



Crisis, anxiety and meaning

- existential challenges and psychosocial health during and after crisis

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Agenda

- 
1. Pandemic and Crisis
 2. Anxiety
 3. Meaning



1. Pandemic & Crisis – a short profile





Pandemic – manifold impacts:

→ unusual life

→ restrictions

→ danger

→ losses

→ new forms of togetherness

→ domestic violence...



Pandemic – direct effects on people:

- stress
- unease
- tensions
- loneliness
- despair
- sleeping disorders, eating disorders ...



Pandemic → psychic symptoms:

- insecurity, feelings of unsafety
- anxiety
- depression
- hysteric reactions
- addiction



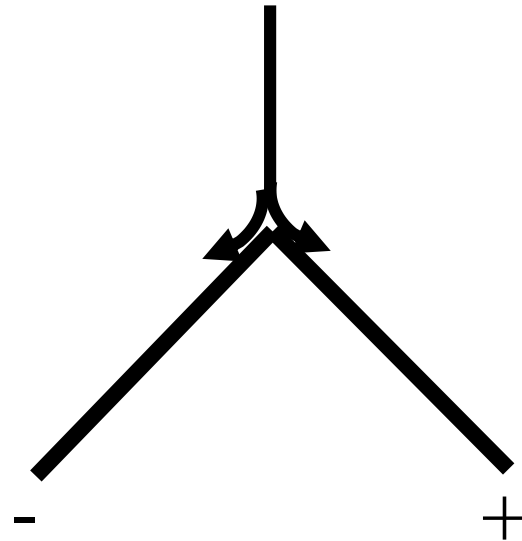
Pandemic → crisis?

→ for most people no crisis





Crisis = ?



To be at a crossroads

→ going to be differentiated



Characteristics of a crisis:

→ no sickness!

= an adjustment problem:

1. Lack of **orientation**
2. **Helplessness**: not knowing how to proceed
3. Feeling of being **overdemanded**: „It's too much“
4. Lack of **means, fail of the usual**, customary, known tools



Help in Crisis:

⇒ Needs a process of

personality development
new skills and knowledge
new orientation



2. Anxiety



Many Anxieties and Fears...

- **Professional:** job, finances, career, place in enterprise...
- **Societal:** state, politics, economy, democracy...
- **Family:** too close, conflicts, distance to friends, aggression...
- **Personal** – health, psychic problems, values, being with oneself...

Anxiety = ?

= a lack of stable ground on which we can rely

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= a lack of stable ground on which we can rely

⇒ feeling: **I cannot be** under these circumstances → danger is there

Anxiety symptoms:

= alarm reaction:

- Heart beat
- Blood pressure
- Muscle tones
- Psychic tension up to panic
- ...

Anxiety prevention:

- 1. Protection** (safety rules)
- 2. Space** (to breath and move)
- 3. Support** (to hold on: state, bank, friends, family, professionals...)

Anxiety reduction:

Confrontation with reality

1. What can realistically happen?
2. How would that be for me?
3. What would I do?



3. Meaning



Purpose and meaning =

Question „what for“ and „why“?

- What does this lead to?
(*development*)
- Why did it happen to me?
(*understanding*)

Purpose and meaning

= 2 questions:

- *Understanding*: The meaning of being (of the pandemic... of life)
- *Development*: The meaning of the situation (meaning of my sickness, of my loss of the job...)





Existential meaning - Definition:

„The most valuable possibility in a situation“

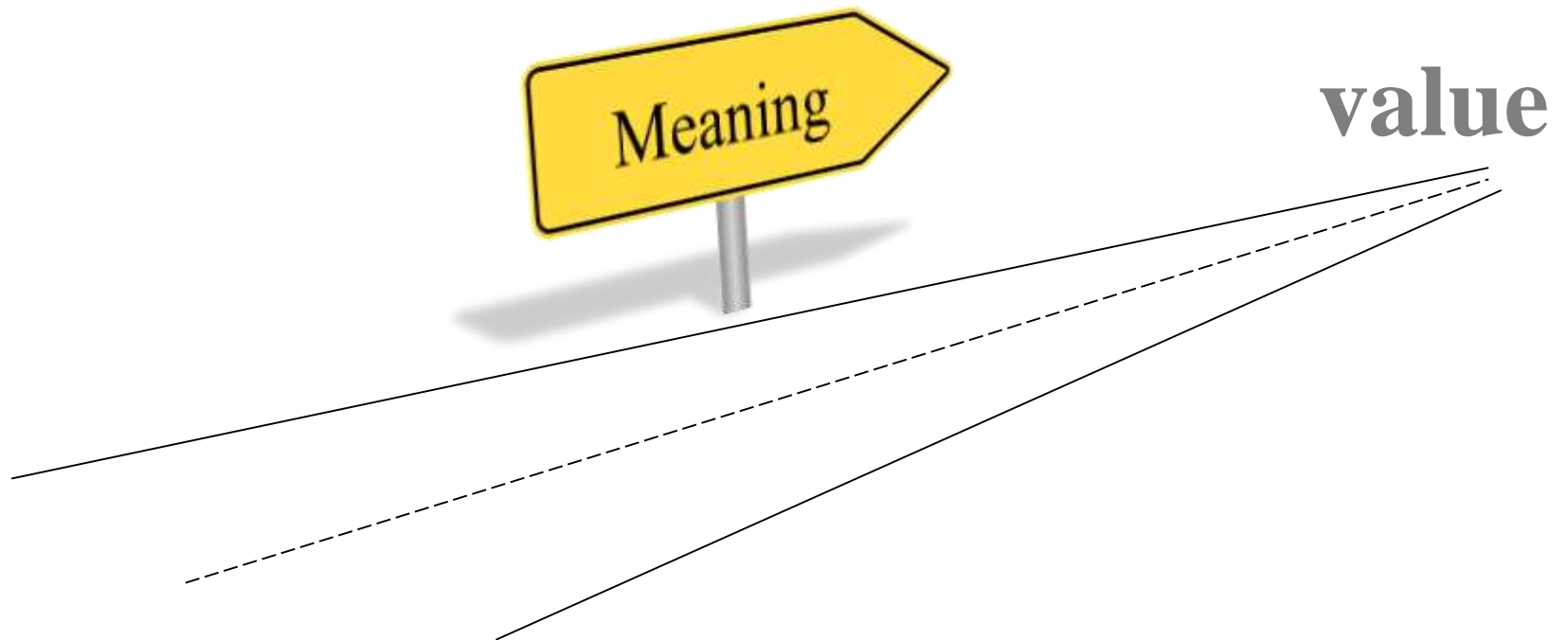


Existential Meaning is defined as:

**“... a valuable task – challenge – possibility ...
within my actuality“**

V. Frankl 1985, 42

Meaning alignment with a value



Power of meaning

He who has a why to live for
– can bear almost any how.

(F. Nietzsche – wording of V. Frankl 1963, 164)





**Existential
fulfillment -
when we can
live with
Inner consent**





... this leads to

Commitment

Giving oneself with one's heart = to be totally there.





Without commitment –
no **existential life.**

Without commitment –
no **inner fulfillment.**





Life is not “something” –

■ it is
■ the *chance*
■ for
■ something.

■ (V. Frankl)

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Thank you for your attention!

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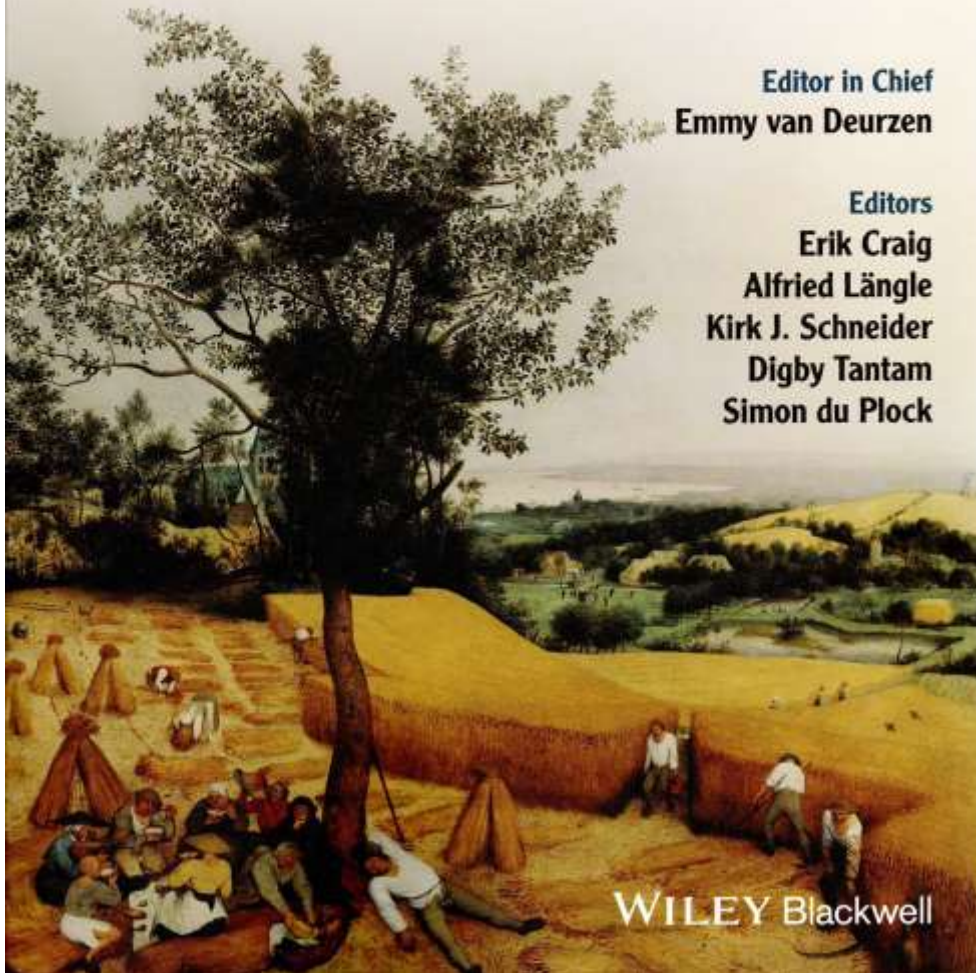
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