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Original Article

## Spirituality in Logotherapy

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### Abstract

Frankl wrote that he needed to find meaning in his life so that he could sustain his life physically, psychologically, and spiritually. In other words, when an individual understands meaning in life, these three dimensions will be in a healthy interaction. The spiritual dimension and the other two dimensions have healing power. Therefore, it will become even easier for a person who is aware of the spiritual side and acts with this consciousness to find meaning. One of the most effective elements in finding meaning is spirituality. Studies have shown that spirituality helps people find meaning in their lives and even has an important effect in defeating the fear of death. In this respect, logotherapy does not reject spirituality and religion but rather encourages their use. This study examines the perspective of religion and spirituality in logotherapy and touches on the work done in this area. The spiritual point of view and applications of logotherapy, which center on finding meaning in the final analysis, are included in this study.

### Keywords

Spirituality • Logotherapy • Meaning • Spiritual orientation therapy

## Logoterapi’de Maneviyat

### Öz

Frankl insanın yaşamını fiziksel, psikolojik ve ruhsal olarak sağlıklı bir şekilde sürdürebilmesi için hayatında bir anlam bulması gerektiğini söylemektedir. Yani birey ancak anlama ulaştığında bu üç boyutun sağlıklı bir etkileşim içinde olması beklenir. Ruhsal boyut, diğer iki boyutu da iyileştirme gücüne sahiptir. Dolayısıyla ruhsal yönünden haberdar olan ve bunun bilinciyle hareket eden kişinin anlam bulması daha da kolaylaşacaktır. Anlam bulma noktasında en etkili yönlerden birisi maneviyyattır. Maneviyyatın insanın hayatında anlam bulmasına yardımcı olduğu ve hatta ölüm korkusunu yenmede önemli bir etkiye sahip olduğu yapılan çalışmalarla gösterilmiştir. Bu yönüyle Logoterapi maneviyyat ve dini reddetmemekte aksine bunlardan yararlanmayı desteklemektedir. Bu çalışma ile Logoterapi’nin din ve maneviyyata olan bakış açısı incelenmekte ve bu alanda yapılmış olan çalışmalara temas edilmektedir. Son tahlilde anlam bulmayı merkeze alan Logoterapi’nin manevi bakış açısı ve uygulamaları bu çalışma içinde yer almaktadır.

### Anahtar Kelimeler

Maneviyyat • Logoterapi • Anlam • Manevi yönelimli terapi

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Throughout history, humanity has engaged with existential questions: Why are we here? For what purposes do we live in the world? Why are we standing here? What does life mean? (Batthyany & Russo-Netzer, 2014). Such questions have emerged as a reflection of universal loss, and people have been searching for answers in more or less all cultures throughout time. This attitude toward human life emphasizes the spiritual or spiritual dimension of man, which centers on the idea that a person is carrying out a quest for freedom and making choices (Guttmann, 2008). Human life was greatly affected by rapid and dizzying changes that took place as a result of scientific advances in the 20th century; namely, life complexities and uncertainties increased with the social and cultural changes taking place. As a result, people faced the greatest problem of the time, “existential barriers,” and began to “search for meaning” for “existential vacancy,” which came to fruition (Bahadır, 2011).

Priorities are the phenomena that must be avoided for Psychology; Religion and spirituality became important again. Once avoided in the field of psychology, religion and spirituality became important again and started to be questioned. Religious belief is a multi-faceted structure that helps answer questions about the meaning and purpose of life (Calhoun & Tedeschi, 1999). Religious beliefs and practices can help a person to recognize himself, to have self-regulation, and to find meaning (Powell, Shahabi, & Thoresen, 2000). Religion and spirituality, which are multi-dimensional concepts, have positive effects on psychological and physiological health (Chen & Koenig, 2006).

Early psychological associations sought scientific explanations for human behaviors and problems and have adopted a more positivist approach. However, contemporary psychology trends have focused on existential problems and on solving psychological problems by protecting the individual’s mental health (Bahadır, 2011). Morgan (2013) and Frankl tried to answer the question “What do we do when there is nothing to do?” According to Morgan, logotherapy helps one make sense of life and offers meaning to those who have no idea what to do. He says that the most important problem of man is focusing on finding meaning as the most fundamental and powerful motivating force.

Logotherapy, called the Third Viennese School and founded by Viktor Emil Frankl, intends to save people from a sense of meaninglessness, to help them find meaning, and to save from them the “existential void.” Costello (2016) argued that while Frankl created logotherapy, he categorized religion separately and therefore failed to blend the concepts of religion and psychology. Moreover, Frankl did not specifically describe Christian, Muslim, or Jewish logotherapy, and he emphasized that he could work with atheists as well. Costello also noted that Frankl treated logotherapy and religion in separate contexts and that logotherapy tries to treat psychological problems but includes religion and spirituality in the treatment process. Thus, logotherapy is a

psychotherapy current and far from a religious current. However, it does not ignore the religious or spiritual dimensions that can help an individual at the point of finding meaning. On the matter of psychotherapy and religion, Frankl wrote,

Although the purpose of psychotherapy is spiritual healing, religion is the salvation of the soul... Although religion does not show the spiritual healing and protection as the main purpose, it can create a psycho-hygienic and almost psychotherapeutic effect in terms of its results, giving people the confidence (Frankl, 2014). Although Frankl's logotherapy tries to separate religion and spirituality from each other or to position them differently, religion and spirituality are not necessarily separated within logotherapy. If there are religious beliefs and values in the interest of the person, religion and spirituality will undoubtedly contribute to solving one's problems (Aydin, 2004). All these explanations show that religion and spirituality function very importantly to enable a person who is searching for meaning to find it and to get rid of existential vacancy. From this point of view, inquiring into the relation of logotherapy with religion and spirituality will help us to understand in more detail how to explore the applications of religion and spirituality with a wide perspective and what forms are effective. It is appropriate to conduct such a study to clarify and examine these points in detail. Therefore, the main purpose of this study is to identify what religious or spiritual activities individuals perform when they seek "meaning" in "existential space" and to objectively present the effectiveness of these activities.

### **Logotherapy Philosophy and Relationship**

The basic philosophy of logotherapy is to help the individual find meaning in his life. How does Logan look at religion in the process of finding meaning, where is it located, and how does one use it? It would be correct to explain the answers to these basic questions either from Frankl's own views or from those of theologian logotherapists. Bahadır (2011) stated that although Frankl was a religious person and the theoretical part of logotherapy emphasizes religiosity, this is not seen in practice. According to Frankl and Kreuzer (1994), religion is a deep part of human beings and is not fully reflected on the outside. However, it is very important for Frankl that religion and psychology or therapy should be close to each other. Frankl (2014) wrote, "Religion gives more than psychotherapy to man and demands more than that. The pollution of these areas, which complement each other and which are foreign to each other in terms of their aims, should be rejected in principle." As can be seen from these sentences, religion and psychotherapy are two phenomena complementing each other according to logotherapy but moving in different directions. If they are intermixed with each other or used to keep each other in place, according to Frankl, this will harm both of them. Morgan (2013) expressed Frankl's point of view on religion and spirituality as follows:



Frankl is neither against believers nor on belief-based worldviews. It is only against the fact that a certain group of spirituality belongs. Or according to Frankl, it is not right to oppose religion and spirituality that help people throughout the day. Religion is corrupted, or where people are deceived. Because “spirituality” is a fundamental component of human nature and man cannot be considered apart from him.

Frankl saw the relationship between man and spirituality as being built on two important concepts: “unconscious God” and “unconscious religion.” The intention is to express that a person is always conscious of a religious or spiritual belief in the same way that there is a God who is associated with man though man is unconscious of it. Here, we must note two points: First, Frankl was not talking about an unconscious God. On the contrary, he spoke of a God who is in intimate relationship with man though man is not conscious of it. In contrast, God has not acquired human space. God is only human by influence. Anyone who believes in a religion has internalized God in the depths of the soul (Frankl, 2014). With Frankl or logotherapy philosophy, it is not possible to mention finding meaning without discussing religion or spirituality at some point. Religion and spirituality exist within the therapy process even if they are not practiced therapeutically, as it is with them that the client can reach a higher understanding.

In all cases, logotherapy, which is considered to be psychotherapy, is not only meaningless, but it is my belief that the ultimate meaning, the dealing with the superficial meaning, and the religious belief in the end are my beliefs in the ultimate understanding (Frankl 2014).

According to Frankl, spiritual beliefs makes it easier for people to find meaning. However, he does not claim that one cannot find meaning without faith. There is a separation between belief and non-belief, and it is said that belief can be found with conscience, and belief is with God (Hahn, 1994). Frankl’s mountain metaphor is helpful in understanding the point: A faithful individual and an unbeliever climb a mountain together. The unbeliever stops there because of the layer of fog that arrives before the summit. This is because uncertainty scares him. The faithful climber, on the other hand, continues his way to the top because of his faith in God. Therefore, a devout person has a deeper sense of responsibility and consciousness (Kolbe, 1986). Bahadır (2000) wrote that the conscience is the last point reached by unbelievers. As Pargament (2007) stated, spirituality is an ordinary part of human life. Spirituality is influential in the vital points of human life from birth to death, and sometimes it can emerge much more clearly. Spirituality in times of crisis and disaster, and points we cannot understand help us to navigate situations that we cannot control. In addition, spirituality is beneficial not only in times of crisis, but in every stage of life.

In this context, the relation of logotherapy with religion and spirituality is very deep and tight, as understood from Frankl's descriptions. It is therefore emphasized that there is no inconvenience in using spirituality in logotherapy, as long as religion or spirituality is not used as a means of oppression or as a doorway to charlatanism. Therefore, spiritually oriented logotherapeutic studies will provide explanatory results at the point of testing the effectiveness and philosophy of logotherapy.

## Logotherapy Concepts and Techniques

### Concepts

Frankl's logotherapy, based on "finding meaning," assumes an individual's main goal is to find meaning. Life, according to Frankl, is meaningful in all circumstances, even the most difficult and unbearable situations. Frankl believed it is important not to understand the meaning of life in general, but to discover the special meaning of the individual (Morgan, 2005). For this reason, the priority of logotherapy is a psychotherapy school that helps one to find a vital sense of meaning. Frankl emphasized that other schools treat human beings physically and psychologically/mentally, neglecting the spiritual dimension, which is the most important one (Patterson & Watkins, 1996). Therefore, logotherapy deals with the psychological dimension and tries to bring solutions through the situations that take place there. Therapy in logotherapy is based on the treatment slogan "through meaning" (Bahadır, 2011).

To understand logotherapy correctly, it is important to have knowledge about the following concepts (see Figure 1)

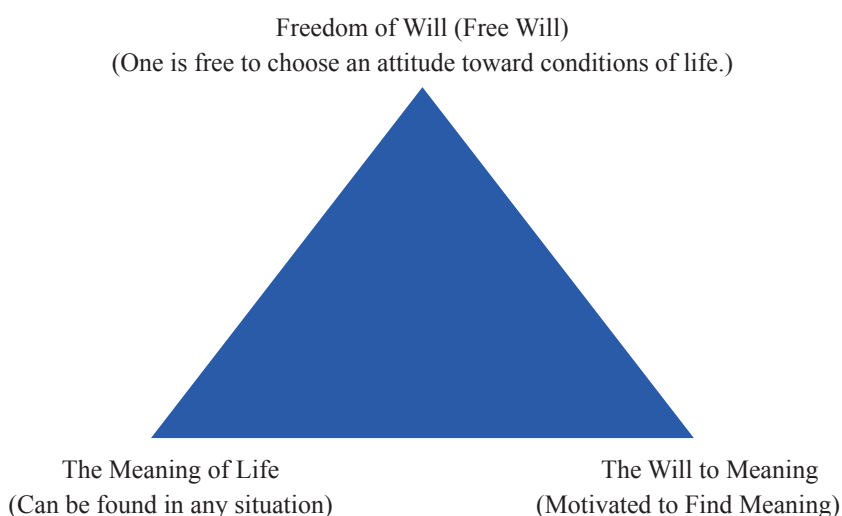


Figure 1. Basic assumptions of logotherapy (Wong, 1997).



**Freedom of will.** Frankl stated that people have the freedom of will and that they are obliged to carry their responsibilities as their decisions are the power and capacity they give (Frankl, 1988). In this context, it is of great importance that people are aware of the will of the person and act accordingly.

**The will to meaning.** One of the premises and basic concepts of logotherapy is “meaninglessness.” For the individual who has freedom of will, meaninglessness or willingness may emerge. Baumeister (1991) did his first empirical work on this subject to understand what the significance of meaning is in reality. For people to live, they need to have certain physical needs met, such as eating and drinking. Yet people also seek answers to questions about the meaning of life from psychologically and spiritually viewpoints. According to Heisel and Flet (2004), if one is constantly struggling to find meaning, this of course does not physically finish his life but pushes him toward suicide. Harlow, Newcomb, and Bentler (1986) reported that such struggle increased the possibility of suicide, loneliness, and many other disturbing problems. It is crucial to have a sense of meaning for one to perform healthier functions in life. Moreover, for one to have a sense of meaning, the individual must be free and bear responsibility. Karahan and Sardoğan (2004) stated that people can accept or reject what is free, using their capacity of choice. They also stated that being human beings in the same way is possible with responsibility.

**The meaning of life.** One of Frankl’s basic assumptions or concepts is the meaning of life. According to Wong (2014), the person who has the will to create is trying to find meaning, even in places such as Nazi camps or ruthless battlefields. People living in ruined countries seem to have a unique meaning for coping with trauma. Continuing, Wong (2014) explained that Frankl considered two points in regard to the meaning of life: the ultimate meaning and the situational meaning. The ultimate meaning is beyond understanding, but in this ultimate sense there is situational meaning, and in every chaos and destructive environment, a meaning is discovered with this potential. Frankl (2013) wrote that meaning must be discovered in the world. If a sense of our own or our soul is reflected in our world, then this is not a real meaning. The intent here is to provide physical and mental health together and reflect the whole human being.

**Existential barriers.** Frankl (2013) said that people will have existential obstacles in their lives as a result of the need to understand, to avoid, or to suffer. That is, when the relationship between the individual and the search for meaning is cut off, it is faced with existential obstruction.

**Noogenic neuroses.** Frankl (2013) described that in the wake of existential obstacles, neurogenic neuroses arise and this leads to an internal conflict. However, each conflict is not a neurogenic neurosis. On the contrary, it is an effort to find meaning.

**Common neuroses.** Individuals who escape from responsibility and freedom produce common neuroses for a variety of reasons. Especially in desperate situations, individuals may be fascinated by the belief that they cannot change things. Such attitudes lead people to think that they cannot plan and organize their own lives (Patterson & Watkins, 1996). Therefore, if they show common behavior together with those like themselves, they will not feel the sense of responsibility when they fall into it.

**Existential space.** Existential space can be interpreted as meaninglessly falling into meaninglessness. Gündoğan (1997) described that there is an existential gap in the sense that one is not in search of meaning, is writhing in helplessness, and has lost beliefs for the future. Frankl (2006) emphasized that the existential gap, which is synonymous with meaninglessness, is one of the most important problems of the individual. Öcal (2010) stated that meaning is equivalent to freedom, so it would be easier for individuals who have lost freedom and responsibility to become meaningless. Altıntaş and Gültekin (2004) found the existential gap: sadness, stagnation, and insensitivity to others.

## Techniques

Logotherapy uses many techniques in general. However, basically four techniques are used: paradoxical intentions, changing the mindset, shaping attitudes, and dialogic dialog (Barnes, 2005; Welter, 2005).

**Paradoxical intent.** Frankl (1988) described his paradoxical intention as encouraging and challenging the individual to face the fear of confrontation. This technique may be used to counter phobia, obsessiveness, and anxiety (Rice, 2005; Lukas, 1986). Paradoxically, the aim is that, instead of dealing with one's own symptoms, the person treats them with mockery and breaks the vicious circle that he has fallen into. The individual will learn not to ignore these problems over time, just as he will not ridicule them (Karahan & Sardoğan, 2004). Over time, as the individual begins to make them consciously, he is no longer afraid of the old (Marshall, 2011). This technique is used in family therapies, behavioral approaches, and gestalt approaches as well as in logotherapy (Ascher, 2002). The paradoxical intention technique, which is quite effective in a short period of time, is used successfully to treat sleep problems, agoraphobia, and anxiety (Schulenberg, 2003).

**Changing the thought focus.** Diving into an individual's thoughts can create problems for the person. With this technique, it is possible to change the direction of the thought that pushes the person to the problems and instead to get away from the problems (Lukas, 1986). The technique was developed by Frankl in the wake of World War II (Ameli & Dattilio, 2013). It is useful for a person who has a certain





position of worry. However, if people become obsessed with their worries, they may become victims of problems (Graber, 2004). This technique is fully engaged at this point. Attempts are made to ensure that clients have a healthy mindset by changing the mindset of those who spend excessive time worrying (Welter, 2005). This technique is used in many cases.

**Formation of attitudes.** This technique was developed by Lukas for mentally challenged clients (Marshall, 2011). A client who faces a problem but so far cannot solve it looks for a clue to make changes in a desperate situation (Schulenberg, Hutzell, Nassif, & Rogina, 2008). The changes that take place in the client's attitudes will help at least to bear the problems of the person (Rice, 2005). The changes that will be brought about in the attitudes of the individuals toward their unbearable problems are then brought to a state of being based on the technique of shaping their attitudes.

**Socratic dialog.** This is a technique that helps the individual to make explorations within himself/herself to facilitate meaning in the life of the individual and to help make sense in the same way (Schullenberg et al., 2008). The counselor in the dialog asks several questions according to the situation of the client to be aware of the client (Scraper, 2000). Of course, the style and quality of the questions asked in such cases is very important. Graber (2004) explained why evil-good questions should be avoided in favor of questions about what, when, where, who, how, and if.

The following supplementary techniques are also available in the logotherapy process (Düşünceli, 2015; Graber, 2004; Marshall, 2011; Schulenberg et al., 2008; Welter, 2005).

- i. Mountain range exercise
- ii. The movie of your life
- iii. Alternative list
- iv. Symbols and metaphors
- v. Logoanalysis
- vi. Logodr Game
- vii. Basic list
- viii. Guided autobiography
- ix. Logoanchor technique (Meaning refuge)



## Religion, Ministry, and Logotherapy

When the concept of meaning is considered, situations related to spirituality likely come to mind, because man can find meaning only through internal direction. This means that life is in a person who seeks life. Bucher (2007) stated that the concepts of spirituality and piety were discussed in research carried out toward the end of the last century, and that they were not exactly separated from one another. However, the two are mentioned as concepts that help to find meaning in the life of the individual. Meditative movements and esoteric occasions became popular due to people's spiritual needs (Grom, 2009). Such situations should be seen as efforts to make sense of the individual's life. However, religion and spirituality have been perceived as medieval dogmas, and consequently they were ignored despite being important in making people's lives meaningful (Utsch, Bonelli, & Pfeifer, 2014). In this section, various topics such as the relationship between logotherapy and spirituality will be examined and various perspectives will be explored.

### Meaning in Religious Literature

Questions about the meaning of life have always been difficult. Scientists, philosophers, and religious leaders have made numerous provocative arguments. The very essence of our existence in the world is, as always, of utmost importance. The essence of our being is that we have difficulty understanding that we are not enough to see life as a single link on a chain. It should be compared to other links. For this reason, it is not surprising that many people turn to religion as a source of meaning because of the doubts they have experienced about life and the general values of life (Guttman, 2008). Therefore, we will analyze ideas about the meaning of life in religious literature.

**Meaning of life according to Judaism.** To describe the relationship between meaning and religion in life, Jacobson (1995) offered a story: In a difficult winter season, two Jewish religious researchers came to a small town in Russia. They told me they had a religious bath there. The townspeople had a bath there, but it was very dangerous to go to the *hamam* on the mountain slope in the freezing weather. Although the two students did not believe the story, they set out the next day to test the truth of it. They saw an old man walking down the mountain slope with sure steps. They often got lost in the ice trying to follow him. Finally, when they came to the bath, they asked the old man, "How could you walk safely on this path?" The old man responded, "The more closely a person is tied up to Allah, the less rare he is." Jacobson linked this story to the words of Rabbi Schneerson. According to him, there are two approaches to investigating the truth: the first is the search for meaning by science, and the second is searching for meaning through God or religion. There is no question that the universe is guided by reason. At first, one starts to look for the



truth by trying to understand various events and then combining the pieces together like a jigsaw to make a painting. Scientists and philosophers look at the outer layers of the universe to discover the forces that lie within them. We all should know that whether we admit it or not, the hand in the glove is God. If we try to look for truth and meaning by observing the truth and experiencing the laws taught to us by looking at what the Creator has told us, we become more fully aware of how the Earth works and why it is created. In fact, true religion and true science are two different faces of the same medallion (Guttman, 2008; Jacobson, 1995).

The various Jewish rabbis in the study of meaning stress a strong link between science and God. They do not deny that science is technologically the cause of a dramatic change in living conditions (Guttman, 2008). The meaning of life in the Jewish religious perspective refers to the person's standing before God and his consciousness about this stance. This consciousness is the content and essence of religious belief. Professor Leibovits (1999) considered the question "What is the meaning of life?" He answered as follows: If one tries to find the meaning of life without regard to how long one lives, one can catch the ultimate meaning in life. This purpose or essence serves God. Raz (1986) noted that a Jewish rabbi likened Earth to a narrow bridge with cliffs on both sides. A strong faith and a bold spirit are required to provide safe passage from this bridge. Stress, depression, and sadness are common situations in human life. Faithful people can achieve happiness if things go well. A person can be happy even if his work goes bad. For though he is weak, he wants his face to connect with the mercy of God and for God to give him happy days.

When we look at Judaism and meaning in general, it seems that finding meaning in Judaism is possible only by being connected with God. In the same way, it is also seen that the Jews possessed much of logotherapy. Various criticisms have also been made. Bulka (1972) stated that logotherapy tries to show that philosophical foundations are related to Judaism: "I cannot say that logotherapy takes every aspect of Judaism, but there is also sufficient evidence that there is a philosophically sound link between logotherapy and Judaism." Jewish-oriented logotherapy applications will be given at the end of the chapter.

**Meaning of life according to Christianity.** It is necessary to talk about the interaction between Christianity and logotherapy, since Christians do not necessarily find meaning. Since the first years of logotherapy, studies on logotherapy and Christianity have been done and books have been written. Tweedie and Donald (1963) wrote a large book on this subject, in which they stated that logotherapy was compatible with Christianity but that it separated from the Bible in some basic beliefs. According to Wong (1997), for Christians, one's profession is very important in finding meaning as fulfilling a profession is seen as a responsibility to God.

This leads to positive thinking and a purposeful life. It affects both one's emotions and one's life. In this context, examples will be presented of Christian-supported logotherapy applications. Figure 2 shows the steps of spiritual orientation of the problems encountered by workers engaged in Spiritual Orientation Logotherapy.

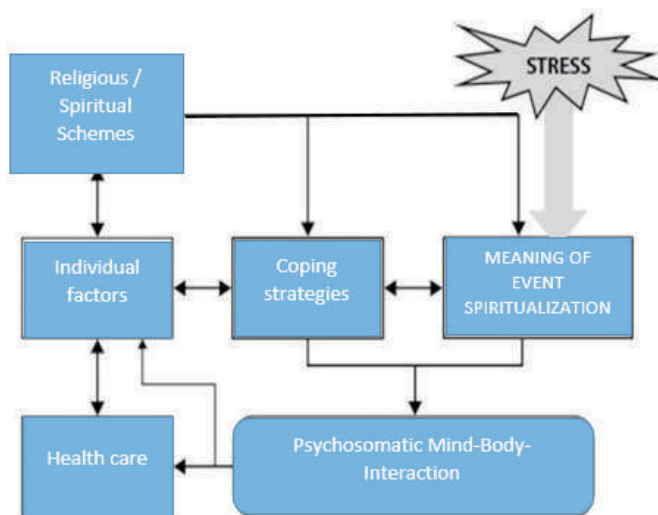


Figure 2. Strategies for spiritual orientation toward stress determined by Utsch et al. (2014).

**Meaning of life according to Islam.** The basic philosophy of logotherapy is not far from Islam. However, Muslim psychotherapists have not addressed this issue in depth. Some religious and spiritual arguments have been placed among the logotherapeutic interventions in Iran, Pakistan, and several other Islamic countries.

### Spiritually Oriented Logotherapy Principles and Steps

Researchers suggested that various principles and steps must be known to begin Spiritual Orientation Logotherapy. Guttmann (2008) suggested that Spiritual Orientation Logotherapy works within the framework of the principles shown in Table 1.



Table 1  
*Principles*

1. THE FIRST PRINCIPLE: FREEDOM OF WILL	2. THE SECOND PRINCIPLE: THE DEFIANT POWER OF THE HUMAN SPIRIT
3. THE THIRD PRINCIPLE: THE THREE HUMAN DIMENSIONS	4. THE FOURTH PRINCIPLE: THE HUMAN SPIRIT IS THE HEALTHY NUCLEUS IN EACH HUMAN BEING
5. THE FIFTH PRINCIPLE: MAN CAN RISE ABOVE AND BEYOND HIMSELF	6. THE SIXTH PRINCIPLE: WE HAVE THE CAPACITY FOR SELF-DETACHMENT
7. THE SEVENTH PRINCIPLE: WE LIVE IN THE PRESENT AND SHOULD LOOK FORWARD TO THE FUTURE	8. THE EIGHTH PRINCIPLE: EACH MAN IS UNIQUE AND IRREPLACEABLE
9. THE NINTH PRINCIPLE: MEANING IS SUBJECTIVE AND CHANGING	10. THE TENTH PRINCIPLE: THE MEANING OF THE MOMENT
11. THE ELEVENTH PRINCIPLE: WE ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR OUR CHOICES	12. THE TWELFTH PRINCIPLE: SPIRITUAL TENSION
13. THE THIRTEENTH PRINCIPLE: DISCOVERING MEANING IN LIFE IS NOT A GIFT BUT AN ACHIEVEMENT	14. THE FOURTEENTH PRINCIPLE: A POSITIVE ATTITUDE TOWARD LIFE
15. THE FIFTEENTH PRINCIPLE: HAPPINESS IS A BY-PRODUCT OF MEANING IN LIFE	

Southwick, Lowthert, and Graber (2016) summarized the following steps for Spiritual Orientation Logotherapy against stress and trauma.

**Definition.** Logotherapy is a healthy way of reaching understanding. It considers concepts such as healthy thinking, creativity, imagination, belief, love, conscience, and self-transcendence. Fabry (1975) emphasized that there are three dimensions to each person, and a person is only “real” if these dimensions are together. The three dimensions are the body, mind, and spirit. Logotherapy starts the therapy process with the definition of human. When people are defined correctly, real results can be obtained.

**Optimism.** An important point in logotherapy is optimism. Frankl (1988) argues that logotherapy is an optimistic approach and that successes may be possible with optimism. Graber (2004) noted that there is realistic optimism in logotherapy, which is very useful in the therapeutic process.

**Facing fear.** It is important to confront fear in Spiritual Orientation Logotherapy. Especially with the “paradoxical intent” technique, one looks at one’s own humorous feelings and understands that he is something to be afraid of instead of being afraid his symptoms. The example therapy at the end of the chapter will be examined in more detail in practice.

**Values.** Frankl (1986) believed that universal values exist. Fabry (1975) explained that these are time tested values. These values touch the spiritual direction of a person and prevent the individual from easily experiencing trauma. Frankl (1986) described values within the meaning of a triangle. The first of these values is that each individual has a distinctive creativity and unique aspects. If contact is made, the person will be

returned from where he or she fell. The second value consists of the experiences of one's life. These experiences have a very important place in finding meaning. The third value comprises attitude values. The most important point here is "religion." Our experience can only gain meaning with religion, love, and reality (Graber, 2004).

**Altruism.** Identity is called the heart of logotherapy. Frankl (1986) believed that one can always find true meaning through love and compassion and that one's self is related to love's values and only to others. Graber (2004) noted that in logotherapy, this means reaching the appropriate targets and responsibilities toward other people.

**Religiousness/spirituality.** Although Frankl saw logotherapy as a philosophy of life, not as a religion, he gave a special importance to it. Nevertheless, psychotherapy and religion were never placed by each other (Graber, 2004). In logotherapy, spirituality and religion do not mean the same thing and are different as from each other. Frankl (1988) emphasized that it is important to take advantage of religious beliefs and to take advantage of this flexibility. According to Frankl, religion gives spiritual power that a person cannot find anywhere else and makes it easy to reach the final meaning. Logotherapy can work with any kind of religion. The aim is to make it easier for someone to find meaning by receiving support from their spiritual values. Logotherapy, which improves the integrity of the mind, body, and soul, sees religious values as an important point of self-sufficiency. As Fabry (1975) wrote, in logotherapy, belief is the power of the individual to find meaning, and this state of affairs has made man more than love.

**Flexibility: Acceptance and cognitive reassessment.** Flexibility in how the individual thinks and behaves in stressful and difficult times is very important. Individuals with strong coping mechanisms are more resistant to difficult circumstances. Survey respondents indicated they used different cognitive and emotional strategies in the struggle against stress. They removed negativities through humor and changed negative beliefs by reasserting their own beliefs (Southwick & Charney, 2012b).

Graber (2009) emphasized that being aware of the facts actually hides the seed of meaning. He demonstrated that those who face sorrows and accept them become more compassionate people. The most important point here is not a strict position but a flexible position.

**Humor.** Frankl (2006) believed that people are freed from humiliating situations through humor. Humor indicates that one can defeat one's destiny. According to Frankl, the soul uses humor as a weapon to protect itself. Graber (2004) wrote that from now on we are able to fall in love. Humor in this direction is an effective method applied in logotherapy.



**Active head.** Frankl (1986) noted that it is important to deal actively with things in life. For this, the individual has to describe his tasks well and encode them well because no one can bring a healthy solution as much as a solution that will bring the individual to a state that he or she has correctly coded. Therefore, it is very important for the individual to be aware of his/her duties and responsibilities and actively deal with the problem.

**Stress training.** Frankl (1988) said that some stress and tension is beneficial to the human psyche, but excessive stress and tension can destroy the internal balance and therefore must be reduced. In this respect, stress education and stress coping strategies are important points for logotherapy.

**Responsibility.** Being responsible is the essence of being durable. When people are aware of their responsibilities, they are able to beat their fears, realize their free will, realize their moral and ethical values, have positive emotions, have realistic optimism, help others, try to find solutions instead of running away from problems, turn negative situations into positive ones, develop their ability to achieve their goals, accept difficulties, learn lessons, work hard, and learn how to deal with stress (Graber, 2004). Frankl (1986) called for courage to face responsibility. Human beings have a fear of escaping from responsibility. However, those who dare to show responsibility may find meaning and dealing with meaning.

### **Techniques for Spiritually Oriented Logotherapy**

Boehm, Golec, Krahn, and Smyth (1999) stated that the following techniques are applied with the support of clients' spirituality and that their benefits have been seen many times. Some of these techniques have been developed by adapting to Harris (1991).

**Self-confidence/belief.** In this technique, the individual sees that he can change something by realizing his/her own power. Good steps to the family, to the environment, or to loved ones will give good results. Thus, at first, the person will see that he has made the change that he does not believe and will realize that the power he or she is looking for exists.

**Visualization.** The purpose of visualization is to imagine and portray the environment in which one feels well and rests by getting rid of troubles. In this technique, the person is removed from disturbing emotions, helping to create stress-reducing images and mental pictures. This technique is quite effective.

**Getting to the center: Exploring the spiritual way.** A person is asked questions with the aim of revealing his or her most powerful spiritual aspects and making it easy for the individual to deal with inconveniences. An example question is, Do you feel that God is with you?

**Improving capability to live.** Individuals are reminded that there are many things in the world that will delight and delight in the world. In every moment of life, one should try to realize that there is something worth living for. Various questions are asked to ensure that people are aware of such things. An example question is, What do you need to do to make your life more enjoyable?

**Finding yourself.** There is a picture or word that comes to mind for every question. The main purpose is for the person to find himself. By utilizing his spiritual powers, he is able to define himself. An example question is, Who are you except yourself?

**Choosing your own duo.** Prayer is an important activity that helps us concentrate our spirit. Our favorite prayer is read again and again. In fact, a different prayer is chosen every time. This prayer can also be created by the person himself, for example, “I am strong, and the strength I carry is stronger and happier with you.”

**Spiritual power awakening.** The main purpose of spiritual power awakening is to find out the strong spiritual aspects that one brings from his past and to use it in the course of therapy.

Example questions: Have you ever had an experience that you would call religious or spiritual? Has this experience influenced your life?

**Creating your own chamber.** The person is presented with the opportunity to organize his own room. The person will visualize a room where he finds peace. In this room the person will feel his own space, color, texture, and air. Through his spiritual experiences, he will try to survive. In this room, he will imagine his strengths and apply them to subsequent processes.

**Combining spirituality and dwelling.** The person will stand in silence and breathe with certain rhythms. The spirit will feel the spirit of the depths. He will quietly listen to his soul and use his four strengths: sensitivity, emotion, perceptions, and connections. He will try to join them together in the spiritual dimension. The main purpose is to ensure that the spirituality and religion that one possesses lead to the realization of the potential power that the individual has created in himself and for the individual to gain confidence.

**Discovering creation.** This step is discovering the talents our spiritual power has. This technique is essentially related to revealing the artistic dimension hidden in our spiritual dimension. We try to find these directions with a few basic processes that are asked. They are then used in the therapy process.

Example: Your childhood (an event in which you are doing something creative). What are your creative aspects in your youth years, your years of adulthood? What does God create and how?





**Integration with a garden.** The individual is told to imagine breathing for a few minutes between plants in a garden and to then touch and feel the garden and plants. The plants talk to the person. After that, the person is asked various questions and their spiritual strengths are discovered.

Example: Which gardens of your life have you noticed with this garden? What happened to you in the garden that makes you sad or gives you peace of mind?

### **Examples of Spiritual Orientation Logotherapy**

#### **Example of Spiritually Oriented Logotherapy for Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder**

[Moklebust \(2016\)](#) worked with a client with post-traumatic stress disorder. The work done with this client is briefly summarized as follows: Maria was a 58-year-old mother. Ever since her children got married, she had been having sleep problems. It was decided that her religious dimension was strong and would help her overcome her problems. First, the client's previous treatment was considered. She had already received 13 weeks of CIS treatment and had not seen any benefit. A treatment plan was drawn up that called for Maria be treated by taking advantage of her strengths. The spiritual aspect of logotherapy was addressed with support for religiosity, which was a strong direction for Maria. Maria, who suffered from chronic sleep disturbance, had set the goal and program to solve this problem. [Guttman \(1988\)](#) emphasized that the three dimensions are effective under each condition, but that the solution is spiritual.

#### **Therapeutic targets.**

##### **I. Related to PTSD.**

- A. Increase your sleeping ability.
- B. Reduce anxiety.
- C. Reduce painful memories.

##### **II. About Meaning.**

- A. Improve value awareness.
- B. Increase the perception of meanings for life.
- C. Solve the factors that impede freedom of functioning.
- D. Develop awareness of her behavior and its consequences for herself and others.
- E. Encourage/challenge the perception of options clearly to resolve the problem.
- F. Procurement adaptation and coping with the problem by enhancing, challenging and influencing functioning ([Moklebust, 2016](#)).

**Sessions in brief.** Maria stated that she could not sleep and had not benefited from

her previous treatments; the therapist first helped her by calming her. She realized that Maria's religious orientation was strong, and she went to treatment at this point. Maria loved the five-stage duality her mother had taught her since she was little, but she said she could not do it. The therapist asked Maria to say these prayers at night. After about three sessions, Maria reported that she had fallen asleep without completing the prayers. The therapist emphasized that it is very useful to know the spiritual direction of the client and to offer relevant treatment. As a result, Maria's problem was solved in a very short time with the help of the spiritual power hidden in her from the sleep disorder.

### **Overview of Work Done**

This section will present various examples of studies that can be collected under the name Spiritual Orientation Logotherapy. First, [Chun-Nan \(1993\)](#) conducted a study to determine the consequences of the beliefs in Taiwan and China used in logotherapy. Religious beliefs in China and Taiwan were found to be compatible with logotherapy. Especially for some clients, the results showed a match of close to 100%. In this context, it has been emphasized that Chinese philosophy and religious understanding together with logotherapy are very effective and will yield beneficial results. In addition, [Robatmili et al.'s \(2015\)](#) study titled "The Effects of Group Logotherapy on Meaning and Depression Levels of Persian Students" showed that sessions prepared with Iranian students' spiritual values reduced their levels of depression and improved their academic performance.

[Julom and Guzman \(2013\)](#) conducted a study entitled "The Effectiveness of the Logotherapy Program in Reducing the Feeling of Significance in Patients with Stroke." In the study, activities were made to make meaningful the lives of individuals who had serious physical disabilities. The participants were 16 patients who had fallen into despair and had no anticipation of life. In particular, the idea that they would spend the rest of their lives in heaven affected them in a positive way. At the end of the study, there was a decrease in the sense of meaninglessness in all 16 patients with paralysis, and the program designed with a spiritual perspective was shown to have had a significant effect.

To briefly mention a few of the other studies that have been carried out, [Landau, Kosloff, and Schmeichel \(2011\)](#) showed that belief and spirituality are effective in reducing the anxiety of people exposed to an existential threat in their work. In the same way, the fact that the thought of death dragged the person into a theological quest was also obtained on the basis of the study. [Davis, Juhl, and Routledge \(2011\)](#) found that theological beliefs also reduced the fear of death. Likewise, [Bassett and Going \(2012\)](#) concluded that spirituality was effective at eliminating negative thoughts. [Batson, Schoenrade, and Ventis \(1993\)](#) found that religious beliefs reduced anxiety

about death and increased the prosperity of life. Jonas and Fischer (2006) found that individuals with a strong religiosity in their inner world experienced a lower fear of death. Vail et al. (2010) showed that religion helped protect people from fear of death.

### Conclusion

Spiritual Orientation Logotherapy is centered on meaning as well as the value of spirituality in human life. There are gaps in the individual's life that cannot be replaced when only material values or biological needs are addressed (Bresser, 1993). Certainly, there are spiritual, moral, and ethical values apart from the abovementioned needs. It is not possible to work out the solutions by ignoring these values. Bresser (1993) stated that it is necessary to enter the worlds of these values to understand and find the human. Otherwise, these values, which are always visible, will be constantly queried and examined by new trends. Psychology offers knowledge beyond the physical condition of the person. People have to discover the secrets that drive psychological disturbances. Frankl, one of the representatives of this quest, has pioneered psychotherapy in this regard. Frankl (2014) stated that humans are not merely physical or psychological, but we have a spiritual dimension that completes these two dimensions and is stronger. Moreover, he added that physical and psychological healing is hidden in the spiritual dimension. In this direction, Frankl raised the concepts of unconscious God and unconscious religion and claimed that every person is inwardly in these situations. Pacciolla (1993) emphasized that religiosity or spirituality is an irrefutable fact and that these aspects of people's lives, especially those who carry religious and spiritual items in their lives, should not be ignored. On the contrary, he added, these aspects are important points for a good therapist.

Spiritual Orientation Logotherapy utilizes the spiritual aspects of individuals' lives in finding meaning and organizes sessions on these spiritual aspects in the course of therapy. On this point, despite the work done by Jewish and Christian psychologists, logotherapy has largely left out the input of Muslims. The organization of sessions on completely Islamic concepts and the sharing of the consequences of these sessions will remove the ambiguities in this regard.

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