

My confidence had a long way to grow, but over the past three years it has, as has my practice. At last I feel I belong in this learning community and am able to contribute to it as well as use it. It feels good to be part of a training that is creatively alive and constantly evolving its theoretical basis.

I am about to start Stage Five; my

understanding is that we will use the year to deepen and develop our style and integration, in working towards submitting for the Diploma. I have heard nothing to suggest this is not the deep end all over again. I am excited; I feel as if I am preparing to go into a subterranean cave peopled by alchemists. I am also extremely daunted — what if...?



Viktor Frankl

(26th March 1905–2nd September 1997)

Sandie Ritter

Viktor Frankl, founder of Logotherapy died of heart failure on 2nd September at his home in Vienna at the age of 92. Although I never met him, I heard him lecture at a Logotherapy Conference in California several years ago. He was a very charismatic and inspirational man, who

spoke with courage and conviction in his beliefs. Viktor Frankl was awarded 29 honorary doctorates, and lectured widely throughout his life. He published some 30 books, though not all translated from German, the most well known being *Man's Search for Meaning* (an introduction to lo-

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gotherapy, as well as some of his personal Death Camp experiences). Born in Vienna, he worked as a psychiatrist and neurologist, and trained with both Freud and Adler, creating his own ideas about human nature. He wrote a manuscript outlining his theories during World War II, which was confiscated from him when he was imprisoned in Auschwitz. During his experiences in four concentration camps, he was able to put his theories to the test, and concluded that people have the inner strength to survive the most horrific experiences with relatively few emotional scars, he often referred to this aspect of human nature as 'the defiant power of human spirit to rise above circumstances to which we feel victims'. This is an underlying principle of Logotherapy. Logotherapy was known as the third Viennese school of psychotherapy, the first school being Freud's and the second Adler's. While Freud suggested that human nature was based on the pleasure principle, Adler felt that human nature was based on the drive for status and power. Frankl felt that human nature is based on a will to meaning, that is to say, when we feel that our lives are meaningful we automatically feel happy. Logotherapy therefore postulates that we attain happiness through finding that which is meaningful to us in our lives. Frankl created several techniques that are used in a variety of therapies, perhaps

the most widely known (though not often credited to him) is the use of Paradoxical Intention — a technique used in Family Therapy.

There are Logotherapy Institutes in the USA, some South American countries, and throughout Europe, but for some unknown reason, Logotherapy has never been a popular therapy here in the UK. I have always been puzzled by this, perhaps, as the Obituary in the *Jewish Chronicle* (September 12th) stated 'Britain did not warm to him and his message, perhaps because his life's experiences had left him with little sense of irony or understatement. But he felt that this was Britain's loss, not his.' Another possibility for its lack of popularity is that Logotherapy is a directive short-term therapy which focuses a person's attention to positive aspects of his/her life. Viktor Frankl was against 'dependency' within the therapist/client relationship, and perhaps this contributes to the unpopularity of Logotherapy in Britain. Having taken classes in Logotherapy while living in California, I have found it to be an invaluable way of working with people. Logotherapy is being used by social workers, counsellors, nurses, psychotherapists in many settings in the USA, and Viktor Frankl's contribution to humanity continues to enable many people to find meaning in their lives, and to overcome their suffering.

