

"Meaning brings Frankl to life in full dimension—his spirit, determination, wisdom, and integrity."

—Jeffrey K. Zeig, Ph.D., Director, The Milton H. Erickson Foundation.



meaning

a play based on the
life of Viktor E. Frankl

Rubin Battino, M.S.

Meaning
A play based on the life of
Viktor E. Frankl

Rubin Battino, M.S.
Mental Health Counseling
Adjunct Professor,
Department of Human Services (counseling)
Wright State University, Ohio, USA



Crown House Publishing
www.crownhouse.co.uk

Crown House Publishing Limited
Crown Buildings
Bancyfelin
Carmarthen
Wales
SA33 5ND
UK

Crown House Publishing Limited
P.O. Box 2223
Williston
VT 05495-2223
USA

www.crownhouse.co.uk

© Rubín Battino 1999, 2001, 2002

The right of Rubín Battino to be identified as the author of this work
has been asserted by him in accordance with the
Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988.

All rights reserved. Except as permitted under current
legislation no part of this work may be photocopied, stored in a retrieval
system, published, performed in public, adapted, broadcast, transmitted,
recorded or reproduced in any form or by any means,
without the prior permission of the copyright owners.

Enquiries should be addressed to
Crown House Publishing Limited.

British Library Cataloguing-in-Publication Data

A catalogue entry for this book is available
from the British Library.

International Standard Book Number

1899836837

Library of Congress Control Number

2002107638

Printed and bound in the UK by
Bell & Bain Limited
Glasgow

Table of Contents

Acknowledgments	iii
Foreword	v
Preface	vii
Production Notes	xi
Act I	1
<i>Scene 1</i> About Man's Search for Meaning	3
<i>Scene 2</i> A Selection Process: Camp to Camp	7
<i>Scene 3</i> Premium Coupons	11
<i>Scene 4</i> The First Phase is Shock	15
<i>Scene 5</i> The Bath—Textbooks Tell Lies!	21
<i>Scene 6</i> Suicide	25
<i>Scene 7</i> Apathy—The Second Stage	29
<i>Scene 8</i> Dreams and Food	33
<i>Scene 9</i> Politics and Religion	39
<i>Scene 10</i> My Wife's Image	41
<i>Scene 11</i> The Inner Life of the Prisoner	45
<i>Scene 12</i> Psychological Factors in the Camps	49
<i>Scene 13</i> Being a Typhus Doctor and Acting Like a Sheep	53
<i>Scene 14</i> The Science Teacher	57

Act II	59
Scene 15 The Size of Human Suffering	61
Scene 16 Art in a Concentration Camp	65
Scene 17 Decisions and Escape	67
Scene 18 Faith in the Future	73
Scene 19 After Liberation	79
Scene 20 Dr J.'s Story	83
Scene 21 Some Personal Stories	87
Scene 22 General Philosophy	95
Scene 23 Frau Kotek	99
Scene 24 The Science Teacher	103

Scene 1

About Man's Search for Meaning

Title Board: ABOUT MAN'S SEARCH FOR MEANING
In a lecture hall
Frankl; Frankl's Colleague

Visual: Frankl lecturing.

Stage Directions: There is a lectern for a lecture. Frankl is behind the lectern and Colleague is stage right commenting.

FRANKL: My book *Man's Search for Meaning* does not claim to be an account of facts and events but of personal experiences, experiences which millions of prisoners here suffered time and again. It is the inside story of a concentration camp, told by one of its survivors. This tale is not concerned with the great horrors, which have already been described often enough (though less often believed), but with the multitude of small torments. In other words, it will try to answer this question: How was everyday life in a concentration camp reflected in the mind of the average prisoner?

FRANKL'S COLLEAGUE (COLLEAGUE): And you presume to speak for them all, to describe their experiences? You survived, yes. Speak about your thoughts, your survival. Do you think another description will answer that question?

FRANKL: Yes. We were separate, we were individual, we made choices; yet, we were so controlled and confined that at times we were just one mind, one body.

COLLEAGUE: So tell your tale. On your head be it.

Meaning

FRANKL: Most of the events described in the book did not take place in the large and famous camps, but in the small ones where most of the real extermination took place. This story is not about the suffering and death of great heroes and martyrs, nor is it about the prominent Capos—prisoners who acted as trustees, having special privileges—or well-known prisoners. It is not so much concerned with the suffering of the mighty, but with the sacrifices, the crucifixion and the deaths of the great army of unknown and unrecorded victims.

COLLEAGUE: You're reading minds again.

FRANKL: Not so, we were one. Yes, it was these common prisoners, who bore no distinguishing marks on their sleeves, whom the Capos really despised. You see, while these ordinary prisoners had little or nothing to eat, the Capos never went hungry. In fact, many of the Capos lived better in the camp than they had in their lives.

COLLEAGUE: Another paradox.

FRANKL: Often these men were harder on the prisoners than were the guards, and beat them more cruelly than the SS men did.

COLLEAGUE: And will you tell their story, too?

FRANKL: Perhaps that will come out. These Capos, of course, were chosen only from those prisoners whose characters promised to make them suitable for such procedures. If they did not comply with what was expected of them, they were immediately demoted.

COLLEAGUE: They, too, had choices; or did fear rob them of that?

FRANKL: Fear? Fear? Almost a meaningless word in the camps.

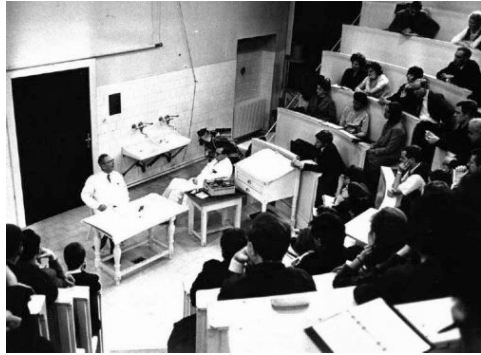
COLLEAGUE: You were afraid.

Scene 1: About Man's Search for Meaning

FRANKL: Of course. You would need to be crazy not to. But, these men soon became much like the SS men and the camp wardens. They can all be judged on a similar psychological basis.

COLLEAGUE: Are you judging? You who understood it all?

FRANKL: You can understand *and* judge. That is what makes us human. To understand does not remove the obligation to judge. Or to forgive.



Wednesday Lecture, 1966.

Source: Viktor Frankl Institute, Vienna, Austria.

COLLEAGUE: Fancy words. I need to hear more.

FRANKL: Nietzsche said, "He who has a *why* to live for can bear with almost any *how*."

COLLEAGUE: Fancy thought, nicely phrased. Out of what concentration camp did Nietzsche come?

FRANKL: You do not have to suffer to learn. But, if you don't learn from suffering over which you have no control, then your life becomes truly meaningless.



Frankl, 1994.

COLLEAGUE: You don't recommend suffering for learning?

FRANKL: Only if it is beyond your control ...

End of Scene 1

Scene 15

The Size of Human Suffering

- Title Board:** THE SIZE OF HUMAN SUFFERING
De-lousing. No chimney!
Frankl; Colleague
- Visual:** Standing outside in the rain. Camp crematorium. Three photos showing delousing behind a back-lit sheet. Ladling soup.
- Stage Directions:** Match visuals to dialogue. Delousing via a series of slides.

FRANKL: A man's suffering is similar to the behavior of a gas which will completely fill any size of empty container. Suffering completely fills the human soul and conscious mind. Therefore, the "size" of human suffering is absolutely relative.



Crematorium.

Source: Hartmann, E. (1995). In the Camps.

Meaning

COLLEAGUE: From the loss of a favorite pet to that of a loved one.

FRANKL: Yes. It follows that a very trifling thing can cause the greatest of joys. We were being moved from Auschwitz and were all afraid that the destination was the Mauthausen camp. You cannot possibly imagine the dance of joy performed in the carriage by the prisoners when we realized we were “only” heading for Dachau!

COLLEAGUE: Only Dachau!

FRANKL: When we arrived the first important news was that this comparatively small camp—only two thousand five hundred—had no “oven,” no crematorium, no gas! A person who became a “Moslem” would have to wait to be returned to Auschwitz to be killed. We laughed and cracked jokes.

COLLEAGUE: It was not all jokes.

FRANKL: One of our members was missing and we had to stand all night and into the next morning, outside, frozen and soaked to the skin. Yet we were all very pleased—no chimney!

COLLEAGUE: It was all relative.

FRANKL: We envied convicts who had it much better than us. We longed for a factory job in a sheltered room. All of the outside work parties were different. Some foremen maintained a tradition of dealing out numerous blows. I was once in such a group and was saved by an air-raid alarm which made it necessary to regroup the workers.

COLLEAGUE: You were saved by many such strange happenings.

FRANKL: We were grateful for the smallest of mercies like enough time to delouse before going to bed.

COLLEAGUE: How was that done?

FRANKL: It meant standing naked in an unheated hut where icicles hung from the ceiling. If there were no air-raid alarm, we had

Psychiatrist and neurologist, Viktor E. Frankl, was the founder of Logotherapy, the third Viennese school of psychiatry. It is concerned with helping people find meaning in their lives. He developed this system before spending several years in Nazi concentration camps, and afterwards he systematized and popularized it in many books and papers. His book *Man's Search for Meaning* has influenced millions of people worldwide.

Meaning is a biographical play relating the most critical times in Frankl's life. Much of the dialog is taken verbatim from Frankl's own writings, making this drama almost autobiographical.

Illustrated with photographs of Frankl and of relevant locations, *Meaning* presents this extraordinary man's life in a dramatic and readable style. It will appeal to those who know of Frankl's work, and inspire those new to his writings to learn much more about this remarkable man and his contributions to humanity.

"*Meaning* transports us across time and through a dimensional gate to personally visit with the legendary Frankl. It is an inspirational and moving journey, succinct and yet deeply impactful."

—Carol Lankton, M.A., LMFT, author, and teacher of Ericksonian hypnotherapy.

"The passionate and poignant bleakness of this magnificent play paints vivid pictures with both precision and grandeur. Each person realizes anew, the humanness as well as the inhumanity of mankind. Frankl's own words responding to the questions we all still have, gives wiser and more deeply profound understanding to the meaning of life, then, now and for the future. Seeing Frankl's life, in this setting—love and life juxtaposed with suffering and death, brings somber joy as we realize once again we all can be free, as Frankl always was."

—Betty Alice Erickson

"Here is a gift of love that provides testimony to the dream that the light at the end of the tunnel of suffering is not an illusion. Read this and you won't miss out on a life of meaning."

—Carl A. Hammerschlag, M.D.

Rubin Battino, M.S. has a private practice in Yellow Springs, Ohio. He is Adjunct Professor for the Department of Human Services at Wright State University, and has over ten years of experience as a facilitator in a Bernie Siegel style support group. He is President of the Milton H. Erickson Society of Dayton, and was co-chair of an ad hoc committee to establish certification standards for training in Ericksonian hypnotherapy. He is Professor Emeritus of chemistry.



Crown House Publishing Limited
www.crownhouse.co.uk

Psychotherapy/Counseling/Drama

£9.99 UK
\$14.95 USA

ISBN 187783683-7



5 1 4 9 5



9 781899 836833