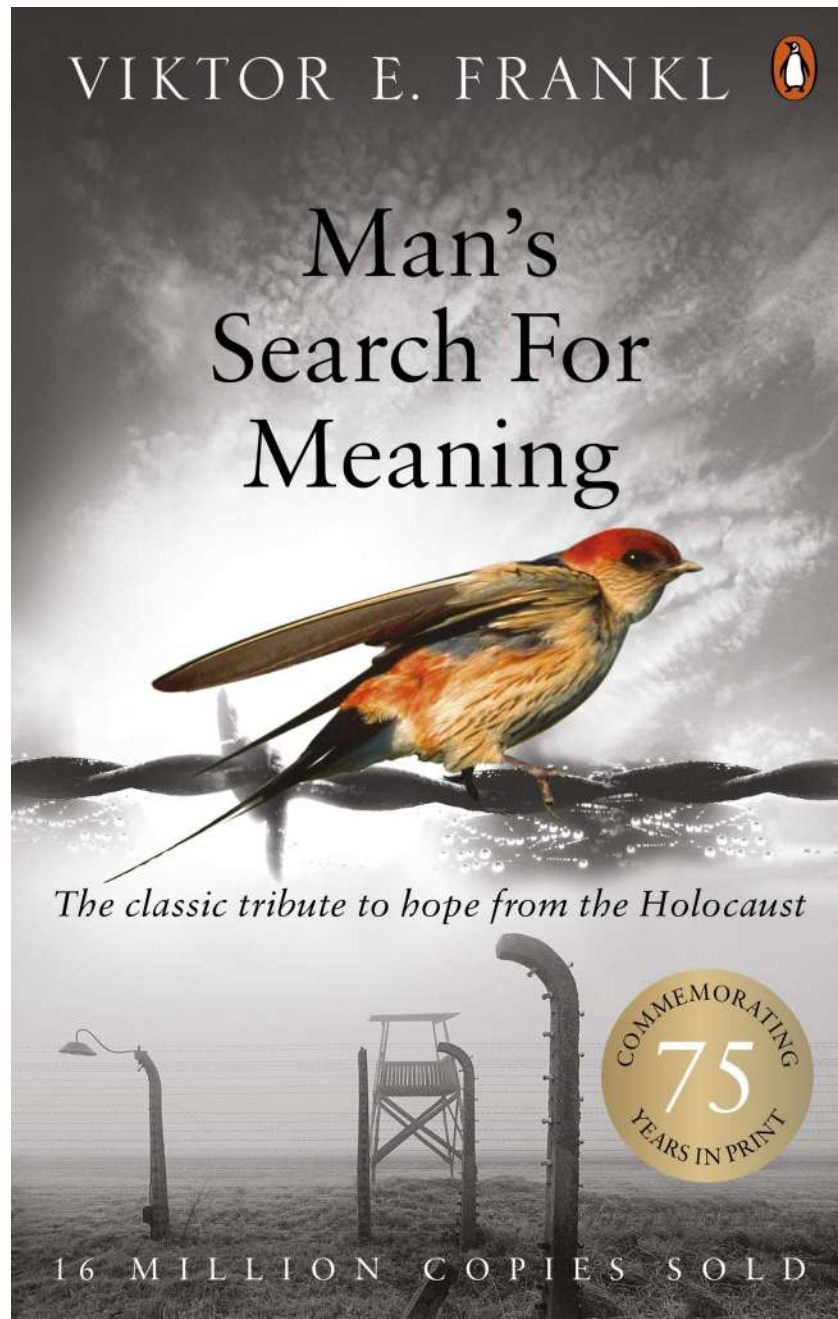


A Book Review On - Man's Search For Meaning



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“Man’s Search for Meaning” is an autobiographical book written by Victor Emil Frankl in 1946 AD. The author of the book, Viktor E. Frankl was an Austrian neurologist, psychiatrist, and Holocaust survivor. He discovered logotherapy, a therapeutic approach that focuses on how we might withstand adversity and pain by looking for meaning in our lives. Frankl's experience in concentration camps and how he was able to survive in such a dreadful environment are mentioned in this book.

The author’s main agenda in the book is that a man's primary drive is not pleasure, as Freud believed, but rather the search for meaning. We are motivated not by what we feel good about, but by what gives our life meaning and purpose. Frankl argues that we can endure any suffering if we can find meaning in even the most difficult situations of our life. The author describes how he was able to use his experiences to forge a will for purpose and a courageous, honorable outlook on life, even in the most hopeless and helpless situation he was in. He has inspired many people to look for their own sense of meaning and purpose through this book, despite any challenges they may encounter in their life.

Frankl had once said, “The salvation of man is through love and in love.” During the hardest time in a person’s life, they search for love. Love makes it easier to endure the pain and can save people. Life is not beautiful because the world is perfect. In fact, the world is filled with bitterness and brutality but it is beautiful because there is a gleam of hope hiding in a person’s heart. The hope to meet their loved ones is what saves a person in life. And just like that, during the time in the concentration camp with the thought of his wife, the author had the courage to endure all the pain and survive to meet his loved one.

While the book emphasizes on Frankl's experiences during the Holocaust, the book also offers insightful observations about the human condition that may be used in any circumstances. Anyone who wants to comprehend the human psyche or learn how to deal with challenging situations in life should definitely read this book.

Anyway, Frankl's writing is mostly concerned with discovering purpose in life and he also talks about three phases of mental reaction to life as a prisoner in the concentration camp. The first phase is the **shock of admission**. During the first phase according to the author, the prisoners inside the concentration camp experience boundless longing for their home and family and then

feel disgusted with all the uglinesses inside the camp. Then comes curiosity or a strange kind of humor which is a fundamental reaction to a strange circumstance a person is in. And, in the second phase which is **apathy**, the prisoners start to go through a lack of emotion and reach the stage where they do not care anymore and get used to their daily and hourly beatings. Then in the last stage, the author talked about the prisoners who were **liberated** from the camp.

After being released, the prisoners had to deal with two life-changing events that could also be harmful to their mental health: **bitterness and disillusionment**. The last stage is the bitterness the liberated prisoners felt after seeing the unresponsiveness of the whole world towards them. In the book, the author has expressed how he felt after being released from the camp.

“Superficiality and lack of feeling...so disgusting that one finally felt like creeping into a hole and neither hearing nor seeing human beings anymore”. (pg 113)

According to the author, disillusionment was the worst in the last stage. The realization that the suffering does not cease and that the happiness he had longed for will not be gained. This was the feeling of many who, like Frankl, arrived home to find no one waiting for them. They no longer had their loved ones, the hope that had kept them going during their incarceration in the concentration camp. This stage, according to Frankl, was the hardest to get over for him.

After experiencing hell in the concentration camp, finding meaning and purpose, according to Frankl, should be the main goal of life. He thinks there is always something that can be done to improve circumstances, even in the most demanding environments. If it is viewed as a chance to develop and learn, suffering can really provide significance. Though it is not always simple, it is possible to find meaning in life. Frankl's tale demonstrates that even under the direst circumstances, there is still hope and he himself is proof of this statement.

A critical analysis of Viktor Frankl's "Man's Search for Meaning" reveals that the author provides a detailed and personal account of his experiences during the Holocaust. He uses his own story to explore the psychological effects of such a horrific event, as well as the ways in which people can find meaning in their lives despite overwhelming suffering. Frankl's work has been praised for its insights into human nature and the resilience of the human spirit. However, some critics have argued that the author's focus on his own experiences means that he does not provide a

comprehensive overview of the Holocaust. Others have questioned whether Frankl's ideas about finding meaning in life can be applied to other situations, such as those who do not experience such extreme suffering.

Overall, "Man's Search for Meaning" is a strong and thought-provoking book that provides insightful information about how we can deal with challenging circumstances. Holocaust survivor and well-known psychiatrist Viktor Frankl has his own distinct viewpoint on the purpose of life. Frankl discusses in this book how we frequently fail to find meaning in our lives because we search for it in the wrong places. Frankl thinks that the meaning of life is something that each of us must discover for ourselves and cannot be found externally. We give life its purpose through our actions and experiences. This implies that the search for meaning is unique for each individual. While some people may discover their meaning through their professions, others might find it through friendships or voluntary work. There is no right or wrong approach to discovering your purpose in life. What matters is that we are always looking for it and evolving as individuals during the process. Hence, to know detailly about daily life in concentration camps and the mental sufferings of the prisoners, I recommend everyone to read this book.