

Existential Insecurity in Adolescence as a Basis for Social Work with Young People in the Era of Societal Crises

Pavel Navrátil

Abstract— Today, the effects of the COVID19 pandemic are still reverberating, the world community is facing war in Ukraine, we are more consciously experiencing climate change and many people in the Euro-Atlantic area are experiencing unprecedented socio-economic difficulties. For many young people who are just preparing for their active lives, these crises show the world as an uncertain and dangerous place [1]. This situation increases the need to offer young people existential support in the context of social work to help them overcome the feelings of existential threat and insecurity that have weighed heavily on them in recent years. In my study I will thus address the question: "How, from the position of V.E. Frankl's existential analysis and logotherapy, can adolescents and their life situation be addressed in an era of societal crises?"

Keywords—youth, existential insecurity, crisis, social work

I. Introduction

Viktor E. Frankl was an Austrian neurologist and psychiatrist who is best known as the founder of logotherapy, a type of existential psychotherapy. He was also a Holocaust survivor, and his experiences in the concentration camps influenced his ideas on the human search for meaning. Frankl believed that the primary drive in human life is not pleasure, as Freud had suggested, but rather the search for meaning and purpose. He argued that this search is what gives our lives significance and that by discovering the meaning of our existence, we can overcome suffering and find happiness. Logotherapy is based on this idea and focuses on helping individuals find meaning in their lives through a variety of methods, including personal reflection and relationships with others. Frankl's work has had a lasting impact on psychotherapy and continues to be widely influential today [2].

A body of research has shown that the desire for meaning is particularly strong at two stages of life - during adolescence and during old age [3]. However, before focusing my attention on the analysis of the noetic dimension of life in adolescence, I will recall some basic characteristics of existential analytic and logotherapeutic thinking, especially their conceptions of meaning and values as conceived by V.E. Frankl and his followers. Thus, I will first clarify the premises underlying the existential and logotherapeutic conceptions of adolescence and then relate them to the conditions of adolescence as a complex bio-psycho-existential process.

Pavel Navrátil
Faculty of social sciences, Masaryk University

Czech Republic
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II. The search for the meaning of existence

At the heart of logotherapeutic anthropology is the axiom that human existence is oriented towards the achievement of meaning. Man's basic intention should be to lead a way of life that enables him to experience its meaningfulness. If one acts in the spirit of this determination, one arrives at a consciousness of a life lived in success. If he resists it, he experiences feelings of ruin, of failure. Awareness of the meaninglessness of one's own life can be a source of personal devastation. Classical logotherapy focuses on three aspects in helping people experiencing an existential crisis. First of all, on the will to meaning, secondly on values, and last but not least on the objective and subjective aspects of the situation in which the client finds himself. The way out of the existential crisis is then seen in the search for values that can serve as orientation in discovering and realizing the meaning of the life situation [4].

The consideration of what is meaningful in existential analysis and logotherapy is based on the ontological characteristics of being. Above all, from the idea that man is a free and responsible being. What is meaningful is not necessarily what appears to be meaningful. Rather, what is meaningful is what harmonizes the life of the individual (the principle of freedom) and society (the principle of responsibility). The bottom line, then, is that meaningful goals are those that benefit both the individual and society. Meaning that does not take into account the needs of the social environment ends in egoism. Meaning that disregards the individual and his needs ends in totalitarian collectivism. As a result, the logotherapist acts as a double advocate. On the one hand, he defends the client against the pressures of an external reality that causes him problems and, on the other hand, he defends the external reality against the client who inadequately processes or underestimates this reality. It is crucial that the speech therapist adequately takes both aspects into account. Where the speech therapist would only focus his/her help on supporting the client, rather than on finding challenges, tasks and meaning in the wider environment, this leads the client to become an 'original' without the capacity for social functioning. If the speech therapist works with clients to learn to consider the facts first and foremost, then they will indeed learn to function socially, but they will not act as "originals." The art of speech therapy lies in the ability to work with clients in a way that allows clients to discover their own

uniqueness and make that uniqueness fruitful for the wider environment. It can also be said the other way around, the art of therapy is that the client learns to discover the questions the world has imposed on them and is able to answer them in their own original way [5].

The problem described here essentially touches on issues of freedom and responsibility. In relation to this issue, it is very significant that V. E. Frankl distinguished the category of meaning from the category of values. Frankl understands values as objective, proven by the history of mankind and providing binding orientation. He also characterizes them as universal, necessary, fateful and binding. Meaning, in addition, is subjective in nature. Meaning is achieved through the unique realization of value. Meaning is therefore individual, freely chosen and original [5].

Existential analytical and logotherapeutic thinking shows here that man can find orientation precisely in the confrontation of objective values and subjective meaning. This confrontation, however, always takes place in a specific period of life. Life is structured, and each period of life has its own specific needs and possibilities for the realization of meaning. It is essential to distinguish, in the context of the search for meaning, which tasks must be carried out in a particular life stage. If these tasks are not mastered at the appropriate time, developmentally there is stagnation, which may be insurmountable. It is therefore necessary to distinguish specific tasks (with regard to the achievement of meaning) to be carried out in childhood, adolescence, early middle and late adulthood or old age [6].

III. Life situations in adolescence

In the context of social work theory, the life situation can be defined as a relationship of mutual expectations between a person and his/her (social) environment (expectations have the character of entitlement, task and desire). The life situation has its specific structure (static dimension) and develops in the context of the life cycle (dynamic dimension) [7].

A. *Developmental transition, identity building and the search for meaning*

The question of the search for meaning is particularly radical in adolescence. The issue of the search for meaning can be seen in immediate connection with the developmental psychological concept of developmental transition and identity formation [3].

In terms of developmental transition, adolescence is the period in which a young person leaves the world of childhood but does not yet fully participate in the adult world. This situation can lead to marginalization and feelings of alienation. These arise as adolescents mature physiologically, psychologically, socially and spiritually, and cease to perceive the sense of existential security that they had unwittingly drawn from their relationship with their parents in childhood.

They now find themselves in an unfamiliar space in which they must seek their own destination and anchorage [8].

However, the life situation of adolescents is usually problematic in terms of providing existential support. The school environment and the stresses that children experience are rarely clearly linked to the existential meaning that graduating from school has (can have). A person's personality and individuality are still rather ignored in adolescence, employment conditions (if the adolescent works) are formalised and the general culture often has little appeal for adolescents. A common escape from this situation is the orientation of adolescents towards peer relationships, towards youth subcultures that create an environment that enables the achievement of a subjectively valued sense of [9].

The experience of such alienation can lead to feelings of the meaninglessness of one's own existence and open up the question of the meaning of life. This question is one of those that is frequently asked by adolescents. The question of meaning in all its radicalness can even overwhelm a person. This is often the case especially in adolescence, a time when the substantive issue of human existence opens up to the spiritually maturing and spiritually struggling young person [4].

Modern developmental psychology speaks of adolescence as a developmental transition, and also characterizes it by a certain task to be mastered during this period. The developmental task of adolescence is seen primarily in the formation of one's own identity. A prerequisite for the formation of one's own identity is the ability to reflect. At no other stage in life does a person devote so much energy to self-reflection as in adolescence [10].

The adolescent asks himself a number of existential questions. He asks who he is, who he wants to be, who he should be, who he will become. But he is also interested in how others perceive him and what they want him to become. The reflection carried out in adolescence is not only individual-oriented self-reflection, but also oriented towards the social environment. The adolescent reflects on himself in the context of his own family, teachers and, of course, peers. Here, reflection has the subtext of the question, "Where is my place in this world?" "Where do I belong?" Adolescence is a time of self-discovery, a time of independent orientation in culture, a time of self-definition. It is a time of independent formation of opinions and attitudes, of making life plans. It is a time of independence in which the adolescent loses the authoritative link with his parents. It is an exploratory phase of life, characterized by the search and discovery [9].

Although developmental psychology usually speaks here "only" of the search for one's own identity [11], it is clear that identity formation is closely linked to existential questions, to the search for personal meaning. One well-known conception of identity formation, for example, is that of Erik Erikson. Thanks to him, identity is usually understood as a sense of an internally integrated unique being and a sense of belonging to a particular social unit for which the person has value. This

concept assumes that an adolescent experience himself as valuable if he is also accepted as valuable in the social environment. The experience of self-worth in the context of the social environment is understood here as a moment that contributes significantly to identity formation. Although Erikson considers the construction of identity in relation to the experience of self-worth in certain social contexts, he does not focus more on the topic of values and rather concentrates on the question of developmental crises [12].

From an existential analytical and logotherapeutic point of view, adolescence appears to be a period in which a person forms not only his or her value identity in a particularly fundamental way, but also the ability to recognize in these values the possibilities of achieving meaning (noetic identity). Waterman further distinguished the process of identity formation into five areas. She speaks of work, gender, political and religious identity and also defines the area of leisure (specific lifestyle) as a special area of identity formation. I understand these areas as defining the social space in which a large number of adolescents try to exercise their basic motivational force, namely the will to meaning [3].

B. Moral development and the search for meaning

Adolescence is thus characterized by the formation of identity, the search for a space in which a young person can fulfill his or her purpose. Adolescents are confronted with new questions, themes and problems on which they have yet to take their own stance. They are faced with the choice of their vocation and other life goals. Parallel to this formation of identity and the search for meaningful goals is the development of moral convictions. This is particularly borne out by research on children and adolescents who have to face high levels of adversity [13].

I understand morality here as a set of knowledge, opinions, which create criteria on the basis of which it is possible to make judgments about what is right and what is wrong. Diverse value systems exist side by side today, creating a space of moral relativism. In such an environment, it is not easy to find clear-cut answers. Adolescents are faced with the challenge of finding a way of making moral choices that will help them achieve meaningful solutions to their life situations [13].

Although moral development takes place throughout life, it is most critical during adolescence and early adulthood. It is a period when people gain the right to make independent decisions and to make choices. The values learned during this period become the basis for value orientation in adult life [14].

Frankl has already shown how closely moral reasoning is linked to the search for meaning. The point is that the discovery of meaning takes place in moral reasoning. Classical moral systems (Christian in Europe) have, however, been relativized. How then to distinguish good from evil? Moral action, according to Frankl, consists in discovering and fulfilling the meaning of a situation. That which facilitates the

fulfillment of meaning is good, that which prevents it is bad. Moral reflection is carried out by man in conscience. Frankl defines it as the organ of meaning. The cultivation of conscience is therefore an essential part of the education of children and adolescents. For it is only through conscience (as an organ of sense) that the adolescent (and later as an adult) is able to perceive the demands of the situation. Only a sensitive conscience makes the adolescent capable of not succumbing to conformism or totalitarianism (not giving up his own freedom and responsibility). The conscience is thus the key to the realization of meaningful values, which enables the adolescent to distinguish the essential from the non-essential and to decide which challenges of life are worth responding to and which are not. [5].

For example, Kohlberg's typology of stages of moral development, which is based on more than 30 years of ongoing research (Table 1), appears to be suggestive here. He distinguishes three levels of moral development (pre-conventional, conventional and post-conventional), which are further subdivided into six stages [15]. The differences between the stages do not lie in the degree of acceptance of social norms, but in the overall perspective on moral issues. Kohlberg [16] found that most people reach only the second level. This morality is based primarily on society's expectations. One conforms to group pressure at the expense of one's own freedom, one's own principles. According to Kohlberg's data, only 5-10% of people have reached the third level.

Table 1 Kohlberg's six stages of moral development

I. Pre-conventional level Control comes from the outside and behavior is conditional on whether it receives reward or punishment.	Stage 1: Orientation to punishment and obedience. Decisions concerning good and evil are exercised with an eye toward avoiding punishment.
	Stage 2: Naive Hedonism. The rules of behavior are determined by the possibility of getting a reward. Decent behavior is exchanged for other gains.
II. Conventional level The opinions of others, their expectations, are important for one's own decision-making.	Level 3: Good boy/girl morale. Good behavior is the result of trying to please others, dominating the need to please and have approval from others.
	Level 4: Morality supporting authority. Strong belief in law and order, behavior conforms to law and higher authority, importance of social order.
III. Post-conventional level Moral decisions are primarily controlled by the self, control from within. Morality requires Higher principles transcending law and self-interest (only 5-10% of the population).	Grade 5: Morality of individual agreements. Law is perceived as a necessity; it is an object of rationality and democratically accepted law.
	Grade 6: Morality of individual principles. Behavior is based on one's own internal ethical principles. Decisions are exercised in light of what is right and not written in the law (this stage was reached by e.g. M. Luther King and Gandhi.

Frankl's moral reasoning, based on individual conscience, is most similar to Kohlberg's Level III of moral development. If these figures are correct, then no more than 10% of people are not subject to external pressures and are able to make full use of their freedom and responsibility to achieve authentic meaning.

C. *Freedom of choice*

Regarding the general spiritual situation of adolescents in the Western European and American social space, the prevailing belief is that it is characterized primarily by freedom of choice [17]. The possibility of choice became a social reality in our society only in the last decade of the 20th century and that it created a specific existential situation for which not only some young people were not prepared. However, in Western Europe and North America, too, in terms of their social history, freedom of choice cannot be taken for granted. As a political phenomenon, it is only linked to the emergence of modern democracies.

But the possibility of choice has also become a necessity of choice. Although freedom of choice accompanies the whole life cycle, in adolescence some choices will affect life for a very long time and are for this reason very important. The adolescent chooses his or her occupation, makes choices about a partner, decides his or her political orientation and how to spend leisure time. Particularly paradoxically, they also choose their religious affiliation, which in traditional terms was usually a "once and for all given" [18].

But those who have the freedom to choose also have a responsibility. A decision is not made as an abstract choice; it always has concrete consequences that affect both the external conditions and the decision-maker. Whereas previously one had to "merely" accept the role(s) assigned to him by tradition, now it is his task to find his role(s). He has to find his vocation, his political stance, his lifestyle and his way of partnership [19].

In such a situation, however, the assumption is that each person is an active subject of the search. Many adolescents, however, avoid this active position and simply do not make their choice or leave it to someone else. These adolescents adopt value schemas from their parents, peers or other authorities, do not feel the need for self-seeking and their identity remains undefined (e.g. the state of so-called diffuse identity), Kohlberg's moral levels I and II. These adolescents are resigned to struggle for an autonomous understanding of life and to find their own direction and purpose [9].

IV. **Existential tensions in adolescence**

Adolescence (especially middle and late adolescence) is usually the first stage of life in which the need to find answers to questions about the nature of human existence arises with an urgency not yet felt. The need for a new life grounding is triggered by the many changes that occur in adolescence.

These changes are primarily physiological (sexual maturation), psychological (emotional and cognitive development) and social (taking full responsibility for one's own actions).

A. *Resignation to the search for meaning x active search for meaning*

Adolescence is therefore a period that is particularly vulnerable to existential frustration. Frankl [5] points out that the very question of meaning is so fundamental that it can even threaten a young person's life (suicidality). The adolescent, however, finds himself in a difficult situation. His instincts do not tell him what he must do and his traditions what he should do. In these circumstances, he does not know what he wants, or even what he should want. This is why adolescents are at risk of conformism (peer groups) or being bound by totalitarianism (cults, extremist movements). But both are expressions of resignation to their own freedom and responsibility for life.

B. *Escape Search for Meaning x Authentic Meaning*

In those cases where the adolescent is unable to find answers to questions of life meaning in the long term and is still experiencing existential frustration, noogenic neurosis may arise, or other problems may arise as a result of the compulsion to overcome the existential vacuum. Such problems may include irrational aggression, suicidality, drug addiction, alcoholism, juvenile delinquency, sexual promiscuity, and many other forms of problematic behavior. [20].

According to Frankl, the search for authentic meaning is always done with the help of the voice of conscience. It is through it that one finds the unique meaning of the situation one is experiencing. The measure of the value of meaning is not profit or success; it is always only the degree to which the voice of conscience has been heard. Achieving such meaning is then possible if one does not give up one's freedom and responsibility [4].

V. **Logotherapy application**

Where a young person resigns to actively seeking his or her purpose, life goal or mission, he or she is at risk from a psycho-hygienic point of view [6]. Logotherapy as a therapeutic method is particularly disposed to work with adolescents and adults. The adolescent is often directly confronted with the question for life's meaning, as he or she is at a time in life when he or she is taking responsibility for his or her own life, is forced to make decisions about many areas of life, and must come to terms with questions of freedom and responsibility. In many Western European or North American countries, there is an increasing number of adolescents who are displaying problematic and risky behavior, even though they live in a country with a high standard of living and are

not themselves materially deprived. This seems to be the result of an inability to see one's own life in the context of self-transcendent goals and values and a concentration on immediate consumption and enjoyment [21].

The logotherapeutic aspect can be divided into two separate themes. In the logotherapeutic literature, on the one hand, there is an attempt to formulate preventive principles to prevent the onset and development of noogenic problems, and then, alongside this, a counselling concept is developed to serve where noogenically induced problems have already developed [6].

A. Preventive aspect

Lukas and Hirsch [22] point out that the cause of the increase in the number of children and adolescents who lack meaning in their lives is due to certain cultural assumptions that are often propagated to parents and educators in the name of science. These include the notion of freedom as emancipation (breaking free from the influence of authority), the idea of consumerism as a prerequisite for happiness, and the belief that human behaviour is determined by biological and social factors. According to Lukas, these attributes of contemporary culture are justified by the argument that they make life easier for children and adolescents. In reality, however, she argues, they cause them deprivation. Emancipation from the higher order directly impairs the ability to perceive the meaningfulness of one's own actions and the ability to be responsible. A consumer orientation damages personal relationships because there is no time to form them, and a belief in environmental determination weakens the capacity for self-creation and overall motivation to live.

Factors that shape the ability to find and realize meaning immediately are formed from early childhood [23]. In particular, (1) the presence of a role model with a strong value grounding who has practically been able to advocate for the fulfillment of values in one's own life and (2) one's own practical experience of realizing interesting and stimulating goals play a key role in its construction.

The presence of a "role model" (or its absence) creates a precondition for whether a child (even later in adolescence and adulthood) will be able to perceive meaning in certain life circumstances and whether he or she will be able to commit to realizing the values that will make his or her life meaningful [22]. Parents, through their attitudes towards work, family, other people, leisure and also suffering, convey messages to their children about how they too should experience their relationship with them. Thus, if parents see their employment as a necessary means to earn money, the family as a given organization of their common life, other people as a tool to maximize their own profit, leisure as a space for unpretentious relaxation and idleness, and suffering as the end of all that is good, they create little incentive to teach their children to perceive the meaningfulness of life and undermine their natural will to meaning. Another essential experience in acquiring the ability to perceive the meaningfulness of life is the opportunity to "participate" in those activities that the child

can experience as valuable and worthwhile [8]. Children have a natural ability to seek out activities that provide meaning. It is only a matter of parents and caregivers not placing undue obstacles to this natural tendency. Children learn to experience meaning spontaneously in play, in helping adults, in nature, in the company of others, in bravely overcoming obstacles, etc.

B. Therapeutic aspect

Logotherapeutic help for people experiencing existential frustration (inability to perceive the meaning of their own life circumstances) is based on the support and development of those abilities that enable the restoration of the natural tendency to recognize, choose and pursue subjectively valuable goals [6]. Logotherapeutic help can be divided into three basic phases: (1) diagnostic, (2) therapeutic, and (3) post-therapeutic. In addition to the common characteristics of these parts of the therapeutic process (diagnostic phase - collecting and analyzing information and the client's situation, therapeutic phase - helping the client cope with his/her own problem, post-therapeutic phase - loosening the relationship between the therapist and the client and ensuring his/her social functioning in natural conditions on the basis of his/her own strengths), this author emphasizes the specifics of each phase in logotherapeutic counseling (Table 2).

Table 2 Logotherapeutic aspect in stages of the counselling process

Diagnostic phase
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • prevention of iatrogenic neuroses • preventing hyperreflexia • use of specific speech therapy techniques (according to the symptoms present)
Therapeutic phase
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • implementation of attitude modulation • use of specific techniques • achieving certainty of orientation between multiple values
Post-therapeutic phase
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • clarification of other individual possibilities of meaning • preventing hyperreflexia

Adapted from Graber 2019

The "diagnostic phase" serves primarily the helping worker. In this phase, the helper gets a general overview of the client's problematic life situation. The client does not benefit directly from this phase and there is even a danger in it. It is the danger of developing an iatrogenic neurosis. The "iatrogenic neurosis" arises as a result of the communication of the diagnosis and manifests itself in an increase in fear and further development of problem behavior. The careless communication of the diagnosis promotes hyperreflexia, which centers on an unhealthy area of life. Here again, a circular mechanism is at work for the emergence and development of neurotic experiences. However, the speech therapist also needs to recognize the problem that is weighing on the client and cannot keep the diagnosis from the client. However, the speech therapist's communication of the

diagnosis is not intended as an announcement of an analytical analysis of the client's life situation, but as a "meaningful" commentary on the client's problem. The implementation of the so-called alternating diagnosis as a prevention of excessive reflection on the problem phenomenon. "Alternating diagnosis" is a form of diagnosis that, on the one hand, helps the therapist to obtain the necessary information and, on the other hand, reduces the risk of iatrogenic neurosis. When applying alternating diagnostics, the therapist talks with the client about the problematic aspect of his/her life as well as about the positive aspects of his/her life.

The "therapeutic phase" always turns its attention to strengthening the ability to seek and fulfil new values in life. This guiding motive of the logotherapeutic intervention is realized through the modulation of unhealthy life attitudes or the application of specific logotherapeutic techniques (dereflection, paradoxical intention, search for a common denominator). The actual therapeutic process, its content and forms, are of course dependent on the type of the client's difficulties.

The "post-therapeutic phase" of the logotherapeutic intervention focuses on further helping to clarify the individual possibilities of meaning and to support the client in orienting to value systems. The goal of this phase is to help establish the client's safe bridge between the protected space of the therapeutic phase and the real-life challenges that make new and ever new demands on the client. The post-therapeutic phase follows the therapeutic phase in spirit. In this phase, too, the helping worker focuses more on the spiritual dimension of existence (freedom, responsibility, decision-making, choice, values, attitudes). In this phase, it is a matter of fixing a life attitude that can be described as the ability to accept the diverse situations of life as a challenge to find its meaning and, of course, as an impulse to fulfil it. The strengthening of such a life attitude is at the same time a protection against a renewed hyperreflection of the problematic past or hyperreflection of the self.

C. Other tools of overcoming existential frustration

Although the basic form of logotherapeutic therapy for existential frustration is the Socratic conversation [4], some authors have added to and expanded the spectrum of logotherapy intervention options [24]. Although a person experiences a state of existential frustration and experiences his or her life as meaningless, his or her basic ability to recognize and fulfill the tasks or challenges that have been or are imposed on him or her by life situations remains permanently preserved (as long as he or she is capable of thinking at all). This experience is an optimistic starting point for any logotherapeutic intervention. However, in order to bridge his existential frustration, the client must experience its depth, name it and understand the possibilities that the world offers him in his situation.

Inspiration from the past: past experiences can be inspiring in the search for a new lease on life. Recalling and rediscovering situations, values, and tasks in which the client has experienced meaningfulness in his or her own life in the past can stimulate motivation in the search for a new life direction. Recollections of past ways of making meaning often cause a re-experiencing of feelings of meaningfulness (meaning in relation to a particular person, in art, nature, religion, in creative, experiential areas, in suffering). The more vivid the image of past experiences of the worthiness of one's own life is evoked, the more encouraging their effect [25].

Imaginative Exercise: One technique that facilitates insight into personality (character) and other obstacles to experiencing a meaningful life and helps in overcoming them is "existential imagery". The existential analytical imaginative exercise consists in looking at a person's biography in a new way, from the perspective of the question: 'What in my life limits (has limited) the possibilities of fulfilling meaning and what, on the contrary, supports (has supported) them? This can help the client to access the symbolism of the unconscious transcendent, to experience his or her hitherto unconscious need for spirituality and the primordial contents of meaning [24].

Acceptance of responsibility for relationships and conflicts: the greatest contribution to the emergence and deepening of existential frustration is made by conflictual relationships between people. In existential work, two changes are to occur with respect to the understanding of relationships. First, there is a rethinking of the nature of conflict. It is to be understood as a product of one's own inner attitude. The second and consequent part of the change in the view of conflict is the acceptance of responsibility for its origins and consequences [24].

Orientation towards others: like the need for meaning, orientation towards the well-being of the other remains a permanent proposition. The existentially frustrated may also yearn for deep relationship, though they may not even realize it. A loving person experiences the meaningfulness of his or her life in its fullness. Relationships, however, are influenced by the attitude one takes toward what one wants, needs, or can love. Thus, in a logotherapeutic intervention, it is possible for the client, with the help of an existential analyst, to reflect on the implications of different attitudes toward forms of relationships [3].

Social responsibility: although Frankl [5] pointed out that existential frustration is sociogenic in nature, he places addressing its social causes rather outside the scope of logotherapeutic action. Nevertheless, it is clear that there is also a need for policy measures that expand the space of free choice and enable sufferers to pursue a wider range of meaningful goals [9].

VI. Conclusion

The aim of this study was to answer: 'How can we address adolescents and their life situation in an era of social crises

from the position of existential analysis and logotherapy?' I presented both the static aspects of the adolescents' life situation, the existential tensions and the logotherapeutic existential analytical implications. I believe that the existential framework and the logotherapeutic procedures can be applied quite adequately and effectively to many of the current life problems of adolescents. Firstly, adolescence is proving to be an existentially sensitive life stage, but especially in recent years, with several major and painful crises with global resonance (COVID 19; the war in Ukraine; the climate crisis) affecting not only the adult world, but of course children and adolescents as well, existentially sensitive approaches seem to be a resource that we will have to learn to use well and increasingly in the context of social work.

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