

*“Man’s Search for Meaning”* by Viktor Frankl

Viktor Frankl, who survived years in a concentration camp, said that those who survived the holocaust had a reason to live. That tells a sad story about those who didn’t survive, but it is a wake-up call for those of us who are still here.

I am looking for that reason to live. Not that I don’t appreciate my relationships, my activities, and my connections with others--weaving a spider web from which I launch forth into whatever shows up each day. But the human heart can’t live with only worry and obligation, with only fear about the future and regret for the losses of the past.

For survivors of a loved one’s suicide, it is a challenge to find a reason to live without them. We need to ask ourselves: what can now be our reason to go on living? Not just cowering in the clutches of grief and the terrible what ifs, but turning our face to the winds blowing out of the future. It is important that we discover why we are still here and our loved-one is not.

That may be a necessary path for survivors of suicide. Before we can discover a reason to go on living, we need to accept that our failures and inadequacies have been gathered up in the arms of a great Being. Only then can we forgive ourselves for the past and respect both our loved-one’s decision and our role in it; then we need to nurture the courage to go on living in a world that has changed forever.

Viktor Frankl lived through one of the most terrible times in human history. And he not only found meaning for himself; he shared the truth about meaning in his remarkable book.