

Episode One Hundred Thirty-Seven - The Letter to Menoecus 04 - On Death (Part Two)

Post by “Kalosyni” of August 28, 2022 at 12:43 PM

I brought up *Existential Therapy* today, and thinking I want to set up another thread to further explore how Epicureanism and Existential Therapy could be compatible.

Quote

Existential psychotherapy is a style of therapy that places emphasis on the human condition as a whole. Existential psychotherapy uses a positive approach that applauds human capacities and aspirations while simultaneously acknowledging human limitations.

...Existential therapy developed out of the philosophies of [Friedrich Nietzsche](#) and Soren Kierkegaard. As one of the first existential philosophers, Kierkegaard theorized that human discontent could only be overcome through internal wisdom. Later, Nietzsche further developed the theory of existentialism using concepts such as the will to power and personal responsibility. In the early 1900s, philosophers such as Martin Heidegger and Jean-Paul Sartre began to explore the role of investigation and interpretation in the healing process. Over the next several decades, other contemporaries started to acknowledge the importance of experiencing in relation to understanding as a method to achieving psychological wellness and balance...

Existential psychotherapy is based upon the fundamental belief that all people experience intrapsychic conflict due to their interaction with certain conditions inherent in human existence, which are known as givens. The theories recognize at least four primary existential givens:

- Freedom and associated responsibility
- Death
- [Isolation](#)
- Meaninglessness

A confrontation with any of the aforementioned conditions, or givens, fills an individual with a type of dread commonly referred to as existential [anxiety](#). This anxiety is thought to reduce a person's physical, psychological, social, and spiritual awareness, which may lead to significant long-term consequences.

For example, the fact that each one of us and each one of our loved ones must die at some unknown time may be a source of deep anxiety to us, and this may tempt us to

ignore the reality and necessity of death in human existence. By reducing our awareness of death, however, we may fail to make decisions that can actually safeguard or even enrich our lives. At the other end of the spectrum, people who are overly conscious of the fact that death is inevitable may be driven to a state of neurosis or [psychosis](#).

The key, according to existential psychotherapy, is to strike a balance between being aware of death without being overwhelmed by it. People who maintain a healthy balance in this way are motivated to make decisions that can positively impact their lives, as well as the lives of their loved ones. Though these people may not know how their decisions will actually turn out, they do appreciate the need to take action while they can. In essence, the reality of death encourages us to make the most of opportunities and to treasure the things we have.

<https://www.goodtherapy.org/learn-about-th...l-psychotherapy>

Display More