

AS AVALIAÇÕES EMPÍRICAS NA LOGOTERAPIA E ANÁLISE EXISTENCIAL: UMA VISÃO GERAL

EMPIRICAL ASSESSMENTS OF LOGOTHERAPY AND EXISTENTIAL ANALYSIS: AN OVERVIEW

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Resumo. Durante os últimos anos, a pesquisa empírica sobre a questão do sentido e o seu papel na psicologia humana tem apresentado um crescimento sem precedentes. A maior parte dessas pesquisas confirmam, até agora, os princípios centrais da logoterapia. Neste artigo, é apresentado um breve resumo sobre os acontecimentos recentes. De forma geral, os resultados de relatos de pesquisa aqui delineados, demonstram que as questões existenciais desempenham papéis decisivos na psicologia humana. Além disso, uma linha de pesquisa relativamente nova de estudos investigativos – examinando a interrelação entre os processos noéticos e as funções neurofisiológicas -, aparece para reivindicar uma questão mais controversa e central no pensamento logoterapêutico, ou seja, o papel da reconciliação existencial e do autodistanciamento na mudança em marcadores neurofisiológicos patogênicos de depressão, ansiedade e transtorno obsessivo compulsivo.

Palavras-chave: Pesquisa empírica em logoterapia; a eficácia estudos de eficácia clínica; ansiedade; depressão; TOC.

Abstract. During the past years, empirical research on the question of meaning and its role in human psychology has seen an unprecedented growth. Most of this research has so far confirmed logotherapy's main tenets. In this article, a brief overview over these recent developments is presented. Collectively, the findings from the research program outlined here demonstrate that existential issues play decisive role in human psychology. Furthermore, a relatively new line of research studies investigating the interrelationship between noetic processes and neurophysiological functioning appears to vindicate a far more contentious and central issue in logotherapeutical thought, i.e. the role of existential reconciliation and self-distancing on change in neurophysiological pathogenic markers of depression, anxiety, and obsessive compulsive disorder.

Keywords: Empirical research in logotherapy, clinical efficacy studies, anxiety, depression, OCD.

Logotherapy and Existential Analysis has long been regarded as a primarily philosophical school of psychotherapy. There are different reasons for this; perhaps the foremost being that Frankl employed concepts which, for a long time, were simply not on the landscape of the empirical psychologist (i.e. meaning, personhood, freedom, existence, etc.). And yet, I will argue in this paper that time has come that logotherapists redefine themselves along with recent developments in their discipline. The rationale behind this plea is not that we should redefine our place on the map of psychological thought; rather, it appears as if, almost unbeknowningly and without much effort from our side, logotherapy has moved to the very forefront of psychological thought for the simple reason that during the past years, empirical research on the question of meaning and its role in human psychology has seen an unprecedented growth, and, more importantly, this research – often conducted by non-logotherapists with some vague interest in Frankl’s courageous stand – has so far confirmed almost every single tenet of logotherapy. In this paper, I will present a brief overview over these recent developments. Space restrictions allow for only a relatively brief overview, but I still hope that the overall message – logotherapy is no longer confined to a small niche for existential thinkers, but is on its way to the mainstream, shall be evident by this brief report. For instance, the archive of the documentation centre at the Viktor Frankl Institute in Vienna, which collects and catalogues research publications on logotherapy, holds some 700 such publications (Vesely and Fizzotti 2011), the vast majority of which were published in the mid-1970s or later; of these, about a half are clinical or empirical studies in logotherapy or existential analysis.

Additionally, Batthyany and Guttman conducted a literature search in 2005 in *PsycInfo*, the Scientific Abstract Service of the *American Psychological Association* and found 613 studies relevant to logotherapy published in peer-reviewed scientific psychology, psychiatry and medical journals between 1975 and 2005 (Batthyany and Guttman 2005). Furthermore, a more recent literature search in spring 2011 in *PsycInfo* revealed that approximately 180 additional studies relating to logotherapy and existential analysis, or, more

generally, meaning-oriented psychology had been published since 2005 alone.

Even from a purely quantitative point of view, these results are impressive, and they clearly demonstrate that existential questions, which Frankl described as being fundamentally bound up with human motivation theory, are sufficiently applicable, practical, and result-oriented to form the object of empirical research, despite their foundation in existential philosophy and psychology. Arguably, this was not as clear when Frankl developed logotherapy and existential analysis in the first half of the past century, nor was it foreseeable at the time that logotherapeutic concepts should become as prominent in empirical psychology as these numbers suggest. For example, in his overview of meaning as a psychological factor in the *Handbook of Positive Psychology*, Baumeister describes the reception of Frankl’s model as follows:

Psychologists gradually have begun to study meaning in life. Frankl’s (1959/1976) early work emphasized the importance of finding value in life, and he is widely credited with being a pioneer in the study of meaning. His work constituted a courageous rebellion against the behaviourist and psychodynamic paradigms that dominated psychological theorizing at that time. [...] Still, these works were isolated intellectually from the main work of their time (Baumeister and Vohs 2002:608).

Damon, Menon and Brock see the situation similarly in their review of the topic:

The notion that ethereal constructs such as “meaning” and “purpose” could make a difference – that they could motivate someone to do something, or even shape a person’s basic choices about how to live – seemed impossibly soft-headed and sentimental to mainstream psychologists of that time. If the behaviourist and psychoanalytic schools (the two best-known bodies of psychological work at midcentury) agreed on anything at all, it was that meaning, purpose, and other such belief systems were the products of more fundamental drives; that they were dependant on the drives for their shape, substance, and very existence; and that meaning and purpose were no more than marginal factors in behavioural development. (Damon, Menon & Brock 2003)

This special, perhaps even isolated, place that Frankl’s work occupied for a long time within academic psychology and psychiatry—apart from its endorsement, for example, by other pioneers such as

Gordon W. Allport, Alexandra Adler, Hans Eysenck, Elisabeth Kübler-Ross and Sophie Freud—is also reflected in one of the first systematic empirical studies conducted in logotherapy. “An Experimental Investigation in Existentialism” (Crumbaugh & Maholick 1964) was the symbolic title of Crumbaugh and Maholick’s 1964 article in the *Journal of Clinical Psychology* describing their first attempt to investigate the psychological aspects of the will to meaning with the *Purpose In Life* test. Now, existentialism and empirical studies are rarely found in the direct association with one another even today; but back in 1964, during the heydays of Skinnerian behaviourism, it must have seemed an even more curious, perhaps even frivolous combination. In the (real or apparent) tension between “empirical” and “existential” lies an important key to understanding the place of logotherapy within the empirical behavioural sciences as a philosophically grounded psychological model that is prepared to leave the safe zone of armchair philosophy and allow itself to be subjected - indeed even desires and demands that it be subjected - to empirical scrutiny and clinical outcome studies (Frankl & Fabry 1978).

After Crumbaugh and Maholick pioneering study – and following continuing encouragement from Frankl himself – various researchers both committed to and sceptical of logotherapy’s psychological model started to conduct empirical tests on its motivation and personality theory and its clinical efficacy.

The majority of studies conducted on these topics up to ca. 1975 aimed first of all to show that the motivation theory of logotherapy - that the “common man” is essentially searching for a specific and concrete meaning above and beyond those relating to his immediate physical, psychological and social needs and concerns - is coherent and has high psychological relevance. Taking this a step further, a subsequent group of studies attempted to demonstrate that the temporary or chronic frustration of the will to meaning paves the way for a range of mental disorders and indispositions; or, more specifically, that even if such conditions presumably are the result of multiple factors, an absence of meaning awareness significantly increases a patient’s susceptibility to neurotic disorders and depressive symptoms. Conversely, yet another set of studies shows that a newly found sense of meaning,

for example as a result of logotherapeutic intervention, brings with it a significantly higher rate of mental health and has a protective effect and, whether in isolation or in conjunction with further therapeutic intervention, is capable of initiating or promoting psychological healing processes. Thus some research showing that logotherapy concepts could withstand empirical testing, already was available in 1975; though until just a few years ago, however, such studies were still borne by a pioneering spirit of testing the basic tenets of a psychological (and philosophical) theory that was not yet anywhere near entering the psychological mainstream.

As hinted at above, and as the sheer number of recent psychological studies on the question of meaning shows, this situation has changed significantly in the past few years. One likely factor that may have contributed to the interest in the psychology of existential concerns may be the fact that, since around 1970, psychological thought in general has opened up to new ideas, especially since increasing numbers of academic psychologists have become aware of the limits of orthodox psychoanalysis (Bornstein 2001, Paris 2004). At the same time, behaviourism, which for several decades was particularly strong within experimental psychology, has likewise lost much of its original dominance. Both developments in the history of ideas of psychology took place perhaps largely due to the so-called cognitive turn in the behavioural science, which then soon spread into clinical and experimental psychology (Gardner 1986, Eysenck and Keane 1993).

This turn not only brought with it a rediscovery of the central role of internal representations of the world, which logotherapy had identified long before as being crucial for understanding human experience and behaviour (Frankl 1958); the increased openness of psychology to less mechanistic or purely psychodynamic models also led to researchers abandoning some their earlier almost exclusive focus on deficits, and instead starting to look again at those inner resources by which real and apparent deficits can be overcome or regulated in a psychologically mature and healthy way. Frankl, too, considered much of the ‘old psychologies’ to be disproportionately concerned with deficits and limits, and held that- put simply - they often tended towards a reductionist

pathologism, which attempted to explain even such deeply human and existential concerns such as the need for meaning and authenticity not as expressions of human maturity, but as mere compensations for psychological defects and frustrated 'lower' needs (Frankl 1961). In brief, for a long time, psychology was largely *deficit-based* rather than resource-oriented. Frankl, on the other hand, always also appealed to those remaining resources which, even during precarious times in a patient's life, can exert a protective effect in crisis prevention and a curative influence in crisis intervention. He further held that awareness of individual meaning and purpose is the most potent such resource, and in turn also the most effective in activating other psychological resources.

For several decades now, positive psychology has tied in with these ideas on a broader level (Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi 2000). Again, looking at the positive sides of human existence is not an entirely new idea in the history of scientific psychology: in parallel with Frankl, Charlotte Bühler had proposed as early as in the 1930s to study not only the life histories of the mentally ill, but also those of individuals who had remained mentally healthy under the same or similar life conditions, to determine which resources they activated; in other words, her proposal was to investigate not just what makes people sick, but also what keeps them healthy (Bühler 1933). Still, the systematic scientific pursuit of a broad-based, resource-oriented psychology is a relatively new undertaking, and at least to logotherapists, it didn't come as a surprise that research in this area would soon find that meaning is a central psychological (and existential) resource (Klingberg 2009). Indeed a contemporary search of empirical studies on the will to meaning and its psychological impact since 1975 reveals an immense surge of interest in the topic over the past 35 years. For instance, Batthyany and Guttman (2005 Ch.I.1) identified several hundred research articles corroborating the findings described by Frankl in the last chapter. These studies use a range of reliable standardized psychometric tests and find unanimous support the notion that the will to meaning is a central motivating force independently of other variables such as gender, age, and other demographic factors. In addition, Steger et al. (2008) conducted three larger studies involving more than 570 participants

in which they used correlation analyses to show that, independent of individual differences such as cognitive style, Big Five personality traits (extraversion, neuroticism, openness, agreeableness and conscientiousness), Big Three personality traits, and approach-avoidance tendency, search for meaning is a *distinct* psychological factor, in other words not reducible to or derivable from other motivations or variables: "correlations with an extensive array of cognitive and personality measures strongly suggest that the search for meaning in life is distinct from these variables. [...] We also used partial correlations to look at the heart of the search for meaning, namely the deep-seated human desire to understand, integrate, and synthesize experience." (ibid.; for similar results see also the mediation analyses in Stillman et al. 2010, Study 2).

Once it has been established that the will to meaning is a fundamental (and irreducible) human motivation, two further research questions arise. The first relates to the influence of individual meaning fulfilment on the development of, or protection against, mental health problems; and the second, in turn, consists in testing logotherapy's prediction that a renewed meaning awareness should provide crucial healing and coping resources to patients who suffer from mental health issues or the psychological impact of negative life events.

In their literature search, Batthyany and Guttman identified more than 320 studies addressing the first question. In these studies, statistically significant correlations between lack of meaning awareness and a general increase in neuroticism scores or more specific mental health problems ranging from depressiveness, substance abuse disorders, eating disorders, anxiety and obsessive compulsive disorders, phobias, and adjustment disorders invariably accounted for a relatively large proportion of either the causative mechanism behind these disorders or the severity of its symptomatology (cf. Batthyany and Guttman, Chs. II.1 and 2). In fact, frustration of the will to meaning was so strong a predictor of the presence of mental health problems that in their research overview Rosenberg and Green conclude that "findings indicate the usefulness of the Purpose in Life Test for discriminating psychiatric patients from normals in a population" (Rosenberg & Green 1998).

Strictly speaking, however, these findings do not yet support the much stronger prediction of logotherapy - namely that at least to some extent psychological problems themselves are caused or exacerbated by a deficit of meaning awareness, for *prima facie*, it is equally conceivable that increased neuroticism could bring about a reduced meaning awareness without itself having been the result of a lack of meaning awareness.

The logotherapeutic perspective on the impact of a lack of meaning awareness on mental health issues was in fact not tested in greater detail until relatively recently, when a number of researchers conducted regression analyses and prospective studies on the aetiological role of meaning on psychological distress. Harlow and Newcomb (1990), for instance, used latent variable and structural models and found that the experience of a lack of meaning was by far the most significant mediator between subjective loss of control and depression, triggered by uncontrollable stressful life events, and substance abuse in female participants, and self-derogation and suicidal tendency in male participants (see also Harlowe, Newcomb & Bentler 1986). Using a similar test design, Kinnier et al. (1994) demonstrated that feelings of meaninglessness were the most significant mediator between depressiveness and substance abuse; in addition, poor meaning in life emerged in this study as the only significant predictor of substance abuse, and predicted no less than 33% of the variance in substance abuse and addiction disorders.

Shek (1998) conducted a broad-based prospective longitudinal study among Chinese adolescents and (using a multiple regression analysis) found that, out of the seven factors tested, the purpose in life scores—followed by self-esteem—were first in their significance as predictors of subsequent general psychological morbidity. In another prospective longitudinal study, Mascaro and Rosen (2005) showed that meaning in life “explained significant amounts of variance in hope and depressive symptoms two months later beyond the variance explained by baseline levels of hope/depression, neuroticism, conscientiousness, agreeableness, openness to experience, extraversion, and social desirability.” In a follow-up study, these authors furthermore found that meaning significantly moderated the relationship between daily stress and depression, leading them to

conclude that meaning acts as “a buffer against the effects of stress on well-being” (Mascaro and Rosen 2006).

At least one other prospective study, conducted over a time-span of 14 months, found that the presence of meaning awareness in older participants was a more significant predictor of successful ageing than traditional factors such as social and cognitive resources and other demographic variables (Reker 2002). Hence both mediation analyses and longitudinal studies suggest not only that there are clinically relevant correlations between an experienced lack of meaning and mental health problems; they also imply that this relationship is present not only because a lack of perceived meaning is the result of a person’s poorer mental health, but because poor meaning in life itself is a significant predictor of overall mental health and behaviour.

For several years now, this causal relationship has also been researched intensively in relation to a suicidal tendencies; so intensively, indeed, that one widely used test instruments in suicide research - the Reasons for Living Index (RFL) - is no longer limited, as most earlier tests, to measuring the intensity and frequency of suicidal impulses, but also includes an index for the reasons *why* patients do not follow their suicidal impulses (Linehan, Goodstein, Nielsen, and Chiles 1983). The RFL has proven to be a reliable and outstandingly predictive test (Malone et al. 2000; Gutierrez et al. 2000; Britton et al. 2008), which is hardly surprising from a logotherapeutic viewpoint. In fact, Frankl used a simplified heuristic form of this test as early as in the late 1930ies:

At first, we pose the question to the respective patient as to whether he still fosters suicidal intentions. In every case [...] he will deny our first question; whereupon we submit to him a second question, which almost sounds brutal: why does he no longer wish to take his own life? And now it is shown with regularity, that he who genuinely does not harbour suicidal intentions is immediately ready with a series of reasons and counterarguments that all speak against him throwing his own life away: [...] that he remains considerate of his family or must think of his professional commitments, that he still has many obligations, etc. Meanwhile, the person who has only dissimulated his suicidal intentions will be exposed by our second question, and not having an answer for it, react from a position that is characterized by embarrassment on account of the

fact that he is at a loss for an argument that would speak against suicide. (Frankl 1947/2010:22)

With the protective and preventive influence of meaning awareness even against suicidal impulses, we already touched upon the second group of studies on the relevance of meaning for mental health. This second group deals either with the regaining of mental health in the course of successful therapeutic intervention, or with its maintenance in the course of successful prevention work during stressful life events. Debats (1996), for example, found in a large therapeutic follow-up study that “meaning in life (a) affects both positive and negative aspects of well-being, (b) that it is related to improvement during psychotherapy, and (c) that it predicts the outcome of psychotherapy, independently of patients’ pre-treatment levels of well-being.” Similarly, Waisberg (1993) reports of the results of a three-month course of therapy on patients with alcoholism that “the mean Purpose in Life Test (PIL) score before treatment was significantly below the normal range and the mean PIL score at the end of in-patient treatment was within the normal range. Furthermore, the PIL score at the end of treatment was predictive of changes in health at follow-up. It was also predictive of follow-up drinking/drug use status.”

Comparable findings demonstrating the curative effect (and predictive value in longitudinal studies) of increased meaning in life have also been obtained in relation to numerous other groups of disorders: Batthyany and Guttman (2005, Ch. II.1) identified 79 such studies in which meaning discovery played either a significant role or, where the study design allowed this to be identified, a probable or confirmed primary role in the recovery of patients undergoing psychotherapeutic or psychiatric treatment for a variety of psychological or psychiatric disorders (for earlier reviews, see Kish & Moody 1989 and Zika & Chamberlain 1987, 1992).

Studies looking at the significance of meaning awareness in the processing of external stresses and traumatic life events yields similar results. Batthyany and Guttman (2005, Ch.I.2) identified more than 150 such studies addressing the role of existential concerns in profound life crises, illness, grief, and death. Impressive as these figures are, given that the first group of studies referred to above clearly demonstrates that the search for

meaning is in any case a deeply human one, the finding that the search for meaning is particularly urgent and prominent in times of personal upheaval does not come as any great surprise. Additionally, quantitative studies are of course not capable of giving due attention to the perhaps more essential question as to *how* patients might use specific meaning-oriented resources to copewith a particular kind of suffering. A more empirically accessible question is how people cope with extreme life situations as a function of whether they succeed in activating individual meaning resources or discovering new ones in spite of, or even because of, their current life circumstances. And indeed, such a positive relationship has been consistently demonstrated in numerous studies; further, these studies often reveal a large magnitude of the effect of meaning awareness on coping. For instance, Bowes, Tamlyn and Butler (2002) found in a study on female patients with advanced ovarian cancer that “the consequence of finding meaning in life was a perception of well-being defined by the women as satisfaction with their lives. Conversely, an inability to find meaning in life resulted in feelings of despair,” while Lyon and Younger (2001) report that, among a group of 137 AIDS patients observed over a period of several months, “purpose in life was a stronger predictor of depressive symptoms than was HIV disease severity and [...] was more important than laboratory markers of disease progression for predicting depressive co morbidity.”

The positive effect of meaning awareness, however, is not restricted to alleviating *psychological* pain in the context of chronic or terminal disease. Hence, for instance, studies on chronic pain patients have shown that meaning awareness correlates not only with significantly lower levels of hopelessness, depression, anxiety and anger, but also show that successful completion of logotherapeutic intervention brings about significant improvements in the clinical picture in chronic pain: “A one year follow-up study [showed that] of 23 adults who had participated in a multimodal treatment program for chronic pain, significant decreases in pain, depression, anxiety, somatisation, hostility, and analgesic ingestion were found without symptom substitution.” (Khatami 1987; for similar results, see Kass et al. 1991; Nagata 2003).

With these latter findings on the impact of existential concerns both on psychological and

physiological health, not only logotherapy's motivation theory, but also its personality theory comes into focus. For as much as Frankl is widely recognized as the psychologist and psychiatrist who put meaning on psychology's map, his work has to offer much more than that the will to meaning, though a central element of logotherapy, is by no means the only one. For according to logotherapy, man is not only self-transcendent, in other words open to the world and the meaning that it might hold for him, but also is endowed with a capacity of self-detachment, i.e. logotherapy holds that though we may not be free from our conditions, we are free to determine the type, nature and extent of the effects of these conditions (i.e. relative free will).

This notion, in contrast to logotherapy's motivation theory, initially appears to be a posit or credo, i.e. a belief in a person's capacity to detach and distance itself from its conditions and to yet decide on its impact and influence ("the psychotherapeutic credo" —Frankl 1964). And yet, self-detachment did not merely remain a credo for long. For remarkably, Frankl succeeded in demonstrating the therapeutic efficacy of self-detachment for precisely those groups of patients who experience what appear to be particularly freedom-inhibiting conditions, i.e. anxiety and obsessive-compulsive disorders (OCD). Specifically, Frankl's method of paradoxical intention (Frankl 1938) is based on what at first sight looks like a relatively simple trick by which patients can consciously and intentionally disrupt the vicious circle of anticipatory anxiety and anxiety-related and obsessive-compulsive symptoms by (a) acknowledging the non-volitional nature of their overwhelming and irrational feelings, and by (b) trying to refuse to be blackmailed and threatened by these anxious and irrational feelings, and (c) by finally using humorous exaggeration as means to break their spell. In numerous studies (about 40 of these are summarized in Batthyany & Guttmann 2005, Ch. II.2.2.) paradoxical intention has been shown to be a particularly effective and fast working therapeutic technique; in fact, research in this area has demonstrated that self-distancing can reduce symptoms to a similar, and sometimes greater extent than, for example, psychopharmacotherapy for OCD (Schwartz 1996, 1997b).

Paradoxical intention is possibly one of the logotherapeutic techniques whose clinical

effectiveness has been investigated most intensively, since it was soon adopted by other psychotherapeutic schools such as cognitive behavioural therapy, which in turn has contributed to its popularity and further clinical testing outside the field of logotherapy (for an overview, see Ascher 2005). Furthermore, novel theoretical models (such as Wegner's ironic processing model; Wegner 1989, Anderson & Green 2001) led to the development of new experimental protocols that are capable of analysing what takes place at a cognitive level when patients temporarily lose conscious control over their experience (for example in anxiety disorder) or their will (for example in OCD; Schwartz 1997a). Many of these models merely express with somewhat different terms (e.g. 'ironic' [Wegner 1989] vs. 'paradox' [Frankl 1938]) what, long before the cognitive turn, Frankl had proposed as a cause of defective modes of experience and behaviour and which he made successfully treatable using paradoxical intention (and dereflection).

Additionally, and in line with the evidence for the overall, also physiological, positive effect of meaning awareness in chronic pain patients cited earlier, Schwartz (1997a&b, 1998) found that self-distancing as a treatment method for OCD not only significantly reduces OCD symptomatology, but also regulates known OCD-specific pathogenetic activity in the orbital frontal cortex within a period of only 10 weeks (for related findings on depressive brooding and hyperreflection, and the neurologically regulating effects of self-detachment and dereflection after a period of 16 weeks, see Kennedy et al. 2007).

Of course, in addition to its therapeutic and clinical relevance, the evidence of downwards causation via self-detachment clearly also has significant philosophical implications since it strongly corroborate logotherapy's concept of relative free will as a person's ability not only to freely decide on how one acts vis-a-vis one's psychological or physiological conditions, but to also form and shape them to such an extent that they are no longer merely manifestations of disease and disorder, but genuine expressions of a person's freedom of choice (i.e. pathogenesis; cf. Frankl 2004). As Schwartz puts it:

There is one particularly key point, both clinically and philosophically, to comprehend about what occurs at the interface of conscious experience and

brain activity during the moments of therapeutic breakthrough in the course of treatment—those moments always involve an active process. For at the moment when the man with OCD summons the mental strength to exert his will and physically actualize his new understanding by adaptively changing his behaviour, he will be overcoming tremendous biological forces that are operating in order to resist that change. And the force [...] represents the essence of what the words active and purposeful really mean (Schwartz 1999).

Against the background of these and the other research studies which highlight and corroborate particular aspects of Frankl's logotherapy, it is perhaps important to recall at this point that Frankl did not propose a series of mutually independent psychological hypotheses and therapeutic methods, but rather formulated a highly generative overall psychological model, which forms the basis for the development of logotherapeutic methods. These methods consequently represent both the applied and the applicable (and empirically verifiable) side of the philosophical foundation of logotherapy, i.e. of existential analysis as described in the preceding chapters of this book. The research presented in this and preceding chapter therefore represent much more than isolated findings and data; rather, taken together, they add to each other to provide strong evidence in support for

logotherapy and existential analysis *as a whole*, i.e. as a philosophically grounded, yet at the same time practice- and outcome focussed, and hence empirically testable, model of human nature.

As this review shows, ties between the existential tradition in psychology, which was initiated largely by Frankl, and experimental psychology and cognitive research have only been forged in the last few years. And yet, the extent to which the empirically and clinically testable predictions of logotherapy and existential analysis have been confirmed during this short period by numerous researchers working independently from one another, using different methods, and different evaluation techniques is remarkable.

There would be much more to report; but the briefest summary of this review is plain and simple: while many logotherapists personally knew that logotherapy works, only recently has it reached the level of empirical back-up to be regarded as an evidence-based school of psychotherapy. Hence, it appears as if Frankl's logotherapy, once only one single psychiatrist's "courageous rebellion against the [...] paradigms that dominated psychological theorizing" (Baumeister & Vohs 2002), has now, albeit belatedly, arrived at the research front of experimental, empirical and clinical psychology.

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