

WHEN LIFE GOT COMPLICATED

Viktor E. Frankl was an Austrian neurologist and psychologist who founded what he called the field of "Logotherapy", which has been dubbed the "Third Viennese School of Psychology" (following Freud and Alder). Logotherapy developed in and through Frankl's personal experience in the Theresienstadt Nazi concentration camp. The years spent there deeply affected his understanding of reality and the meaning of human life. His most popular book, *Man's Search for Meaning*, chronicles his experience in the camp as well as the development of logotherapy. During his time there, he found that those around him who did not lose their sense of purpose and meaning in life were able to survive much longer than those who had lost their way.

Dr Frankl came to my mind after receiving correspondence from three guys on the row that have themselves 'stepped out' to find meaning within their own lives which has been important for them to hold onto a sense of purpose.

Joseph Hart at San Quentin wrote in about his friend Michael Flinner and Inmate Organs. Michael writes, "I lost my father to lung cancer. His battle was short, but no less painful or profound. While unaware for the most part, in one of the last chats we'd share, he whispered in his increasingly strained voice -- *that a man can preach a much better sermon with his life than with his lips* - something that our tolerant humanity regularly took for granted."

With a broad commitment to family, community, tradition and certain intangibles, men like Michael, who'd never be found among the pinnacles of male evolution, have lived their lives carved from marble-like-misfortune - fate not even society could ignore.

Michael says' "I'm condemned to die by lethal

injection for my role in the June '00 murder of Tamra Keck. Once accepting of the scenario so grim, I found it far less difficult to accept "who" I am - but equally important, was unearthing what my true purpose on this planet might actually be."

As you might imagine, Michael has met countless men and women while doing everything possible to live for today, plan for tomorrow, and remember yesterday. These folks made for an oddly comforting realization that at the heart of many humble solution, there is oftentimes found a great "why". Exploring the "why" with an open mind tends to present an equally sound "how".

For a myriad of personal reasons on the legal front, Michael stumbled upon some very unique statistics. As it turned out, The Federal Bureau of Prisons were responsible for housing a tiny 13% of the nation's prison population. This "machine" of sorts has some very promising policies in place for their inmate population. One of the policies he found most disturbing however, was that the feds had in place a well-oiled protocol for their inmates who wished to voluntarily donate a LIVING vital organ or tissue, doing so free of inducements. The feds' policy works on behalf of the intending donor's immediate family member(s) who are in need of said transplant(s).

The "other" 87% of the nation's prison population is systematically spread thin across the various 50 states, none of which offer such an opportunity to change/save an innocent person's life from a match worthy biological donor (prisoner). The operative word, being "LIVING" inmate.

In California for example, the CDC-R provides for the willing prisoner, an opportunity through

an Advance Healthcare Directive to align themselves as potential organ donors, but with a caveat as ridiculous as fried ice cream. The "twist" is that the intended STATE PRISONER may only donate in the event of his/her DEATH while in custody. How this purports to serve the nation's citizenry is beyond Michael (and many others). The apathetic oversight compelled Michael to kick off a rather aggressive snailmail campaign - one which asked a good many question of some people in very high places. He argued that many prisoners share in the sentiment where the rationale for incarceration stems from a responsibility to repay (their) debts to society through restitution, rehabilitation and punishment.

Why then, if the government remains tasked with protecting its citizenry, are some 22 Americans in the free world dying each day while awaiting the gift of a life-saving organ, tissue, or bone marrow when no doubt more than ample resources exist?

Fast forward...finally Michael got a reply with promise: California (Dem) Senator Cathleen Galgiani who herself found it absurd that the state takes life, labor, income and time from the imprisoned, make it a point to demand that each and every inmate "rehabilitate" themselves, yet methodically ill-afford any meaningful protocol through which to make the ultimate restitution, the means to replace destruction with life.

Senate Bill SB1419 soon followed - an opportunity to rekindle some important conversation with some equally important people. SB1419 has been successful up through the first three layers of Senate consideration. See February 2016 : www.tinyurl.com/sb1419. To date, SB1419 has found solace despite being up against what some paint as an uphill battle. The object as Michael sees it, is to model SB1419 after the Federal Bureau of Prisons (inmate organ donor) protocol for immediate family members. To do so means being able to comfortably dispel the myths where prisoners are without redemptive value - devoid of civic responsibility

through social action and Political awareness.

What is needed today comes with advocacy from people like you. This is an emerging industry which requires vocal and visible participation from families, activists, academic and legal circles - people ready to stand united against the ravages of these lurid destroyers of life.

Michael created :

<https://twitter.com/inmateorgans>

with a burgeoning array of online venues to explore. They met and interviewed with 60Minutes, they've managed to record an audio project scope at soundcloud, and much more.

For not the dedication of this projects' promise and potential, they'd never have learned of the judicial fallibilities and hurdles in their way while the sick languish in numbers that far-outstrip national supply for match worthy donors - LIVING donors. The numbers speak for themselves.

Thank You

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