

Abstract

The aim of this thesis is to describe meaning in the context of Existential Hagiotherapy and to answer the following research question: How do hagiotherapy participants experience the existential meaning?

The first chapter reflects the chosen topic for the context of social work. It draws on a discursive conception of social work and a typology of the interrelationship between spiritual and professional discourse (see appendix A.1). This thesis is based on the belief that hagiotherapy belongs to spiritually sensitive social work. The second chapter focuses on the trends of existential therapy. It points out the considerable differences between the different trends, but also the similarities that can be found between them. In particular, three specific trends are important for this thesis, namely existential psychotherapy according to I.D. Yalom, logotherapy and definitely existential hagiotherapy.

The third chapter deals with the meaning of life and shows how individual philosophers see it. Firstly, the different perceptions of the so-called higher or cosmic meaning and its influence on human freedom are pointed out. It also points out one of the questions connected with the existence of God, which mankind was occupied with for thousands of years: If there is a God, where does evil come from in the world? Finally, the chapter discusses the so-called earthly or secular sense.

The fourth chapter applies to situations that can be described as senseless and to suffering. Firstly, it points out the values of the attitude that, according to Frankl, can never make suffering fully meaningless, and also discusses the consequences of the loss of life's meaning. In the fifth chapter, attention is focused directly on hagiotherapy itself and on the way it perceives and relates to existential meaning. On the one hand, existential hagiotherapy acknowledges the existence of existentials, as thematized by I. D. Yalom, but on the other hand, in the case of the existential of meaning, it disagrees with the description that Yalom gives.

The research part focuses on answering the research question mentioned above. The method of interpretative phenomenological analysis was used to reach this goal. The research was carried out with participants in a self-experience hagiotherapy training. Their view of the existential meaning of life was approached through their answers.