certain gap, a distance between psychophysical parallelism and the third dimension of humanity. According to Frankl, the noetic dimension resonates throughout the whole person, and he or she becomes most himself or herself when the three dimensions come together. It is our task in life to balance and harmonize our heterogeneous aspirations. In this hardship, Frankl saw the dominant role of the third, personal dimension – due to its role in establishing the relationship between the individual and the outside world. At the same time, he believed that the modern human struggles with the greatest deficits in this dimension, which results in a sense of meaninglessness, disorientation and lack of fulfilment.

A characteristic feature of existential analysis is that it takes into account human life as a whole. A person is perceived as strongly connected to the values he or she professes. A person does not necessarily have to experience fulfilment in life when in good health and when his or her drives are satisfied. Instead, when people strive for something greater, they feel the need to transcend themselves and devote themselves to something that is beyond themselves; whether it be other people or goals set by themselves, because this is the only way to find their existential fulfilment. Frankl said:

> Thus, I understand the original, anthropological fact that being human is always directed and striving towards something or someone other than just the individual: towards a meaning that needs fulfilment, towards an encounter with another person, towards service or towards love for another person. Only to this extent does a person transcend the human being to which he or

she is human and becomes his or her true self. This happens not by self-ac-
tualization, but by forgetting oneself and giving oneself away, rising above
oneself and focusing on something beyond oneself (V.E. Frankl 1978, p. 117).

That is why we are talking about motivations related to the activity
of will, during which a person experiences needs at the physical level,
the pursuit of pleasure at the psychological level and the search for
meaning and values at the existential level. These are the dynamics and
forces that move people.

Logotherapy works on the third dimension, supporting and helping
in the search for meaning. For contemporary existential analysis, the
essential criterion for an individual's fulfilled existence and the prelim-
inary condition for the search for meaning is the ability to engage fully
in life and devote oneself to something beyond the life itself. Existential
analysis also focuses on emotions and physical experience, because the
fulfilment of existence can only be achieved in a situation of connection
and cooperation of all dimensions of humanity. Pathology is therefore
defined as a situation in which a person feels blocked or prevented from
trying to live the life he or she considers appropriate (cf. E. Ryś 2008).

The concepts of meaning and values

The question of the meaning of life is answered by Frankl with the
seemingly tautological statement that "the meaning of life lies in life it-
self". However, the word "life" is used the first time in the sense of actual
life – " being a human given to me", while the second time in the sense
of optional life – "being a human assigned to me". The quoted state-
ment means that the meaning of what is actual is what is optional. In
other words, the meaning of a person's life lies in becoming what one
can become and who one is supposed to become. A human is a being
called up to becoming. Freedom and responsibility point to the poten-
tial aspect of human becoming, and therefore to what a person can be.
However, values and meaning indicate the aspect of duty, i.e. what one
is supposed to be (V.E. Frankl 1998, pp. 67–68). As aforementioned, logo-
therapy inextricably combines freedom with responsibility for its proper

use. Responsible freedom can be both "from" and "to": it can be freedom from all real drive and environmental conditions; it can also be freedom to chosen values (V.E. Frankl 1998, p. 282). Humans are not beings driven by urges from within or stimuli from outside but are attracted by values. They decide to open themselves to the world of values and to implement the values that attract them, using their freedom and sense of responsibility (V.E. Frankl 1998, p. 282).

Values can be divided according to the dimension of human beings to which they refer:

– values related to the biological dimension (e.g. general improvement of the body, sports, relaxation exercises, acquiring positive habits, and others);

– values related to the mental dimension (e.g. development of intellectual skills, healthy emotional atmosphere, and others);

– values related to the noetic dimension (e.g. personal interactions, personal encounters, experiencing values and meaning, awareness of personal freedom and responsibility, pursuit of goals and tasks, and others) (K. Popielski 1987, p. 118).

Frankl divides values into creative, experiential and attitudinal values. Creative values are related to work, self-expression, and shaping the world. They are unique to each of us, because the attitude to the world of each of us is unique and distinct. These values form the axiological background of Frankl's concept. To implement them, we just need to have and elaborate on our own talents.

Experiential values are focused on receiving from the world, as opposed to creative values which are related to giving oneself to the world. Values related to experience assume the subject's receptivity. However, this receptivity can be very significant, just like a creative attitude. These values are manifested by sacrificing oneself for the beauty of the natural world or art. Frankl believes that it is possible to fill life with meaning by intensely experiencing one aspect of experience. Examples include a musician absorbed in listening to his or her favourite symphony, or people intensely experiencing a pure form of beauty. The decisive factor here is not the number of peak experiences we achieve,

but the intensity of experiencing values. Experiential values related to absorbing the world emphasize the absorption of its beauty and truth. To experience them, it is enough to have the appropriate sense organs: the sense of hearing to receive the beauty of music, the sense of sight to admire the beautiful landscape.

Attitudinal values are related to our attitude towards fate and suffering. Indeed – Frankl states in *The Unconscious God* – only on the basis of this three-part axiological division can the unconditional meaningfulness of life be maintained. Thanks to attitudinal values, even the negative, tragic sides of human existence, or what I call the tragic triad – pain, guilt and death – can be transformed into something positive and creative. Caught up in a hopeless situation as a helpless victim, facing a fate that cannot be changed, a person can nevertheless transform his or her difficult situation into fulfilment and success on a human level. One can therefore bear witness to the best human capabilities, which include transforming tragedy into victory. As Plutarch said, "The measure of a human is the way he or she bears misfortune". The personal fates of Frankl, and in Poland of Antoni Kępiński, of John Paul II and of priest Zdzisław Peszkowski, fully confirm these words. Suffering, not pleasure, is seen here as a test of human dignity and conscience. Paraphrasing the well-known maxim of René Descartes, we can conclude that existence becomes identical with suffering: I suffer, therefore I am – this is the expression of being human. Suffering becomes the source of human identity and values. "What life teaches people most is that we are not here just to have fun together" (V.E. Frankl 1998, p. 36). The third group are, therefore, values related to attitude, i.e. to suffering and bearing one's fate. The ability to endure suffering is not given from above to anyone, as is the case with talents and senses. Everyone must learn to suffer.

Of these three types of values, attitudinal values prove the most valuable. This is due to the fact that the values created by action or experience are limited and, as such, can become exhausted. However,

> [...] satisfying the meaning of suffering is unlimited and therefore focusing on it ethically surpasses creative and experiential values (V.E. Frankl 1998, p. 74).

Although the functioning and implementation of values are only partially subject to schematization, it seems that certain ways of fulfilling them can be distinguished. K. Popielski distinguishes four such methods: row, layered, pyramidal and hierarchical. Each of them is defined by its characteristic configuration of four basic criteria for developing values, which include: the intensity and type of values, the dependence and subordination of values, the absolutizing of values and the adoption of a set of primary values (K. Popielski 1987, p. 113).

Row method. In this method, each type of value, i.e. biological, psychological and noetic, is assigned the same intensity. In the row method, three additional variants can be distinguished: in the first variant, all values have very low intensity, in the second one – medium intensity, in the third one – high intensity. K. Popielski believes that the first and third variants represent a particularly dangerous tendency, i.e. variants in which all values are assigned an equally small or equally large existential significance. This way of realizing values may lead to a lifestyle characterized by cynicism, nihilism or resignation, and in pathological cases – to depression, loss of motivation, existential neurosis or escape from life (K. Popielski 1987, pp. 113–115).

Layered method. This is based on the principle of the subordination of values. Psychological values are built upon biological values, and on these – existential values. This way of realizing values allows you to answer the question: "How to act?" This method, however, does not provide strong grounds for answering the question: "Why act like this?", a question that

> [...] in the case of human existence, considered from the perspective of the deepest motivational bases, [...] belongs to the most significant ones (K. Popielski 1987, p. 115–116).

Pyramid method. In this method, the values are arranged in the shape of a pyramid, with the value of highest importance at the top. This is an absolute value with all other values being subordinated to it (K. Popielski 1987, p. 116). Such deification of one value does not allow one to see many other values and consequently leads to a narrowing

of one's worldview. It then seems to a given person that only the reali-
zation of this one selected and deified value will give meaning to his or
her life (V.E. Frankl 1998, pp. 102–105). Frankl also gives specific, real-life
examples of absolutizing relative values. For example, a person who has
fallen unhappily in love and is discouraged to live because of it, reveals
that he or she has put happiness in love above all other values. A wo-
man who believes that her life is worthless because she cannot marry or
have children, thus betrays the deification of marriage and motherhood
(cf. V.E. Frankl 1998, p. 105). This is a very risky way of realizing value.
In a crisis situation, when the absolute value collapses, the entire pyr-
amid of values, forming its basis, also breaks down (K. Popielski 1987,
pp. 116–117).

Hierarchical method. In this method, values are arranged in a hier-
archy whose reference point is the absolute value – God. Below are the
so-called primary values, none of which is absolutized, although each
of them may play an important role in a given person's life. The primary
values form a team in which values related to each dimension of human
existence (biological, mental and noetic) are represented, with the val-
ues related to the spiritual dimension being put first. From the point of
view of logotherapy, this is the optimal way of realizing values:

> Humans' will and right to refer to the "Supervalue", which humanity has
> called God for centuries, is respected here. God is understood religiously. It
> is the highest value for personal existence. The analysis of this approach in-
> dicates that it meets the postulate of both the assignment of existence and
> its subordination. It also takes into account the importance of specifically
> human needs: completion, direction and belonging (K. Popielski 1987, p. 117).

The concept of "meaning" in logotherapy is complementary to the
concept of "value", as meaning always refers to values: adopting an at-
titude towards values, and realizing values leads to filling human exist-
ence with meaning (K. Popielski 1987, p. 108).

Human beings are the only creatures on earth that raise the question
of meaning. It seems to be an original feature of the *homo sapiens* species
(K. Popielski 1987, pp. 134–135). It can be assumed that in phylogeny the
emergence of a psychological sense of meaning in human conscious-

ness was influenced by the discovery of the sequences cause-effect and I-value. When searching for hypothetical mechanisms for the emergence of a sense of meaning in humans, it should be remembered that such mechanisms play the role of a necessary secondary, and therefore non-final, cause of the emergence of a sense of meaning in life, just as a musical instrument is necessary for the existence of music, but cannot produce it on its own (K. Popielski 1987, p. 134; cf. J. Kozielecki 2006).

In fact, it is not so much that a person raises questions about meaning, but rather that these questions are put forward to him or her by life – to be answered. The problem of meaning concerns not only life as a whole, but each individual life situation. It is hidden in every situation. It is conscience that helps us find this meaning. The task assigned to conscience is to show a specific person the only sense-creating possibility that exists in a particular situation (J. Kozielecki 2006, pp. 134–135).

There are no life situations without the possibility of fulfilling meaning, even in the situation of greatest suffering. It is not about suffering of any kind, but only the suffering that is imposed on a human by fate and which cannot be avoided in any way. Frankl describes such suffering as necessary since it is associated with an inevitable random necessity, as opposed to unnecessary suffering that can be avoided. Subjecting oneself to suffering that can be avoided is nothing else – according to Frankl – than masochism (V.E. Frankl 1998, p. 89).

A person affected by necessary suffering faces the following dilemma: This or that suffering has been imposed on me (e.g. disease). What will I do with it now? The only correct answer to this question is to accept suffering and assign an intention to it, that is, transcending it. Transcending suffering by giving it intention also gives meaning to suffering itself, which otherwise appears to be truly meaningless. Therefore, for suffering to have meaning, it cannot be suffering in itself, but for something or someone. It must point to something or someone beyond itself, which means that it must be connected to sacrifice (V.E. Frankl 1998, pp. 79–80, 84–85).

Such conscious acceptance of suffering and giving it meaning through sacrifice leads to the development of human existence. A person

then undergoes a maturation process in which he or she gains internal freedom despite external dependence. A person also gains the deepest truth about life.

> Placed over a gulf, a human being looks into the abyss and sees the tragic structure of human existence at its bottom. There, deep down, the truth is revealed to him or her that ultimately human existence is suffering and that the essential destiny of human is to suffer: to be *homo patiens* (V.E. Frankl 1998, p. 82).

The pursuit of meaning is the basic expression of human spirituality. Its implementation allows the human person to develop fully. However, the lack of this realization causes existential frustration and may lead to noogenic neurosis. However, the sense of meaning in life cannot be equated with achieving success, and therefore the lack of a sense of meaning cannot be equated with failures. Full meaning in life can be associated with both success and failure and vice versa, the lack of meaning in life can occur both with great success and with its absence (cf. K. Popielski 1987; M. Wolicki 1987, p. 106f.). It seems that the lack of equivalence between meaning and success is confirmed by the cases of suicides of people enjoying fame or wealth, i.e. people who, according to the criteria of the so-called public opinion, achieved success.

Empirical research reveals that the sense of meaning in life is associated with generally good mental health, while the lack of this sense is correlated with generally poor mental health, a tendency to depression and noogenic neurosis, as well as with various signs of frustration (K. Popielski 1997).

To summarise, it can be stated that a person is perceived by logotherapy as a free being. However, this freedom is not absolute but is instead conditioned both internally (drives) and externally (society, culture, history). As such, a person can use freedom responsibly to move towards the values that attract him or her. Directing life towards non-absolute values, whose reference point is God, fills life with meaning. Meaning itself can be discovered in each specific life situation through a response to the call hidden in this situation, determined by conscience and consistent with the hierarchy of values. Even the inevitable suffering sent by

fate can be filled with meaning by giving it the value of a sacrifice in the name of someone or something.

Placing the three-dimensional concept of the human in an existential perspective reveals its close connection with philosophical anthropology, as well as with pedagogy. As a result, even greater emphasis was placed on the human ability to make choices and on the sense of duty that accompanies the awareness of being human. The contribution of logotherapy comes down to the three dimensions of humanity, their relationships and differences in their functioning, but also to the tension that may arise if they are in conflict. In such difficult situations, the human ability to make decisions is put to the test, and a person faces the possibility of failure and suffering. The questions contained in internal conflict create a certain dynamic, and it is about answering these questions and finding the right balance on all three levels. Tensions exist between:

– health and disease at the physical level;
– pleasure and disgust at the psychological level;
– fulfilment and emptiness or faith and despair on the spiritual level.

An important factor in the considerations of existential analysis was the claim, close to philosophical pedagogy, that personal fulfilment and finding meaning depend on additional existential conditions. Personal fulfilment can only be achieved on the basis of certain lasting, existential foundations (A. Brzezińska 2014).

Alfred Längle developed a model describing four fundamental conditions that must be met in order to achieve a satisfying existence (A. Längle 1999). This model, combined with Frankl's three-dimensional concept of the human being, creates a general existential analysis.

The conditions for a fulfilled existence are called four fundamental motivations. All four are related to existential questions and are placed in Frankl's noetic dimension. Of the four motivations, the search for meaning is located in the fourth motivation (called existential), but it is based on three basic, preceding existential motivations. They include the need for sufficient support and care, the search for the value of life and the recognition of individuality and autonomy. These three issues, along

with the search for meaning, create the four fundamental motivations for a fulfilled existence. These are the milestones of human existence in its fullest sense and can be described as follows.

The simple fact of existence in the world raises the following questions, which are important from the point of view of not only therapeutic but also of pedagogical influences:

1. Can an individual accept one's place in the world and the conditions he or she is faced with? Can an individual experience safety and support in this world? Regardless of the conditions in which he or she lives, a person is faced with the choice of accepting the reality as such in which he or she functions. This acceptance leads to a basic sense of power (ability to act).

2. Does the individual positively accept existence in being, does one feel the quality of his or her life as such? This feeling requires closeness to people, animals, objects and takes time to create and participate in relationships. All this can be a matter of experience, but also of choice. It takes a choice to allocate time for something that is felt to be valuable, to create a relationship and to allow for closeness. This leads to a sense of acceptance, to the consent to live.

3. Does the individual perceive his or her existence and internal experiences as unique? Do people allow themselves to be authentically themselves? Such consent to be yourself comes from the experience of receiving attention, consent to your being and gaining respect. An individual must experience it not only from others, but also give it to one's own self. This leads to self-esteem, empowerment, consent to be yourself, consent to your person.

4. Does the individual experience the call of the world as something that gives meaning to his or her life? A person strives for transcendence and wants his or her life to have a purpose. Therefore, we need an openness and a decision to actively engage in the search for such challenges. This leads to acceptance of the challenges and opportunities we encounter, which in turn provides a sense of existential meaning in life.

The first basic condition for a fulfilled existence or existential motivation concerns the question of whether an individual is able to exist. This seems to be a simple question, but upon further analysis, it is not at all. This question concerns the environment, the individual's living space and the conditions in which one lives. In this context, acceptance means feeling that the individual can survive and breathe under the circumstances. This does not mean that he or she agrees to these terms. It simply means that you are able to recognize these conditions as part of the reality in which you exist and function.

The notion of consent forms the ontological basis of existence, its existential basis. Apparently, support in the world appears as the first of all experiences that an individual experiences. Everything that encourages confidence and supports a sense of sufficient security comes from this level. It becomes an existential motivation when a person wants to be part of the world, have their own place in it and live.

The second fundamental motivation concerns the question of whether we experience life as good and valuable. After all, being here requires living as a person (requiring our life to take on a human shape), with all our moods and sensations, with extreme experiences of suffering and joy, and, finally, with our dependence on relationships. At this stage, a choice is needed whether the individual says "yes" or "no" to his or her life with its warmth, suffering and relationships. The response to this choice is called fundamental value. However, you can only feel sympathy and warmth in relationships if you have experienced them earlier in life. We experience the value of our lives when we are in relationships. If there occurs a paucity of interaction in life, we do not experience the basic value of life and most often tend to flee inward and suffer from the emptiness and cold of an uninhabited life.

The third basic motivation concerns the questions pertaining to whether an individual can agree to what he or she is like, whether they can "sign" themselves and their actions, whether they are honestly themselves. These questions touch on the inner world of the individual, their identity. Everyone seeks recognition of their own way of experiencing, thinking, feeling and acting, just as we seek respect for our dignity.

We need recognition as individuals, and collective protection of the species does not suffice for this. We want to be ourselves and appreciate ourselves for who we are. The individual's awareness plays an important role here because self-respect depends on the ability to support one's identity, what one does and what one becomes. In such a case, the individual feels his or her own value.

The fourth basic motivation is different from the previous ones because it concerns questions about the future, and the importance of these questions is revealed in the sense of one's own mortality. When a human life comes to an end, what purpose will it serve? This basic motivation is about something that is still in the future, waiting to be accomplished. Therefore, the question of value is always open, and the answers may not always be fully realized. However, what a person strives for is a meaningful life, an active, engaged life, devoted to people, goals and values. In a sense, it is complete motivation and in it the individual experiences fulfilment. This is the area of work of logotherapy.

Basic existential motivations provide good theoretical support for explaining mental disorders, but also educational ones. At the first level, where a sense of care and support is needed, we find anxiety disorders, phobias, obsessions and compulsions. All of these disorders, considered at this level, are the result of deficits. At the second level, the lack of internal consent to life and its values is associated with depression and forms of self-sacrifice in order to be loved. At the third level, disorders may result from a lack of sense of inner authenticity and individuality, for example conversion disorder or narcissistic personality disorder. Finally, at the fourth level, which concerns the conditions for existence being fulfilled, broadly understood addictions will be the result of a life that is not imbued with meaning (cf. H. Rotkiewicz 1999).

These basic motivations are not presented in random order, on the contrary: one depends on the other. For example, the presence of the third motivation requires the fulfilment of the second one. If someone's life is filled with anxiety, for example, they may not have the strength or ability to actually experience their self-worth or form relationships with others. A person can, of course, also (ab)use relationships to compensate

for his or her fear. On the other hand, a person may be free from anxiety but be unresponsive to values and may suffer from a lack of relationships and depression. This is the case where a person will not be able to experience his or her value, that is, the value of his or her life, as this process occurs in encounter and dialogue. The individual may consistently suffer from feelings of inadequacy and insignificance. Moreover, an individual can experience his or her life as filled with meaning if he or she experiences himself or herself as an authentic person. In this part of existential motivations, the first and second basic motivations enable survival in the existential and social sense, while the third and fourth lead to an authentic and fulfilled existence.

As can be seen, existential motivations provide a theoretical basis on which psychological and pedagogical difficulties can be understood and explained. At the same time, they facilitate understanding of educational problems in phenomenological terms. In other words, disturbances in the field of existential motivations may result in disruptions in the upbringing process. The presented model can be used for diagnosis, but also for designing pedagogical interventions, because it makes it possible to explain the symptoms, understand the student's problems and understand his or her deficits. Therefore, this concept may prove to be an extremely helpful tool in the practice of educational influences.

Conscience as an organ of meaning

In Frankl's theory, the term conscience connotes in a pre-logical way, i.e. pre-scientific and ontologically preceding any axiology (E. Lukas 1997, p. 50ff.). In terms of its importance for pedagogy, conscience can be analysed from various points of view. Dietrich Benner speaks directly about the pedagogy of conscience and education in conscience – as prevention of the feeling of meaninglessness and neuroses rooted in the noogenic sphere of a human being (D. Benner 2002, p. 49f.). In logotherapy, it is an organ of meaning and a condition for its internalization. It is also a goal leading to the filling of the existential void.

Conscience as an "organ of sense" has its practical dimension. Among others, Rolf Kühn, analysing Frankl's theory of meaning in therapy, noticed its philosophical and practical aspect. He wrote:

> The starting point is the vitality of reality, which must also be confronted with the soullessness of instructions for action. Established norms will never be able to predict all specific life situations. They therefore require a certain intuition, which is based on conscience. Within the framework of conscience, the conditions of truly being a person are discovered, which are expressed in openness, faithfulness and simplicity. The passing of all property leads a human again to flexible openness to everything that appears as new (R. Kühn 2001, p. 177).

Kühn emphasizes that in the area of conscience there is no external guidance relating to the intuitive infinity or diversity of life. Frankl is aware of the need to educate about conscience, because making free and, above all, responsible decisions requires an internal agency, the voice of conscience, even if it is subjective. This is especially important in times when the Decalogue is no longer the basis for moral behaviour and has been replaced by uncontrolled post-normative guidelines. Conscience can also protect a person against the aforementioned attitudes of conformism and totalitarianism, and against giving in to postmodern tendencies in the ethical area (cf. V.E. Frankl 1979, p. 156; K. Olbrycht 2004).

Thanks to conscience, a person intuitively senses previously unconscious meaning. Benner calls this sensing a process of spiritual cognition:

> [...] which has sufficient power to extract the meaning of a specific situation in its most valuable layer along with the need to fulfil it. What is important is the fact that this process of cognition results from the unity of the person, which is "more" than the sum of feelings, will and thinking, but from the person as integrally permeated by these elements (D. Benner 2002, p. 134).

Frankl claims that conscience is not a norm given to a person in advance, but rather a given norm that must be shaped. This means that conscience may be fallible because it is subordinated to the knowledge and intelligence acquired by humans. However,

[...] the fallibility of human knowledge and conscience does not cause a gap between the trans-subjectivity of existence, towards which human knowledge aims, and the duty towards which conscience aims (V.E. Frankl 1987, p. 76).

Rather, Frankl believes that people who are convinced of such trans-subjectivity are also convinced that only an erroneous conscience could support evil acts, such as murder.

Conscience as an organ of meaning is located in the area of human spirituality, and therefore also in religious existence. Hence, Frankl also defined conscience using terms found in the biblical dictionary. He wrote, among others, as follows:

Conscience is an element in the human being and that allows him to shape life, drawing from his own interior (heart) in a free and conscious way, and to decide freely in his actions. Because a person is not an absolute being, he shapes his life and personality in connection with his own reality (bodily constitution, temperament, state of mind, personality, etc.) and foreign, external reality (environment, upbringing, school, etc.). Therefore, human conscience never reaches its final form, but is constantly in the phase of creation (V.E. Frankl 1982, p. 54).

Frankl uses the notion of the organ of meaning by analogy to the organ of sense, with the only difference that here it is about perception from the heart, that is, perception by the human spirit. Accordingly, he speaks more about a certain function or partial aspect of conscience than about conscience itself. If Frankl calls for an education that would care not only about transmitting knowledge in the perspective of transcendental philosophy, he has in mind a sensitive conscience in order to perceive meaning combined with observing morality (cf. M. Heitger 2003a, p. 107; P. Socha 2000). He thus draws attention to the fact that modern education ignores the issue of meaning as a norm co-creating specific behaviours and attitudes, focusing rather on a functional approach to this process (cf. M. Heitger 2003a, p. 116f.). Understood in this way, the challenge means caring for the sensitization of conscience in education, stimulating the improvement of the perception of possibilities that open perspectives for meaning, precisely in the unity of knowledge

and attitude, where a person is not released from the position he or she holds, and he or she himself or herself remains a subject in relation to tasks – in connection with meaning and responsibility.

The combination of conscience with human spirituality and religiousness emphasizes the importance of the latter for the possibility of finding the meaning of one's existence. The multi-faceted concept of a human being means that there is no need to reduce all manifestations of what is human to the psychophysical sphere of the body. In this context, the religious need is perceived by logotherapy as having its roots – just like freedom, responsibility and the pursuit of values and meaning – in the noetic dimension of human existence. It is an expression of human relationship to absolute value, to God, and thus is the highest expression of the possibility of giving meaning to one's life. Religiousness is therefore a deep, specifically human need, which does not necessarily have to be driven by psychological conditions (e.g. reduction of anxiety) or social conditions (e.g. influence of the reference group or culture). If this need were to be a burden for humans, even from the perspective of purely biological-evolutionary analyses, it can be seen that nature does not create, but rather eliminates what interferes with or makes life difficult. Hence, it must become clear even to a naturalist that if a person has a religious need and it enables him or her to motivate and direct human life, it must serve some purpose (K. Popielski 1998, pp. 55–57).

Human beings, within the limits of our freedom, can drown out a religious need and push it into the unconscious. Frankl assumes (in which he agrees with psychoanalysis) that humans do not only have an unconscious drive, although – as already noted above in this study – he attributes to it only a limited motivational influence on human life, also the spiritual unconscious (V.E. Frankl 1990, p. 26, 30–31). The religious need, pushed into the unconscious, then makes itself evident, for example, in religious dreams. The possibility of repression of religiousness is also evidenced by the cases of patients in psychotherapy offices who have no problems in talking about, for example, their sexual life, but show blockages if they are to delve into their personal religious experiences (V.E. Frankl 1990, p. 45).

THE QUESTION OF MEANING AND THE QUESTIONER

The meaning of life is one of the primary human needs – as resulting from the need for a worldview. The belief in the meaning of life must be understood and perceived as giving life the order and direction.

Józef Pieter

The analyses of this chapter will focus on the question of meaning that requires an answer. Therefore, the principle of dialogicality in mutual relationships will be discussed, taking into account its participants, i.e. people as carriers of meaning. Attention will also be paid to the importance of the theory of the subject for the dimension of human meaning.

The question of meaning

Questions and answers are a constitutive component of the school teaching process and every form of learning and teaching. This guarantees the effectiveness of one's own learning and understanding of reality. Heitger emphasizes: "Whoever does not know how to ask will not understand anything" (M. Heitger 2003a, p. 54). With each new act of cognition, however, new questions arise about the representation of one's own knowledge, and thus a person becomes aware of the partial nature of his or her knowledge, mobilising their potential to learn continuously. The ability to define the limits of one's own knowledge and ignorance is a kind of philosophical skill, and each question is the beginning of thinking.

> It is simply the state of the friend of wisdom, wonder; apparently, there may be no other beginning of philosophy than this (M. Heitger 2003a, p. 55).

The moment of surprise translates into the intensity of attention leading to a question – comparable to the intuitive perception of "meaning", which becomes a question about meaning. The immediacy of the moment when something surprises, when meaning is perceived, turns into a discussion leading to problem solving. Therefore, it is emphasized that no type of education is possible without questions:

> Learning through questions guarantees positive results of one's own cognition and protects against purely rote knowledge (J.M. Prelezzo 2001, p. 84).

Questioning, analogous to the role played in teaching and learning, is a significant element of possibly finding meaning in life. Nobody other than ourselves can ask questions about our own "meaning", neither a teacher nor a therapist. Both of them can be – within the scope of their competences – only accompanying people in the search for meaning, they can motivate and encourage its discovery. The lack of meaning is the psychological state of our times, it affects religiously oriented people and gnostics equally, because this lack is nothing other than the need to ask questions: "Psychological need pertains to questions that must receive a chance to be expressed" (J.M. Prelezzo 2001, p. 172). If the lack of meaning in life is the cause of mental difficulties, then the answer to the question will take the shape of filling a need and a certain lack.

A person who asks about the meaning of life, in a sense, questions its existence. According to Frankl, one manifests one's humanity in this way, because the category of meaning is a feature of human beings. Therefore, Frankl recognizes in the "question of meaning" a specific human feature and sees in it not so much an expression of mental illness, but an expression of spiritual maturity. It does not consist in accepting and adapting the tradition, but in one's own recognition of meaning (cf. V.E. Frankl 1979, p. 46).

It should be noted that Frankl does not discuss meaning in general, in a broad sense, but a situational dream. In such a case, questions

about the meaning of our own fate, the world and nature are devoid of justification, because we will never find answers to them. They can then be sought only in relation to one's own faith. The "question of meaning" is therefore a dynamic question. "Meaning" cannot be determined and consolidated statically; one must take into account the constant recurrence of this issue. This is an important task for educators in the teaching and learning process. K. Dienelt, in the article *The question of meaning among young people and the answer to it in Frankl's logotherapy*, indicates the need for pedagogical guidance in this area, taking into account the age of the students (cf. K. Dienelt 1993, p. 33; K. Dienelt 1999). However, the most vital thing that remains comes down to the possibility of finding an answer to the question of meaning.

The possibility of finding the answer

Awareness of problems in common relationships gives the opportunity to pay attention to the other person's condition, their isolation, uncertainty and lack of a sense of meaning. Eugenio Fizzotti is a supporter of the view that a well-diagnosed problem already contains the beginnings of healing. However, existential problems do not find quick solutions, especially in the face of the technically oriented present. Moreover, in relation to others, we always adopt our subjective, often egocentric point of view, and from such a position we try to help. Meanwhile, logotherapy is more about a purely dialogical situation, within the meaning of the philosophy of dialogue, that is, leaning towards the other person, adopting their point of view rather than your own (E. Fizzotti 2005, p. 150). Fizzotti, noticing the dialogical premises in psychotherapy and not following them, defines it as a broken dialogue, calling for an appropriate response to the problem.

When the problem concerns the feeling of meaninglessness in life, then the educator or therapist confronted with such a situation should first of all try to understand the meaning of such a problem and what lies behind it. If the person affected by a given problem were to take full responsibility for his or her life again, it is necessary to first activate

the category of understanding on both sides of the relationship. This is about the attitude of accepting the value of the message contained in a given problem, while Fizzotti calls our problems the "heart blood" of life. They force us to struggle with life's adversities that we would prefer-ably avoid. They are the ones that create the tension that increases the vitality of existence, as long as we pay attention to it (cf. E. Fizzotti 2005, p. 155).

Problems thus require change that would enable questions to be raised. Therefore, they become a message, a challenge to take responsi-bility for your own life:

> Because you fall into a trap of being lost, your problem will be your prob-lem. But when you don't lose yourselves, then there really is no problem at all, even when you encounter difficulties. [...] when you are part of the prob-lem or the problem is part of you, then there is no problem at all because you are the problem yourselves (J. Wadowski 1999, p. 87; cf. T. Borowska 2008; W. Cichoń 1996).

Jan Wadowski very clearly emphasizes responsibility towards one's own life and own problems. We ourselves sometimes become the prob-lem, hence we ourselves also become ambassadors of meaning. This sense penetrates our consciousness, leading us to shape our lives in a self-responsible manner. In other words, a problem can be described as a response to a situation, it allows one to feel and show the sense of meaninglessness and thus can give rise to the question of meaning. However, this situation requires a constant, responsible response.

Martin Buber sees real responsibility as only possible where there are real answers. However, a question arises as to what to give an answer to? Buber writes correspondingly that it is about responding to what one sees, hears and feels. Each specific hour with its content related to the world and fate that is assigned to a given person becomes a language that draws attention (M. Buber 2009, p. 161). An alert person will be the one asked to react to a given situation and deal with it. However, aware-ness itself does not determine our attitude; we can either remain silent or respond. Yet, if we respond to a problematic situation, we also take re-sponsibility for it (cf. M. Buber 2009, p. 163). Responsibility is inseparable

from freedom. Without such a connection, the concept of responsibility would not be too meaningful (cf. I.D. Yalom 1989, p. 264). Frankl draws attention to the connection between responsibility and freedom by writing:

> Human existence is responsibility because it is also freedom. There exists a being which – as Jaspers says – in a specific case only decides what it is, and this is a "determining being" (V.E. Frankl 1987, p. 120).

At the heart of responsibility, then, is the human quality of asking questions. The category of responsibility is anthropological in nature because it allows us to perceive a human being with all his or her doubts and concerns. It is the core of human self-understanding and the human as constantly becoming: "Being human means – being in question – life means responding" (A. Längle 1987, p. 10). This statement clearly emphasizes the dialogical nature of human existence, the dialogical relationship to one's environment and to other people. The basis for a meaningful, responsible life creates an attitude of openness towards life. Therefore, a person must be open to the challenges that life throws at him or her.

> Life itself poses questions to humans. They themselves do not have to ask, rather they are asked by life; they must respond to life, and take responsibility for life (V.E. Frankl 1987, p. 96).

The answers given by a person questioned by life constitute the essence of this life.

> In responsibility towards existence there is an answer to it, in existence itself humans 'realize' the answers to their own questions (V.E. Frankl 1987, p. 96).

The existential-analytical view of responsibility therefore means opening ourselves to the questions that life asks of us and, as the questioned persons, we join events and are called to be active. This entails getting involved in something that, through its value, creates an opportunity for action, and that is when the desired meaning appears. However, involvement and our own activity cannot be directionless. They require independent thought, reasonable decisions and responsibility. For

education, there is a need to develop pedagogical wisdom, the ability to make judgments and critical thinking as conditions of responsibility (cf. M. Heitger 2003, p. 67).

Responsibility being carried out in the spirit of freedom therefore reflects a person's independence towards his or her life goals. "Freedom is filled with a certain meaning – and the meaning of freedom is responsibility" (A. Längle 1990, p. 65). Therefore, when Frankl talks about responsibility, he means the responsibility for one's life, opening oneself to the values associated with living it (cf. A. Längle 1990, p. 70). It is a responsibility that is in harmony with conscience, which is connected with meaning and its fulfilment. If we talk about responsibility "for what", then, according to Frankl, we should also ask "to whom". There is no satisfactory answer here due to the individuality, distinctiveness and sensitivity of each person. However, values, and above all the value of a human being as a person, remain an important possible direction in answering the question "towards whom". The answer appears to be obvious: "towards ourselves" (cf. A. Längle 1990, p. 56f.).

In this respect, conscience fulfils the function aiming at both higher and lower values (see part II, chapter 3). Responsibility is therefore a condition for the possibility of the occurrence and realization of values. It is the acceptance of duty, which E. Lukas wrote about:

> If all humanity is contained in duty aimed at the struggle with fate, when we cannot change our nature, then responsibility is imposed on us as a special gift (E. Lukas 1990, p. 81).

Responsibility must not be confused with an obligation imposed by others. It is not a law, regulation, or user manual. Instead, it is an expression of a personal connection with a person and an idea (cf. R. Guardini 1991, p. 97ff.). Responsibility is therefore the essence of a commitment to values.

Responsible self-determination is a property of the subject, not the object, and therefore (cf. M. Heitger 2003a, p. 113ff.) in the educational process, the transmission of knowledge is opposed to the person's free choice regarding the acquired content. An answer to the question of meaning without freedom of choice would take it to an absurd level.

The principle of dialogue
and the question of meaning

In this part of the analysis, attempts will be made to define the dia-logical principle in interpersonal relations with regard to the question of meaning. Therefore, the issues of philosophy and pedagogy of dialogue will not be discussed in depth, but will constitute a contribution to the main thread of the considerations.

Carlo Nanni describes dialogicality, citing Buber, in the following way:

> I will and I am a human being through relationships with other people, and I can and want to enter into important relationships with others, while re-specting my own and others' differences. This means that my own existence is inextricably linked with other people (C. Nanni 2000, p. 65).

Buber defines this relationship as "I – you" and "I – it" (cf. M. Buber 1979, p. 7ff.). Dialogue takes place between "I and you", not inside a given person, but between two people, as long as they are open to each other. The "I – you" relationship may be of a technical nature when it concerns a substantive agreement. Then it is difficult to talk about focusing on the other person. It is then only a means to an end and one can only talk about pseudo-dialogue (cf. C. Nanni 2000, p. 65). True dialogue must be of an essentially personal nature. And when it takes place between the educator and the learner, the therapist and the patient, it is the latter who proves more important. In both cases, the other person counts more than oneself.

Regardless of whether it concerns a therapist or a teacher, it re-mains clear that they meet their pupils at a specific moment of their psychophysical development and their main task is to help them shape appropriate attitudes towards the world, facilitating them in becoming more and more human (the maieutics of a person) (C. Nanni 2000, p. 65; J. Michalski 2007). The only difference between therapy and the edu-cational process is that the former is under the regulating influence of health, while pedagogy is under the regulating influence of upbringing and education (cf. M. Heitger 2003a, p. 54). An important common point

in Frankl's therapeutic and pedagogical interactions is his use of Socratic dialogue in medical practice and the use of the personalistic principle of a person's maieutics to demonstrate the meaning of suffering in illness, pain and the death of loved ones (cf. V.E. Frankl 1979, p. 151ff.). Moreover, Frankl, like Buber, emphasizes the importance and role of encounter in human existence:

> I would like to allow myself to put forward here that true dialogue will not take place until the dimension of *logos* is exceeded. Dialogue without *logos* tends towards monologue. The partners then do not concern themselves with the intentional subject as their attention is directed only to expressing themselves (V.E. Frankl 1979, p. 36).

Frankl expresses the belief that Socratic dialogue cannot be learned. This method can be used by intuitively gifted therapists and teachers, with the ability to listen rather than speak. He writes:

> t is more about these [...] subjective and "intuitive" layers that develop in a specific way within the personality of a given therapist. And this is what cannot be captured "operationally" (V.E. Frankl 1979, p. 38).

Socratic dialogue methodologically goes much further beyond behaviourist methods of interaction, towards a personal treatment of others, where "I" makes sense only in the presence of "you". In logotherapy, dialogue becomes a method and a principle of effectiveness in helping people discover meaning.

It is clearly visible that logotherapy and existential analysis distance themselves from the reductionist premises of these psychotherapeutic directions, which largely ignore the spiritual dimension of a human, by demonstrating their connections with transcendental rather than empirical pedagogy. Meaning cannot be measured or weighed in any way. It does not succumb to objectification, planning or utilitarianism. Therefore, it also remains beyond the distinction between means and ends – it is both (M. Buber 1979, p. 8).

Logotherapy in the context of using the dialogue method is therefore understood here as a specific method of psychotherapeutic activities, even though it can be used in relation to pedagogical and

educational influences, not only because of the techniques employed, but also because of the range of problems addressed and the goals to be achieved in both the processes of education and therapy. In both cases, it aims at a spiritually oriented reorganization of the hierarchy of values, discovering meaning and raising awareness of spirituality.

The principle of dialogicality in logo-theory, as in pedagogy, consists in provoking reflection on the meaning of individual actions and existence in general (cf. V.E. Frankl 1998). Both the teacher and the therapist remain, in the words of Socrates, "midwives" of the truth – that is, they must help bring it out of another person, like a child from its mother's womb. This technique may for instance be in the form of open questions with a philosophical undertone, focused on a substantial area of existence that is not fully reflected in the consciousness of the student or patient.

Pedagogical interactions can also include forms of working with patients within logotherapy. They are, of course, still considered and applied in the perspective of the principle of dialogical relationality between persons. These include the described responsibility for words and actions in the subjective sense. The matter of the utmost importance lies in the subjectivity of expression in a relationship, i.e. using personal forms of "I", direct communication, listening to the other, focusing on the spontaneous flow of content, experiences "here and now", and sharing, above all, present experiences. Priority is also given to revealing the theses behind the questions, avoiding interpreting or searching for hidden meanings, and acknowledging the messages the students communicate. It is worth recalling that in a dialogue that seeks meaning, questions about the content of experience ("what?", "how?") have priority over questions about causes ("why?").

Dialogue and relationality in logotherapy also mean "listening" to a person's body language, paying attention to body sensations, encouraging natural self-expression and safe experimentation with expressing emotions and new behaviours. The ability to listen both in the process of education and therapy, in accordance with the principle of personal

dialogue, means, above all, respect for the dignity and psycho-peda-gogical space of others, refraining from coercion and interference with violence.

In Frankl's dialogic logotherapy based on the existentialist philos-ophy of dialogue, the basic principle that the therapist and educator follow is to "conclude" an alliance, i.e. entering the phenomenologi-cal world of the patient or student while suspending their judgments about him or her, trying to see the world through the client's eyes and acceptance as a person. In such a process, presence proves necessary, i.e. "being yourself", authenticity, revealing your experience "here and now" (e.g. expressing your feelings and observations).

A person without existential meaning during therapy can often be characterized by resistance and a lack of cooperation. A dialogically ori-ented therapist will then show respect for this resistance and for those parts of it that it alienates. Resistance is treated not so much as a force of the Self, but rather as the Self itself (a manifestation of a certain un-conscious aspect of the Self). Mutual involvement in dialogue means allowing the relationship to develop in line with the gradual process, in accordance with what happens between people in the space of their mutual influence, in the natural rhythm of contact and withdrawal. In this sense, the teacher or therapist does not control the process of inter-action according to any interpretive assumptions, but engages in a phe-nomenological study of relationships.

The presented principle of dialogue in the question of meaning re-veals its pedagogical justification primarily in avoiding treating a person as a means to some end (e.g. expected change). It treats the person and his or her consciousness as an end in itself, therefore the phenomeno-logical study of relationships prevails over the expected change (cf. E. Lukas 1999; R. Lay 2005).

The person as the subject – the carrier of meaning

The philosophical and anthropological assumptions of Frankl's logotherapy place it in the area of humanistic psychology, the development of which was influenced by three factors: a) the growing belief in the insufficiency of behaviourism and psychoanalysis in describing and explaining the specificity of human behaviour; b) the need to help in the renewal of contemporary Western civilization in the field of human personal development, mental health and interpersonal relations; c) the need to develop a new concept of psychology, which would represent the science of a human person behaving and experiencing himself or herself as an entity of existence and action. This third factor is most present in Frankl's theory. He believes that only a human being as a subject in a personal dimension can be a carrier of meaning.

A person as a carrier of meaning is an individual, characterized by uniqueness, freedom, dignity and deep social roots. Therefore, the meaning of life can be found by a person not reduced to a more elementary, biological entity, but by a person understood as a value, as a being capable of autonomous evaluation and autonomous activity. Frankl does not treat a human being only as a biological organism modified by experience and culture, but as a person, a being capable of valuing his or her existence and determining its sense, significance and direction of action (E. Fizzotti 2003, p. 45). Frankl always emphasizes with great emphasis that "[...] the subject of his theory is the human as a person, a free, intentional subject" (V.E. Frankl 1978, p. 116).

The above definition of human beings is, to some extent, close to the philosophical approaches to a human as a person, understood as

> [...] a subjective, self-existent 'I' that organizes (i.e. forms) a specific individual nature, a specific individual source of rational action (M.A. Krąpiec 1997, p. 176).

However, while the philosophy of the person emphasizes primarily the self-existence of the "I" of the subject, whose nature should be the source of "my" acts, logotherapy takes into account the human person in the potential aspect, i.e. in the process of his or her becoming,

perfecting, fulfilling a certain personality. Hence, the subject of Frankl's special interest is the ability of a human individual to actualize his or her internal potentialities to be a person, i.e. to organize and form one's own personal "face", a specific personal nature, the source of one's actions (E. Fizzotti 2003, p. 78).

In this sense, Frankl, like Carl Rogers, undertook a psychological analysis of the process of "becoming a person" in search of existential meaning. At the basis of this process, an internal, conscious experience is revealed that

> I am not a creature shaped by the expectations and requirements of others, that I am not forced to be a victim of unknown forces within myself, that I am increasingly the architect of myself. [...] I am able to develop my strength, become a unique individual (cf. A. Längle 1990, p. 68).

Frankl, by approaching the human person in his process of becoming the subject of a specific, individual existence and action, a unique personality contributed significantly to the development of the "internal" point of view of humans in psychology. The "external" point of view, also called "objective", was developed, according to the requirements of the neo-positivist concept of science, by behaviourism and psychoanalysis. A person and a person's behaviour are then perceived from the point of view of an observer looking at something in front of him or her. The researcher tries to be an "objective" "outsider" of the observed phenomenon. Research methods developed in the natural sciences then turn out to be the most appropriate.

However, the "internal" point of view takes into account a person's way of experiencing himself or herself and the surrounding world in a given life situation. Therefore, this psychological point of view has been termed phenomenological, as discussed in the second chapter of the work. It is adopted by promoters and supporters of humanistic psychology, including: V.E. Frankl. They oppose the concept of the human being proposed by the supporters of behaviourism and expressed in the works of, among others, Burrhus Frederick Skinner. Frankl assesses the concept of the human being proposed by Skinner as reductionist, because it ignores the world of humans' subjective experiences, attitudes,

mental states and processes. He also points out that the behaviourist concept is based on the analysis and interpretation of human behaviour only within the framework of the model adopted in the natural sciences (cause-effect), and ignores the description and explanation of human behaviour in terms of formal and purposeful causes (cf. A. Petzelt 1999, p. 177).

Moreover, he emphasizes that both the behaviourist and psychoanalytic concepts derive their conclusions about human nature from the study of animal learning and the similarities between animal instincts and the basic motives of human behaviour (V.E. Frankl 1978, p. 118). Therefore, a characteristic feature of the theory of subjectivity and its importance for the dimension of human meaning seems opposing atomistic and mechanistic concepts of the human being, in which he or she is perceived only as an object (of external observation or manipulation in experimental situations), capable only of reactivity and homeostasis with his or her environment.

On the other hand, a holistic and personalistic approach to humans is preferred, which allows us to emphasize his or her intentionality, subjective way of existence and behaviour, as well as the specific ability to transcend (transcendence) the current *status quo*, in addition to the limitations imposed by the external or internal environment in achieving what is possible, what is right and sensible for him or her. Therefore, logotherapy seeks answers to the questions: who is a human being and who can he or she become after finding the meaning of life, which of the human potentialities count as the most important, the most substantial for humanity and what determines their liberation and actualization? What are the limits of human possibilities in terms of overcoming the pressure of the biological and social spheres and the conditions of the past? What conditions favour the development of courage, creativity, love, a sense of joy, commitment to discovering the truth, beauty, justice and righteousness? (K. Popielski 1987, p. 79). These questions can be found at the root of problems and detailed hypotheses that humanistic psychologists most often formulate in the terms that go along the organismic theory of personality, proposed by, among others, Frankl.

A person as a subject and a carrier of meaning in Frankl's work reveals the dynamics of the internal experience of the "I – world" relationship. He refers to the existing tension between these poles of human life as "noodynamics". Ignoring the tension existing between the cognizing subject and the cognized object, according to Frankl, would be ignoring the objectivity of the world (V.E. Frankl 1967, p. 49). Exploring the world does not imply so much an act of self-expression, an expression of one's aspirations and needs, but an act of transcendence of one's own existence towards the world, which conveys an objective reality and in which an individual can discover new possibilities of actualizing one's existence and meaning through the realization of values. Frankl interprets human personal development in such a contextual frame. This development occurs in the process of discovering the dialectical interdependence of two opposing poles of the "I – world" relationship and their ultimate unity in the act of transcendence of "one's own self", one's own existence, through the implementation of certain values. Every life situation gives the individual a chance to actualize one of his potentialities, the opportunity to enrich his or her own way of existence and action. Once actualized, a possibility cannot be annihilated. Therefore, when updating one of many possibilities, a human individual also makes an evaluation. Frankl draws attention to the existence of a specific need to search for values, the will to discover values, which is then interpreted as a motive, as a challenge. The strength, the power of this challenge, is expressed in the experience: "I should".

Humans experience different types of values depending on their way of existence. Human existence, according to Frankl, can be understood in three aspects: 1) "I am" in terms of "I must" (e.g. I am forced by hereditary and environmental factors); 2) "I am" in terms of "I can" (i.e. I am able to actualize this or that aspect of personality); 3) "I am" in terms of "I should". Therefore, apart from the dimensions of necessity and possibility, a person also experiences a certain obligation to respond appropriately to his or her own life situation, to the "appeal", "call" that tasks resulting from a specific life situation and the values related to them address to him or her. This experience is therefore accompanied

by a state of tension between what is done and what should be done. This experience could also be described as "calls" and "oughts" as a specific dimension of experiencing the complementarity of two opposing poles of the "I – world" relationship in the aspect of certain values (cf. V.E. Frankl 1967, pp. 53–55). The experience of what is appropriate, sensible and significant in terms of fulfilling the "call" and "duty" takes place in the course of creating a certain whole (Gestalt) from a chaotic set of experiences of the "I – world" relationship. The discovery of meaning, Kazimierz Obuchowski states, is the result of "[...] creative, individual trust and the ability to operate within and on the entirety of one's existence" (K. Obuchowski 1985, p. 174). The sense of life, the meaning is not given, but is a function of symbolic creativity, commitment, effort, dedication and care – in sum, a function of the most personal contribution (cf. V.E. Frankl 1967, pp. 56–75).

Discovering the meaning of a given way of behaving, an attitude, is therefore the result of discovering its position and its function in the whole of a given existential situation "I – the world" and discovering the principle of unity of this whole, i.e. the specific value. This is an especially difficult task when the existence of the self is limited or threatened by suffering, guilt or death. Then, the only form of human being, according to Frankl, is to adopt the right attitude towards these situations in terms of certain values. He then suggests the so-called ultimate values that convey meaning to human life even in a situation where a person has no chance to achieve values defined either as profit or as giving (taking something from the world, creating, giving something of oneself) (cf. V.E. Frankl 1978).

Values beyond the profit-giving dimension are also something objective, like the previous ones. A person discovers them outside himself or herself, and by realizing them he or she transcends his or her "self-transcendence". In other words, these values are not recognized by Frankl as symbols of human "organic preferences". That is why Frankl so clearly distinguishes the process of self-transcendence, which directs development towards the realization of objective values that exist beyond the "self", beginning from the process of self-actualization, which is rather

guided by the principle of pleasure related to the actualization of what has the potential in the body.

Self-actualization, according to Frankl, should be treated only as a side effect of self-transcendence, and not as the ultimate goal of the life process. His critical remarks about Rogers and Maslow's self-actualization theory seem to be correct insofar as they refer to the overemphasis in this theory of the description of the orientation of the life process in terms of the tendency to autonomy. Meanwhile, Frankl emphasizes more the importance of values related to the actualization of the tendency towards homonomy, the inclusion of a human individual in a larger whole: a supra-individual whole, in which a human individual can discover his or her position, role and the principle of unity of this supra-individual whole. In a word, it discovers a new meaning of its existence. The world of objective values should therefore not be interpreted as a world of certain ideal beings, but as something that allows us to discover a new, fuller dimension of human existence, to experience the "I – world" system.

The situation is similar to the Copernican revolution (cf. V.E. Frankl 1971, p. 93). A human who evaluates only in terms of the self-actualization of the autonomous "I", i.e. the "I" gaining control over the world, does not fully grasp what creates an opportunity to actualize his or her own innate potentialities. This position is therefore similar to the position of a person adopting the concept of geo-centrism. However, the concept of taking into account the Earth as part of the whole called the solar system presents a new objective value for humans, earthlings, and gives an opportunity to perceive human existence in a new, vertical dimension. It allows a person to better understand the conditions of his or her life due to their location in a larger system, in the universe. Moreover, Jan F. Terelak states that joining a supra-individual whole constitutes a very important factor of mental health (J.F. Terelak 2008, p. 181ff.). The attitude of homonomy, the experience of being part of a larger whole – the world, makes it easier to endure suffering and difficulties. In this situation, the individual can better understand the proportions of his or her own problem against the background of a certain universal perspective.

> A human person [says Terelak] can be so focused on himself or herself and isolated from everything that allows him or her to transcend the boundaries of one's own individuality that he or she fills himself or herself with the entire world, and whatever happens in the sphere of his or her world – since there is nothing outside it – takes on gigantic proportions. However, by subordinating their individual aspirations to supra-individual goals, a person can achieve extraordinary power, be capable of heroic works and courageously endure pain and even face death (J.F. Terelak 2008, p. 184).

The above observation seems to be related to Frankl's views on noogenic neurosis and the importance of goals and values that allow one to discover the meaning of life.

A person, as a carrier of meaning, also displays relationality with his or her own personality and character. In this area, Frankl emphasizes the spirituality of the human person. He applies to it Jaspers' definition of a "determining being", which never "is", but always decides who it is.

> A human decides for oneself. As a decisive being, a human never decides only about something, but always also about someone, himself or herself. Each decision is one's own decision, which shapes the one who decides (V.E. Frankl 1979, p. 65).

A spiritual person determines primarily the psychological character of a person.

> The character of the soul is the area and challenge in a person that a spiritual person faces. For a person is free, but character is not free in itself. It is rather that thing in relation to which a person is free. This ensues due to the fact that a person is a spirit, while character represents something mental and, as is well-known, corresponds to hereditary tendencies and is derived from them [...] So we could say that character means something created, while a person denotes something existential and creative (V.E. Frankl 1979, p. 247).

A person who is a spiritual person has character, but also carries freedom in relation to it. This moment of freedom of the human person towards character is extremely important for a person, especially for the formation of his or her personality. The freedom of a person from character involves also freedom in relation to personality.

> It is, as Frankl writes, freedom from one's own factuality and freedom in relation to one's own existentiality. It is freedom from a specific being and freedom in relation to becoming other (V.E. Frankl 1979, p. 248).

The mutual relationship between a person, character and personality can be summarized in the following statement: a person is a person, has a character, but becomes a personality. Human personality would therefore be the result of the free influence of a spiritual person on his or her mental character (cf. J. Michalski 2004). Frankl briefly summarizes the genesis of personality as follows:

> [...] the person that someone 'is', interacting with the character he or she 'has', taking a position towards it, still shapes this character and becomes a personality. There again he or she expresses the same thing slightly differently: when I shape my fate, the person I am shapes the character I have – the personality I am becoming is developing (V.E. Frankl 1979, p. 65).

Frankl assigns the name "I" to the spiritual person in a human, while he calls the personality "the self". In Frankl's interpretation, the mutual relation of the personal "I" to the personality "I" would be as follows:

> Unlike the real "I" of a person, his or her "Self" is something optional. This concept expresses the totality of possibilities of our "I", and these possibilities are the fulfilment of meaning and the realization of values, which are manifested in an irreplaceable way in human confrontation with the necessities of fate. Whoever deprives a human of these possibilities robs him or her of own self as the space in which his or her "I" acts (V.E. Frankl 1979, pp. 16–17).

A person who fully understands the meaning of existence always experiences his or her life space bipolarly. That is, in relation to some factors (such as health, family happiness, wealth, etc.) – it is on the side of "successes", in relation to others – on the side of life's "failures". A positive attitude towards success means that one uses one's success to help suffering people and alleviate their suffering. In turn, if a life devoid of success is filled with heroic attitude values, then through this humanistic attitude life gains meaning and purpose. Both of these attitudes, courage in suffering and readiness to help in happiness, require strenuous

work on oneself and therefore must be counted among the great internal human achievements.

Therefore, Frankl believes that "success" and "meaning" do not coincide with each other, but are heterogeneous components of personality. Hence the experience of meaning cannot be reduced to the experience of success: we do not observe a simple relationship between these components (cf. J. Kozielecki 2006; K. Popielski 2008). The fullness of meaning in life can be associated with both success and failure, and vice versa: a lack of meaning in life can be associated with both great success and failure. Based on empirical research, it was found that for the proper functioning of the personality in the psychic and noetic sphere, it is advisable for a person to consider his life filled with success in two-thirds and with meaning in three-quarters (K. Popielski 1987, p. 106).

From the above considerations, an important conclusion can be drawn, both for the therapy process and educational activity: if the orientation as to the meaning in a person's life decreases, his or her general mental health deteriorates and the number of effects of frustration increases; if his or her orientation to meaning improves, then one's ability to take a positive attitude towards any successful situation in life also increases.

To summarize this part of the analyses, it should be stated that a person, as an entity that carries meaning, makes it present in a subjective and objective dimension. The former is born in subjective experience and has reference and validity in a specific life and for a specific person. The latter occurs when objectively meaningful actions lead to a subjectively experienced sense of meaning. In both cases, the emphasis is primarily on the subjectivity of experience in the personalistic dimension.

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE SEARCH
FOR THE MEANING OF LIFE
FOR PEDAGOGY

> *Whoever deals with philosophy constantly must along-side every question re-determine the beginning, course and the ending of your conduct; must not only give an account through argumentation, but the type of argumentation concurrently.*
>
> Alfred Petzelt

The discussion on the mutual relations between therapy (psychotherapy) and pedagogy has been conducted in a particularly controversial way for a long time. While some discussion participants are convinced of the need to relate these fields to each other, others claim that there is a fundamental inconsistency between the psychotherapeutic and pedagogical approaches. However, there are also positions that see a special case of pedagogy in V.E. Frankl's existential analysis, or further development taking place within it (cf. M. Heitger 1991).

In order to approximate this relationship, it is necessary to determine the conditions of mental analyses and the necessary assumptions influencing the formulation of problems and questions in the field of pedagogy. First of all, it is about reviewing the adopted foundations on which pedagogy and psychotherapy are based and developing their systematic perspective, even if the presentation itself would go beyond the adopted framework of this work.

Therefore, the philosophical and anthropological foundations of pedagogy will firstly be presented in order to resolve its points of contact and differences with psychotherapy. Later, the subject of interest will be the phenomenological perspective bringing together both positions within the scope of educational and therapeutic interactions.

CHAPTER FIVE

FROM QUESTIONS IN GENERAL
TO THE QUESTION OF THE MEANING

Satisfying the need for meaning in life is characterized by continuous development and goes through certain phases. The first one is typical of adolescence – the main role is played by identification relying on looking for a pattern and identifying with it. As development progresses, this phase becomes insufficient and in the second phase there appear initially general, variable and vague ideas concerning the meaning of life. In the third phase, the meaning of life and ways of achieving it become more specific.

Kazimierz Obuchowski

Principles of pedagogical thought and practice

When questioning the conditions and principles that validate pedagogical activities, it should be remembered that – generally speaking – these principles are at the basis of every pedagogical thought and practice. With one question and one statement, we reach the stage of searching for the basic structure of pedagogical thought and practice, and thus also the search for the pedagogical constitution. At this point, it is not about presenting basic pedagogical concepts or conditions regulating the practical scope of their operation, but about specifying the basic meta-theoretical foundations of pedagogy (A. Petzelt 1999, p. 28).

In this field, D. Benner distinguished principles into constitutive and regulating. The former include susceptibility and independence, and the latter – social determination adapted by pedagogy and the

non-hierarchical structure of the complex of human practice (D. Benner 2005, p. 35f.; cf. J. Michalski 2004).

By constitutive we mean principles relating to the fundamental necessity of pedagogical thought and practice. In relation to a specific human existence, they constitute an unconditional assumption. Pedagogical practice, like other areas of human praxeology, is not only an attribute of humans, but a constitutive element for human coexistence.

If the concept of human susceptibility and the call to independence were to have a historical dimension, then this necessity would claim a supra-historical meaning as an *a priori* principle (D. Benner 2005, p. 37).

Pedagogical theory is therefore understood as an opportunity to reflect on practice and as its validation. Autonomy, self-determination, freedom, self-goals and human susceptibility constitute the foundation for defining and reliably assessing pedagogical practice. They have a regulatory significance for pedagogical activity. In other words, theory programs pedagogical practice, which in turn makes theory more comprehensible (cf. B. Śliwerski 1998; J. Michalski 2004).

When talking about the principle of adaptability to education and the principle of independence, it should be remembered that these are theoretical and educational postulates, in the absence of which the addressee of the pedagogical activity could lose his or her subjectivity. When education means self-determination and maturity, independent thinking and the ability to make judgments, then education involves free decisions and responsible action, with simultaneous autonomy and independence in using one's own mind, i.e. freedom realized in relation to truth and good. In other words, with freedom in relation to specific transcendental regularities and conditions. In the process of developing independent thinking and independent action, a fundamental role is played by the proper use of freedom, while respecting methodologically disciplined questioning and argumentation.

Regarding the role of practice, D. Benner claims that:

> A certain activity can be considered a practice only if, firstly, it has its reason and necessity caused by a person's lack of a given skill. Secondly, when it

defines a person in its own way, by carrying out the activities themselves, i.e. not directly triggered by the state of failure (D. Benner 2005, p. 42).

The regulating principle regarding the transfer of social determination to pedagogical determination is a control criterion that claims the right to determine regulations in terms of the conditions for recognizing social demands and their control, taking into account the constitutive conditions of pedagogical action. According to this, it is not only about adapting to social norms, but about independent cooperation of adolescents as part of intergenerational practice.

From the point of view of the principles of science, it should be added that neither knowledge of tradition nor mastery of certain skills constitute a guarantee of education. The concept of education cannot be considered at all without the participation of a person who is free, independent and self-reliant in thought and actions:

> However, on the other hand, education as the readiness and ability to think and make judgments, to act and take responsibility for society along with its challenges and problems, is by no means an unnecessary decoration of an outdated humanistic ideal (M. Heitger 2003, p. 152; cf. Z. Kwieciński 2003; L. Witkowski 2008).

Practice in the aforementioned sense, being of a general social or political nature, cannot resign from its regulatory role within the framework of constitutive principles. If it gives up pedagogical freedom and individual maturity, it constantly runs the risk of transforming into an autocratic dictatorship. Thus, there is a one-sided conditional relationship between pedagogical freedom and social or political expectations, provided that the latter are considered the foundation of democracy.

Another of the principles regulating pedagogical thought and practice, namely the principle of the non-hierarchical structure of human practice, does not refer only to pedagogical practice, but to the entirety of human practice. The idea of this practice distances itself from recognizing the primacy of any single practice or from any form of hierarchization of such practices. The formulation of this principle is aimed at limiting the scope and validity of modern knowledge and instrumentally

understood reason. The possibility of resolving such a limitation exists only in the equivalent and equal recognition of all partial practices included in the total human practice:

> The importance of the idea of regulating the non-hierarchical structural connection of overall human practice, in the context of determining the relationship between individual practices and demonstrating the connection between science and practice, should be the task of contemporary universal practical philosophy (D. Benner 2005, p. 44).

This brings us to the necessity to philosophically ground officially recognized pedagogical theory building. A constitutive and theoretically legitimate question in the search for appropriate principles becomes a preventive procedure against ideological appropriation and against attempts to introduce purposes alien to pedagogy. However, we need to inquire about "orderly aspects", about the "correlation" of pedagogical activity, because neglecting the scientific and theoretical foundations may lead to complacency in solving technical-practical, empirical or historical-explanatory problems (cf. M. Heitger 2003, p. 125f.; A. Petzelt 1999, p. 76f.; J. Bagrowicz 2008, p. 38f.; J. Michalski 2008). Moreover, there may be an attempt to define pedagogy by various types of "instances" and institutions outside the field and by interest groups dictated by the desire to achieve their own goals. A. Petzelt's objection seems to be significant in this area, expressed in the words:

> [...] the fate of pedagogy cannot be ultimately decided by 'false representatives', by 'false means', 'in a false place' (cf. A. Petzelt 2002, p. 11).

The philosophical foundations of pedagogy

The existence of a close relationship between pedagogy and philosophy is reflected in the understanding of philosophy as an *"a priori science"*, as

> [...] a science with generally applicable and necessary assumptions for all sciences and their unity, for all fields and their systems (A. Petzelt 1999, p. 78; cf. A. Kamiński 2001).

This science creates mental assumptions, principles and structural frameworks from which the argumentations of other branches of science draws their meanings, contexts and structures. Omitting such principles of ordering and argumentation results in short-sighted expediency, opportunism or even propaganda:

> Therefore, philosophy seeks universality and necessity in the dimension of certain principles, due to the variability of facts, but it does not ask questions to them, does not exchange arguments with them, it does it only for the sake of their scientific good (A. Petzelt 2003, p. 84).

The philosophical assumptions of pedagogy can therefore be perceived in a theoretical, empirical and political context (cf. C. Nanni 1999, p. 68f.).

Petzelt clearly indicates that philosophy, as a "theory of science", is not isolated from other sciences. If other sciences encounter their own problems, then philosophy always examines the problem behind the problem and thus asks about the need to ask questions (cf. A. Petzelt 2003, p. 104). Philosophical questions are the basis for posing all kinds of other questions and, therefore, questions about the conditions and possibilities of pedagogy. These questions "are a symbol of the principles" that

> [...] concern the student's activity towards its proper implementation, carried out in the right place. All questions that philosophy covers appear in this area (A. Petzelt 2003, p. 107).

In Petzelt's criticism of experience, three main assumptions of the empirical-pedagogical approach can be reconstructed. Firstly, the mental element, taking a physiological form, is situated subordinate to the principle of causality. Thus, the second assumption appears – our "I" must be understood as an object of nature. Thirdly, it finds its application in the study of the mental element. The methodology of empirical proceedings is used to project the nature of natural sciences onto the sphere of the psyche (A. Petzelt 2003, p. 119). Relations expressed through numbers and quantities serve to define it qualitatively (cf. M. Pellerey 2006, p. 69).

The "quasi-causal" rules developed simultaneously should – within the framework of pedagogical practice – be applied through canons included in the "if-then" category (cf. M. Heitger 2003, p. 113). Schemes behind applying pedagogical and psychological activities in the form of rules, appropriate means and methods at the disposal and through the acquisition of transferable techniques are not appropriate due to their inability to recognize the causes of specific phenomena:

> Taking into account the possibility of recognizing a given reality, there is a need to consider the mental element that cannot be imagined without constant activity, i.e. spontaneity of thinking (A. Petzelt 2003, p. 184).

Thought is a factor defining the concept of the mental element, i.e. a factor conditioning each case of a single mental phenomenon. Pedagogy that functions in a purely empirical way is characterized by the lack of a typically pedagogical element, because it does not correspond to the "nature of the soul" and therefore to the human (our "I" in the implementation of his or her acts, in his or her activity). It is deprived of the meaningful task-oriented nature of the "I" that is formed in its activity. First of all, it is completely unable to recognize a person in his/her references to the question of meaning and the search for the truth (cf. A. Petzelt 2003).

A. Petzelt claims that

> [...] every retreat to a natural attitude and empirical methodology must result in the obscuration of the individual element found in the psyche, and therefore violate the nature of the psyche (A. Petzelt 1998, p. 37).

Therefore, he believes that

> [...] the way to determine the existing diversity of activities in the aspect of interpretive analysis is the only one that can protect pedagogy from being taken over by the natural-scientific trend, and on the other hand is able to fully take into account human individuality (A. Petzelt 1998, p. 37).

If theoretical pedagogy ceases to be based on the analysis and interpretation of its principles, gives up on philosophical questions, does not turn to the search meaning, and adapts existing norms thoughtlessly

and uncritically, it will be reduced to an instrumental science, to a technological model, easy to use in practice. The presented relationship between the goal and the means, in its transposition in terms of value, creates pedagogical anthropological implications which are fundamentally opposed to the personalistic, humanistic and Christian image of a human being (cf. R. Kwaśnica 1987; C. Nanni 2007).

The positivist model of pedagogy can be analogously transferred to the scientific, theoretical and political context. When, for example, Petzelt talks about "the disaster of teaching and upbringing visible after the defeat of the National Socialist dictatorship" in Germany (A. Petzelt 1999, p. 12), this only hints at the scale of the dependence of pedagogy on the political context of the state. This type of phenomenon, naturally in a milder form, also occurs in democratic social systems. The choices and decisions of the majority of the population and the results of referenda may affect the validity of laws and ordinances. However, they do not aim at the moral approval of the individual and do not transform into a dictatorship.

Political capture (supporting existing political relations) does not have to be transferred to pedagogy "from outside", but comes from its own interior, exposing itself to the danger of

> [...] degradation and the 'role of a pimp' in the face of existing relations of political forces and becoming simply an executive body in the hands of those in power (M. Heitger 1999, p. 42).

When pedagogical intentions become valid only on the basis of their existence and abandon scientific justifications, they are subject only to the desire for power. Pedagogy is thus degraded to the level of functional qualifications important from a socio-political point of view. In such a situation, "[...] what is required is knowledge not related to one's own belief in the truth, but efficient functioning" (M. Pellerey 2006, p. 39). In such a situation, a mature, independent and critical person becomes an individual suspected of anarchist activities from a socio-political point of view.

Schirlbauer in an article entitled *History as a subject of education*, which is an allusion to A. Huxley's *Brave New World*, writes:

> The state in the form of twelve Alpha plus has reached its final inhuman end. [...] Creating specific types, straightforward training and focusing on the unverifiable needs of the giant that is achieving society, within the programmed sequences of educational goals, is the meaning of forming all people as future implementers of various tasks (A. Schirlbauer 1984, p. 51).

At the same time, the author talks about the end of all education and the end of the idea of a human, which found its starting point among the ancient Greeks and was constantly developed thereafter (R. Schirlbauer 2004, p. 49). If pedagogy, due to its guiding ideas, loses the interrogative philosophical character that consolidates its foundations, then it will lead itself into absurdity, depriving itself of a foundation that is essential not only from a theoretical but also a practical point of view. In its philosophical questions about its own constitution and legitimacy, pedagogy as a science experiences independence from the "changeability of everyday circumstances", from the "temporary way of thinking" (A. Petzelt 2003, p. 13), from the constantly changing "predilections inherent in the so-called spirit of the times" and finally from being drawn into social and political service.

> Education is not subordinated to serving society, but is primarily a factor enabling the existence of a community (C. Nanni 2007, p. 184).

In this case, pedagogy as a theory and practice of educational influences can only be slightly abused due to its fidelity to principles and goals alien to its essence (cf. R. Leppert 2010).

A pedagogy that first of all:

> [...] considers itself not only as the executive body of the state and society (both of these forms are neither close to the ideal form of human community nor are they completely identical to it), and secondly – highly emphasizes the concept of a human as a person and the subject of his or her own actions, must be, as such, uncovered to young people during the difficult educational process, especially when solving life problems (R. Schirlbauer 2004, p. 50).

A pedagogy that aims to ensure that people remain people and subjects, build their own identity and independently seek answers to questions about the meaning of life, will also have to ask about its own conditions and foundations in order to explain its connections with social reality (R. Schirlbauer 2004, p. 59) and with the foreign areas assigned to it, if it does not want to lose its distinctiveness.

The interrelationship of questions of a pedagogical and psychotherapeutic nature

In numerous studies, views on the mutual relationship between pedagogy and psychotherapy are polarized, ranging from those demonstrating their closeness to those that completely deny it. According to Heitger, this is related to the loss of pedagogy's subjective features, i.e. pedagogy itself, which exposes it to being replaced by psychotherapy (cf. M. Heitger 1991, p. 409).

Fundamentally, pedagogy and psychotherapy differ from each other in the scope of their tasks and the goals they set. These differences are of a significant nature. While human education has reached the highest goal of pedagogy, psychotherapy is subject to the regulating principle, which lies in the preservation of human health (cf. M. Heitger 1994, p. 21). If education is understood as "maturity in the ability to judge and act, knowledge and attitude, in the spirit of responsible self-determination", then there follows the separation of pedagogy and psychotherapy on the scientific and theoretical levels (M. Heitger 1994, p. 28).

On a practical level, however, there may occur points of contact where a psychotherapist can carry out pedagogical activities, similar to the extent to which a pedagogue (especially one working with disabled children) can carry out health-oriented activities (in relation to acts of a spiritual or physical nature).

However, the concepts of education and health cannot be reduced to operational categories and

> [...] a given conceptual value must constantly be redefined. For this reason, the definition of the relationships sought here is constantly questionable (M. Heitger 1994, p. 144).

It is therefore necessary to establish clear criteria for searching for these relationships between pedagogy and psychotherapy "[...] so that the boundaries between them are not blurred, thereby leading to harm to education and health" (M. Heitger 1994, p. 144).

We can, already in advance and in a metaphorical way, assume the thesis that in many cases the attitude towards one's neighbour may be better than towards members of one's own family. This fact itself is not a hallmark of an existing relationship, however, and the closeness thus obtained may soon be felt as a limitation.

In terms of the closeness of both fields in the area of practice, A. Krause characterizes this relationship as one of inseparability between the formulation of questions and research content, especially when it comes to the education of mentally disabled people, and therefore also in the field of psychology and psychiatry (cf. A. Krause 2004). The justification for such an opinion refers to framework conditions of an institutional and organizational nature. This type of justification, however, renounces any meta-theoretical analysis of the search for constructive foundations of the detailed disciplines mentioned and their scientific and theoretical relativization.

Although Wilfried Datler perceives health in connection with play, as the goal of psychotherapeutic activity (oriented towards analytical psychology), psychotherapy is also aimed at

> [...] enabling direct self-determination and therefore it meets not only the need for therapy, but at the same time always also the need for pedagogy (W. Datler 1999, p. 29).

The conclusion that psychotherapy can constitute an indispensable discipline in the education of mentally disabled people seems premature. Therefore, according to Petzelt, one should critically ask whether by borrowing foreign conceptual values, "[...] by uncritically adopting formulations and results from other areas of research", a pedagogical

question was not raised about the appropriate position within the problem of education (A. Petzelt 1991, p. 46). According to Petzelt, it is rather more about a clear recognition of the specific place of a given discipline, also in the context of its importance for neighbouring disciplines, "[...] but within the framework of one's own questions, not by adapting them" (A. Petzelt 1991, p. 46).

The lack of decisiveness in the use of pedagogical terms on the one hand, as well as technical and natural ones on the other, is also revealed when play accompanying the upbringing of mentally disabled children, with a very pedagogical basis (apprehending the child as a whole body, soul and mind), also characterizes this upbringing as "[...] the science of stratagems, i.e. skilful methods of approach" (cf. W. Spiel 1996, p. 124).

W. Böhm does not see any mutual inspiration in the growing "pedagogization of therapy" as well as in the "therapeuticization of pedagogy" (cf. W. Böhm 1992, p. 129), but instead sees a blurring and unacceptable interpenetration of the positions taken by these disciplines. Proceeding further, he considers the concept of a human deciding about "himself" as determined by psychoanalysis and anti-pedagogy, and both of these fields talk about humans "becoming themselves" also determined by humanistic psychology, proclaiming a natural drive towards self-realization. This determination is as strong as the conditioning through behavioural therapy, in which the philosopher Skinner places "himself" on the other side of freedom and dignity.

> The difference is that in one case the determination is made from the inside, from 'nature', in the other – from the outside, from the 'environment', 'society' (W. Böhm 1992, p. 146).

However, the pedagogical dimension appears only when a person becomes the author of his or her own life story. This is a place where it is not imposed on them or defined by regulations, but they write it themselves within the framework of their existential possibilities. The pedagogical concept of self-formation does not express natural becoming and passive achievement, but is an endless process of self-transcendence, because "[...] in the process of his or her education, a person constantly transcends oneself" (W. Böhm 1992, p. 147).

In this way, Böhm very clearly denies psychotherapy any semantic content that is important from the point of view of pedagogy. He only accepts Frankl's theory of education, to which he even assigns the role of the "pedagogization of pedagogy" (W. Böhm 1992, p. 132). However, Böhm is not consistent in his analysis of the possible pedagogization of therapy or psychotherapy. Frankl's theory is not about the theory of psychotherapy. It largely exceeds it (the spiritual dimension of man) and in this sense it is important for pedagogy.

The idea of pedagogical self-determination is considered by Böhm to be particularly strongly emphasized by Frankl (W. Böhm 1992, p. 147). Gross, in relation to Böhm's views regarding the impossibility of reconciling pedagogy with psychotherapy and vice versa, and the simultaneous acceptance of the "pedagogization of pedagogy", sees that existential analysis is a "special" form of intellectual achievement in the field of therapy, distinguished from other therapeutic starting points, namely by something "[...] which gives it a pedagogical character that other theories do not have" (W. Gross 2003, p. 31). So where is this "special" feature that validates the importance of psychotherapy for pedagogy?

Gross clearly separates the concepts of logotherapy and existential analysis, and attributes the former to applied psychotherapy, while attributing the latter to an anthropological, theoretical basis (W. Gross 2003). However, it is difficult to accept the belief in the clarity of this division in relation to its application in Frankl and Längle. The latter actually separates these concepts, assigning existential analysis to broadly understood anthropology as the basis for logotherapy, and, apart from psychotherapy, it is used everywhere "[...] where concern for the successful shaping of human life and obtaining an adequate image of a human being is at stake" (A. Längle 1998, p. 7). However, these concepts are combined again by Längle and used synonymously, as variants of the same theory, with *"logos"* defining meaning and values, while "existence" – self-awareness of freedom and responsibility. *Logos* here refers to what "ought to be", while freedom and responsibility refer to what "can be" (possibilities). In this way, both concepts remain inseparably linked in meaning – in the pedagogical aspect (cf. A. Längle 1998, p. 5f.). In the

understanding given here, existential analysis does not appear in the sense of psychotherapy, but constitutes its theoretical and philosophical basis. Frankl, opposing psychologism as such (cf. V.E. Frankl 1987, p. 51f.), opens its psychological foundations by comprehensively presenting the human, previously divided into "this", "ourselves" and "what is above us", and emphasizing his or her spiritual dimension. He thus develops his theory regarding the anthropological basis, experiencing this openness in relation to pedagogical questions – in recognition of freedom, responsibility and the need for human duties.

The pedagogical aspect comes to its fore when the danger is pointed out

> [...] that logotherapy without prior explanation, based on existential analysis, of what 'truly' grows and the freedom to decide, could lose sight of the person of a patient, directing attention only to his or her responsibility (perhaps incomprehensible to him or her). The patient is later given tasks that may limit him in his maturity and self-determination or may exceed his capabilities (A. Längle 1998, p. 103ff.).

The full picture, obtained here, of the possibilities of realizing the human as a whole, the freedom of the person, one's responsibility in the aspect of the goal of self-determining maturity, allows the recognition of anthropology, with its clearly visible importance for pedagogy (cf. K. Dienelt 1977, p. 121).

The theoretical basis adopted by Frankl – especially in comparison with other directions of therapy – bears some similarity with the pedagogical views of authors representing pedagogy based on the principles indicated above and/or scientific pedagogy, which will be discussed later in the work when discussing its connection with the question of meaning.

An attempt to bring the positions closer together.
A phenomenological perspective

The phenomenological perspective of Frankl's theory has already been discussed in the first part of the work. At this point, special interest will be paid to the approximation of the positions of pedagogy and psychotherapy in relation to phenomenology. However, more than a philosophical school, it will be about a basic approach to phenomenological thinking and looking at the world.

Edmund Husserl adhered to the principle that one must reach the essence of things themselves and by the term "things" he understood everything that could be observed externally, i.e. objects, people, animals (E. Husserl 2008). However, he treated human products, pure phenomena, symptoms, worlds, structures, and others as phenomena in the broadest sense. For Heidegger, phenomenological looking meant: "[...] what appears, what is shown in form by a human oneself, what is seen by self" (M. Heidegger 1999, p. 34).

According to Josef Schermaier,

> [...] the phenomenological way of looking sets itself the task (by reducing the 'theoretical consciousness' that the world has always allowed us to see in an appropriate light) to make oneself an object free from the prejudices of thinking and thus to allow one to recognize what is essential (J. Schermaier 1999, p. 4).

According to Heidegger, this would not be a superficial description of facts, but demonstrating:

> [...] what does not appear first, what is hidden, as opposed to what appears first for the most part, but at the same time is something that essentially belongs to what first and mostly appears, and in such a way that it creates its meaning and cause (M. Heidegger 1999, p. 47f.).

By emphasizing the essence of things, phenomenological vision is usually directed usually against interpretive points of view, recognizing the danger of "blind implementation" of previously formulated

concepts. Therefore, it suggests a critical analysis of the points of view and assumptions adopted in previous analyses.

When Frankl, as part of building his own theory, included the assumptions of the phenomenological method, recognizing the phenomena of the subjective mind, he also radically departed from naturalism and positivism, because these concepts omitted the personal dimension of man, the "I" – "you" relationship, as well as the sense and meaning of existence. According to Frankl, psychoanalysis, which attempts a "meta-psychological explanation" of man, also has the same defect. The human phenomenon is presented in quantitative categories and, using the auxiliary concept of psychic energy, is reduced to the concept of a play of forces, especially when Freud talks about the "distribution of the psychic personality, the zones of 'myself', 'something' and 'above us'" (cf. S. Freud 1999, p. 51f.).

Frankl accuses psychoanalysis of reductionism in that it "[...] objectified human existence – it detached it from its 'I'". The phenomenological postulate of man's active attitude towards the world is opposed to the traditional determinism of positivistic psychology. According to this postulate, a human is not subject to stimuli from his or her environment. However, one must rather start from the position that any act of cognition through perception always involves "orientation towards the object of perception". Such an actively functioning attitude towards specific properties of the world sees phenomenology as "intentional", and the act as such – "intentionality" (A. Längle 1999, p. 29).

The phenomenological approach to human beings differs from the limiting natural-behavioural approaches in psychotherapy in its openness to the freedom of the human individual. Phenomena remain what they are here. Whoever encounters phenomena, for example, only at the level of their practical significance, thus excludes other ways of accessing them. Therefore, the task of phenomenology is to reach the self-existence of phenomena, while moving away from both the everyday life and the scientific attitude (cf. A. Vetter 1989, p. 15f.).

Methodological procedure in such a situation may consist in:
– reduction – diverts a look away from what is directed solely towards its external existence, that is, at how a certain phenomenon appears in its proper form;
– destruction – it is directed against anticipating the obvious, towards overcoming a naive, pre-philosophical attitude;
– construction – as a means, it is aimed at extending the scope of cognition to the one who practices in the *Logos* of phenomena.

Therefore, the point of construction is to allow phenomena to exist in order to better recognize them. This approach, on the one hand, gains distance from one's own prejudices, and on the other hand, relies on the factuality of phenomena. This requires prudence and openness aimed at discovering the hidden meaning also in the world of technology (cf. A. Vetter 1989, p. 18ff.).

What is distinguished from the "look" of phenomenology, which is concerned with recognizing phenomena in terms of their properties, is the revealing "look" of transcendental-critical pedagogy, which, as Hermann Lubbe put it, is not directly aimed at things or content, "[...] but at the conditions, which determine the way we look and what things we can see thanks to it" (quoted in: W. Fischer 2008, p. 70). However, both directions depend on the discovery of the truth, and in this respect there is a common ground between pedagogy and psychotherapy. Truth is not the product of an independent subject, but opens itself to human existence ready to accept it. According to Helmut Konrad, it is not a human achievement, but is the most important value in their existence (cf. H. Konrad 2004, p. 101). In search of an answer to the question "why?" from the point of view of existence, truth is always a prior state and corresponds to the concept of education through the human ability to remain whole in his or her world.

According to Konrad, the ability to be whole is simply a need for education. In terms of content, the ability to be whole is defined by openness to the truth, which cannot be transmitted through teaching, because it itself is its source:

The thought of truth is not about transmitting techniques, domination and overcoming, but about presenting in its entirety and allowing the existence of objects, beings and neighbours, as well as of itself. Thinking meets the principle of consent to existence (H. Konrad 2004, p. 101).

When, from a phenomenological point of view, it is about the aforementioned human ability to be whole, due to his or her feature of being himself or herself – self-existence – the existence of a trace of closeness with pedagogy is also confirmed.

Günter Schaufler discovers this trace, starting from the analysis of existence made by Medard Boss, in which he puts forward significant limitations of one's own possibilities, thus leading further towards a Platonic explanation of the phenomenon of therapy in *Charmides* – "[...] in accordance with the whole and to clarify and supplement part of the platonic explanation of the phenomenon of therapy" (G. Schaufler 1994, p. 102). The author does not question the closeness of therapy and pedagogy in the resolution of fundamental questions in both education and therapy. However, he maintains the independence of both fields, despite their mutual orientation towards each other and their ability to be whole. In this way, the trace of therapy leads to the proximity of pedagogy, but

[...] it is not occupied with its most appropriate field of activity here – the effort undertaken in connection with the question about the essence of *paideia* (G. Schaufler 1994, p. 102).

THE ROLE OF QUESTIONING IN HUMAN EXISTENCE

Just the fact of knowing what you should ask in a reasonable way is an important and necessary proof of your wisdom and understanding.

Immanuel Kant

In this chapter an analysis of questioning itself, as well as its place in the formation of theory, will be conducted. This intention will be implemented on a general level and thus the question of meaning, as a special type of question, will be omitted. The next chapter of the work will be devoted to its analysis.

Firstly, this chapter will examine the importance and significance of questioning within pedagogical systematics, in order to build a bridge between the question in the general sense and the question of meaning in the existential sense in the further part of the analysis, linking it with the questioning subject.

The relationship between questions and answers

The relationship between questions and answers is important in the entire educational process. Each completed question becomes a starting point for the next question. Questions aim to gain knowledge, and the teaching process is carried out through constant interaction between questions and answers. In relation to an object, something known, this means that a questioning self finds the difference between its knowledge and ignorance regarding the given object. Knowledge about an

object – in contrast to its ignorance – is a possibility and an opportunity for an act of questioning that enables cognition. Perceiving this difference also means noticing the problem (cf. A. Petzelt 1999, p. 190f.).

Therefore, every act of questioning has its source in the awareness of one's own ignorance, characterizes its size and at the same time expresses the desire to know. Every new message, every answer found raises a new question. It defines a human being by his or her ability to educate himself or herself, as a constantly questioning person and points to the possibilities of human thought:

> Without the act of questioning, the educational process is not possible. Through each question, my "I" provides information about knowledge in general, about my own knowledge and about its limits. At the basis of each question is a more or less conscious act of self-discovery (M. Heitger 2003, p. 55).

As questioners in our quest to find answers, we experience ourselves as searching individuals and understand the essential infinity of the educational process. Humans are characterized by the desire to constantly learn and to discover the unknown in building our own "I".

The reason for the central location of questions in the field of pedagogy has its source in human nature. However, this is not connected to the unique situation of a particular individual, which the teacher encounters, for example, during the teaching process, but is related to the characteristics of all people, about what shapes our humanity, what expresses human nature. This is the role that should be seen in the desire to acquire knowledge. Our "I" is encouraged to gain knowledge by experiencing the fact that there is an area, a representation unknown to us. This type of persuasion, however, does not take place under the pressure of the natural course of events, not as an expression of a drive, but as a necessary direction. It is an expression of human ability to discover knowledge about everything, to define everything, and to assign meanings (cf. A. Petzelt 1999, p. 11; R. Kwaśnica 1987).

> My 'I' should be addressed in the same way as something that can become an object of knowledge; because he has the ability assigned to focus precisely on this, on one's own person (A. Petzelt 1999, p. 12).

Knowledge is never an unchanging state of possession, but is achieved at a given moment in relation to someone who does not yet have such knowledge. In the course of realization, our "I" demands some regularity, while at the same time it makes a distinction between other entities, establishing this distinction by giving meaning and accepting certain quantities as truth. Acquiring a certain representation of knowledge becomes impossible when it comes to the diversity of giving meaning and, at the same time, the unity of this meaning. The task of education is not just the mere accumulation of knowledge, but also learning to ask questions (cf. A. Petzelt 1999, p. 12ff.).

When a question becomes a learned skill, the attitude towards questioning itself changes in various developmental stages of adolescents. Petzelt emphasizes the rights of children and young people:

> [...] to be understood in each phase of their development in accordance with the achieved state and attitude towards the question. Each age group has the right to guide them within the limits of their current stage of development. They are entitled to responsibility for questions, which they are able to cope with (A. Petzelt 1999, p. 230; cf. D. Klus-Stańska 2000).

Regardless of the number of formally asked questions, Petzelt notices different ways of formulating them and the attitudes towards them, related to specific stages of human development. Due to the type of its activity, each phase should be considered a certain attitude towards the question.

> My active 'I' asks about fundamental issues and takes a position, thanks to which the mental element is characterized by a specific feature of its processual nature. In this way, in each phase there is a certain 'age related to the question', but in each of them questions appear in a different way (A. Petzelt 1999, p. 76).

In the context of the question of meaning and the related second question, about value, the process of human maturation is revealed. At each moment of this process, the importance of questions about meaning, as well as the hierarchy of values relevant to a given developmental period ending with adulthood, varies. The maturation phase is subject to

checking the adopted values, as well as evaluation by others and one's own assessment (A. Petzelt 1999, p. 168f.). The appearance of a question is conditioned by interest, the activity of others and our own. In this way, the mental sphere becomes the focus of the analyses conducted here (cf. A. Petzelt 1999, p. 170). During adolescence, a person realizes that he needs a certain kind of solitude, which makes him a "carrier of symptoms of humanity" and increasingly appears as an obvious responsibility in answering the questions asked. In this way, a person reaches the level of his or her subjectivity and dignity (A. Petzelt 1999, p. 220). In Petzelt's understanding, maturation is not the result of a causal relationship between a disease or a crisis, but is the need to formulate questions about the whole of meaning, about the constantly required establishment of order through acts performed by our "I" (cf. A. Petzelt 1999, p. 249). Adulthood is marked by the unambiguity of the personality and its full responsibility. The factor that opens meaning is the connection with truth and goodness, which Petzelt calls "attachment to importance".

> My "I" throughout the entire period from infancy to adulthood is understood as a reflection of the image of God and therefore as an expression of full human dignity. The human "I" learns to preserve its freedom, recognize it, and realize its responsibility in it. Upbringing significantly helps in this process (A. Petzelt 1999, p. 270).

The issue of freedom raised here, combined with the question of meaning, indicates the fundamental impossibility of its implementation. Meaning cannot constitute the good being taught, but can at best result from it. It is not possible to teach someone to experience meaning, education only pays attention to initiating such an experience. The questioning and experiencing subject is faced with a question about the meaning of his or her experience in the belief that he or she is free. While searching for meaning, the educator can support the student and show him various ways to get out of a difficult situation, but he cannot in any way "teach" him this meaning. When providing such assistance, he should pay attention to the unambiguity of the questions asked and avoid losing the clarity of the question. Otherwise, instead of helping, he may distort the path to reaching meaning.

If a person does not learn to formulate questions correctly, it is difficult for him to find understanding and the essence of objects and things, and even more so the essence of existential meaning, situations, experiences, and the experience of values. The basic condition for this to happen is the correct ability to ask questions. Kant wrote about this problem as follows:

> A necessary proof of wisdom or understanding is already knowing what one should reasonably ask. When a question is not well formulated in itself and requires unnecessary answers, then, in addition to limiting the person who asks it, it also sometimes has the disadvantage of leading its inattentive listeners to an inconsistent answer and, moreover, giving a comical impression, (as the elders used to say), one of the participants in the dialogue milks the bull and the other holds the sieve (I. Kant 2015, p. 54).

Clearly formulated questions also allow for clear answers, while unclear questions result in uncertain and opaque argumentation. The unambiguity of the question shows, firstly, the distinction between knowledge and ignorance, and secondly, its adequacy in relation to a specific subject (I. Kant 2015, p. 56). The act of questioning should be consistent with the object to which it concerns, i.e. the question is not an instrument located outside the object or a completely isolated instrument. The subject is by its very nature a problem, a question. In this way, from the point of view of the subject, or teaching material, or branch of science, there are "correct" and "false" answers (cf. A. Petzelt 1993, p. 205).

A question refers to an object, state of affairs or field of science:

> Any mixing of sciences leads to their degradation, while any defined separation leads to further development. [...] A question, according to this statement, is correct when it corresponds to the structure of the subject (A. Petzelt 1993, p. 209).

A detailed discipline requires a method corresponding to its fundamentals. The expectation of justified/correct answers dictates the obligation to control the questions asked. This is necessary due to the structure of the item. In this way, individual, unchanging forms of objects

become unambiguous. When we talk about a method here, we do not mean various forms of its use when transmitting teaching material, but the form of questions asked, corresponding to a specific subject. Asking questions as a method corresponds to a specific domain or area of importance. The method is, for example, the corresponding rules of argumentation (M. Heitger 1993, p. 57). When solving specific problems, the following are used: a question, an argument, an answer, and a method. They determine the order of the path of action (cf. A. Petzelt 1999, p. 88). If a certain subject or field of knowledge is to make sense, it is important to consider a correctly formulated question. Hence, for example, natural methods are inappropriate for conducting human self-analysis, analysing one's existence in relation to the meaning of life. Here, interpretative questions are necessary, going beyond positivistic empiricism.

There are also apparent questions that try to create an impression and hide the deficiencies of one's own knowledge. They reveal gaps in one's own attitude, aim to divert attention from human weaknesses or pursue false interests (cf. M. Heitger 1993, p. 56). We should also talk about apparent questions when we hear a question about certainties, i.e. what is obvious, or when their content shifts the interest from the essence of things to secondary matters. These types of questions result in sterile action (cf. A. Petzelt 1999, p. 91). Apparent questions therefore lead only to apparent answers. They do not require logical, situational argumentation, hence they do not lead to finding meaningful content.

Our "I", which must consider all questions, tries to find the meaning of its effort, thus implementing the educational process. Therefore, a person should master the art of asking questions in order to be able to distinguish false questions from real, sensible ones. Questions are inherent to human existence and the learning process.

> Learning through questions guarantees the development of your own results, it protects against purely theoretical, bookish knowledge that can be estimated. This is how we reveal our learning effectiveness. We move from question to answer. In each answer there is a new question, and with each answer we gain insight into the meaning we have given, at the same time we have knowledge about our imperfection, i.e. the need for further effort, and we truly learn (A. Petzelt 1993, p. 84ff.).

For Petzelt, questions and answers mark the time of the educational process. In this space, a decision is searched for, but it cannot be made randomly, but requires arguments and justification. Arguments must be sought to demonstrate what is right. Only argumentation makes it possible to give a good answer and at the same time prevents ill-considered, premature answers. Whoever avoids the need for justification does not maintain the importance of the question-answer relationship. In such a situation, there could be a disintegration of the education process, leading, as a consequence, to a lack of education. This would reduce one's own intellectual capabilities in the field of absorbing and analysing existential situations and strengthen randomness, arbitrariness and lack of reflection on one's own learning results.

Arguments and justifications help in solving any problem. They are closely related to questions due to their order. For example, religious values cannot be undermined or defended using scientific and natural argumentation. It is also impossible to attempt to objectify the human "I":

> My "I" objectifies by itself, so this "I" should be perceived as a questioning element, otherwise the clarity of the whole problem is disturbed and the answers will become similar to each other (A. Petzelt 1993, p. 88).

The danger of overstepping appropriate limits here also applies to argumentation. It should also be emphasized that in the argumentation process both subjects of the dialogue situation have the same dignity. In this case, C. Nanni's statement is correct:

> If the educator does not also grant his pupil the freedom that elevates man above all creatures, he will not be able to support his education. You can only teach others something if they use their own minds. When I treat someone with dislike, I will be unable to impress upon him any practical desire to know my reasons for accepting the truth. If I treat someone as having no dignity of their own, I will not arouse in them the need to do good (C. Nanni 2002, p. 39).

The obligation of such a relationship between teacher and student concerns argumentation when searching for answers. It also concerns the accuracy of justification, but has nothing to do with blind faith in the

validity of unquestioned truths or unrelated answers from some self-appointed authority. It is about learning to convince oneself. Only then is it possible for the person looking for an answer to find meaning that goes beyond the need to promote oneself or beyond something that only gives pleasure.

Another feature of pedagogy is that

> [...] in its way of formulating questions, all questions and answers can be subjected, due to their material, to radical justification and criticism (J. Schurr 1999, p. 53),

and both teaching and upbringing is based on the concept of the task of anticipating educated adulthood (J. Schurr 1999, p. 53), which includes the question of meaning and the search for an answer this question. Both categories should be treated inseparably, as a certain concept in the field of education. When a person, during education, becomes a task for himself, when he is a being who, as Kant says: "[...] has the ability to set autonomous goals for himself" (I. Kant 2015, p. 103), then the human task moves towards becoming the creator of oneself (due to one's own education), and in terms of freedom and self-determination – to rise to the level of *conditio humana*. A person can become a creator of himself, aware of his responsibility:

> [...] and someone who transforms the world only when, for his own sake, he begins to practically test the method he used when learning about the surrounding reality. It is a thorough analysis of one's own nature (oneself as an essence, the way of reacting to sensory stimuli and the type of one's own thinking) (I. Kant 2015, p. 103).

The inductive path of cognition

If a specific discipline requires the use of a method corresponding to one of its foundations, then, due to the education of the learner, another question is also necessary – about the mutual affiliation or mutual orientation of individual fields of knowledge, as well as about their unity. The question therefore starts from the assumption of the diversity of the

distinguished elements towards their unity, using the concept of "concentration".

Individual areas of teaching material do not exist in isolation from each other, but indicate interconnections. Nor are they irreversibly separated from each other, but should be viewed as a whole with other domains. They are separated from the unity that represents the whole and distinguished as single by other divisions. In this sense, all the positives of teaching will be seen in the aspect of related doubts and questions raised about them. Such a question is also a mode of belonging to other fields. However, this context cannot be misunderstood as simply adding everything up. The correct approach is to see it in its ever-changing interrelationship, which should be recognized:

> The unity of possible truths is not something that can be given up, otherwise there is no point in talking about truth at all. No clearly identifiable pattern or any single chosen path leads to such unity (A. Petzelt 1999, p. 122).

Petzelt particularly emphasizes the aforementioned mutual belonging of individual specific fields, claiming that regardless of the differences between them, unity can be achieved thanks to the relative nature of the whole. This is a never-ending and constantly repeated task related to a specific question. Regardless of whether you feel the need to see the specificity of natural sciences, whether you want to explore the essence of history as the history of all sciences, or whether you consider your own "I" in relation to the cosmos – in each of these cases, you are subject to the requirement of concentration. Anyone who is convinced that they have explored this stage of knowledge and no longer has to deal with it, has not really reached it and does not know what he can demand.

For the learner, the "norm of the soul" is visible here, which, due to the ability to direct ordering acts, is aimed at giving meaning to life. Our learning selves accordingly have various tasks to fulfil – while maintaining their order – with the aim of creating their unity. Our "I" therefore gradually gains its unity as our own work, and accomplished in a safe place. It learns a broader perspective, looking ahead, because it is able to protect itself against the dangers of the future (cf. A. Petzelt 1993, p. 110).

In the human way of looking at the whole and at the possible understanding of this whole, one gains freedom from its connection with the truth itself. Our "I" confronts the truth and must constantly shape itself in all its acts in the face of it. With every type of knowledge, our "I" remains connected to the truth (cf. A. Petzelt 1999, p. 141). Truths in their time course, in their temporality, can only be perceived through their participation in the universal truth, which remains constant and unrelated to the time factor. When we search, ask, make mistakes, find something and feel disappointed, then the truth becomes immutable (cf. A. Petzelt 1999, p. 141; M.A. Krąpiec 2004, p. 38f.). Through individual truths, universal truth is revealed.

Any search for partial truth meets the need for truth in general at a given moment. Whoever argues for something individual remains in close relation to truth, because their arguments in this case concern the universality of possible arguments. Only thanks to such a relationship is it possible to individually relate to the universal truth. When asking about the unity of all questions, the questioner looks at him or herself, asks about his or her question as such, because "[...] the question about unity is a question about my 'I', it is a call to self-analysis" (M. Heitger 1993, p. 32). What is expressed here in the relationship between the true element and truth will, in the next chapter of analysis, also appear in the relationship between meaning in general and the transcendental, superior meaning.

The relationship between what is true and the universal truth, as well as between the individual question and the unity of the question, can be summarized by the following quote:

> In this way, through one single question we obtain the question of all questions at the same time. When we ask about a single issue, we ask about everything at the same time. We answer one question; we learn to ask everything based on the structure of one answer and we are dependent on the answer of all answers. This clearly includes the task of education (A. Petzelt 1999, p. 23).

The question of the truth must consequently lead to an analysis of our own place in life. Indifference to the lack of knowledge about who

we will be, what our intellectual endowment is or what place we occupy in the social structure is tantamount to a lack of interest in the level of education and is opposed to any pedagogical effort. Also, in the context of the question of meaning, finding the right answer can only succeed if one comes to a self-analysis of one's place in the unity of the knowledge achieved with one's own attitude.

In self-analysis, our "I" turns to ourselves as to the "you" relationship (looking at ourselves from the outside) – understood as an obligation. Self-relationship as to the "you" in self-analysis means examining, controlling, securing and correcting the place we have achieved in life. It is then possible to see the difference between what we have achieved and what we can achieve. The unity of our knowledge and attitude achieved in this way will not only be the work that builds our success, but also our constant fact subjected to self-analysis. Knowledge here means the task of self-formation, attitude – the order of acts of action, and place – the possible directions in which our "I" exists. A place is therefore defined for our "I" to the extent that it is able to self-determine itself in the sphere of its responsible freedom. It has nothing to do with arbitrariness and indifference, but takes place in the service of truth and in accordance with it (cf. A. Petzelt 1993, p. 76; M.A. Krąpiec 2004, p. 71f.). Jürgen Habermas also points to the task of building unity, which is a question from the perspective of philosophy and existence, criticizing the summing up of elements of human education as ineffective in achieving goals. In his opinion, the philosophical basis of questions should also be a principle in each field of knowledge and in their review as a whole (cf. J. Habermas 1999, p. 171f.):

> Truth is the principle that supports the unity within which all knowledge is held together despite its internal differences, because all common elements of knowledge are united by the desire to be recognized as right. Whoever denies this fact causes his consciousness to disintegrate into unrelated data and information. At the same time, one alienates oneself from one's own knowledge, because one does not recognize it as valid on the part of one's own mind and thus makes it incapable of transmitting it, leaving it in such a state (M. Heitger 1993, p. 122).

The universal desire to recognize something as right and true has far-reaching consequences for one's identity, understood as a task. Our "I" obtains its unchanging identity through the anxiety of questioning, searching, through creativity and innovation before the tribunal of truth, thus experiencing itself as the condition of possibility of questioning and doubt, knowledge and one's conscious ignorance (cf. M. Heitger 1993, p. 123; A. Siemianowski 1996). Knowing one's own identity, also in connection with social challenges and social dialogue, is a condition for the possibility of experiencing meaning. In the principle of truth that creates unity, the statements of our "I" partner (i.e. "you") also become understandable, and knowledge is passed on in dialogue, through arguments. Only in connection with the sense of rightness does communication become a social bond between people and is not deformed in the form of idle chatter. Through attachment to the sense of rightness and the obligation to argue, one avoids claims of an exclusive nature and treating language as a means of control over others. The idea of conducting a dialogue is retained (cf. M. Heitger 1993, p. 124; M. Buber 1993). Self-analysis is a reflection on what has been achieved in life and the possibility of "pure" communication with other people. It encourages people to give up superstitions and replaces simple self-introduction with meeting others. This dialogic aspect also allows for an independent view of the importance of self-analysis for experiencing a meaning-creating experience during a meeting with others.

Egon Schütz problematized the transition from self-knowledge to self-recognition from the point of view of anthropology and stated that only the knowledge about a human threatens his or her division, parcelling and fractionation (cf. E. Schütz 2002, p. 11). Schütz introduces the concept of "chance" into the description of the individuality of the human "I", contrasting it with an objective approach to a human being within the framework of a specific scientific anthropology. He asks the question: "Who or what constitutes this 'self', if not the collective concept of the factor of randomness in a certain biography?" (E. Schütz 2002, p. 11).

Even if at the beginning everything is against discussing the phenomena of chance at all in the context of scientific anthropology, according to Schütz, it is precisely on the basis of the existential power of a given case that we will experience those experiences that become ours and which should only then be described as irrational. When we look at them through the prism of our reason, we will make ourselves the measure of all things and we will not want to admit:

> [...] that our self-disposition is also sometimes preceded by the reality that we have no influence on, by the whole of the surrounding world, by the power of inclinations, by the surprise of something unpredictable, by the uncertain certainty of death, and others. Existence among such elementary extreme experiences which our self-recognition defines as borderline knowledge, cannot in fact be included in the framework of scientific-objective anthropology that seeks specific principles (E. Schütz 2002, p. 12).

It is not a question of mere criticism of the scientific and theoretical way of working, for what else should a person take as a basis for his or her evaluation and study than the criterion of their own reason? Rather, Schütz's overall goal is to present the limits of will, thought, and action as boundary experiences of our individual "I", and then to perceive the "I" as an exemplary "self", exceeding any objective self-knowledge.

As a consequence, anthropology cannot be only a science about humans with a scientific and objective attitude. Human beings remain a mystery, including to ourselves. We solve this puzzle in the course of our lifetime. Even if this approach draws attention to human existential transcendence beyond the real state of a given moment, it must nevertheless be noted that only a specific individuality can come into play, which experiences itself in the diversity of its existence and which gives an answer to the question "why?" also through "how?" Life in its fullness as a world exceeds the dimensions of individual existence and leads to its transcendence to some extent; on the other hand, the world can exist for our "I" only thanks to its cognitive ability, thanks to its awareness of the world. In his reflection, Schütz therefore opposes the shortcuts used by experimental-scientific anthropology, which takes into account only verifiable empiricism. Recognition of this criticism is necessary because

considering the question of meaning and the possibility to answer it requires an image of human beings that do not allow themselves to be exhausted in objectifying statements about themselves, as well as in observation and description of the effects of their actions. Meaning here corresponds to the case exposed by Schütz; it is often a factor that is not available, it is often a random – in the sense of something that falls to someone, and it is always impossible to realize – in the sense of the existence of such a possibility. Meaning can be sought and found only by "oneself" during a person's existence.

When education is not reduced to equipping a person only with qualifications (occupation specific activities), when it is also aimed at the autonomous ability to evaluate and decide, at the independent and consciously responsible ability to decide based on one's own under-standing, while maintaining the guiding role of truth, then the task and goal of pedagogy have the nature of a process. Then self-determination, autonomy and meaning-making must be developed constantly anew; nothing can therefore be considered as definitively achieved. The lofty words "the path is the goal" are adequate as long as education is understood as the unity of knowledge and attitude (cf. M. Heitger 1990, p. 116f.). The task of education is to ensure that a person learns life in the right way. It wants to transform the postulate of "the need to live properly" into the postulate of "the desire to live properly". Namely, it wants to deal with the issue of the stability of a fully conscious attitude, considering the unity of our "I" as the work of the soul in the sense of constantly demanding its validity (cf. J. Habermas 2005, p. 84).

Determining the concept of "wisdom" as the goal of education means the need for wisdom in every act performed, at every moment in time, due to the proper order of the act performed. Therefore, so-called foreign wisdom is any knowledge, in the sense of its mere possession, and not necessarily a direct influence on the formation of an individual. The concept of authentic wisdom should be focused on the fulfilled principle of human participation, valid for all organizational arrangements, regardless of whether they concern things, other people, or one's own "I".

The concept of education, and with it also wisdom, combines acts of sense-making as participation with *veritas maxima* (cf. A. Petzelt 1999, p. 147f.). The point is to make the search for meaning an "art of life". This then obliges us to be guided by a new maxim in life; there is a new orientation, distinction, assessment, determination. We change completely; there is a kind of "rebirth" (in the same place). Such "becoming new" (during which our "I" discovers or creates meaning) cannot, from a pedagogical point of view, occur in isolation from the question of duty, and therefore without orientation. In this way, the question of meaning remains linked to the question of value, and the possible answer to it remains linked to the responsibility of our responding "I".

The pedagogical significance of the question of meaning

Questions about meaning cannot be posed without reference to values, and the answers to them are not possible without a relationship to the categories of responsibility of the questioner and the answering entity. Ignoring this dependence deprives the questioner of his or her freedom and independence, and the question as such would be deprived of its essence. Questions about values remain fundamental even when they are a demand for "freedom from values", because even then they reveal the need for values (even when they take the form of "freedom from values"). Such a form would exclude the existence of an entity that exercises responsibility and would thus resign from it in favour of an unknown destination. In place of our corresponding self, there would be an instance deciding on meaning. So, ignoring our questioning "I" results in simultaneously ignoring the question of meaning (cf. K. Popielski 2008).

Kant pays particular attention to the fact that humans need (unlike animals) education; we become a human being only through learning and upbringing. We should also shape a positive attitude towards life, preferring only good goals (cf. I. Kant 2015, p. 77).

> Good goals are those that are necessarily accepted by everyone and which can also become a goal of every person at the same time (I. Kant 2015, p. 94).

When we ask about meaning, there is a demand for duty; it is a question about proper goals that can be accepted by everyone, considered simply right. Consequently, from a pedagogical perspective on meaning, these questions arise:

– As to what represents value?
– As to what may be the subject of liability?
– As to what duty is? The "instance" that ultimately guarantees the validity of such a question is conscience.

Petzelt is of the opinion that it is impossible to separate the question of meaning from the question of absolute values, from the question of essence, from *veritas maxima*, from *Logos* or from the question of God. Whoever asks about the meaning of life also asks about his/her share in absolute values, reaches for transcendence in this question and moves from the temporal to the timeless dimension. The meaning of an act therefore requires almost a focus on the absolute, thanks to which temporal quantities are given a timeless meaning. In the pursuit of an important act, it is taken out of the temporal dimension and serves with respect to infinite values. The question of validity occurs in connection with the question of the correctness and reasonableness of the act performed. If it is omitted, it disrupts the hierarchy of pedagogical values (cf. A. Petzelt 1994, p. 52ff.).

> Pedagogy becomes a theory of sense-making – as establishing order in a community of people, for the sake of *Logos* (A. Petzelt 1994, p. 52f.).

Our inquiring self participates in absolute values, in essence, through the question of meaning. The question is about meaning in the vertical dimension, about the importance of perceptible order for the representation of knowledge due to its nature. Detailed knowledge, related to the awareness of our "I", has its value assigned to the current moment, is consolidated by the act of action and demands to be given a certain meaning.

A person constantly remaining in the position of the questioner sensibly updates the diversity of the ratings of his "I" in the process of education, self-organizing the existing and scattered acts of knowledge and supplementing them with new truth. The knowledge of our "I" always retains its task-oriented nature. Even if we never reach the end point of our cognition, the need for meaning cannot abandon us (cf. A. Petzelt 1994, p. 59; P. Fijewski 1998). For Petzelt, determining man's place in relation to his surroundings is inextricably linked to the question of transcendence. In other words: the last of the important places of a human being is always the transcendent one. From this perspective, meaning can always be binding without contradicting its own content.

Humans take an attitude of "self-recognition" towards themselves. Considering their spiritual dimension, they are anchored not only in nature. In the face of nature, they recognize and evaluate values, thus becoming the masters of nature. This is a situation that requires a person to seek balance and dialogue between *bios* and *logos*. It is about "a connection with the Infinite or with the dimension of infinity, jointly developed or found" (A. Petzelt 2003, p. 180). Our "I" must learn to see itself properly if we want to see the other person (i.e. "you") correctly with reciprocity. There is an interplay here, a relationship which, if not respected, is an expression of selfishness and self-centeredness.

Next, in an individual's self-analysis, the question about his or her relationship to "you" is important. In connection with transcendence, this relationship can be of three types: towards another person, towards oneself and towards the absolute. According to Petzelt, the latter rules the others. Thus, a human's place in time and beyond it emerges, with its indeterminacy and need for definition in the face of the Transcendental Being. From the point of view of education, each of the above-mentioned types of relationships has its justification and significance (cf. A. Petzelt 2003, p. 181; K. Popielski 1996).

Searching for one's own place can lead to finding meaning related to the obligation to relate to values. If education is to be understood as a way of finding meaning (cf. T. Konrad 2003, p. 95; J. Michalski 2004, p. 71f.), then a human, in the aspect of having his transcendent

homeland, must still be understood as someone existing, as the one who transcends himself or herself adapts another dimension of existence. Otherwise, a human would be understood as having power over everything that constitutes existence, as an unquestioned entity that has no need to ask questions and analyse his or her self-image. This kind of person would be defined as an unconditional subject of will and dominion of the existential element, he or she would go beyond the framework of doubts related to his or her existence, but instead would reach his or her self-realization, devoid of questions about the meaning of it. Our "I", feeling rooted in transcendence, oriented in a dimension going beyond itself, focused on meaning and duty, does not succumb to the need for ideological anthropology

> [...] which, under the guise of humanism, in fact leads a human to the greatest distance from himself or herself and misunderstanding himself or herself (T. Konrad 2003, p. 96).

The "will to find meaning" (Frankl) is not replaced by the "will to power" (cf. T. Konrad 2003, p. 97), and a human is perceived in his or her needs, orientation and questions as needing values that direct him or her towards a goal in the surrounding reality. When asking about value, a person looks for the measure needed to provide a possible answer to the question of meaning. Meaning cannot be linked to a lack of value; whoever asks about meaning also asks about values.

For Petzelt, the question of values is related to the question of autonomy from them. It concerns the order of values, the systematics of the values of our "I". "Value demands the law of the moment, which requires proper shaping" (A. Petzelt 2003, p. 179). The relationship of an object to our "I" becomes the subject of a question about the diversity of everyday values. Breinbauer emphasizes faith in values which, from the point of view of reason, cannot be considered as finally confirmed, but must be responsibly justified according to the possibilities of reason. Science cannot ultimately justify the regularity, necessity and rightness of decisions and procedures because it is not possible to justify them empirically (cf. I.M. Breinbauer 1994, p. 72). However, if science cannot

become the basis for the question of values, the question of the possibility of justifying them remains open and necessary to be implemented within the framework of pedagogical interactions that give meaning to actions and decisions made.

Correct decisions, according to many psychologists and axiologists, can be made in the religious dimension of human existence, as the foundation of all values, the scale for all temporal diversity (cf. W. Prężyna 1996; P.K. Oleś 2003; K. Popielski 1996; W. Kozielecki 1981; M.J. Bocheński 1994). This dimension is understood as a guarantor of all detailed values, because God is the basis for valuing a human being. Thanks to the Absolute, human valuations gain direction and make sense. In connection to God, the question of correct valuation can finally receive its answer. In the sphere of valuation, it is therefore necessary to define one's relationship to God:

> Whoever finds the right relationship with the Absolute, [...] finds oneself in their relationship to "you", defined from the highest position (W. Prężyna 1996, p. 23).

In the determination of the absolute scale of values, the connection of will and duty, there is freedom of our "I" in relation to opportunism and servility. Through the validity of obligation, a person achieves freedom from unauthorized claims resulting from intentions that are alien to the thing itself.

In the context of the above proposals and A. Petzelt's analyses, doubts remain regarding people who are indifferent to religion. Are they deprived of the ability to make right decisions in the sphere of values? In Frankl's concept, the ability to decide on values is grounded in man himself. Therefore, the religious dimension can only effectively support valuation, without excluding non-believers from this area.

When attempting to educate people in values, the subjective, individual "I" of the student should be taken into account. Because of the unique position of each individual, it is necessary to demand the determination of a situational value adequate to this situation. In this way, important attention is paid not only to the purely subjective nature of valuation, but also to the subjective conditions of every existence.

Inclusion of valuation in the obligation is essentially irreversible, it becomes the subject of responsibility and qualifies a given moment to assign it a value.

> Such a connection requires defining the teaching material as valid knowledge; it also requires demonstrating a characteristic attitude in subordination to absolutely good values. It commits my personal self to a given moment on the basis of timelessness and vice versa; it demands timelessness at a given moment, that is, learning how to live properly (A. Petzelt 1991, p. 226).

However, it must not be a question of traditional transmission of values, their learning as a canon, but only of education in the need for valuation itself, both in the area of theory and pedagogical practice (cf. J. Michalski 2004, p. 79f.; I.M. Breinbauer 1994, p. 74). This will only be possible when the focus is on values related to the environment of our lives, when science involves justifying and arguing decisions about valuation. Of course, the person of the teacher/educator as a personal authority to follow can play an important role here. The educator is the director in the sphere of the unity of knowledge and conscience (I.M. Breinbauer 1994, p. 75) and helps in finding answers to questions guided by life itself (cf. V.E. Frankl 1998). By looking at one's conscience, a person gives himself or herself an important answer to important questions, thus taking responsibility for his or her life.

The importance of conscience in the search for meaning

The role and importance of conscience in the upbringing process is often limited or even significantly omitted. This is due to the subjective nature of this criterion of ethical behaviour and the impossibility of defining it precisely (cf. A. Szostek 2001, p. 32f.; M. Heitger 2003, p. 198f.). What is conscience? According to J. Schurr, etymologically and content-wise, it is located between "consciousness" and "knowledge" (cf. J. Schurr 1997, p. 112). First of all, however, it means "sharing in knowledge" or

knowledge accompanying itself (in the sense of constant being with oneself). "*Conscientia*" already in modern times had the meaning of having one's own conscience:

> Therefore, if the demand is directed towards knowledge that it be "true", i.e. absolutely certain, then "conscience", the most conscientious of consciences, will demand nothing more than absolute acceptance of what this knowledge will tell us (J. Schurr 1997, p. 112).

Schurr does not see in conscience an objectified "object", but a certain "state of self"; not a "state of affairs" but a "situation of self". Conscience indicates that the area of our infinity, from what is incomprehensible, what is valid in a limited and conditional way, directs us towards values that are valid in an absolute way (J. Schurr 1997, p. 114f.). When we replace conscience with another internal authority, for example fear or an external threat, it is not our conscience that is wrong, but we ourselves. As a consequence of this thinking, Schurr makes a distinction between autonomous and heteronomous conscience, corresponding to the distinction between morality and legality, good morals and custom.

Autonomous conscience constitutes a law for itself and does not follow any other law that is alien to it. In this way, conscience can ultimately be understood as an institution that significantly educates a person. According to Schurr, it educates a person in the "image of God" "and without this obligation, 'education' does not have full meaning" (J. Schurr 1997, p. 128; cf. J. Bagrowicz 2000; J. Michalski 2003). The answer to the question of meaning, made in the spirit of responsibility, is therefore an answer in accordance with the voice of conscience as a call from being and its responsible life. The teacher and/or educator should help in discovering this voice: "a possible good response from conscience" (J. Schurr 1997, p. 128).

The above thought is connected with the reflection of Frankl, who claims:

> Life itself is such that it asks questions of a human. He or she does not have to ask questions – being rather the person to whom the questions are addressed, who has to answer life and take responsibility for them in the spirit of conscience (V.E. Frankl 1987a, p. 96).

A human being is the only creature on earth that can determine the meaning and purpose of his or her behaviour and the inspiration for action.

It is not one of many goals, but the highest goal, understood as the goal of itself:

> [...] as the need to answer the question "why?" in relation to yourself. Only when you are human do you have this awareness. There is no other value than the one that humans themselves set before themselves as worth realizing in pursuing the goal. A purposeless value is devoid of significant content and therefore ceases to be a value. Therefore, there are no values in themselves (J. Schurr 1999, p. 97).

Purpose is here a synonym for meaning. If meaning exists at all, who else but a human being should establish it? A human looks for meaning in choosing his or her goal. We look for meaning in our decisions; where possible, we find meaning and in this way our choices become valuable.

Therefore, we should ask here about a point of reference, about the norms of our decision-making and choice, independent of the mood and the momentary situation and the spirit of the times. The answer would be conscience, according to Schurr, as the only absolute authority regulating every upbringing. Because although it is possible to imagine conscience without education, the reverse is no longer possible. There is no education without education in conscience. It follows from this that although a person can be denied education, he or she can never be denied an act consistent with his or her conscience. It influences, regardless of its relative norm, the shape of lifelong upbringing, socialization or indoctrination. Schurr argues that we are not the creators of conscience, but it is conscience which creates us and determines our education. Therefore, upbringing and education remain in an inseparable relationship with each other, even when the voice is followed regardless of education (cf. J. Schurr 1999, p. 101f.; B. Śliwerski 2011).

From this point of view, conscience as an *a priori* value does not have a major impact on the development of morality, because it is autonomous (cf. I.M. Breinbauer 1994; J. Michalski 2003) – it does not become, but already exists – as an absolutely normative instance in relation to all

recognized norms that can become the subject of knowledge, all competent acts of judgment, as well as all possible and objectified moral performances. Due to its own autonomy, it requires respect from the acting and learning entity. Conscience is understood here as something that the subject has *a priori* in his or her existence and is not something that emerges in the process of upbringing or development.

If conscience is, by definition, autonomous and not subject to any external, ethical or moral norms (cf. J. Schurr 1999, p. 102), this would mean that a person should not recognize objectively existing social norms or acquire them through education. Therefore, conscience would also not be subject to the educational process. However, this is about something completely different. Education to conscience does not mean imposing by the educator its norms and motives of behaviour, but rather shaping the awareness of the existence of such an instance as conscience, which can only support the morality of everyday life and help in resolving existential crises and various types of choices (cf. M. Heitger 1999, p. 200). However, the fundamental task-oriented nature of being a human being is grounded in the authority of conscience, because in our concrete existence we are not, from the very beginning, who we could be. Kant expressed it as follows: "A person can become a human being only through education" (I. Kant 2015, p. 17). Of course,

> [...] the realization of "becoming human" understood in this way may fail; conscience is, apparently, exposed to the danger of disregard and ignorance (M. Heitger 1999, p. 201).

The unconditional acceptance of the existence of conscience does not contradict the recognition of human freedom. A person can also free oneself from the demands of conscience and can "reduce" it to silence. To the question whether a human is by his very nature evil or good, Kant replies:

> Neither of these possibilities is correct, because by nature a human is not a fully moral being; he or she becomes so only when his or her reason rises to the level of the concepts of duty and law (I. Kant 2015, p. 55).

To achieve this, however, we need to listen to the voice of conscience, which makes demands, but does not force us, does not cause anything mechanically. In this respect, conscience, as the final and irrefutable instance of morality, cannot be trained or changed through education. The task of educating conscience, in such an interpretation, should be defined as

> [...] caring for one's own conscience, submission to the demands of duty. This is the most general and broadly perceived moral human task (M. Heitger 1999, p. 203).

Conscience, along with the empirical "I", must be considered as a set value; it is not an obviousness discovered during upbringing and socialization. It is true that education may appeal or address conscience or even stimulate it, but this possibility is created by the very value of conscience that existed prior to it (cf. K. Wojtyła 1991, p. 107ff.).

Conscience is the expression of absolute duty found in reason itself and can therefore neither be created nor destroyed in our "I". In this way, the key question for pedagogy is the question of duty, and conscience is the ultimate measure for this category and for possible answers.

The thesis advanced here, related to the question of meaning posed by humans, understands meaning as a starting point and as a motive for the question, takes it into account in its importance as the cause of the question, and sees a role in recognizing, experiencing or providing an answer. Therefore, from a pedagogical point of view, it is not possible to separate meaning from the question of obligation. It can only be expressed correctly by listening to conscience and in responsibility to it. In each case, however, our questioning and answering "I" – expressing the recognized, experienced or responsible meaning – is present and continues to recognize, experience and respond.

The question of duty

In pedagogy, it is not possible to search and find a valid and real answer to the question of meaning without simultaneously asking questions about duty. The question of the duties of our "I" is crucial here. It

is an ordering principle for deciding what is good or bad, true or false. Duty as such should constantly be a subject of questioning and learning. Thus, each task and detailed question is guided by the principle of duty:

> When my "I" is the possibility of all questions, it must pose questions from the perspective of duty; must learn the subject scope of questions and obey this obligation (A. Petzelt 1997, p. 82).

Duty is about proper self-ordering and making knowledge binding. It is about motivation and faithfulness to one's position in relation to character, and about shaping one's attitude towards making decisions (A. Petzelt 1997, p. 83). Education aims at proper human fulfilment in society. In duty we encounter the quintessence of all educational tasks and we include them in the question of meaning. The possibility of finding an answer to this question is therefore related to the category of duty in pedagogy.

Providing an "answer to the question of meaning" is equivalent to a change in the basis, a decision and an obligation in relation to the newly adopted maxim (cf. K. Popielski 1980, p. 144). When we have found the "meaning", we change our current valuations as a result of which a new orientation, distinction, assessment and determination take place. What takes place here (as with the "birth" of a moral subject) is a kind of "rebirth" (cf. J. Michalski 2004). In other words, the question of meaning allows us to find a binding answer from a pedagogical point of view only while maintaining the criterion of obligation and therefore cannot be considered in isolation from the question of correctness and falsehood and good and evil (in order to make them credible). In this way, the real answer takes shape only in the area of responsibility.

When Kant wrote the aforementioned principle: "A person can become a human being only through education" (I. Kant 2015, p. 17), he contrasted the existence of a human being as belonging to the person alone, as opposed to the existence of other living beings (animals). It was about the educational task of "humanizing" a human being.

From the pedagogical point of view presented in this way, a human being should be allowed to be guided by his or her own conscience.

In such a process, the educator is only a companion, support, advisor and must take responsibility for ensuring that a person can increasingly be entrusted in his/her process of becoming himself/herself to his/her autonomous conscience, not yet fully developed but still forming. However, an adolescent can experience the meaning of life only through his or her own autonomy. The meaning cannot be imposed, it cannot be transmitted, but can only be found in the autonomy of one's own existence (cf. K. Olbrycht 1994).

Teachers and educators should require this opportunity from an adolescent, at the same time preventing others from having access to his/her person. The educators therefore take responsibility for the "requirements" of the instance of the young person's own conscience and in this way can take courage:

> [...] to entrust a human to the truth of his/her conscience and [entrust]the truth to the conscience, [...] so that "education of conscience" as education "to" responsibility is not possible otherwise than by education "in" responsibility, "through" responsibility and "out of" responsibility (J. Schurr 1997, p. 137).

In this way, according to Schurr, a theory of "responsible responsibility" is created, which he understands as a "metaphysics of education", "[...] which announces itself in conscience, through conscience and ultimately as conscience" (J. Schurr 1997, p. 138). A mature personality, as the work of oneself, guarantees the existence of self-education carried out in a responsible manner, so that self-analysis regarding the moral assessment of one's own actions does not remain empty and ineffective (cf. W. Śliwerska, B. Śliwerski 2008).

Frankl sees responsibility and the response to it as elements belonging to each other in the act of "I", where personality appears as the capacity for responsibility. Responsibility therefore stands in front of our "I", in the face of a certain measure (duty).

> It gives my 'I' a position of diversity in the act it performs, a scope within which there is any sense of argumentation and motivation (A. Petzelt 1997, p. 99).

As a consequence, meaning also becomes visible as a certain duty, built on the basis of understanding by the questioner equipped with conscience.

The search for meaning in the area of pedagogical influences may take place in the context of the question of obligation, because the binding nature of meaning cannot result from arbitrariness.

First of all, meaning allows us to present ourselves as one of the available possibilities, related to a certain situation and opening up to us through it. In this way, we are called to respond, which should not be done arbitrarily, but with a sense of responsibility. Since the experience of meaning is also an experience of value, one may indeed doubt whether any meaning can be obtained from the experience of lack of value. However, it may be mistakenly considered to be an experience of values, and therefore special attention should be paid to the need for proper education in values. The search for meaning, however, always remains the goal of a specific task, appropriate for a given situation and a postulate at a specific moment. In a specific situation, meaning wants to be brought out of hiding, found, perceived, seen and this is how a person is perceived, who should realize the value-related possibilities inherent in a given situation.

The fact that the discovered answer found must be an expression of duty in accordance with one's own conscience, corresponds to pedagogical fidelity to the principles. Conscience does not determine what is specifically "good" or "bad", but rather it is an unmistakable call addressed to us to do good. Every decision made in one or the other direction results from the freedom of our will, and freedom means formal specificity and just because of this – absolute obligation of our destiny (cf. M.A. Krąpiec 2004, p. 13f.). Thus, when perceiving meaning, it is about discovering a certain possibility against the background of reality, which appears to be unique and unrepeatable (cf. V.E. Frankl 1990, p. 28). However, from a pedagogical point of view, it is always the voice of conscience, which, out of a sense of responsibility, must provide answers. In training to perform specific tasks, the educator should therefore help in finding answers to the voice of the student's conscience. This is the only

way to talk reliably about the question of meaning and the possibility of answering it.

Human beings always remain an "open question", despite the inherent achievements in life, as an obligation to our duty and often unlived experiences, for example those related to meaning. We raise doubts and throughout life find the answers by analysing our own existence, by facing ourselves. Frankl calls this act "self-transcendence". We become "ourselves" in self-knowledge, experiencing the limits of our will, thought and action, in our own experience of:

> [...] disposition to what is not disposable, by the whole world, the strength of inclination, the surprise of the unpredictable, the uncertain certainty of death, etc. Life among such very elementary experiences, defined by our self-knowledge as borderline, cannot in reality be recreated in a scientific-objective anthropology that seeks specific principles (E. Schütz 2002, p. 12).

Nevertheless, there are, and quite often occur, events in human existence that take the form of weakness, vulnerability and the dimension of finitude, which necessarily call into consideration the question of meaning, call for self-analysis and await the answer with hope. During self-analysis, a person looks at himself/herself and is simultaneously observed. Only in this way does it become possible to ask questions about our "I":

> [...] it must appear in the perspective of the question about the meaning of our existence. The answer to the question about one's own "I" is possible only through self-analysis. The question about myself is a question of my "I", which is looking for itself in knowledge, memory, actions, i.e. it must perceive itself as a source of meaning (A. Petzelt 1997, p. 197).

Frankl recognizes the essence of human existence as anchored in its "self-transcendence". By this he means:

> [...] the basic state known as human existence, constantly directed beyond itself and towards something that is no longer itself again. It is directed at something or someone, at a certain meaning that it fulfils, or at another human being that it encounters in the spirit of love (V.E. Frankl 2010, p. 75).

The fulfilment of meaning is comparable here to the basic peda-gogical task, which consists in "forming oneself" as the work of oneself, whereby a human is given to himself/herself as a task. It follows from this that the need for education and the need to ask about meaning are specific to human existence and are assigned to human beings in the work that we are ourselves.

THE QUESTION OF MEANING

Who approaches life with a "why?" endures almost every "how?"
Viktor Emil Frankl

Whenever we pose a question, we are essentially participating in the process of searching for meaning. However, we are also asking about meaning *expressis verbis*. Each specific question aims in its specificity to give meaning, but "[...] all sense-making in particular finds its unambiguity in the very sense on which we are dependent" (A. Petzelt 1997, p. 126). The question of meaning and the possibilities of answering it will be considered in more detail in the current chapter, and will also be analysed in terms of its importance for pedagogy.

Frankl's theory becomes the subject of this study only to the extent that it serves to explain and present the question of meaning as a "special case of posing a question". These considerations include the analysis of concepts such as: the question of meaning; the loss of meaning; the questions of value, conscience and responsibility; and an attempt to include them in the field of pedagogy. In accordance with this assumption, a conscious distance has been maintained from the precise presentation of Frankl's theoretical taxonomy.

What is more important here, after determining the rank of existential analysis, pertains to the significance that humans attach to "meaning", not as an objective act, yet always determined by them. Attributing meaning to the essence of human beings is realized only through the question of values. The claim that such a definition (also in Frankl's work) is possible to accept only in connection with the acceptance of

the existence of conscience precedes the attempt to answer the question of meaning that appears at the end of the present work.

The place of existential analysis

Viktor Emil Frankl was involved in the psychoanalysis of Sigmund Freud and the individual psychology of Alfred Adler from the 1920s. As was already noted earlier in his biography, he was looking for his "spiritual place" in "crossing the border" between psychiatry, psychoanalysis and philosophy and thus also the border of criticism of the then prevalent deep psychology, which, in his opinion, did not take into account one very human phenomenon, namely human beings' search for the meaning of their existence. Already then, Frankl wanted to illuminate the borderline space between psychotherapy and philosophy, with particular emphasis on the issues of meaning and value. His goal was to overcome psychologism in the field of psychotherapy, for which reason he turned against any reductionism which deprived humans of their human dimension and constituted for them the nihilism of our times (cf. V.E. Frankl 1987, p. 151). This attempt at "re-humanization" on the part of psychotherapy ultimately led to a conflict with Adler and, consequently, to Frankl's exclusion from the Association of Individual Psychology. Excluded from deep philosophy, Frankl continued to develop his "high philosophy". Despite Frankl distancing himself from psychoanalysis (cf. V.E. Frankl 1982c, p. 18ff.), he treated Freud as his personal ideal and showed him deep respect. However, he did not adopt anything from his psychoanalysis into his logotherapy and existential analysis, because his intention was not to justify a certain type of psychotherapy (cf. A. Längle 1995, p. 6f.).

One of Frankl's more serious criticisms of Freud was the fact that:

> Freud understood love as a pure side effect, when in fact it is a primary phenomenon of human existence and apparently not only a side effect – either in the sense of so-called efforts to stop the goal or in the sense of sublimation [...] because only on the basis of the existentially valid and original capacity for love, on the basis of the original bond of humans with love,

sublimation, i.e. the integration of sexuality with the whole human person, becomes understandable. To put it briefly – only my "I", which aims at a certain "you", is able to integrate my own "it" (V.E. Frankl 1987a, p. 25).

Together with Scheler, Frankl criticized individual psychology on the grounds that it actually takes as its starting point only the human striving for meaning. Frankl, on the other hand, sees humans possessed of a much more radical "ambition", namely a striving,

[...] which, as it can be said, is not content with earthly honours at all, but strives for something much greater, namely, to make oneself immortal, in any form (V.E. Frankl 1987a, p. 26).

Frankl saw a certain difference between psychoanalysis and psychology in this. While the former sees reality in the category of causality, the latter looks at purposefulness. However, the question is further asked whether the category of "ought" should not be added to the "compulsion" to abandon causality and the "wish" for a certain spiritual purpose (cf. V.E. Frankl 1987a, p. 18). In his criticism, Frankl wanted to emphasize the need to include higher spheres of human existence in anthropology (constituting the basis of his theory), which is why he turned against appropriate shortcuts to present the "image" of humans and

[...] for this reason, instead of deep psychology, he demanded the so-called high psychology, which in its field of vision took into account not only the will to willingness (including the will to power), but also the will to meaning (V.E. Frankl 1987a, p. 26).

With this postulate, we consciously go beyond the level of physical and mental nature, and fundamentally take into account the dimension of spirituality. This indicates an area that also plays an important role in pedagogy. The question here is addressed to humans seen in the aspect of one's duties. In this regard, Frankl shares the following words spoken by Johann Wolfgang von Goethe:

When we accept people as they are, we make them worse. But when we treat them as if they were what they should be, we lead them to the place they should aim at (V.E. Frankl 1987a, p. 27).

The concepts of logotherapy and existential analysis are juxtaposed to describe Frankl's theories, often interchangeably by Frankl himself. The concept of logotherapy is commonly understood in terms of "meaning-oriented" psychotherapy, while the concept of existential analysis defines a theory assigned to the first of these fields and expressing the appropriate anthropological direction of research (which also serves the theoretical foundations of logotherapy) (cf. V.E. Frankl 1987a, p. 57f.).

Logotherapy is not simply a concept of a new direction in psychotherapy. For Frankl, from the very beginning it is in opposition to psychotherapy in the current sense of the word. In its original position, logotherapy is understood as the opposite of psychologism within psychotherapy, and later as the possibility of its re-humanization. This is due to humans' understanding of themselves as beings on a search for meaning (cf. V.E. Frankl 2010, p. 47ff.). Due to its essence, logotherapy is not a certain form of psychotherapy, but rather its critic and complement. Frankl puts it forward in the following way: "Logotherapy cannot and naturally should not replace psychotherapy, but complement it (only in specific cases)" (V.E. Frankl 1987a, p. 40).

By taking into account the spiritual dimension of humans, Frankl overcomes the narrowing of psychopathology with its categories of "healthy" and "sick". Logotherapy begins to emerge not in the psychological sphere of humans, but in the nootic sphere, i.e. in their spirituality.

The concept of existential analysis also appears in Frankl's work in various meanings. Sometimes he uses it synonymously in relation to the aforementioned logotherapy, and then again to define a form of treatment of a given person, which is about "analysis" and therefore the process of awareness-raising. Finally, we encounter this concept in application to anthropological inquiry and to designate the philosophical examination of the foundations in Frankl's theory.

Existential analysis in the sense of analysing a particular person is an ontological activity that makes a person free, but only conditionally, in the sense that this "freeing" is characterized by the fact that at the same time one must speak to the person in a responsible way (cf. V.E. Frankl 1987, p. 9). Existential analysis is about the processes of creating con-

sciousness. A particular individual is stopped in their path in order to transfer spiritually unconscious content to the level of consciousness. Therefore, it is also, and mostly, about becoming aware of one's own spiritual ground, which is capable of transmitting values. It also involves becoming aware of one's own responsibility. Existential analysis as a self-fulfilling process of awareness, from a pedagogical point of view, is focused on the maturity of a person who is becoming aware of their non-reflective spirituality. The task of the psychotherapist there, as well as the educator here, is to help in explaining one's own existence. It is largely about self-reflection on one's freedom, one's awareness and one's development (cf. V.E. Frankl 1985, p. 145). The task of existential analysis is twofold:

> [...] it becomes an analysis of the entire existence (eros, logos and ethos), as well as an analysis focused on existence (being human, existence and being responsible) (A. Längle 1995, p. 11).

Frankl also critically states the limitation that "existence" cannot be objectified, but only explained, "[...] and therefore it is not possible to discuss it in terms of a certain 'analysis of existence'" (V.E. Frankl 1985, p. 70). Existence, however, is, for its part, only explainable

> [...] because it is self-evident; existence has self-understanding within itself. Such self-understanding, contained in existence as such, can therefore be explained; if such an explanation is possible, then some explanation of existence is also possible (V.E. Frankl 1985, p. 70).

Existence can be recognized to a certain extent, not through "mental analysis", but only through "existential analysis". Analytic existence represents a case of borderline analysis to the extent to which it allows its object to be a subject" (V.E. Frankl 1985, p. 71).

As an anthropological research direction, existential analysis is aimed at "ontologically explaining what existence is" (V.E. Frankl 1985, p. 71). In this way, it will be understood as a turning point in psychotherapy, as a

> [...] reflection on the essential reason for human existence, on responsibility as the basis of human existence [...], as an analysis of being human in terms of responsibility (cf. V.E. Frankl 1987a, p. 55).

We find an amazing affinity with the pedagogical way of understanding humans not only because of the duty of responsibility, but also because of the concept that humans are constantly in a phase of development, due to their openness and, therefore, susceptibility to education. Frankl does not discern human existence as an actual being, but as an optional one. That is to say, it cannot only be as it is, but can always become different. Human existence is realized in the spirit, a person can leave the physical and mental plane and oppose oneself. This occurs to the extent "[...] to which one, as a spiritual person, stands in front of oneself as a psychophysical organism" (quoted in: A. Längle 1998, p. 104).

Here we encounter a view of humans, seeing them (as defined earlier in this work) in their capacity for self-analysis and, consequently, self-recognition. For example, a person has the ability to succumb to his or her urges or to oppose them. This ability to gain distance from oneself also makes one free to engage in dialogue and encounter with other beings. In Frankl's anthropology, humans are perceived and understood in their opportunity of self-determination and self-reflection in the context of responsible freedom. Frankl's existential analysis goes beyond all explanations of existence and attempts to explain meaning, with the focus shifting from explaining the mere reality of existence to explaining its possibilities.

Frankl draws attention to the variety of meanings of the basic concepts of logotherapy and existential analysis, defining logotherapy as "reflection on the duty of being" and existential analysis as "self-reflection on the possibility of being". With regard to the concept of existential analysis, Frankl literally claims this:

> Existential analysis places at the forefront of its field of vision the orientation towards meaning and man's striving for values (V.E. Frankl 1985, p. 175).

Existential analysis is neither about "deep" nor "high" science, because these concepts are beyond meaning. They have dimensions that exceed the dimensions of the world, are experiences stemming from the very essence of things, and constitute knowledge coming from a deep and high being, i.e. from God Himself. The concept of existential analysis

does not represent metaphysics, theology, or religion, which does not prevent us from talking about our own religiosity. Existential analysis does not get to the cause itself. It does not "transcend" the world:

> [...] it is the transcendence of only beings (living in the world) into the world. In this way it remains the thinking of the "material world". "Metaphysics" is not, in its essence, the task and work of some "finite" reason (reason characteristic of all people) (E. Fizzotti 2004, p. 59).

For existential analysis, humanity simply means being human. This being, however, requires the opening of the world as a primary task:

> The world, outer space, must be conquered as living space; time limitation must be lived and shaped within the framework of human history. The impression of appearance must constantly give way to some other possible reality (R. Kühn 2005, p. 151).

As an anthropological research direction, existential analysis opens up to a significant extent by narrowing the therapeutic concept (guided, probably not consciously by the main idea, which is health) to the pedagogical question. It does so in particular when human existence is treated as a duty and humans are understood through their orientation towards this duty. Being human always meant for Frankl:

> [...] an existence that goes beyond oneself. The essence of human existence is related to its self-transcendence. [...] Being a human being always means being directed and organized for the sake of something or someone, devoting oneself to some work, devoting oneself to another person whom one loves or to God whom one serves (V.E. Frankl 1987a, p. 48ff.).

In the same place, Frankl emphasizes that such self-transcendence goes beyond the limits of all images of humans, who do not transcend themselves, do not ask about meaning and values, and who are neither aware of their duties nor tend to fulfil their tasks. Fulfilling one's own existence in a way that has a certain meaning (according to the view of humans proposed by Frankl) is located in the concept of education to the extent that it is simultaneously a motive, a task and a goal, and, moreover, it corresponds to an obligation in pedagogy. "Wrong questions" (wrong forms) only occur when the human will becomes frustrated with

meaning. Only there does the will to want something (Freud) or the will to have power (Adler) develop. In fact, the desire for something is less neurotic than the pursuit of meaning (cf. V.E. Frankl 1990, p. 71). Through this motivation, humans miss their proper task of realizing meaning. The relationship between the pursuit of sensory needs and the pursuit of meaning can be juxtaposed as the relationship of questions as such to erroneous questions. Just as there, an apparent question leads to apparent knowledge, so here neurotic motivation leads to what Frankl understands by "existential frustration" (a sense of meaninglessness).

Finding meaning stems from humans' original task of conquering their world for themselves. This task is endless during one's life. The purpose of human education is to find meaning because:

> The world as such, namely in comparison to the beings that live and fill it, is infinite because it includes all living things. The "world" is an "entity", not some "living thing". The world is a "horizon" that allows a living being to show itself as it is (E. Fizzotti 2004, p. 72).

Do we do anything in pedagogy other than supporting people in the task of opening their world in the spirit of responsibility (and thus truly) until they learn to put these elements together on their own? However, when the image of a human being contained in a given pedagogy does not adequately reflect the dimension of human meaning, it will also not be able to understand a human being – as a person searching for meaning.

The significance of the question of meaning

When we ask questions, we always look for meaning. This happens, if not directly, then at least without explicit emphasis. In other words, each of our questions participates in meaning; we simply cannot act otherwise than to ask for meaning in a general sense. Even if we do not ask directly about meaning itself, we ask about "partial", "specific", and "here and now" meanings, and also about the past and possible future. When "being human" means "being in the world", and the world is so

infinitely large, just as the subject's possibilities of opening up all possible worlds are infinite (cf. E. Fizzotti 2004), then the human question must be one that encompasses their entire existence.

Frankl experiences "a cataract in the eye" when he puts forward the concept of "self-transcendence" in his anthropology. One's outlook on meaning will be independent and clear, when one also learns to "see" what is not oneself again. Just as the quality of vision of a healthy eye depends on the fact that it does not see itself, so being human always points beyond oneself for something or someone, for fulfilling a certain task, for love for a person, for some meaning that should be preserved (cf. V.E. Frankl 1990, p. 18). In the fact of a human being standing in front of the world, the question of meaning inevitably arises.

This is also true when a person has the ability to self-analyse. Here, too, our "I" takes a distance from itself and asks about itself and about the truthfulness of the acts it has performed (cf. J. Kozielecki 1988, p. 78f.). The direction of gaze splits into two out of necessity. The self turns to the "outside" in the act of opening the world, while to the "inside" it opens and shapes itself. Both of these views offer the possibility of finding meaning and condition each other, because humans are equally the creators of the world and of themselves. As for the possibilities of meaning included in the question here, Frankl's work requires a distinction between the concepts of "meaning" and "metaphysical sense". This distinction will be the subject of more detailed considerations later in this work.

In Frankl's proposal, the question: *what else should I expect from life?* is almost juxtaposed with the possible experience of meaning. Frankl would rather talk, together with Kant, about a U-turn; then the question should be: *what does life expect from me?* This is a question about the task that awaits one in life. Frankl adds to this:

> We are not the ones who should ask about the meaning of life, life is a value that poses and directs questions to us – and it is us who are asked. We are the ones who are supposed to give an answer to the constant, current question of life (V.E. Frankl 1990, p. 88f.).

Life is called, accordingly, no other than being questioned yourself. Our entire existence is understood here as a process of a constant search for answers, as a "responsibility" on the part of life. The present, our here and now, eternally holds within itself a new question of life addressed to us, and allows us to find meaning. Experiencing meaning is not just a perspective of the future, not merely speculation, but a specific experience of a given moment. It is possible that it changes from hour to hour and takes a different shape in each person. According to Frankl, the question of the meaning of life is asked in a naive way if it is not accompanied by real life details. We need to find the meaning of according to the specific requirements of the moment, and our answer may vary. "First of all, our response should be active, through the action we perform or through the work we create" (V.E. Frankl 1990, p. 88f.). Additionally, it is about how we will take a certain position and carry out a certain life situation, although the scope of our action is not at stake here.

However, Frankl does not see the possibility of meaning only in the fulfilment of a task, but also in obligation – in relation to morality, as well as an element of love, "[…] in our sacrifice for beauty, greatness, goodness" (V.E. Frankl 1990, p. 92). When we give meaning to life actively and in the spirit of love, there always remains a question concerning the meaning of misfortune and the experience of suffering. According to Frankl, when we suffer, we also give meaning to life by the way we take a stance towards the limitations of our life possibilities. Humans are also able to realize values and find meaning in the way they behave in the face of their suffering and life limitations (cf. V.E. Frankl 1990, p. 93). Therefore, meaning will be understood here not only in task categories, as a state of possibility of something or a certain human ability, but as an inalienable obligation belonging to human existence and inextricably linked with it. This is especially clear, when Frankl relates, referring to his camp experiences:

> What we care about is the meaning of life as a whole, which also includes death and thus guarantees not only the meaning of "life", but also of suffering and dying – this is the meaning we fought for! (V.E. Frankl 1982, p. 126f.)

For pedagogy, the unconditionality and irreplaceability of meaning become the basis of existence in this statement. Meaning is also confirmed in its significance as the driving force for the fulfilment of life. Based on the considerations so far, it also becomes obvious that meaning constantly has two properties – a situational character and subjectivity (i.e. it is personal). Therefore, it is not a value that can be transferred through teaching. It does not consist of many different subjects, but it is a basis for them as a possibility. Meaning cannot be imposed on a given person from the outside, nor is it something that can be assigned to a given situation. Thus, finding meaning and discovering it remain, just like asking about it, an act of recognition or intuition of an individual. For an educator, of even greater significance is the concept, the way of perceiving and understanding the human being in this act. Humans discerned in "their addiction to meaning" can only be understood by pedagogy if they are accepted and respected as a subject and a person, and in the sense of their right to manage themselves. Only an individual person can only determine for themself what meaning means to him or her and what they derive it from. Human beings are not flexible in this respect. The desire to act has no place here. Also, knowing this and following it will influence teaching practice. One's own attitude is nevertheless related to the question of how one meets someone who is their opposite. Also in this context, it is true to say that pedagogy should advocate that the desire to have control over another person is excluded (cf. B. Śliwerski 2011; M. Nowak 1998; J. Michalski 2008). Together with Frankl, we can also oppose those behaviourist trends within pedagogy (cf. V.E. Frankl 1982, p. 148) which, through their concept of absolute planning of learning and upbringing, would like to take control of human souls. In this understanding, whoever attempts to limit individual freedom is also trying to reduce the possibility of experiencing meaning. However, such a demand results from a certain anthropology (or, better put, the lack thereof) which tries to deceive humans by convincing them that there is no dimension of spirituality in him or her and which, by the very fact of rejecting this inalienable attribute of a person, has lost it.

Due to questions about the meaning of all things, the purpose and meaning of the world as a whole, the meaning of the fate that befalls us, and the issues we deal with, there is a need to conduct an exploratory and critical analysis. It is necessary to examine whether the very question of "meaning" of the history of the world, of the meaning of the whole, already has meaning as such, or whether perhaps in a given case we are not only asking about the meaning of individual events. For Frankl, the category of "meaning" takes on a transcendent character when:

> [...] meaning always lies outside the something that "possesses" it. We can therefore understand the meaning of the whole world only in the form of the so-called borderline concept. On the basis of such a view, one could probably define this meaning as a metaphysical meaning at most, which at the same time expresses that the meaning of the whole is impossible to comprehend and therefore exceeds this possibility. Accordingly, this concept would be an analogue to Kant's postulate regarding reason; it presents the possibility of thinking – an antinomy, available only through faith (V.E. Frankl 1987a, p. 62).

Thus, it becomes obvious that for humans the possible "metaphysical world", if at all possible to comprehend, is found only in faith. Knowledge about the meaningfulness of everything that happens in the world remains closed to humans, and yet only premonitory faith is able to give metaphysical meaning, even to our suffering. Frankl discerns such meaning in the faith-fulfilling pursuing an "extremely human" dimension, based on the foundation of love (cf. V.E. Frankl 1987a, p. 65).

According to E. Fizzotti, the aspect of the definite progressiveness of Frankl's theory, in relation to other theories, is connected with psychotherapeutic views rooted in existential philosophy, in its

> [...] taking into account the transcendence existing on the other side of the material world. The responsibility that humans have as spiritual beings points to the direction from existence to transcendence (E. Fizzotti 2003, p. 68).

In this way, the view of the limitation of human spiritual life is overcome. That is why Fizzotti considers, in this context, the following statement by Frankl to be appropriate:

> Once again, as always and everywhere, it turns out that everything of a relative nature not only cannot oppose absolute values, but must condition them (E. Fizzotti 2003, p. 69).

Accepting only relative meaning is therefore insufficient and incapable of referring to meaning in a binding way at all. Looking at it in a specific way, the following statement should be considered true: either I will find meaning on my own or I will not. Although meaning is found in specific situations and experienced subjectively, it remains unacceptable without the aforementioned metaphysical meaning. The metaphysical dream thus becomes the thought condition for meaning in the ordinary sense. If the acceptance of the possibility of meaning as such also requires the acceptance of metaphysical meaning, so as to ensure proper thinking and assumption-making, then it cannot be overlooked that the personal experience of meaning always remains concrete, situational and subjective. Meaning cannot be objectified, verified, or proven in the sense of evidence based on the natural sciences. Meaning is still an explanation, attribution, and acceptance of a specific individual. Individual situations are experienced in different ways, depending on particular people. To illustrate, if for one person – an optimistic person with an optimistic attitude to life – the bottle is half full, for another person – a pessimist – it is simply half empty. Which of them is right? Meaning is something that requires further definition only by humans, but nothing arbitrary. Therefore, Frankl discerns the similarity between the question of meaning and the question of value. However, he answers them within the framework of existential analysis while standing on the existential side of the division, by dividing attitudes towards life into religious and non-religious. It is certain that belief in meaning is a transcendent category and humans must accept the ultimate meaning that can no longer be fathomable, since

> [...] when trying to answer the question about the meaning of being, it is always necessary to assume the existence of meaning (V.E. Frankl 1979, p. 78).

Therefore, a human being always conveys an existence oriented towards meaning, regardless of whether one knows it or not. It is char-

acteristic of humans to have the "will to discover meaning". However, when given the opportunity to find meaning, we constantly deal with the aforementioned specific meaning in specific situations. Frankl, in his Logos theory, is not satisfied with the "will to find meaning", because, according to Dienelt, it makes a transition to "the will to find the ultimate meaning":

> As part of the phenomenological analysis, it turns out that: the more extensive the meaning, the less comprehensible it turns out to be. Where it is entirely about the ultimate meaning, it completely escapes at least purely intellectual interference. What cannot become an object of knowledge does not have to become something that cannot be believed (K. Dienelt 1999, p. 18).

The whole world may have no specific meaning for a person because as such it cannot be comprehended by anybody. Frankl maintains this: "The whole has no ordinary meaning; but a metaphysical sense" (V.E. Frankl 1985, p. 200f.). Despite the impossibility of comprehending it in thought and demonstrating its existence, the metaphysical meaning is set as a task for humans, because:

> The impossibility of obtaining an overview of the whole, the impossibility of understanding the metaphysical meaning – taking it all upon oneself, belongs to an important extent to existence (V.E. Frankl 1985, p. 201).

The postulate of metaphysical meaning does not release humans from active action, but leaves them to carry out their tasks. "I can count on the metaphysical meaning, but not rely on it directly" (V.E. Frankl 1985, p. 202). In this way, one's task remains to exploit concrete possibilities in the face of metaphysical meaning. In this context, Frankl emphasizes that metaphysical meaning is fulfilled in history through one's undertakings or omissions. Our activation in the sense of a single meaning is therefore our participation in the sense as a whole. This is comparable to the task of shifting one's gaze from the detail to the whole, but without ever being able to reach the whole; thus the task remains unfinished. In this respect, Christoph Kolbe points to the phenomenon that many people free themselves from the burden of their own responsibility by

shifting it to some higher authority in order to avoid their own responsibility and not have to personally account for their behaviour (C. Kolbe 1996, p. 13f.). In order to prove this misunderstanding, he refers to the Lutheran theologian Heinz Zahrnt, who debunks it by saying:

> It is a shameful trap to try to show faith as necessary from the point of view of the goal, and as not being pleasant either to God or to human. You don't need a God that you are in the need of; such a God will always be an idol. God always has his cause only in himself and is therefore interesting only because of himself (W. Spiel, W. Datler 1984, p. 102).

In Frankl's work, the question of meaning is often considered by using the example of crisis situations, because this is the way in which it best expresses its important nature. Various types of breakdowns, disappointments, irreparable losses, various shocks and other events often lead a person to a crisis of meaning. On the other hand, these types of existential borderline experiences are also an opportunity to reorder life, transform it, change habits that no longer work, etc. However, when faced with the question of whether everything has its meaning or not, knowledge must give way to faith:

> Where the arguments for or against the ultimate meaning remain in a state of balance, a person who believes in meaning puts the entire weight of one's being, one's existence on the scales and says their "fiat", their "amen", i.e. "so be it", I decide to act in this way – as if life had an infinite metaphysical meaning, going beyond our finite possibilities of understanding (V.E. Frankl 1987a, p. 280).

> Faith is not thinking impoverished by the real side of what was thought at a given moment, but thinking enriched by the existential dimension of a given act of thinking (V.E. Frankl 1987a, p. 282).

Even if the specific question of meaning and the specific meaning found are always personal, these elements do not become subjective in the sense that the result of the search can be exchanged indifferently, randomly or arbitrarily. Subjective here means personal and impossible to objectify and generalize.

The question of meaning cannot be separated from the question of value. If we have already discussed meaning as an obligation, we should now consequently ask about the orientation of this obligation and its measure. This is a question of values.

A question of values

Meaning can only exist in relation to values. With pure value neutrality (if it can exist at all) or with no value at all, no true experience of meaning is possible. Only by focusing on something that must be accepted (values) does meaning appear. Values require recognition that cannot be managed or enforced. Values therefore require, because they must first be recognized as such, the freedom of the person who recognizes them, and while meaning is possible only by focusing on values, this also must result in a subsequent indication of the impossibility of proving meaning. Rather, meaning calls for a decision and allows only those who are ready to rely on it to recognize it (cf. K. Popielski 1987c, 107ff.). With the concepts of meaning and value, we reach the limits of what humans can achieve. Meaning and values cannot be implanted in anyone, but only recognized and received personally. Nevertheless, it seems that what is important in pedagogy is the human vision in its ability to perceive in relation to meaning. A blocked "feeling of values" (cf. A. Längle 1999, p. 23) limits a person in their educational process. Opening up to values means expanding into the world. In pedagogy, we would probably talk less emotionally about recognizing values if using our reason. Here too, the concept of values is contrasted with the concept of pedagogy, but not to justify moral norms and therefore not in the spirit of claiming general truth. The need for personal learning of valuation and the ability to justify what can be considered a value is also noticeable in Frankl, because a person perceives a certain value

> [...] when he [or she] begins to understand the arguments for the sense of action (they then say that the thing is to allow oneself to be noticed by the meaning) (A. Längle 1999, p. 24).

First of all, it is about finding arguments for "tragic optimism" in the face of life situations of a crisis nature (cf. V.E. Frankl 1985, p. 51f.), because meaning can never be imposed, but instead should be ennobled by the person oneself on the way to leading one to awareness, to one's own responsibility.

Frankl perceives the leading of humans to their responsibilities as reaching the limits of existential analysis, because responsibility, as an ethically formal concept, does not yet conceal any substantive purpose. Moreover, responsibility is an ethically neutral concept, and in this respect it is liminal, because it does not contain any statements about "against what?" and "for what?" In this sense, existential analysis remains natural in relation to the question "to what?" Humans are responsible, whether to one's conscience, to the community, to God or to some other authority. This analysis responds similarly to the question of "what" a person feels responsible for, for realizing which values, for fulfilling which personal tasks, and for which specific meaning of life.

Pedagogical theory can vary in the valuation of a person to the extent that it must indicate one's use of reason. It is also equally important for it to be guided by reason when justifying decisions regarding values. This means that a person must be aware of one's own decisions in this regard in the face of one's own conscience. Related to this is also the justification of what can be considered value and why. However, for pedagogy, there is no strict, scientific, final justification for the correctness of decisions regarding values. It is also within pedagogy to point to the responsibility of the individual when implementing one's decisions and the necessity to justify them as well as possible.

Längle considers Frankl's special merit to be the first to gather together those possibilities which, in terms of their value, are carriers of meaning (cf. A. Längle 1999, p. 59). It is helpful for pedagogy to present these "three main paths to meaning", primarily from the point of view of a desperate search for meaning.

In his earlier works, Frankl uses the concepts of meaning and value synonymously, but in his later works he distinguishes them in such a way that meaning is related to a unique situation, while value is related

to general concepts of meaning, the truth of which includes wide spaces of repeated, typical situations. Values are, as one might say, "abstract meaning", generalized ideas about meaning, ideas that reflect the contents of meaning found in the real world and existing independently of it, as well as regardless of whether they are recognized by someone or not. Therefore, in the course of history, what changes are not values, but their recognition by humans and their relationship to them (cf. B. Wojciszke 1986, p. 107ff.). Frankl himself does not talk about value in itself, but divides it into three categories.

When an event is experienced in its beauty, colour and harmony, for example nature in its richness of forms, then such an experience can be full of meaning, and therefore meaningful, without thinking about meaning as such. Along with Fizzotti, we could talk about "sensitivity of the heart", because "seeing meaning" by the heart begins at the moment of carefully looking with the eyes (i.e. perception through the senses):

> We ourselves are the meaning of what we experience in a meaningful way. When this becomes clear to us, and – only then – do we find meaning through our senses. Meaning does not occur when we ourselves are meaning (E. Fizzotti 2004, p. 40f.).

Fizzotti does not view one's sensory perception independently of the observing person. Also, the factor that gives meaning to the content received through the senses is always my "I", which perceives here and is itself seen here as meaning. Besides, the most deeply experienced values lie in meeting other people. Such an encounter with a certain "you" becomes meaningful through our understanding of the special character of the essence of the other person.

What will be experienced here as meaning is the relationship between oneself and/or a certain something, or someone. Buber defines such a dialogical event as an "in-between", which is also constitutive due to the experience of meaning. Buber especially emphasized "remaining in relationship" of this kind when he says: "A person becomes himself in relation to 'you'" (M. Buber 1993, p. 32).

When experiences are accepted as valuable and creative for meaning, they will not be treated only as accidental events, but instead there will be an internal realization of the external form,

> [...] certain of the integration of the meaning of matters that makes them so attractive. Experiences of meaning ultimately gain form through personal shaping, during internal assimilation, and in subsequent reflection on the experiences (cf. A. Längle 1999, p. 141).

We are talking here about a kind of dedication through which we experience the original beauty of life and receive spiritual forces that again help us in sensibly shaping other areas of our lives.

Likewise, pedagogy cannot take an undifferentiated stance towards the fact of humans' encounters with value. A child experiencing reality, through its surprise and admiration, already fulfils two forms of perceiving meaning. According to R. Lay, both cases involve intentional acts, and he calls surprise a source of admiration, which in turn opens the way to values (cf. R. Lay 2005, p. 203). Without taking up the issue of dealing in more detail with the consequences of the phenomenon of encountering values for pedagogical practice, let us point out, following Buber, that a child's behaviour is not only an expression of the need to engage in something and be active, but also has a certain intentional direction (cf. M. Buber 1992, p. 10). Therefore, it is about a certain intention, a certain creative act, the will to create, through one's own action, something that has not existed yet.

Human beings also experience life as meaningful when they have the opportunity to influence the world in creative and original ways. Creative values evolve from acts through which a person brings something valuable to the world and enriches it with their actions.

Through taking and giving (by way of creative action), a person is in a relationship in which they make demands of the world – both the world composed of creative processes, as well as feelings and emotions; but also at the level of decisions and responsibility. The question here does not entail the magnificence of the work of creation or the sensible shaping and creative invention of something new. Instead, it touches upon the entire scope of responsible, active human activity:

> This includes situations in which a person contributes to preserving a certain value or supports a certain idea – through actions, decisions, and courageous determination. [...] When involved in something or for someone, a person serves a certain good and is also filled with this good (A. Längle 1999, p. 143).

By experiencing and creating, we can experience our lives as meaningful. However, Frankl also asks what happens when our life is so limited as a result of illness, imprisonment, or some other difficult experience of fate, that both of the previously mentioned possibilities of giving meaning to life are excluded. In such a case, he talks about the need for the most strenuous human effort to also find meaning in suffering, in enduring the inability to change or in accepting one's fate with dignity (cf. V.E. Frankl 1987a, p. 132f.).

In his analysis of existence, Frankl tries to demonstrate this possibility, which is open primarily towards a person (regardless of their confession or belief in one God, yet without limiting the access to solutions in the spirit of religion) to be able to find meaning in the experience of suffering. The source of suffering is unimportant. What is important is how one endures suffering and the purpose for which one suffers. The way an individual approaches their own suffering is entirely up to them, and the essence of who they are is expressed in how they treat their ability to suffer. Since suffering belongs to the intimate sphere of humans, it is about remaining oneself. Even when our external freedom is taken away, we are still left free to adopt a certain attitude towards fate and either completely submit to it without a fight or exclude one or more areas from its influence (cf. A. Längle 1999, p. 147). Längle connects this to the following questions:

> Can't a person develop anew on a personal level? (even when not noticed by others). When things take this turn and I don't doubt it myself, don't moments of truth also express the value that is, in fact, myself? A value that forms the basis of dignity? (A. Längle 1999, p. 147).

In pedagogy, whenever a person is understood as "one's own work", when the task is for someone to become their true self, and whenever one should be subject to a certain obligation and not be dependent on

arbitrariness, this discipline must also be about recognizing meaning and drawing attention to the possibility of finding it in specific situations. In an experience, through creative activity, and even in the approach to one's own life experiences, a person substantially always experiences oneself as well. The questions also concern one's own existence. However, these are also questions about the "basic value" on which all subsequent questions about values and meaning are based, because such value is also the condition for posing such a question.

A human is not only life, but also possesses life, remaining in relation to one's own existence and behaving in a particular way towards one's own life, as well as creating a certain attitude towards one's own existence and the world:

> This (usually unexpressed and unconscious) attitude towards one's own life is a reference point towards which values are oriented and relativized. This is the fundamental value of all values, one could say "the Archimedes point of existence". Basic value is the personally perceived, primary quality of life (A. Längle 1999, p. 34).

Human beings find the reason for any shape of further life in their acceptance of life. Saying "yes" to life creates a person's internal reference to their own existence (cf. A. Längle 1999, p. 35). The certainty of experiencing the concept of basic value, which is understood here as a human attitude affirming one's own existence in its entirety, results from the contact between the spiritual and the physical being. In this touch of "being" lie the roots of experiencing values, and therefore whatever is in opposition to the attitude towards the fundamental value makes life difficult and disruptive and thus threatens the possibility of discovering meaning. However, when values are insufficiently experienced, the attitude towards one's own life is also at risk, because

> [...] the more reduced the experience of values, the less a person cares about life. The deficiency of experiencing values loosens the basic attitude towards existence (A. Längle 1999, p. 37).

For this reason, the task of human beings relies on accepting one's existence as the one and only and to identify one's unique and unre-

peatable possibilities (cf. V.E. Frankl 1987a, p. 91), as well as recognizing the task-oriented nature of life. Through such a concept, we reach with Frankl the direct proximity of pedagogy, because also there our "I" must find its definition as *unitas uniens* – "principle and chance" (A. Petzelt 1999, p. 365). Our "I" should be seen, also in the search for the one and only meaning of life, in the context of its task-oriented and independent nature, to the extent that the individual should be respected and deserving dignity. The task-oriented nature of life, which has been mentioned many times in this work (especially in relation to the search for meaning), can, however, be changed and blocked – in terms of the possibility of implementation, despite the decision to implement specific situational values. Frankl therefore talks about a personal act of doubt, which, however, requires having a certain ideal of personality, a certain personal duty to be. Along with this, a person would already perceive a certain value and at this point would take part in a world of values in which he or she would be able to take up the call to pursue their ideal. Thus, such a person also achieves a certain level of self-analysis and enters a spiritual area that shows one as a citizen of the spiritual world whose values one accepts:

> The task that a person is supposed to fulfil in one's life is therefore fundamentally within this area and is never impossible to fulfil [...] (and – note of the author of the work) the more he understands the nature of life as task-oriented, the more his life seems to make sense to him (V.E. Frankl 1987a, p. 940).

Frankl's point is to clearly emphasize humans' responsibility for fulfilling their tasks. However, it also indicates that there are people who go a step further and see their own lives grounded in the next dimension of existence. For them, the task is transitory. They see their lives as transparent; oriented towards a transcendent principal. In such a case, we deal with a person called *homo religiosus* (cf. V.E. Frankl 1987a).

When talking about the human task of enquiring into values and meaning, it is necessary to add what is meant by a specific meaning in relation to a specific person. Frankl's understanding of meaning is based

on the capabilities of a specific person "against the background of reality":

> [...] such a person feels affected by a specific value-related discrepancy between possibility and reality. They are also called to transform possibilities into reality. And the more someone is not susceptible to realizing this possibility, the more it becomes a symbol of personal meaning, personal duty (E. Fizzotti 1999, p. 23).

Conscience should help humans listen to the values that should be implemented by them. Frankl defines conscience as an "instinct" that not only leads a person to their most specific life tasks, but also guides one in answering life's questions in the spirit of responsibility for one's own life (cf. V.E. Frankl 1987a, p. 96).

The significance of conscience

For Frankl, conscience is synonymous with a "premoral understanding of values", which significantly precedes any clearly emphasized morality. Conscience reaches deep into the human unconscious, and that is why "great, thoroughly existential" decisions of human existence are always made unreflectively and, to this extent, also unconsciously. "In this sense, conscience must also be called irrational", it is illogical – or, to put it even better – it is ahead of logic (V.E. Frankl 1987a, p. 77). For this reason, conscience is seen by Frankl as necessarily unconscious, because what opens up to consciousness is something that exists, while what opens up to conscience is not what already exists, but rather what should exist. The latter must be something realized and possible, "[...] not forgetting, of course, that this possibility itself, in a higher – moral sense, again represents a certain necessity" (V.E. Frankl 1987a, p. 77). When what is opened by conscience is only just subjected to implementation, it must somehow be spiritually anticipated, which occurs in a certain "act of perception".

> In this way, conscience turns out to be an essential function of intuition; in order to anticipate what needs to be realized, it must first be intuitively

sensed by the conscience. And conscience and ethos understood in this way are truly irrational and can later be subjected to the action of reason (V.E. Frankl 1987a, p. 77ff.).

The task of conscience is therefore to explain what causes difficulties in a specific situation, and this concerns the unique possibility of a specific person in a specific situation and the implementation of a completely individual task. The subject of interest in this case is the individual duty to exist, personally experienced morality, because:

> Only conscience can, to some extent, transfer the generally formulated moral law to a particular situation of a particular person (V.E. Frankl 1987a, p. 78).

Frankl believes that there is no contradiction between presenting conscience as, on the one hand, understood individually, and, on the other hand, also understood as "eternal", as a moral law. When conscience is approached as something absolutely individual, a critical question must be asked about the validity of the measure, about the correct orientation that such an understanding of conscience presents. Can conscience, viewed in this way, guide a person in one's actions and decisions? Is there not a danger here of allowing oneself to be guided by self-will, while at the same time relying on one's conscience? Is there not an opportunity for abuse and error when Frankl himself says that conscience participates in "*condition humaine*" and thus has a finite and final dimension and is burdened with error because:

> It can also mislead a person. Moreover, until the last moment, until the last breath, a person does not know whether one is really fulfilling the meaning of one's life or whether one has been deceived (V.E. Frankl 1987a, p. 77).

Frankl therefore believes that the voice of conscience can also be misleading and therefore ultimately attributes a lack of conscience to humans as well. Thus, life is always an act of courage that a person must decide to take. He must then also listen to the voice of conscience, despite the uncertainty associated with it:

[...] because uncertainty and finality are given with humanity and a person should admit to them. This "uncertainty" includes not only "daring to do something", but also "humility" (V.E. Frankl 1987a, p. 92).

The danger of arbitrariness in actions and decisions while referring to one's own conscience is noticed by Frankl in the unlimited recognition of the dignity of every single person as a spiritual being. Recognizing human freedom and responsibility corresponds to preserving and supporting orientation to the Logos. In connection with the *Logos*, the ability of a person to have absolute value in one's eyes and in one's conscience and to choose values accordingly, and thus to act sensibly, is established (cf. G. Vogel 1997, p. 149).

The concept of human dignity defines a certain value in itself, which becomes the share of every person at all times, because humans are spiritual beings and this property is not annihilated in them (even through illness). Any attempt to objectify a person, to use one for purposes that are incompatible with him or her, insults their dignity, because for Frankl preserving dignity alone does not suffice, he also wants to acquire the ability to respect it. The following consequences arise from this:

– the value of a human being goes beyond one's use value. Therefore, it cannot be assessed only on the basis of the criterion of one's own resourcefulness in life and ability to achieve success;

– humans cannot, due to their inherent dignity, be abused as a means. Frankl speaks against abuse, which occurs when one person treats another only as a means to satisfy their own needs. We will only be right with people and things if we try to connect them with their highest value;

– Frankl strengthens human dignity not only through spirituality itself, but also by respecting individual aspects of spirituality, namely freedom, responsibility and individual specificity. One is required to show respect not only towards one's neighbour, but also towards one's own life, and also to fulfil life's tasks (according to possibilities and circumstances), and through all this showing fidelity to one's humanity (cf. E. Fizzotti 1999, p. 193).

Frankl, emphasizing human dignity, comes close to understanding humans from a pedagogical point of view. In relation to opposing the abuse of humans for purposes contrary to them, this corresponds to Kant's formulation of the categorical imperative, that human should never and under no circumstances be degraded only to a tool. On the one hand, it is about recognizing a human being as an end in oneself, and on the other hand, it is about the fact that being human is a task. In the act of creating oneself, a person develops into someone else they should become. Frankl, by posing the aforementioned demand, is in direct proximity to important pedagogical premises; in relation to conscience, however, he emphasizes more its practical importance in the implementation of life, and less its importance in justifying correct action, decision-making and recognition.

The concept of practicality in this case does not indicate that logotherapy and existential analysis have effective methods and "techniques" of treatment at their disposal; rather, it highlights their claim to be an ethical anthropology. The concept of intuition once again wants to emphasize the logotherapeutic situational meaning of a given moment, which should be "felt" (cf. V.E. Frankl 1979, p. 29ff). In this sense, intuition is oriented towards direct and concrete values and does not cease to refer to a certain foundation or justification. When Frankl talks about a certain "unconscious God" (V.E. Frankl 1979, p. 29f), intuition contains in its function of conscience a certain principle and origin, because the thoughts associated in such a situation with "God":

> [...] express the essential unconditional character of the claim that every situational meaning places on the person. This means that intuition should be perceived ethically in the sense of the unconditional nature of obligation, similarly to Kant (E. Fizzotti 1999, p. 178).

According to Fizzotti, practicality lies in the fact that the above-mentioned obligation relates therapeutically not only to a general principle, but also to a unique challenge from meaning that demands explanation from the side of existential analysis. The definition of conscience thus results from compliance with earthly existence for which one must take responsibility. If such correspondence is positive, and therefore it is

possible to respond to it reliably from an existential point of view, then intuition also obtains a reliable internal measure, because it is guided by conscience, which characterizes every person endowed with spirit and remaining free. Seeing valuation only as a system of negation or approval of norms would be insufficient. Values must rather be perceived multidimensionally or as mutually assigned in a hierarchical manner, because the intuitively formed reality is based on spiritual perception, which a given person can only achieve thanks to their own effort.

> In fact, the role of conscience is played by the 'spirit' which, from the point of view of meaning, creates practical references (Logos), after their prior intuitive formation (E. Fizzotti 1999, p. 179).

In this way, conscience derives from a specific property of humans' spirituality and is understood by them in an "intuitive" way. The fact that conscience can be misleading means that in certain circumstances a person does not understand the meaning or has yet to explain it. For Frankl, however, this does not mean that such an explanation proceeds arbitrarily. Humans are responsible for the correct explanation, which makes it clear how closely conscience is related to humans' responsibility (cf. A. Szostek 2003, p. 145).

Conscience is not perceived by Frankl as an absolute and independent concept, but is related to a specific person. Just think, for example, of trying to remove conscience using conscience itself. This is because the feeling of guilt or remorse is presented as a pathology and one begins to think about freeing oneself from these "unnecessary blockages". In this context, Jürgen Werbick talks about "introducing spiritual confusion" and "bringing relief to a person", which is reflected in the fact that a person who organizes it, endowed with a spiritual attribute, is overwhelmed by a wave of primitivism, leading the conscience to silence (cf. J. Werbick 2007, p. 153).

At this point, however, it should be emphasized that particular emphasis is still placed on human freedom, the fact that, as a person, one can still react positively or negatively to the voice of conscience. The freedom to decide is preserved in each case due to conscience, which

brings the concept of responsibility to the centre of our attention, be-cause only it can later constitute the basis for correct decision-making.

Frankl calls conscience "the organ of meaning". Meaning, as was shown in the first part of the work, cannot be given; it must be found by each person themselves. Frankl compares finding meaning with getting the answer to a question. It follows that just as there can be only one answer to every question, the correct one, so there can be only one solu-tion to every problem – the right one,

> [...] and therefore also in every situation only one, namely the true meaning. It must be found, and on this path one is guided by one's conscience (V.E. Frankl 1972, p. 119).

It has already been pointed out that the search for meaning is always an intuitive feeling of the one and only meaning of "*ad personam*" and "*ad situationen*". Conscience as such is compared by Frankl with a phys-iological organ, with the help of which one can find the "beginning of meaning" that is "dormant" in a given situation. For Frankl, it is not a sub-jective element, but an objective factor:

> In the sense of a certain understatement (diminishing the real meaning), it can be described after R. Allers, as transsubjective (V.E. Frankl 1972, p. 119).

Meaning as an obligation transcends human subjectivity because "[...] only the general arrangement of meaning enables the expression of subjectivity" (R. Kühn 1993, p. 119).

According to Frankl, there is no situation in which life does not offer us some meaning. Likewise, there is no person for whom life has not pre-pared some task. Along with the will to obtain meaning, every human has the ability to find meaning in their experiences, by creating some-thing, and even in suffering – through his attitude towards this experi-ence (cf. V.E. Frankl 1990, p. 31). Such categories of meaning correspond to the categories of values described, which we can feel thanks to the "organ of sense" – conscience. As for the aforementioned will to have meaning:

[...] it must be the case that we cannot demand anything other than meaning; In this understanding, the will to possess it takes on a transcendental and, to a small extent, a priori meaning (Kant) or takes on an existential character (Heidegger). Meaning is so significantly integrated with the condition humaine that we simply cannot strive to find it until we believe that we have found it (V.E. Frankl 1987, p. 71).

Humans, however, are not determined by their addiction to meaning, but take responsibility for answering questions about life. Even if life always has meaning resulting from its possibilities, it is up to us whether it will also be filled with this constantly changing meaning. It is the responsibility and decision of a given individual to embody a specific meaning. Just as it is a human achievement to ask questions about meaning, and thus meaning is often questioned (which does not lead to the conclusion that neurotic suffering occurs, but proves the spiritual maturity of the questioner) (cf. V.E. Frankl 1985, p. 80), so it is a human achievement to answer the question that life poses to each of us, as well as to take responsibility for one's own life. For Frankl, being human does not only mean living in consciousness, but also in responsibility (cf. V.E. Frankl 1987a, p. 83).

Responsibility as an answer

Through each question, the questioner seeks an answer, just as when posing a problem, one seeks its solution. Problems want to be solved because they highlight certain things. When it comes to personal problems, they indicate, among other things, how the person experiencing them has broken down, been pushed to the margins of society or is experiencing internal unrest. Horney claims that from the point of view of psychotherapy, a diagnosed problem already contains the beginning of healing and therefore should be considered not as an anomaly but instead should be viewed in connection with the entire existence of a given person, to some extent as part of the dialectic of "questions and answers" between soul and body, between yourself and the other person.

> When we only look for the answer in the problem itself, we leave our egocentric position and can consider what lies 'in between', i.e. existence from the point of view of existing relationships (K. Horney 1987, p. 128).

Considering a certain symptom separately and being solely interested in resolving it changes the view of a person as such. However, a view that considers "psychopathology" not only in terms of diagnosable symptoms, but understands it as a "broken dialogue" or as a "remnant of an attempt at dialogue", a "dialogue" that met with no response (cf. K. Horney 1987, p. 128), could, for example, have an explanatory effect in the area of special education, if the idea was to see a person as a whole and, apart from his or her suffering, also hear one's "call" to the world, or to find a person in need outside one's hurt, without focusing solely on the hurt itself. What is at issue here is the ability defined by Frankl as "self-distancing" or "self-transcendence", or what Horney earlier called (certainly referring to Buber) "in-between". In order to be able to take responsibility, a person should turn one's gaze "away from oneself" and direct it "at the other person". The primary motivational force to devote oneself to a purpose and to participate responsibly in the affairs of the world is seen by Frankl in the willingness to make sacrifices in general. As this act he understands the power to go beyond oneself in order to establish a relationship with something that is no longer oneself. It may be a "thing" or a "person" (cf. A. Längle 1999, p. 14ff.).

Whoever wants to give an answer must first be confronted with the question. Human life is not strictly defined by existence, but is an existence "questioned". This situation occurs because, on the one hand, humans are assigned the property of being a "questioning being", and on the other hand, it raises doubts because existence remains free and therefore lacks established frameworks, i.e. it only requires being asked questions. Human freedom is the basic condition for one's ability to ask and answer, and only a human being can be credited with having responsibility. Frankl expressed himself on this subject in the following words:

> Human existence means having responsibility because it is free. It is an entity that, as Jaspers put it, in each case decides what it is. We can therefore say that it is an "entity that makes decisions" (V.E. Frankl 1987a, p. 120).

This representation of humans again corresponds to transcenden-tal-philosophical pedagogy, because its view of a human being is that it considers a person as a free and self-responsible subject who realizes one's "path" to maturity precisely by taking responsibility for one's think-ing, behaviour and one's own attitude. As a "decision-making entity", humans are also responsible for addressing the issue of their possibilities in relation to values and transferring them to the scope of experiences of meaning. It is not the task of a therapist in psychotherapy or a ped-agogue in the teaching or upbringing process to ask questions about meaning and then wait for the answer. Even if interest in the existing possibilities of meaning is a certain duty for Frankl, the answers to life's questions cannot come to a person from outside. There can also be no formulation of learning goals and the creation of teaching plans aimed at reaching meaning, because these are independent human questions and answers that cannot be covered by any planning. The answer to the question of meaning is given in the spirit of responsibility for existence, in which one works on the answer to one's own questions. Meaning results from the commitment of inserting oneself into the course of life events, oneself seen as experienced by life, questioned, and in a place where some value creates an opportunity to fulfil meaning. Such involvement may be reasonable to the extent that one's "I", in such a situation, is cred-ited with independent thinking, decision-making and responsibility. Therefore, finding meaning is always a personal answer to the question of meaning, which can only be addressed to each of us personally. It is our responsibility to address this question. Frankl's anthropology, like the anthropology of transcendental-philosophical pedagogy, radically shifts the person of the questioner to the centre of attention, consider-ing him or herself responsible due to the success of their endeavours in decisive areas of life. If life is to be successful, then it becomes important at this point to entrust life's questions and find answers to them in the spirit of recognition and love. In Frankl's statements about the "task-ori-ented nature of life" (cf. V.E. Frankl 1987a, p. 91f.) we find a fundamental thought that constitutes the basis of this thinker's work, and is also the key to a meaningful arrangement of life. According to it, the questioner's

task is not to ask about the "meaning of life" in general, but specifically about "one's own existence". Existential analysis can only indicate the importance and necessity of an appropriate and self-responsible view of the world, yet at the same time it is not a worldview in the sense of any ideology. The same can be said about pedagogy, although it does not have to be assigned any position. It does not stop the individual's ability to find meaning by defining what is right and false, good and bad. On the contrary, it demands a specific position. What needs to be conveyed in this case is less knowledge than it is an attitude relating to all possible objects, to all that can be covered by our knowledge, to what can become the object of knowledge. Opening up to the need for meaning in the situations an individual encounters must remain one's task:

> A person is constantly and inextricably linked to a certain situation. In a practical response to the need to find meaning in a given situation (Logos), one enters into dialogue with one's world (A. Längle 1998, p. 11).

When it comes to taking the opportunity to find meaning and answering its need, we can talk about the concept of "what for?" in relation to liability. We can also, next to the question "what for?" with regard to responsibility, ask another question, "what against?" This question pertains to what a person is responsible to – to what authority or to what other person.

It is easier to say that a person is responsible for fulfilling the meaning resulting from the possible values assigned to a certain situation than to indicate what one is ultimately responsible to. Längle encounters this dilemma of the need to find a binding answer to the question of what a person is responsible to and specifies broadly outlined concepts of "the direction of the answer". It aims to determine the highest value known in one's life. Thanks to conscience, we gain familiarity with values, so that we are ultimately responsible to the authority we feel in our conscience (cf. A. Längle 1999, p. 86f.).

Fizzotti, in turn, emphasizes that the way we answer the question "what for?" implies the answer to the question "what to?" Human action should constitute something more than just an answer to the questions

that life poses, being the possibility of meaning. People should also ask themselves whether such opportunities are an obligation. As a consequence, however, Fizzotti emphasizes that in Frankl's phenomenology, the concept of conscience determines the instance of responsibility for human action. As in the case of spirituality and freedom, conscience is not a side phenomenon, reduced to a drive or one that can be formulated on this basis. Conscience is not derived from or reduced to the empirical conditions of human existence and is therefore free from randomness, arbitrariness and determination by foreign influences (cf. E. Fizzotti 1999, p. 100).

The statement that it is impossible to derive conscience from something has, as such, significance for pedagogy, because its goal is to educate humans as "the work of one's own" (Pestalozzi), and this goal can only be derived from recognizing a person as a free subject, as a "master of oneself" (Kant) (cf. M. Heitger 2003, p. 171). Responsibility must not be confused with the "exercise of duty" imposed on us by others. It is neither a law, nor a regulation, nor a type of instruction, but an expression of our connection with a person, an idea or a matter (cf. A. Nalaskowski 1998).

In thinking in the spirit of existential analysis, responsibility is a concept expressing an attitude, it is a commitment to values – to what is an obligation. Thus, following Petzelt, we can claim:

> When everything human becomes a duty, when we have to fight for it, we are unable to change our duty and therefore our nature, and then responsibility is imposed on us as a special gift (A. Petzelt 1999, p. 81).

Meaning perceived without responsibility and without reference to conscience would therefore be nothing more than nonsense.

It is by no means obvious that responsibility is not something given to humans, but is something constitutive of their existence. The existential reference of humans' responsibility is not perceived as directly as, for example, their mortal nature.

Yalom sees the core of the "revolution" of Kant's philosophy in the view that human consciousness creates an external form of reality.

According to Kant, space itself is not something subjective and ideal, but constitutes something subjective and ideal, it is a pattern resulting from the nature of the spirit thanks to a constant law, in order to coordinate external impressions regarding meaning (cf. I.D. Yalom 1989, p. 263).

Heidegger and Sartre explored the importance of responsibility for human existence, with Heidegger emphasizing the dual nature of human existence. The individual is here, but at the same time it constitutes what "here" is. Thus, we are dealing with two concepts in one whole:

> There is a certain empirical or objective ego, something that constitutes "here" (a certain object in the world), and a certain transcendent (constituting) ego that constitutes itself and the world (that is, is "responsible" for this). In this way, responsibility is considered as inseparable from freedom. When a human is not free to constitute the world in any way he wants, then the concept of responsibility has no meaning (I.D. Yalom 1989, p. 263f.).

For Sartre, human beings are not only free, but condemned to freedom, and this freedom goes beyond responsibility for the world (that is, for filling the world with meaning) and refers to all life, not only to one's own actions or negligence. Yalom provides a number of escape options that would serve to free oneself from this freedom, which is often perceived as an overwhelming burden. All these solutions have in common the avoidance of responsibility associated with freedom (cf. I.D. Yalom 1989, p. 26).

Maintaining the need to take responsibility in the "here and now" (for its "image" of a human being) is as interesting and inherent in pedagogical thinking as in Frankl's existential analysis. Pedagogy sees the individual's maturity in human readiness for responsibility. Frankl raises the importance of the concept of responsibility by emphasizing human freedom not for the sake of freedom as such, but for the sake of their responsibility (cf. V.E. Frankl 1967, p. 9). Only in the very perception of humans as free, self-responsible subjects asking about meaning, who should see the need for meaning in every situation and respond to it through responsibility, Frankl's theory shows its importance for pedagogy. Humans are seen by Frankl in their orientation to tasks. They are bound by duty to the extent that it is a matter of taking the possible

values that exist in each situation and responding to them in an appropriate way to maintain the situational sense that represents the duty (in the pedagogical way of expressing it). Conscience guides human beings in their search for meaning and also enables them to choose values. The response of conscience is valid to the extent that it involves responsibility for one's own life.

From the point of view of pedagogy, Frankl's theory arouses interest not only because of its close relationship to this discipline. What benefits could engaging in existential analysis bring pedagogy if it were limited only to finding in it what is characteristic of itself anyway? Considering the current positioning of the issue, it is important to leave the question of meaning in its specific form. Seeing man in the basic concepts of pedagogy and existential analysis developed so far is important for our way of looking at man, for our view of him from specific perspectives. The main interest in pedagogy in Frankl's theory is not related to the postulate of transferring certain principles of a constitutive or legalizing nature from one theory to another, but with the importance of existential analysis as an anthropological research direction directed against an overly limited understanding of man. Dienelt emphasizes this aspect, opposing the reduction of the "image" of man in ("modern") empirical pedagogical sciences and, together with Frankl, demands "education for responsibility" and the "sensitization of conscience" (cf. K. Dienelt 1994, p. 203). In turn, C. Nanni talks about the image of humans, which should correspond to one's integral approach. This type of situation appears in Frankl's anthropology as a result of emphasizing the "spiritual dimension" of humans, which has long been overlooked (cf. C. Nanni 1999, p. 196). Without going into detail about these or other positions, it must be emphasized that their reference to Frankl's theory is certainly a criticism of pedagogy, which can lose its subject (a human being seen as a person) as a result of reducing it to the human dimension of humanity, and therefore to the spiritual dimension. What then remains is only an object, a thing, but not a person. This work should (and can) not be about instructions for practice, in terms of addressing the question of meaning in the framework of science and education. This is no longer

possible because respecting the dimension of human meaning is about the attitude of the educator towards someone searching for meaning, and not about guiding him or her using certain "techniques" or "methods" that could enable finding meaning. Rather, Frankl's anthropology can be considered as a compensator for narrow ways of seeing man, especially with regard to the "aspect of meaning" given here.

When taking into account Frankl's theory in relation the human search for meaning, the point is not to introduce this philosopher's existential analysis into pedagogy, but rather to draw attention to humans as people who ask about meaning and seek answers to it.

The importance of Frankl's anthropology and the reference to it seen from the perspective of pedagogy lies in the explanatory power it has in

> [...] detecting and undertaking pedagogical tasks, in the pedagogical analysis of the entire situation of the spiritual state, views and attitudes (A. Rebe 2001, p. 28).

Anton Rebe is talking about anthropology in a general sense, which is applied here specifically to Frankl's anthropology. In this context, we can also talk about the explanatory, indicative and supervisory functions fulfilled by anthropology in relation to the whole of life in which education is carried out, because:

> [...] life as a whole constantly and at different points encounters the danger of being incorrectly explained, ignored, as well as a practical threat to something "essential" related to humanity. It is at such critical points that pedagogical tasks are also born (A. Rebe 2001, p. 28).

On the basis of existential analysis, pedagogical thinking and awareness of the problem are developed in the scope of man's questions about meaning, without at the same time demanding the introduction of Frankl's theory into pedagogy. Moreover, in no other place can we find a similarly thorough and systematic treatment of the specifically human dimension (cf. V.E. Frankl 1972, p. 17). Thus, together with Frankl's theory, we are able to fully enrich pedagogical thinking, because there is no reason why Frankl, due to his existential analysis, understood as an anthropological direction of research, should be considered a person

competent only in the field of building psychotherapeutic theories. This becomes all the more important the more his concept of humans constitutes (as has been shown so far) a view that is fully binding on pedagogical awareness. Also, what concerns the concept of humans in relation to one's being a person indicates the importance of the concept of person presented in Frankl's concept for pedagogy.

The last chapter of this work will therefore be about the questioner him or herself, the person asking about meaning. The understanding of the person in transcendental-philosophical pedagogy will be relativized in relation to the concept of the person according to Frankl. Then, specific concepts of the person will be confronted with concepts characterized by a narrow approach to human subjectivity, concepts that do not fully respect human dignity. Therefore, the main question posed in the last part of the work is the question about the questioner.

CHAPTER EIGHT

THE QUESTIONER

*You shouldn't be your "self" says the wise teacher;
become only "you" in all its dimensions!*

Johann Michael Sailer

It is not the intention of this part of the work to provide a binding answer to the question of who a human being is in his or her essence, in the fundamental dimension as a personal "I", as a subject. Such a goal would certainly exceed the scope of this work. However, when analysing the connections between V.E. Frankl's proposal and pedagogy, it is impossible not to take into account these "doubts" about human beings due to questions in general and the question of meaning in particular. More than anywhere else, it is in the question of a human being as a person and a subject that the relationship of closeness becomes visible, as well as the differences between transcendental-philosophical pedagogy and the theory based on existential analysis. In human subjectivity, understood as *personalitas-transcendentalis*, *personalitas-psychologica* and *personalitas-moralis* (see R. Kühn 2005, p. 12) and thus in the concept of humanity, in one's spirituality, and in one's "noetic" dimension, the aforementioned closeness can be seen. It concerns a person who can enter into a relationship with the surrounding reality in order to argue with it, take a position and make a decision (cf. A. Längle 1999, p. 34ff.). Our "I" is, in accordance with its nature, shaped in such a way that it represents the relationship between the principle and the existing case, that is, it appears as an obligation (which is why it is perceived in the aspect of its property in the form of a task) and in a responsible way should solve these tasks (cf. A. Petzelt 1994, p. 66).

In both of the aforementioned disciplines (theories), a person is per-
ceived as a specific "behaviour in relation to", and thus in its relativity.
Therefore, a person does not prove an object for oneself, but remains in
relation to it and oneself, thereby demonstrating its independence from
a destiny that is alien to oneself.

As mentioned above, in this chapter the understanding of the person
in transcendental-philosophical pedagogy will also be contrasted with
the understanding given in existential analysis, in order to then point
out the existing similarities and differences. Therefore, in these analyses,
there will also appear a need to confront the indicated viewpoints with
those which – due to a narrow approach to human subjectivity – may
lose this dimension or fail to notice it at all.

The personal self in pedagogy

Our "I" (person) is constantly seen in pedagogy in terms of the
implementation of our actions, that is, around the implementation of
our work, around a certain issue and, at the same time, around oneself.
A person faces one's actions and oneself, on the one hand activating
the content, and on the other, making oneself the result of one's own
actions. The activation of our "I" should be seen in connection with duty.

> Through the "I" one can rightly claim recognition of significance in re-
> spect of what has been said here, as well as in respect of oneself; it is con-
> stantly exposed as a personality value (A. Petzelt 1994, p. 265).

Personality determines the coherence of our "I" as a whole, as pre-
sented in accordance with the unity of attitude and knowledge. In the
temporal aspect, personality determines the type of ordering of our "I"
taking place in relation to the acts performed, but also in terms of the
possible order of acts in the future. In this matter, the concept of a person
in the pedagogical approach is distinguished from the approach given
in existential analysis, because in the latter the individual strives to find
the value of the situation and its realization as the content of meaning;
however, there is no question of the future here. The rest of this work

will be devoted to a discussion about personality as the whole moral achievement of our "I". This concept does not play any role in Frankl's work, but it may be included in the concept of responsibility.

The uniqueness of humans occupies a central position in the statements of pedagogy (the way it occurs in existential analysis). It is emphasized that our "I" is a unique value, which subsequently creates the possibility of multiplicity, and therefore constitutes a condition for it. By looking at a human being in the aspect of one's exceptionality, specificity and uniqueness, we again reiterate the close relationship of pedagogy to Frankl's existential analysis. What both disciplines have in common is that they both pay attention to man's individuality and subjectivity.

Some authors see this field as being closely related to the human capacity for thought. The possibility of being able to consider every topic appears as a necessity of our "I", if at all there is a desire to take a position on the problem of cognition. Similarly, the cognition of a thinking person, if seen independently of the concept of our "I", would be unacceptable. Combined with the necessity that constitutes our "I", it becomes a transcendental condition (cf. G. Vogel 1997).

Through our activity, in which there is also the possibility of directing oneself towards objects as the transcendental condition dominates objectivity, our "I" becomes a person. Taking into account its unity and coherence, constantly reborn in the acts performed, we talk about personality (C. Nanni 1991, p. 191ff.). Petzelt further compares the relationship between person and personality with the relationship between objectivity and object, law and a given case, or principle and fact, whereby personality is always a person in a special sense: "This is so insofar as it is constantly realized in its own acts" (C. Nanni 1991, p. 191f.).

We can therefore say that being a person is a condition for the existence of personality. The latter, in turn, must constantly re-realize, shape and grow in the process of creating the characteristics specific to a person. It organizes itself from event to event in its own acts, which entails including in its scope the questions concerning meaning and the search for meaning, which constitute a feature of a specific personality and are the motive behind its activity.

Petzelt recognizes the psyche as the centre of relationships and, at the same time, the individuality that creates relationships. The psyche recognizes and evaluates, gives answers and must take responsibility. It also seeks clarity so that it can present itself in an unambiguous way.

> In short: the combination of principle and fact, or possibly person and personality, becomes the logos of the psyche assuming the unity of these ranks of importance (A. Petzelt 1994, p. 82).

This connection with the rank of importance (also in relation to the possible finding and experiencing of meaning) is inextricably linked to pedagogical thinking. Meaning must be based on arguments and cannot be an expression of wilfulness or solely invoking personal freedom. When realizing meaning, it should therefore create the best possibility for a given case, for a given situation. Regarding this, Längle poses the following question: "How do you determine which option is best for a given case? Is there any way to know that another decision will not be better?

"Is there any certainty that what is correct has been implemented?" (A. Längle 1999, p. 37). When looking for answers to these questions, Petzelt points out the need to work on yourself. He talks about "the need for my 'I' to work on myself". Our "I" should learn to manage itself, organize action and make decisions, without at the same time showing indifference towards itself (cf. A. Petzelt 1994, p. 266f.).

In pedagogy, our "I" is seen as the possibility of asking about everything and thus "the possibility of transformation into knowledge", defined in a way that allows for self-definition. Our "I" stands here before the truth and constantly stands before it in particular matters. Asking questions gains its meaning only on the basis of its determined relation to the truth. This duty of humans to face the truth is their task, in which the meaning of all questions is contained (cf. K. Popielski 2001). Thus, our "I" is understood in accordance with its nature as a complement to truth and defined as related to truth. The meaning of personal character is to seek the truth in particular matters and to navigate the task of realizing one's destiny in a truthful manner. The questioner may include

in one's questions both individual matters and the whole, and thus be concerned about the relationship of the individual to the whole. The questioner asks because of being a complement to the truth oneself, and every word, every thought, every argument and motive becomes a complement to the truth (cf. J. Rekus 2004, p. 24ff.). In such a situation, the question of the truth precedes or constitutes the basis for the question of the meaning of a specific situation. Therefore, the correct question about meaning can only be asked in the face of truth. Striving to find meaning in untruth would undoubtedly be searching for a questionable, unstable meaning, or to put it even better – it would be nonsense. The search for meaning, according to the analyses so far, is a participation in the truth, and the question of meaning should, in fact, be a question about the truth. In turn, the participation of our "I" in the absolute truth may, according to some, combine the question of meaning with the search for meaning, and they understand this truth as meaning itself (cf. S. Kowalczyk 2006). Frankl also comes close to this concept in the sense of "superior meaning", which is clearly visible when he claims that:

> [...] the question is legitimated in participation; all meaning of a particular situation finds its unambiguity in the sense as such, which we are dependent on (cf. V.E. Frankl 1975, p. 19).

Moreover, through this participation he understands the meaning of the entire education, noting that: "[...] in participation the meaning of education for attaining self-actualization is fulfilled" (V.E. Frankl 1975, p. 19).

Thus, individual acts of human activity may be completely devoid of the feature of arbitrariness – as long as they aim to achieve the rank of importance. A person should organize oneself in accordance with basic principles and pose the question about the unambiguity of the place one occupies. Therefore, we should talk about our "I" as a "subject of basic principles" (cf. J. Rekus 2004, p. 28ff.), which means that we are to manage our place in the spirit of responsibility – in the unity of knowledge and attitude. This means that our "I" should control itself as a subject to

the truth and/or the absolute (cf. J. Rekus 2004, p. 31). Our "I" desires – as a subject – to realize the basic principle of unity between knowledge and conscience and thus testifies to its connection with truth and/or the absolute as *participatio*. Therefore, our "I" is also not able to reveal itself throughout a moment, but constantly directs its variety of acts towards a truth that may be absolute truth.

Frankl clearly separates the question of specific meaning, about the meaning of the here and now, from the question of the limits of meaning, from the "superior meaning", which includes our own existence as people and our existence as a being in the world. In this way, he draws attention to the necessity to pose a specific question about meaning in a given life situation, and also emphasizes this question in pedagogical thinking.

The concept of a person in existential analysis

When logotherapy and existential analysis deal with a human being in the aspect of him or her being a person, while taking into account their ability of spiritual analysis of themselves and the world in which they live, they thus emphasize the dimension specific to humans, distinguishing them from all other living beings. This is a spiritual, noetic dimension. Being a human includes three levels, which despite being inseparable from each other, nevertheless, represent different forms of existence. These dimensions are: noetic, i.e. related to the science of thinking and recognition, mental and bodily.

The noetic dimension also includes a unity consisting of three parts. In it, a specifically human feature opens up, and through it a person comes into existence. The noetic dimension, as a specifically human one, refers in this context to the meaning of life, self-transcendence, the will to obtain meaning, self-distancing and freedom of will (cf. A. Längle 1987, p. 14f.; K. Popielski 1994, p. 85f.).

In its understanding of the person, existential analysis emphasizes the noetic dimension of humans, characterized by freedom of choice,

possessed by will and the will to find meaning. When a person's deeply rooted "desire" for meaning succumbs to frustration, a "crisis of meaning" may occur, often culminating in doubt and a sense of loss.

What in pedagogy is often called the implementation of binding acts, through which a person always individually participates in absolute values, in existential analysis constitutes a person's striving to take part in the world, to bear responsibility towards it – in the form of a readiness to devote oneself to a certain meaning. A person's ability to establish relationships with someone or something other than oneself, the ability to go beyond oneself, is defined by Frankl as "self-transcendence" (cf. V.E. Frankl 1990, p. 18). Even when Frankl does not further point to absolute values that lie beyond the finite dimensions of humans, but considers the fulfilment of life with meaning and values as justified in earthly existence, he places emphasis, like in pedagogy, on the possibility of a single person constantly striving for self-formation and self-transformation, as the ability to constantly rise above oneself (cf. V.E. Frankl 1985, p. 70ff.). Thus, a human is seen as a free and responsible person, independent in the work of creating oneself (Pestalozzi), and at the same time is given as a task to oneself, which is why he or she is perceived as a free being but also a responsible one. The obligation resulting from self-responsibility cannot be fulfilled by someone else. Pedagogy and psychotherapy can only be an aid to obtain self-help, provided that human freedom and the right to self-determination are recognized (cf. B. Śliwerski 2002; M. Heitger 1999).

Free and responsible self-determination is a task and a goal for both pedagogy and existential analysis. They also consider it a condition for defining someone as a person.

A human being, in the dimension of his or her spirituality, is not a "being with a fixed shape", but a "free being". Frankl puts it forth in this way:

> Being human never means being exclusively one thing and not another; being human always means the possibility of also becoming someone else (V.E. Frankl 1985, p. 71).

Moreover, the question of human freedom and spirituality is not a question of a scientific and natural nature, because it is an approach that only sees the psychophysical organism, not the spiritual person. Although Frankl points out that psychophysical dependence is inherent in human existence, he also emphasizes that psychology based on natural sciences only perceives the moment of dependence, and ignores the autonomy of man's spiritual existence. Frankl claims that:

> Instead of the autonomy of spiritual existence, such psychology sees the autonomy of the mental apparatus. It sees only necessity. However, a human as such is always on the other side of necessity – even when being on the side of possibility. A human is, to an important extent, a being capable of transcending necessity. A human exists only due to necessities, but remains in a relationship of freedom towards them (V.E. Frankl 1987a, p. 87f.; cf. K. Popielski 2008, p. 65f.).

In terms of the way he looks at man, Frankl distances himself from narrow scientific and natural arguments. This is expressed in the fact that he makes a clear distinction between necessity and freedom. Freedom lies on another plain, beyond all necessity. In relation to necessity, human existence is always open to accepting what constitutes meaning. In particular, Frankl turns against the narrow concept of the person, emphasizing human freedom in relation to drives, hereditary conditions and environmental influences.

> There are drives in humans, but they do not control him or her. A human can transform them in some way, they certainly do not create him or her (V.E. Frankl 1987a, p. 88).

Humans are therefore able to direct their drives, they can accept or reject them. By virtue of being a person, one has the freedom to make decisions. A human is the master of one's drives. Unlike an animal, a human has no drives unrelated to freedom of choice. If one wants to accept one's drives, one must first identify with them, whereas an animal already exists as the sum of its drives. Frankl compares drives with the terrain on which freedom has set foot and which it can also quickly leave. Drives and freedom remain in a mutually complementary relationship. They

are not mutually parallel, as is the case between spiritual and physical nature, but, according to Frankl's views, their relationship takes on the character of facultative, neo-psychic antagonism (cf. V.E. Frankl 1987a, p. 90). Freedom is an a priori value of human existence. It is worth noting that it is already typical of an infant not to be guided by instincts, drives or reactions, but in all forms of its activity it basically determines its distance from adults (cf. A. Petzelt 1999, p. 127f.). What applies to the infant also applies, in other places and contexts, to children, adolescents and adults.

The emphasis on human self-determination is further expressed by the fact that a person's mobilization is perceived essentially as being guided by will, not drive. Humans have drives that

> [...] have been entrusted to their activity. This means that one should show what one will do with them, whether one manages them properly (or does not manage them at all). The drives that a person is aware of cease to be drives as such (A. Petzelt 1999, p. 128).

Here, the understanding of freedom, consistent with the principles of existential analysis, is opposed to the concept of "determinism related to inheritance", in which humans are understood to be conditioned by their hereditary characteristics. Frankl, citing Goethe, expresses the view that there is no virtue that is not burdened with errors, and that there is no error that cannot be transformed into a virtue (cf. V.E. Frankl 1987a, p. 101).

In relation to the environment, a great deal depends on the individual's approach to it, how one behaves towards it, and what attitude one assumes. A human is not a product of his or her environment, because ultimately we decide about ourselves (cf. V.E. Frankl 1987a, p. 191). As a former prisoner of a Nazi concentration camp, Frankl clearly showed that it is possible to adapt to even the most terrible environmental conditions. He wrote:

> There was one possibility or another; every day and every hour of the stay in the camp, one could encounter a repeated opportunity to make this internal decision, being for or against the fall of man, addressed to those

forces in the environment that threatened to deprive of what was the clos-
est and specific to humans – their inner freedom (V.E. Frankl 1982, p. 108).

Shortly thereafter, Frankl took a firm position that a person cannot
be deprived of one's spiritual freedom until one takes one's last breath,
and that it is possible to meaningfully influence the course of life until
the very end of it (cf. V.E. Frankl 1982, p. 109).

When constructing his theory, Frankl tried to look at humans inte-
grally, at humans as people, at their freedom and dignity. This was ex-
pressed, among other things, in the fact that he opposed tendencies
leading to various one-sided directions, such as biologism, psycholo-
gism and sociology, which split human beings through the "prisms"
of their ways of looking, and thus isolate humans' subjectivity, their
unique spirituality and personal freedom so much that typically human
elements disappear completely from their field of view. What is meant
by this concept can be shown by the example of psychology, claiming
that the main direction of human life – the duration of existence – is
precisely that:

> [...] which can neither be examined nor controlled nor verified nor mastered
> by psychology. This happens for the simple reason that this deep process is
> closed to their way of seeing. What happens within existence is the constitu-
> tion of the world, the constitution of the connections of meaning (E. Fizzotti
> 2001, p. 18).

The importance of the logotherapeutic-existential-analytical theory
for pedagogical theory lies primarily in the fact that it is about looking
at humans in as many aspects as possible, primarily in the aspect of
one's questions about meaning and search for meaning, which comes
from one of the most basic dimensions of human existence, namely the
spiritual dimension. This is precisely the dimension that pedagogical
anthropology also cares about, when pedagogy raises a question about
becoming a human being and states that this process should not be left
to wilfulness and chance. This also happens when it poses questions
about the principles of pedagogical thought and action, so that these
elements can be recognized and binding.

The last part of this work aims to show how easily simplifications and shortcuts can occur when creating visions and projects of the "image of human", and that anthropology based on "solid foundations" is often outside the reality of human life. On the one hand, it remains – due to purely theoretical considerations – inadequate in relation to the actual situation, and on the other – and this should be emphasized – anthropological thinking warns against overly superficial descriptions and assignments in relation to human life. Anthropology is also able to discover them or avoid them in advance. The thesis advanced here is that Frankl's anthropology represents a certain enrichment and extension for pedagogical anthropology, for the reasons provided earlier, in the sense of emphasizing the "dimension of meaning" of human and respecting it. In this way, it serves to expand and deepen our field of vision when we create a certain "image" of a human being, that is, when human existence reflects on itself.

Walter Böckmann even points to anthropology as a possible intermediate link between pedagogy and psychotherapy (cf. W. Böckmann 2001, p. 191f.). He also perceives it as a kind of preventive measure against the danger of incorrect explanation of an "essential" component of human existence, as well as its practical threat. One can agree with this view to the extent that this work is about presenting the personal character of a human being as an inalienable condition of pedagogical thinking and action.

When examining humans' subjectivity, one should – according to Frankl's proposal – take into account their freedom, consciousness, self-determination and responsibility. This approach will also protect pedagogy from treating humans as objects of influence, intervention and manipulation. Only the answer to the question of human subjectivity (in the sense given above) determines "the possibilities of pedagogy, the type of its practice, the validation of its purpose and the anthropology underlying it" (M. Heitger 1999, p. 42). Thus, the question of human subjectivity and the answer to it generally precede pedagogical activity, because such a result is a measure of its importance. Only an examination of human subjectivity, taking into account one's own responsibility

and freedom, determines the purpose and meaning of pedagogical activity and also becomes a necessary condition for creating theories in pedagogy.

If the practice of existential analysis and/or pedagogical practice would like to give expression to the personal dimension of humans in their search for meaning and their intention to educate themselves, appropriate anthropological assumptions must first be recognized. The fact that "being a person" is always something "more" in relation to the reductionisms associated with it, that being a person or an entity itself cannot be related only to the factual state, and that an individual can always be experienced only during a personal meeting are the basic conditions for both psychotherapeutic and pedagogical practice. They must be the beginning of any kind of practice if it wants to be adequate to its subject. Therefore, both pedagogical and psychotherapeutic theory and practice should be about recognizing and overcoming one's own reductionisms.

Human subjectivity justifies both the necessity and the possibility of pedagogy being fulfilled, because humans are responsible for themselves and the goal of all pedagogy is that each human individual fulfils their humanity (cf. M. Heitger 1999, p. 116f.; J. Michalski 2000).

From the point of view of the possibility of finding meaning, the fact that a person can and should face oneself becomes determinant. Only by facing yourself and the world does a person create oneself as a spiritual person. Human beings struggle with themselves when "as a spiritual person" they face themselves "as a psychophysical organism". This ability is optional to the extent that a person remains oneself, in one's freedom, and therefore also in one's sense of responsibility. Being yourself has an existential character to the extent that a person opts for or against their existence. Existence here means the ability to get out of yourself and stand in front of yourself (cf. V.E. Frankl 1978, p. 116f.).

Being a subject is distinguished from all other existences in that it not only exists, but also faces oneself. A person owes one's existence to self-realization, which does not mean that the subject has found oneself in the world on one's own or created oneself,

[...] but that the type of his or her existence is not the result of social deter-
mination or biological maturation, but is a self-realization (M. Heitger 1999,
p. 202).

A person fulfils one's life by taking responsibility for it. It is not one
of many goals, but a goal in itself. Each individual is a responsible creator
of the shape of their life and thus takes responsibility for taking oppor-
tunities to find meaning, as well as introducing them to the meaning of
their own life. Where this issue is not noticed, "alien destinies" appear
and humans not only lose the meaning of life, but are also reduced as
a subject or, at least, are not perceived in such a dimension.

Where there is a degradation to the level of non-questioning ques-
tions, the question must be asked about our "I" (person, subject). When
our "I" becomes an object, it is lost or it is not recognized in its proper
greatness. Pedagogy that loses its subject also loses itself, depriving it-
self of the basis on which it grows. What else could pedagogy refer to, if
not to a specific person, to a specific situation? Pedagogy must address
people taking into account their individual situation. It should see them
as they are, and it is this image that constitutes their starting point in
relation to duties. When pedagogy asks about a person's duty, it can
indeed ask about it on a meta-level, in a general sense, but in a specific
case it can only refer to a fully defined individual, taking into account the
state one has achieved in a given case.

Heitger also criticizes the idea of effectiveness in pedagogical prac-
tice, which defines its activity in terms effectiveness. In school practice,
such "models" are primarily about action, mobilization, and so-called
processing – activities or projects that are practically tested and, if "suc-
cessful", are introduced into the regular school program. The value of
such attempts undertaken for the school is measured in terms of appli-
cability – taking into account the motto "the more effective, the better".
The achieved effectiveness then also creates a criterion for their claim
to validity. The idea of an independent, responsible and free entity is
replaced by the need to achieve some effect. No attention is paid to the
fact that along with the apparent success of such efficiency, the intensi-
ty of the influence of "foreign destiny" also increases. Heitger is talking

here about a conditional relationship – to the extent that the effective increase in pedagogical resources is associated with a decrease in the autonomy of the subject, "[...] one grants to oneself an action attributed to external influences" (M. Heitger 1999, p. 405).

Analysing contemporary reality, it is clear that technological and scientific development – although necessary – has advanced so far (also in the sense of moving away from understanding a human as a person) that criteria other than the good of the individual have become dominant. This may also apply to pedagogy, which would take as the most important criterion, e.g. social requirements, and would construct effective processes of controlling the individual. Pedagogy that adopts such an assumption can ultimately be separated from its subject and reduces it to an effect. Ultimately, it occupies a place that loses its pedagogical nature. In such a situation, it would lead to self-destruction. With the end of pedagogy, comes the end of the subject, insofar as this concept involved human's awareness of oneself as a being that has been given to oneself and is expressed through one's ability to educate (cf. M. Heitger 1999, p. 406; A. Nalaskowski 1998).

In pedagogy, as in Frankl's proposal, we find an understanding of the person in which the subject is defined as an end in itself, and in this aspect demanding respect and dignity for itself. Just as it is impossible to construct pedagogy without a subject, so it will be pointless to think about meaning without the subject that strives for it. Pedagogy and existential analysis remain dependent on their subject – on the one hand, on the basis of the educational capacity associated with it, and on the other – on the basis of the dimension of meaning assigned to it – its spirituality. Subjectivity means that the thinking subject knows about itself and shows certain behaviour towards itself (provided one has freedom).

Both in pedagogy and in Frankl's work we encounter human duty. While in Frankl "realization of meaning" coincides with duty, the concept of what we are obliged to do in transcendental-philosophical pedagogy is undefined. Subjectivity is defined here by the concept of duty, but duty itself is neither a specific form,

> [...] nor does it contain at its roots a specific image on the basis of which the norms that would be binding to them all could be derived. The subject and one's duty are not placed at the disposal of objective thinking. The subject is a condition of obligation, and this in turn does not constitute a specific norm, but a condition of the possibility of establishing norms (M. Heitger 1999, p. 412).

To this extent, the concept of duty, considered pedagogically as formal, constitutes – as a concrete concept of norm – the condition of duty in meaning. The concept of meaning cannot (according to the previous considerations) become an obligation (in the understanding of pedagogy), because such an obligation must be free from objective thinking. A comparison of the concepts of pedagogy and existential analysis shows that the concept of meaning aims at the concept of education. The search for meaning and the fulfilment of meaning would be consistent with these educational tasks and would show the traits of autonomy, independence, and responsibility, precisely the search for meaning. It would fulfil its possibilities of meaning. A person fulfilling meaning would be the goal of pedagogy in the sense of being led to human maturity. The task of education also here remains endless and the independent pursuit of a specific subject becomes necessary,

> [...] because none of the values ever acquired by the subject can claim to be final, so the postulate of education is constantly relevant anew (M. Heitger 1999, p. 412).

The search for a specific meaning in a given specific situation, seen as a decision with regard to value, undertaken through conscience, thus becomes the task of pedagogical education.

While speaking at this point that the question of meaning, the search for meaning, the possibilities of meaning and the fulfilment of meaning in one's life become an educational process, it must be recalled and emphasized that "meaning" cannot be the goal of education. Therefore, Petzelt's statement seems to be correct:

> Education does not have a goal in the sense of a timely achievable point. It has meaning, in relation to every point in time (A. Petzelt 1999, p. 128).

Humans in search of themselves

Since meaning is always connected with the specificity of a certain person, the question of meaning is always a question of a certain "I" about oneself or about one's world, about a certain matter or about a certain "you". However, such questions require, at least, a reference to the questioner, even if in one's own question they point, through their own existence, to the existence of someone else. Frankl refers to this as "self-transcendence". Humans constantly remain a mystery to themselves and this mystery must be solved during one's life, even when one wants to obtain an explanation of one's own existence through the scientific-objective approach of anthropology (cf. W. Chudy 2009, p. 149f.). A human is – in a double aspect – an object of doubt to the extent that, on the one hand, deserves inquiry and analysis, and on the other hand, is also "part of something that cannot be explained", and who hears himself or herself in the answers he or she creates. The third "doubt" refers to the answers to these questions, which present the form of "images of humans". What raises doubts here is the fact that these images can never reflect the real existence of a human being. Humans constantly mean more than the images they create about themselves. However, this is precisely why there is a need to shape the "image of humans" as broadly as possible and to shed light on all possible aspects of humanity, as well as explaining them as deeply as possible. The contribution of Frankl's proposals to pedagogical theory and practice is visible in his "conception of meaning". The importance of Frankl's anthropology for pedagogy results precisely from this indeterminacy in relation to the specific formulations of individual psychotherapeutic schools. Frankl's existential analysis is of so very basic nature in terms of its concept "[...] that it requires its acceptance before psychotherapy is split" (E. Fizzotti 2004, p. 19).

In this sense, it is primarily anthropological, not psychotherapeutic, which also results in its openness to pedagogical questions. Taking into account the possible finding of meaning as a human task, necessary for personal fulfilment and, according to the situation, expressing

self-responsibility and self-determination corresponds to this openness to the pedagogical aspect, but also requires an appropriate anthropological foundation, namely one that recognizes each human being as a person and respects him or her in the pursuit of their own goal. In Frankl's existential analysis, the question of meaning, as a human question about one's own existence and the meaning of one's own life, finds a theoretically diverse formulation that has no similar one, and therefore contains ready-made basic inspirations for pedagogy and its consideration of the question of meaning.

According to Frankl's existential analysis, a human being has an intentional nature and is on the path of searching for the meaning of one's own life, but the meaning itself does not open as a reflection of some kind of "mirror image of oneself". Human beings always go beyond their own existence, towards some other being. Therefore, the value corresponding to some act towards which it tends is necessarily transcendent, that is, it lies beyond the act itself.

Frankl's views on the person are closely related to the concept of transcendence. He understands human existence as transcendent to the extent that it concerns humans' self-transcendence.

> In other words: a human being as a whole is a human being only when he or she is completely involved in a matter and devotes oneself to another person. And one completely becomes oneself only where one loses sight of oneself and forgets about oneself (V.E. Frankl 1987a, p. 201).

It should also be added that dedication to a cause is only possible when such a cause exists. We can devote ourselves to ourselves when we have learned to manage ourselves, when we have the "maturity" to leave our "I", our ego. The point is that we learn to ask questions about ourselves, about specific acts of self-analysis. In questions about oneself, the presence of the main question related to upbringing is visible (cf. A. Petzelt 1994, p. 177). According to this:

> [...] self-analysis is a guarantee of my true "I", which seeks itself in knowledge, memory of its actions, and therefore must perceive itself as someone having meaning. [...] Self-analysis is a special case of evaluation. My "I" evaluates itself (A. Petzelt 1994, p. 197).

Before we go beyond ourselves to some extent, we must first know something about ourselves. We must learn to properly perceive ourselves in our own activity, in order to then devote ourselves to an ideal, a cause, or a task without exposing ourselves to the danger of "getting lost". There is no temporal sequence here between one's experience of oneself and another person's experience, but it is entirely simultaneous. The experience of meaning is always an experience to the extent that an individual experiences someone else and oneself at the same moment.

Frankl often emphasized – as a fundamental point – the importance of reference and relationship with other people. What he was concerned with was the danger of an egocentric fulfilment of life, in which one fails to cross the border of one's own "I", and achieve one's own transcendence. When considering what the concept of transcendence refers to, it is worth paying attention to the fact that Frankl presents it in different ways. In one case, he believes that God is hidden behind this concept, while in another, it is the aforementioned self-transcendence (cf. E. Fizzotti 2004, 82f.). In this work, it is the latter concept of transcendence that is subject to closer analysis.

The criticism of the reduction of meaning is, as Schütz puts it, multi-threaded. It turns against shortcuts in the matter of meaning and attempts to narrow it down:

> [...] whether by the fact that education and social life practice perceive the human being only as an entity of economic importance (economism), or by the fact that they understand social coexistence only as the organization of life related to domination (politicism), or by adhering to the view that the explanation of human existence occurs only in the perspective of effective production and rational, goal-oriented control of oneself and others (technicism and instrumentalism) or, finally, because activities and experiences related to explanations turn out to be trustworthy only when, in methodological terms, they can be subordinated to principle of intersubjectivity, while personal results related to explanation, evolving from lived experiences of fate, define guilt as pre-scientific-private one (scientism) (E. Schütz 2002, p. 31).

Schütz points out that the tendency to monopolize individual "syndromes of purely scholastic theories" penetrates the plane of pedagog-

ical self-understanding, which was formulated by Heitger as a warning against the "mechanical" treatments of humans if pedagogy is degraded to the "role of a pimp", considering itself as an organ in the service of the currently prevailing forces (cf. M. Heitger 1994, p. 42).

The human ability to ask questions and our need to ask are the basic conditions for the functioning of the education system and the recognition of the question of meaning as a question in the background of every other question. All this, of course, refers to humans as subjects, as people endowed with freedom, consciousness, self-determination and responsibility.

To this extent, this work should be understood as a contribution to the anthropological foundation of pedagogy, in which the idea, along with Frankl's proposal, is to point to the dimension of meaning in human existence. Pedagogical theory cannot remain indifferent to this dimension without exposing itself to the danger of the impoverishment of the image of humans in the form of a spiritual dimension.

A pedagogical attempt at synthesis

It is not my intention to indicate specific proposals or guidelines on how the "topic" of the problem of meaning could be introduced into pedagogical practice or what suggestions could arise for applications in pedagogy. Such an intention would mean ignoring the uniqueness of the individual in search of meaning, while everything should be generalized and systematized, which only the individual is capable of carrying out in his or her uniqueness and individuality. Planning based on the theory of teaching and learning, with a division into goals corresponding to both processes, and with the desire to formulate different recommendations, would be absurd and would contradict the basic meaning of this work. It cannot be about the possibility of application in pedagogical practice, because proposals of this kind would have to go precisely towards the reduction of meaning, as it would be far from an alien destiny which must remain the task of a specific person.

Answering questions about how we create the structure of our spirituality while struggling with ourselves and the world, how we shape ourselves in our work, and whether this also includes the question of the meaning of life proves a far-from-easy task. This is primarily because it should not be limited to merely stating claims, but instead should include supporting them with arguments and the analysis of relevant basic concepts.

Pedagogical practice involves looking at a person in an appropriate way and adopting an appropriate attitude that respects his or her dignity. Ultimately, the personal search for meaning always involves humans analysing their own lives and existence in the way in which it is given and assigned to them at a particular moment. "We often do not know about it, immersed in difficulties above our knees, up to our chests, up to our chins," says the poet Rainer Maria Rilke.

> But we are happy at the same time because of the ease. Aren't we almost wired for ease? Our heart has depth, but when we defy oppression, we will never go down to the very basic level. And yet, you have to find yourself on this level. That's what it's all about (quoted in: A. Corti 1999, p. 187).

This is why any pedagogy which "does not call into question" humans but instead wants to facilitate the economic exploitation of the individual tries to eliminate the so-called subjective coefficient – in particular on positions assessing values – in favour of apparent objectivity. This is done in order to calculate the expected effects more clearly and to be able to implement them better in order to achieve the goal (cf. M. Heitger 1991, p. 43). The consideration of what is meant here by the term "meaning" was removed by such "pedagogy" a long time ago, as well as in the sense of the "pedagogic dimension" within its own actions. Only a pedagogy that not only eschews the impoverishment of humans due to their experience of meaninglessness (caused by their own means and drive for efficiency) but also does not betray the principle that gives it its foundation and possibilities, orientation and justification. This is about:

> [...] connecting humans with importance in one's thinking and action, transcendental a priori as a condition for dialogue and communication, Socratic

connection with logos as the possibility of humanistic life, relating humans to God in Pestalozzi's approach, so that one can pursue education as one's own work (M. Heitger 1991, p. 50).

Therefore, a pedagogy that sees humans as subjects and which sees itself alongside them in the "question of meaning", in which action is carried out not only for the sake of tangible benefits, but for the sake of good, again asks about the ultimate goal of being human. This question deserves the radical support of our humanity (M. Heitger 1991, p. 50). A pedagogy in which there are also personal references, and which recognizes the rights of an individual based on the fact of being a subject will enable the realization of "consistency with meaning", and will recognize the "question of meaning" as an important question for itself. As part of the "question of meaning", we ask about ourselves and also go beyond ourselves, towards the other person. This question focuses on the human question, concerning issues related to one's own "existence of the world" and "possession of the world". Therefore, it belongs to the basic questions of human life and should also belong to the basic questions of pedagogy as a science concerning humans. This statement summarizes the thesis of this work, namely that the "question of meaning" is important for pedagogy.

Taking as a starting point the interaction between question and answer (which is found in pedagogy in every form of learning and which also characterizes the path of knowledge in which acquired knowledge becomes the starting point for the next question, thereby maintaining the continuity of the process) the idea is to show the special nature of the "question of meaning", as a question about one's own existence, in its importance for pedagogy. Therefore, it is necessary to demonstrate the possibility of giving an answer as taking responsibility for life, through which a person is questioned and expected to answer in the spirit of responsibility. Furthermore, it can be shown that the search for meaning is realized only through dialogue, in the freedom that is inherent in it and in mutual relation. Then, a person closely related to meaning is shown, who, by contrasting the "concept of a person" included in pedagogy with such a concept found in Frankl, required the illumination

of its significance for understanding the dimension of human meaning. Finally, an overview of the importance of the theory of the subject – for pedagogy in general, and in connection with the dimension of meaning in humans in particular – was to conclude the topic of the importance of the "question of meaning" for pedagogy. This last point fully leads to the question of the fundamental understanding of human beings, according to appropriate anthropology. Within individual thematic areas, the question of the most basic anthropology was constantly raised. Although it was often discussed in particular thematic areas, it also revealed the enormous scope that a thorough study of Frankl's anthropology would require, as opposed to anthropology, which is present in the pedagogy related to the science of transcendence. This can be understood, on the one hand, as an explanation that what is highlighted here is primarily what connects, i.e. what is common to pedagogy and existential analysis, mainly due to the issue of meaning that requires discussion, and on the other hand, it can also be understood as encouragement towards further study of Frankl's work in connection with pedagogy.

The analyses conducted concerning the "concept of the subject" present in pedagogy – in its importance for the dimension of human meaning – can be summarized in several points which are important in light of the assumptions of this work. These are:

1. It is possible to demonstrate that the theory of the subject turns out to be a necessary condition for dealing with the human question of "meaning". Meaning is always related to the personality of a specific person.
2. The search for meaning as a self-responsible, personal and situational possibility requires an appropriate anthropology – one that recognizes human beings as people and is a test of their goals.
3. Meaning can never be determined externally and thus become a plannable program. Pedagogy cannot be about creating a curriculum of meaning, because such an intention itself would be nonsense. Pedagogy is rather about a certain intention in relation to meaning. The educator is called to personally engage as a person in the question of "meaning", which may also mean being questioned, both in the

question on the part of the pupil or student, as well as in questions about him or herself, or in questions about others.

4. "Meaning" is in no case something that can be constructed and thus it ultimately becomes elusive to any external force or any intention to dispose of the other person's "meaning". "Meaning" invariably has value in its nature, which one finds independently and about which one makes decisions independently.

5. "Meaning" is also expressed in the implementation of tasks, while recognizing that the freedom of people looking for "meaning" and therefore mutual reference to "meaning" (also in the event of possible assistance in this regard) can exist in accordance with the principle of dialogue.

6. "Meaning", in its task-oriented feature, is subject to the requirements of duty – it shows itself as a goal and as such requires recognition. "Meaning" cannot be arbitrarily changed, which raises questions about its validity.

7. We must ask here whether "meaning" can be seen as an aspect of education, as an educational task. The thesis which would assert so would require more specification here. It must be stated that it cannot be considered unimportant whether or not a person is understood as one who searches for "meaning", whether or not the dimension of human meaning is thematically presented and thought out in theory and practice, or whether or not this aspect is omitted.

CONCLUSION

Human life is included in a broader, socio-cultural, historical context of action through "invisible threads" of symbols through which human beings experience reality and themselves. During the process of primary socialization, an individual learns to read symbols from so-called significant others by the very fact of participating in the life of the group. Further on, through educational practices, e.g. initiation, ritual, religious practices, or at school, socially desirable mechanisms of understanding symbols are unconsciously adopted, and through them rationalization and legitimization of the world and ways of building strategies for one's own life. Culture provides certain philosophical concepts that constitute the foundation for a decent life, suggests solutions to basic existential problems, and establishes social mechanisms for maintaining them. They constitute a frame of reference for both social and individual life. The type of social order in which a person exists plays a significant role in the process of shaping one's own life, as it constitutes a framework that outlines the context for understanding the world being experienced and acting in it, but always by finding the meaning of life.

Obviously, from a practical point of view, there remains the important problem of how to revive the issue of shaping the meaning of life in social encounters, in upbringing, in education, in religious education and in pedagogical thinking, how to help people embark on a path that does not lead to nothingness, but instead to the fullness of being and life. The answer to these doubts may be a pedagogical reading of V.E. Frankl's proposals and his logo-theory. This was the purpose of creating this publication. However, the author's intention was not to exhaust the problem of the relationship between pedagogy and V.E. Frankl's theory from the perspective of the question of meaning. Instead, it

was intended to be a contribution to further in-depth analyses which may subsequently lead to treating the problems of "meaning" and the "meaning of life" as an important subject of theoretical and pedagogical decisions and to recognizing the "question of meaning" as one of the key areas of the practice of educational influences.

As has been shown, the "pedagogical nature" of Frankl's theory consists of the significant similarity in the understanding of the person, in which the subject is defined as an end in itself and therefore demanding respect and dignity for oneself. Just as it is impossible to construct a pedagogy without a subject, so it is groundless to think about meaning without the subject that strives for it. Pedagogy and existential analysis remain dependent on their subject – on the one hand, on the basis of the educational capacity associated with it, and on the other – on the basis of the dimension of meaning assigned to it – one's spirituality.

The initial and necessary condition for both logo-therapy and educational interventions is their personal nature. In both areas, the occurrence of such factuality is called a meeting of people. It involves a dialogical, horizontally and vertically oriented way of being and self-fulfilment that fully satisfies the individual. This is achievable in the deepest personal experiences: in friendship, in love, in religious experience, in existential experience and others. It is therefore a comprehensive human experience that can be described in existential-phenomenological language. As such, it is not available to the empirical approach, which by its nature must "reduce" the multidimensional complexity of human experiences to simpler behaviours.

Existential analysis and logo-theory, like pedagogy, start from the concepts of the human being, which definitely leave in the field of negation one's biological and mechanistic assumptions. Today, fashionable terms often taken from other scientific disciplines, such as signal, stimulus, reaction, information, interaction, communication, relationship and others, without their detailed definition, seem to lose the personal nature of being and human experiences. Rather, they capture the instrumental, functional, phenomenal side of the fact of human existence.

It should be noted that a meeting must include, for example, relationship and communication. However, in an existing relationship or communication, as Frankl argues, a meeting does not necessarily have to occur. The understanding of the term "meeting" must be subject to certain conditions in order for it to be truly human. One of these conditions is meaning, which in the era of global interaction often appears imperceptible and overlooked. The meeting is then threatened with perversion. This means that, although it takes place between people, it may take place at a subhuman level and be purely instrumental in nature.

Buber and Ebner point not only to the importance of meetings, but also emphasize its dialogical nature. At this point, however, it is worth noting that from the perspective of logo-theory, true dialogue cannot take place until the dimension of *logos* is exceeded. Dialogue without *logos* devolves into monologue. The dialogue partners are then not subject to an intentional attitude, but only to "expressing" themselves. Self-transcendence here means that to be a human being is to be directed beyond oneself, towards someone or something that is not oneself, towards something or someone, towards some meaning fulfilled, or towards a person encountered in love. The intentionality of spiritual acts, emphasized in logo-theory, is the cognitive side of self-transcendence. Dialogue which is limited to expressing oneself deprives human existence of the distinction of self-transcendence. A true encounter is not only oriented towards *logos*, but also helps humans to go towards *logos*, to transcend themselves (cf. V.E. Frankl 1972, pp. 218–219).

This has important consequences for pedagogy. Any pedagogy without *logos* has no basis to which we can direct our existence. It only knows of causes, and these are not found outside in the world, but within ourselves, in our own psychophysiological equipment. However, causes are not the same as fundamentals. Frankl illustrates such a principle and claims that "[...] if someone cuts an onion, one cries. Their crying has a reason. But there is no reason, no basis for crying" (V.E. Frankl 1972, p. 221). In an encounter,

I transcend myself if it is real and serves not only to express myself. I transcend myself by transcending *logos*. The pseudo-meeting is based not on real dialogue, but on dialogue without *logos* and therefore serves only as a forum for self-expression (V.E. Frankl 1972, p. 225).

The dominant features of being in an authentic encounter are: partnership, participation, subsidiarity, responsibility and freedom (cf. V.E. Frankl 1975; K. Wojtyła 2012). The first three terms refer primarily to the social dimension of the meeting. The last two concern those distinctions that a person is entitled to as a human being. These features result from the analysis and understanding of the ontological status of humans as a people – a neighbour. A meeting carried out in such an atmosphere has a chance to be creative, but it is also educational and therapeutic.

The strength of the authenticity of the meeting and its educational and therapeutic impact lies not in declarations, but in meeting its essential conditions. Hence, treating these conditions only as propaganda and wishful thinking, without any basis in reality, destroys the atmosphere of dialogue and makes it impossible to achieve the results of the meeting in terms of its meaning. The meeting situation then turns into a state of enslavement with its characteristic symptoms: submission, non-resonant presence, self-interest, the loss of responsibility and the development of a sense of enslavement.

Hence, following Frankl's theory, if we want to talk about a deeply human encounter in education, it must take place both in the mental and spiritual dimensions, as well as penetrating and animating with its content the dimension of physical existence. In such a situation, we deal with what can be described as dual and open contact. Something characteristic of this type of meeting is the "what is going on" between "I" and "you", leading to the creation of "we". It takes place between two entities, realizing this special state of existence that is born from the existence of "we". The state of being locked in having "yourself for yourself", as logo-theory emphasizes, destroys "becoming" yourself.

For pedagogy, the question arises about the path to self-realization during the meeting. The answer from the perspective of logo-theory

can only exist in the area of searching for meaning. The method is, of course, individualized. In the process of individual development the meeting takes place in the context of the social, cultural and natural environment. It is particularly influenced by communities or reference groups, as carriers of cultural and spiritual values. The developing individuality that participates in them achieves its own subjective synthesis, according to internal possibilities and external circumstances. When this path leads to a loss of general life orientation and a loss of meaning in life, it is always a loss for the individual. However, this does not have to be an irreversible loss. Humans are able to transcend conditions and distance themselves from them with the ability to understand matters, ask questions in general and about meaning (cognitive dimension). This is not about rationalizing existence, i.e. taking away the aspirations and orientations, motivations, goals, values, meaning and so on and so forth specific to it, but about taking into account the subjective understanding and fulfilment of life, which at the personal level also benefits from cognitive orientation. However, pedagogy is about something more. This "something" is emphasized by Frankl in his logo-theory. Opposing reductionism, he points to the noetic, spiritual, typically human dimension, in which cognition is an important, but not the only, feature. The need to take this human equipment into account and the need to use it in the educational process is emphasized by the existential-cognitive approach.

Phenomena characteristic of human existence, analysed in a dimension lower than the one in which they appear, present their qualities in proportion to the possibilities offered by the adopted point of view. This situation is clearly illustrated by the analysis of such a phenomenon of human existence, namely love. Neither logo-therapy nor existential-cognitive counselling want to reduce it either "up" or "down" (V.E. Frankl 1972, p. 257). However, it deserves its proper place, i.e. among the phenomena characterizing personal existence. Therefore, speaking metaphorically, logo-therapy and logo-theory desire to save for pedagogy the deepest meaning of what is called human love.

The importance of the category of meaning and its application to the theory and practice of the educational process can be expressed in the form of theses developed by Popielski based on the analyses of Georg Moser from the book *Wie finde ich mich zum Sinn des Lebens* (K. Popielski 1987). Finally, let us try to look at them in the educational and pedagogical context.

1. Meaning is more than the purpose and benefit of life as a whole – it covers the whole life

The realization of the meaning of life in the process of education must determine the attitude of the subjects of education towards the present and the future, which they are able to choose from among the values that are not subject to devaluation, when the "tomorrow" of human existence arrives. It is necessary to emphasize the importance of the so-called supra-individual values that show people the direction of their life actions. Such values are certainly: love, truth, goodness, beauty, freedom, dignity and peace. They give perspective to life, prioritize needs, and allow the learner to achieve greatness. They serve to create a sense of meaning and value in life.

2. We do not receive individual meaning in a ready-made form – it manifests itself in the process of upbringing, and therefore in the development of life

Every subject of the educational process has unique individual predispositions which allow them to discover the values of life and indirectly co-create and concretize their individual sense of the meaning of life. The conditions, talents and inclinations are different, but their limits are also different. These factors make the educator aware that each student is unique. Anyone who cares about realizing the values of life must be a person who courageously accepts the truth, is open, humble, appreciates oneself and others, respects goodness and beauty, is ready to share deep joy and kind words, and is able to accept the gifts of life, including suffering. Logo-theory teaches that a person with a rich inner life has

the optimal opportunity to find his or her own meaning in life. There are many paths to this. A special place is assigned here to the activation of the poetic dimension of humanity and transcendence. They have liberating and often transformative power. Discovering meaning takes place in patience and is often revealed in hardship and through suffering.

3. Meaning-taking and meaning-making must complement each other

Human life is an expression of a specific "historical unity" in which we become aware of our historical and temporal dimensions. The educator should emphasize that life becomes full of meaning when it is received with acceptance and love. Not only a child, but every person must be surrounded by an atmosphere of love necessary for individual development and finding meaning in life. This emphasizes the obligation to develop the ability to creatively realize and constantly enrich the gift of life, as well as the obligation to discover and realize meaning. First, however, we need to learn a true view of the surrounding reality in order to concretize the tasks posed by life. This is achieved through such personal forces as the "will to meaning" and, among others, religious faith understood as the fullness of love. This allows us to overcome difficulties in fulfilling life – a part of this love.

4. Only in being true to ourselves and being patient do we realize the meaning of our lives

The increasingly dominant role of technology in modern life, the impatient pursuit of growth and development of production, and the magic of numbers all destroy "human being" and fuel the desire to possess. These conditions contribute to "losing faith in oneself". This makes humans feel more and more deprived of value and dignity, and we forget about our uniqueness and individuality. Although work allows us to realize ourselves and serve others, we cannot overlook the fact that it is only one of those human activities that serve to create humanity. We should not forget that apart from work there is also family, social,

religious and cultural life. A state of constant rush is not conducive to the development of personal life and maintaining proper coexistence with others. There is less and less time left for an authentic personal life. Yet, it is the gift of one's own time that helps maintain wise fidelity and generous patience and serves both the individual and society. This bears fruit especially when we find ourselves in difficult situations, when we need strength, when we have to experience and overcome setbacks and obstacles. We need to manage the gift of time skilfully, so that we can find space not only for ourselves, but also for others.

5. The form of meaning changes in different phases of life

Each period of human life has its own needs, shortcomings and opportunities. The task of education is to provide age-appropriate content and to define goals to the best of the child's abilities. The meaning of a child's life cannot be enough for an adult, because human possibilities are constantly expanding. Therefore, it is an educational necessity to define the meaning of life so that it is consistent with the characteristics of a given age.

6. We will not find the meaning of life alone

No one is "a lonely island" and no one can be wholly self-sufficient. Humans are beings with open minds towards other people, though at the same time can be withdrawn, suffering, and afraid of reaching out to others. Educational activities should be aimed at dialogue and approximation, at shaping the awareness that we realize ourselves only in the context of others, in trust and fidelity to them. In the most extreme situations, when a decisive choice must be made, we especially need a co-thinking and compassionate companion because struggling with difficulties together provides a better chance to resolve them satisfactorily.

7. Life gains full meaning only when it goes beyond death

Humans long for ultimate fulfilment. Life only makes sense if it does not lead "to a vacuum" (no matter what we call it). A human busy with the problems of everyday life should not forget about the connection between life and death, which is the threshold between temporality and eternity. The world and life are a gift entrusted to us, but alone they do not suffice for us. What is needed is openness to transcendence. This grace must be earned. You have to earn it with your own effort and personal, dignified attitude.

* * *

The presented theses demonstrate the significant complementarity of the concept of "meaning" with the concept of "value", because taking a specific position towards values and their implementation leads to fulfilling human existence with meaning. In turn, this represents a challenge for pedagogical thought and practice. Humans are the only creatures on earth that asks questions about meaning. This seems to be a primordial feature of the *homo sapiens* species. In fact, it is not so much that humans ask questions about meaning, but that life itself asks us, and it is only us who must answer these questions. The problem of meaning applies not only to life as a whole, but to every individual existential situation. The meaning-creating opportunity of such a situation occurs with the participation of the category of conscience, which always helps in finding meaning in life. There are no life situations which are without an opportunity of fulfilling meaning. This is possible even in the face of suffering. This is not about suffering of any kind, but about the suffering imposed by fate and which cannot be avoided in any way. Frankl calls such suffering necessary, in the face of which humans only discover the essence and meaning of our existence. Transcending suffering by giving it intention also gives meaning to the suffering itself, which otherwise appears to be senseless. Therefore, for suffering to have meaning, it cannot be suffering in itself, but for something or someone. It should point to something beyond itself or someone beyond oneself, which means it must be connected to sacrifice. Conscious acceptance of suffering and

giving it meaning by sacrifice leads to the development of human existence. A person then undergoes a maturation process in which he or she gains internal freedom despite external dependence. A person also acquires the deepest truth about life and reaches the deepest layers of one's own spirituality.

The content of the presented work in the context of its application to educational theory and practice can be treated as a guide to the land of ideas, but not a formulary with ready-made solutions to educational aporias. It justifies the use of the category of meaning and its search as a possible path to reach the learner, the student, or one's own child. It does not impose a way of looking at the process of upbringing or education, at the associations from the years of early education that appear in the consciousness of every educator. By showing the significance and even necessity of searching for meaning in this process, it also makes one realize the importance of understanding and the self-understanding of one's place in it. In pedagogy, as in life and other social sciences, no path is the best, yet nothing will be repeated on any of the paths leading to the child, nothing will be possible – as in a laboratory experiment – to be induced again with a sense of certainty of obtaining the same results. As educators, we have been entrusted with a heritage of thoughts and theories of which we become heirs and debtors at the same time, because we are supposed to read them in order to be able to apply them in educational practice, develop them, argue with them and reinterpret them. Such an inspiring idea for pedagogy is embraced in logo-theory with its questions about meaning.

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