

Emmy van Deurzen "Everyday mysteries: existential dimensions of psychotherapy"

p.3 Thinking independently about life is now more taboo than ever before.

p.4 The truth about life is more complex and diverse than we can imagine.

p.11 [Kierkegaard] It seems, therefore, that man is a synthesis of the eternal and nothingness, which results in temporality.

p.16 (Kierkegaard) wrote in order to become more and more truthfull to reality that he sensed to be there.

p.21 If Freud was the healer of the neuroses created by capitalist cultures, Nietzsche was the healer of its psychoses.

p.23 Zarathustra book is a blueprint for psychotherapeutic work of the Nietzschean kind. N views are far more revolutionary. For him the superego does not exist: he merely sees a lack of courage in those who live obedient lives, adjusted to the norms of society.

p.27 N argues that man has to go through the ordeal of three metamorphoses: camel -> lion -> child.

Camel: pakelti alone gyvenimo sunkumus

Lion: freedom in order to rule and be independent of duty

Child: innocence and forgetfulness

p.28 If we are able to live in such a way that it would be all right for our lives to be repeated in exactly the same way, over and over again, to eternity, then we live the sort of life where peace (i.e. sleep) can be had.

p.31 What replaces insight as the prime therapeutic mover is courage.

p.34 The fundamental question to Heidegger was: What is the meaning of 'being'?

p.35 Human being is essentially always in a world and in relationship, never in isolation.

One of the most fundamental characteristics of Dasein is that it cares.

p.36 We do not usually reflect on what it means to be alive (and take it for granted).

p.37 Being human is always being with others.

p.39 We have a tendency to let ourselves fall into mediocrity and averageness. Living our lives like They do. This fallenness with others makes us inauthentic.

p.41 Only when I am dead do I finally possess my totality, but I am no longer there to possess it.

p.42 We are essentially a process of historicity, of creating and letting go.

p.43 [anxiety] amounts to the disclosedness of the fact that Dasein exists as thrown Being towards its end.

The original Greek root of the word therapy is the verb therapeuo, which means "to serve".

p.45 Sartre. Things are entirely what they appear to be and behind them... there is nothing. Sartre. Man is condemned to be free.

p.46 To be in bad faith is to pretend that we are other than we are and to reduce all of our many possibilities to one reality, which we pretend to be all there is to life at the moment.

p.47 Human beings are essentially emptiness. They are not a something like a table or a chair.
They are not defined once and for all.
We are nothing pretending to be a something.

p.49 Trying to catch the self is like trying to catch one's shadow: I cannot ever grasp myself, for as soon as I do so my self has been altered.
I can never fulfill myself, because I am by essence a nothing.

p.50 My body is my consciousness.
There is in fact one choice that we do not have and that is not to choose. (Kitaip: mes visada esame priversti rinktis).

p.53 Withdrawal from relationships may be tempting but it can only be a temporary solution for we are essentially beings in relation.

p.55 The highest value is that of generosity for in emptying myself instead of trying for illusory fulfillment I can keep my freedom open much more effectively.

p.58 Life only seems absurd when I'm not equal to its challenges. Camus.
Brentano argued that intentionality is the defining characteristic of human consciousness.

p.51 out consciousness itself is only moderately conscious most of the time.

p.65 Merleau-Ponty. Philosophy is not the reflection of pre-existing truth, but, like art, the act of bringing truth into being.
Consciousness is a phenomenon of bringing the world to light.
I am both the author and the receiver of my experience.
Truth is the situational and open to alteration.

p.70 The definition of self as action rather than a thing, is the essence of existentialism.
Real freedom only begins when we are only responsible to ourselves.

p.72 If my liberty encounters no limits, I am nothing.

p.77 courage is intrinsically related to anxiety, not just by overcoming it, but being generated by it (draša reikalinga ne tik nerimui įveikti, bet ir jam kurti)
Tillich. Anxiety is the state in which being is aware of its possible non being.
Anxiety is the fear of fear.

p.78 Faith is our participation in God, who is defined as the infinite power to resist the threat of non-being.

p.80 Courage is to affirm the ultimate prevalence of being over non-being.

p.81 B.Russell. The trouble with the world is that the stupid are cocksure and the intelligent full of doubt.

p.83 Ricoeur. I belong to history before I belong to myself. History in many ways dominates and directs me.

p.95 We are one of the channels through which life flows.

p.113 Eventually we come to realize that the world is not divided between good and evil in this manner and that all of us are good in some situations and bad in others.

p.119 A full sense of private self is usually not achieved until at least the age of seven.

p.125 The preoccupation with self-improvement, or the desire to grow, or even just "find oneself", is often a superficial disguise for the desire to find a new meaning in life.

p.127 When paying attention to the mysterious waves of life that rule our existence, we discover almost immediately that much more about lives is unknown than known.

Just as food can only be taken by an organism that is open to being hungry, so the enormity of the mysteries we live with can only touch us when we open ourselves to spiritual emptiness.

p.131 For many centuries, of course, guidance in living has mostly been the province of religion.

p.139 Lacan constructed a new form of psychoanalysis on the basis of the idea that the unconscious was structured like a language.

Psychoanalysis advocated a strong ego, and Lacan saw this as the essence of narcissism.

p.144 Lacan however does strike a more existentialist note than most of his analytical colleagues by showing humans to be haunted by an absence that we can never make present, by an ideal that we can never possess.

p.150 Boss always returns to the notion that we have a world in our dreams in the same way in which we have a world in our waking lives.

p.153 [Boss] We need to stop equating self-awareness with consciousness and unawareness with unconsciousness.

p.189 Clients want a psychotherapist who is trustworthy, understandable and capable.

p.190 Clients look for psychotherapists who have established a solid foundation for their own life and whose working environment reflects such robustness, inner confidence and joy of living.

p.192 What is needed is optimal challenge, not total security or total chaos.

p.195 What existential therapy does is to forcefully confront clients with their set mode of living and their current ways of being in the world.

p.197 Existential work can only be done efficiently if the therapist is willing to be touched by the clients material.

p.198 The final consideration should be whether you honestly think that you can help a person, and whether you like this person enough at the initial interview to feel ready to get to know him and understand him.

p.199 It is sobering to keep in mind that it is you as the therapist who is going to the job interview, rather than your client.

p.202 Consciousness... is total emptiness. Sartre.
Consciousness is multiple and layered.

p.203 The problem is that people take their schemes for granted and forget that they are merely temporary maps which must be replaced with more accurate ones when it is possible to draw them.

p.212 Our consciousness tends to be focused narrowly rather than broadly.

p.216 It is striking that many of the things that psychoanalysis refer to as unconscious are the same things that behaviourists refer to as either instinctual or learnt behaviour.

p.220 We also tend to assume that others will respond to the same experience similarly, but this is often untrue.

The fact that we learn more about ourselves and others with every client that we see is one of the most satisfactory aspects of working as a psychotherapist.

p.225 We always transmit to each other our own version of reality, and we never mean exactly the same thing as any other human being.

p.226 The therapist who imposes a worldview, or an interpretation, is in all cases abusive and in the wrong.

p.229 Interpretation is the art of connecting individual statements and experiences to an overall story that makes sense of it all.

p.231 When a person specifically comes to an existential psychotherapist, it must be assumed that he or she is ready to face facts of life that have hitherto remained hidden.

p.233 It is crucial for a person to have a sense of self-esteem, for without this it is not possible to stand up against the pressures around one.

p.235 Life equals change and that individuals do not need to force change and personal transformation, as they are nothing but a process of transformation and change.

p.239 The self could be defined as the centre of decision making.

p.242 E-motions – a movement out from myself towards the world that takes me over and may even take me out of control.

p.246 We get angry when we feel that our treasured possession is threatened be it a thing, or a person, a situation, or an idea.

On the whole, anger is a panic response that demonstrates our position of loss and weakness.

p.247 Emotional cycle.

p.249 In working with clients from an existential perspective we need to keep in mind that we do not seek to eliminate their problems nor cure them of any pathology. We seek to help them describe, clarify and unravel their relationships to the world in all its different dimensions, and to make the most of their particular way of being.

p.270 Ghetto mentality – you think in terms of survival, rather than success, and you settle for less than you know that you want and are capable of.

p.274 Time does not just heal wounds, it also makes them.