

Logotherapy and Mindfulness: An Anthropological Perspective



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Psychotherapy as a science and profession has recently shown serious interest in Buddhist meditation techniques, particularly those that cultivate mindfulness (*sati*).¹ In recent decades, there has been a huge development in the field of introducing Buddhist-derived intervention methods into traditional psychotherapeutic settings. One can observe many new therapeutic approaches arising and remodeling or even adapting already existent psychotherapeutic models to incorporate mindfulness as its main therapeutic tool, for example, in mindfulness-based stress reduction, mindfulness-based cognitive therapy, mindfulness-based relationship enhancement, mindfulness-based relapse prevention, mindfulness-based eating awareness training, mindfulness-based cancer recovery, dialectical behavior therapy, as well as acceptance and commitment therapy (McCown, 2013, pp. 23–26).

Based on these recent developments, it can be observed that Indian approaches to mental health are becoming of great interest to current Western psychotherapy (Kristeller & Rikhye, 2008, pp. 507–508).² Within this interest and progressive development, the fields of non-Western psychology and cross-cultural psychotherapy are becoming one of the most important current research areas, since the need for appropriate understanding of methods for alleviation of human suffering deriving from

¹The technical Buddhist terms in Pāli are followed in parentheses, in Roman transliteration. All Pāli terms referred to in the text are transliterated according to the internationally accepted transliteration standards. In the direct in-text citations which do not follow these transliteration rules, appropriate changes are made; these modifications are not specifically noted in the text.

²The term “Western” used throughout this work refers to cultures, societies and the body of knowledge founded by and developed from the Western Classical philosophy, such as the Greek philosophers’ perspective on the nature of the human being.

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non-Western cultural contexts demands a broader and interdisciplinary approach in order to be fully grasped and wisely applied in new contexts, such as clinical psychotherapeutic practice (Berry et al., 2011, p. 425; Chakkarath, 2012, pp. 80–81; Lavelle, 2016, p. 233; Manickam, 2008, p. 501; Virtbauer, 2016, p. 75).

Thus a cross-cultural approach will be used for this work, since the research question focuses on the exploration of the potential introduction of mindfulness (*sati*), as understood and presented in the textual sources of Theravāda Buddhism,³ (e.g., Anuruddha, trans. 1993; Buddhaghosa, trans. 1999; *Dīgha Nikāya*, trans. 1995; *Majjhima Nikāya*, trans. 1995; *Samyutta Nikāya*, trans. 2000) into an anthropological model of one of the existential schools of psychotherapy: Viktor Frankl's (1946/1986) logotherapy and existential analysis.⁴ Can logotherapy's dimensional anthropology be enriched through the Theravāda Buddhist concept of the five aggregates (*pañcakkhandā*) in order to provide a solid theoretical framework for exploring potential possibilities of introducing the concept of mindfulness (*sati*) into logotherapy? What are the divergences and confluences between the anthropological models of logotherapy and Theravāda Buddhism? What is mindfulness (*sati*), how is it developed and cultivated according to the Theravāda Buddhism, and where is it situated in the concept of the five aggregates (*pañcakkhandā*)? Can the concept of mindfulness (*sati*) be theoretically introduced into logotherapy's dimensional anthropology?

In the first part of this chapter, an introduction to both anthropological models is given, namely to the dimensional anthropology and to the five aggregates (*pañcakkhandā*). A brief outline of the Frankl's anthropological model and its main components and dynamics is presented, followed by exploration of the Theravāda Buddhist anthropological model of the five aggregates (*pañcakkhandā*), as described in the textual sources of Pāli Canon, particularly in the *Book of Aggregates* (*Khandhavagga*) of *The Connected Discourses of the Buddha* (*Samyutta Nikāya*, trans. 2000) and the commentarial work of Buddhaghosa's (trans. 1999) *The Path of Purification* (*Visudhimagga*). The discussion then focuses on the later development of the Buddhist anthropological model as presented in the Abhidhamma portions of the Pāli Canon and summarized in *A comprehensive manual of Abhidhamma* (*Abhidhammattha Sangaha*) of Ācariya Anuruddha (trans. 1993), who perceived the human experience as being constituted of four ultimate realities (*dhammas*), and situates mindfulness (*sati*) as being a part of one of these ultimate realities (*dhammas*), namely the mental factors (*cetasikas*).

The second part of this chapter offers a brief description of mindfulness (*sati*) and ways it is cultivated according to the Theravāda Buddhist thought; the last part explores the accommodation of the model of the five aggregates (*pañcakkhandā*)

³ Interpretations of mindfulness that have evolved in modern Buddhism very frequently refer back to Theravāda sources. Therefore, in discussions of the concept of mindfulness, this article draws from the Theravāda Buddhist canon with the technical terms for mindfulness and the related concepts given in Pāli.

⁴ The term *logotherapy* is used throughout this work as an abbreviation of the full name of the psychotherapeutic school known as "logotherapy and existential analysis," as established by Viktor Frankl (1946/1986).

into Frankl's (1969/1988, 1946/1986) dimensional anthropology in order to theoretically situate mindfulness (*sati*) into the logotherapy's anthropological model, without neglecting its ethical characteristics as outlined in the Theravāda Buddhist psychological and ethical system of thought.

The inquiry in this work is inspired by the current lack of emphasis on the ethical dimension of mindfulness (*sati*) and its role in the contemporary psychotherapeutic forms of its application (Monteiro et al., 2015, p. 11). The acknowledgement of ethical dimension as an irreducible characteristic of mindfulness (*sati*), situated at the core of practices for its cultivation, is crucial, and to explore potential ways of actively integrating and enhancing this dimension in the context of psychotherapy is an important next step in the dialogue between contemporary psychotherapy and mindfulness (*sati*), as a component of Buddhist psychology (Brown, 2017, p. 45; Ditrich, 2013, p. 60; Nilsson, 2014, p. 172; Virtbauer, 2012, p. 254). The key assumption of this research is that logotherapy can be enriched by the Buddhist concept of the five aggregates (*pañcakkhandā*) to such a degree that it can theoretically incorporate in its anthropological model the concept of mindfulness (*sati*), without neglecting its ethical foundation emphasized by the Theravāda Buddhist doctrine.

Anthropological Models of Logotherapy and Theravāda Buddhism

The inquiry into the question of what human beings are, what constitutes them, and how to apply this knowledge to enhance both material and experiential living conditions in order to live a less painful life has been the topic of many great thinkers. The conceptual representation of the nature of the human being has been established in many forms throughout human history. Based on these representations, various approaches to relieve human suffering have been (and are still being) developed, among which two such approaches are being considered in this work, namely, logotherapy (Frankl, 1946/1986) and Theravāda Buddhism (e.g., Anuruddha, trans. 1993; Buddhaghosa, trans. 1999; *Dīgha Nikāya*, trans. 1995; *Majjhima Nikāya*, trans. 1995; *Saṃyutta Nikāya*, trans. 2000). Both systems of thought developed their own culturally informed representations of the human being and the ways to approach human suffering. Logotherapy developed an anthropological model called “dimensional anthropology and ontology” (Frankl, 1969/1988, p. 22) while Theravāda Buddhism outlined the model of the five aggregates (*pañcakkhandā*) (*Saṃyutta Nikāya*, trans. 2000, pp. 853–1041, *SN III 1–278*)⁵ and later reinterpreted

⁵The in-text references of classical Pāli texts are cited according to the APA guidelines and followed in italics by abbreviation of Pāli source and the quotation system according to the Pāli Text Society transliterated edition of the text. The numbers in the quotations refer to the volume and page of the Pāli edition of the text (e.g., *MN I 21* refers to the *Majjhima Nikāya*, vol 1, page 21). See also Rhys Davids & Stede (1921–1925), Trenckner et al. (1924–1992) and Gethin (2008, pp. xi–xliv).

it in terms of the four ultimate realities (*dhammas*) (Anuruddha, trans. 1993, pp. 23–365 [excluding explanatory guide] *Abhidh-s*). These two models differ from each other in many ways, since they were conceived in two very different cultural and historical contexts.

Dimensional Anthropology

The logotherapeutic model was put forth in the early 1930s by Viennese psychiatrist and philosopher Viktor Frankl (2010) as a response to a highly reductionistic and pandeterministic approach of Western medical and psychological sciences towards understanding the human being and its suffering (Cooper, 2003, pp. 51–53). Frankl (2000) focused his theory on the “*rehumanization of psychotherapy*” (p. 105) and strived to establish an anthropological model that would encompass the contemporary scientific findings in his approach while not neglecting the specifically human dimension of existence, which was often the case in the early twentieth century debates on conceptual formulation of the human being as a machine rather than a living being. The model was developed in a dialogue with various philosophical, psychiatric, and psychotherapeutic movements of that time. Those that most influenced Frankl’s (1969/1988, 2000) perspective were Sigmund Freud (the founder of psychoanalysis), Alfred Adler (individual psychology), Edmund Husserl and Max Scheler (phenomenology), Nicolai Hartmann (ontology), Martin Heidegger (existential phenomenology), Ludwig Binswanger (existential analysis), and others.

Frankl (1946/1986) developed logotherapy as a psychotherapeutic school with its own perspective on the human being and its constitutive elements based on the main postulate that “*being human means being conscious and being responsible*” (p. 5). According to this anthropological model, a human being is an irreducible whole of three dimensions, namely *somatic*, *psychic*, and *noëtic*, each of them having unique characteristics. The somatic or bodily dimension stands for biological and chemical processes of the body; the psychic or mental dimension represents emotional and cognitive processes of human experience; and the noëtic, spiritual dimension outlines the moral and ethical processes of the human experience (DuBois, 2004, pp. xiii–xiv; Lukas, 2000, p. 9).

The three dimensions are inter-related insofar as a change in one dimension influences the other two in a particular manner. In *Der Wille zum Sinn*, Frankl termed the dynamics between somatic and psychic dimensions “*psychophysical parallelism*” (Frankl, 2004, p. 63). This can be understood in terms of contemporary medical psychosomatic understanding that the changes in biochemical processes of the body affect psychological content of the human experience, and that the modification of psychological content of the human experience brings about the change in the biological processes occurring in the body. Frankl explored this dynamic, particularly in the context of mental disorders, where he distinguishes between the given human experience based on its etiology (somatogenic, psychogenic, noëgenic) and symptomology (pheno-somatic, pheno-psychological) (2004, pp. 44–49).

Frankl termed the dynamics between the noëtic and psychosomatic dimensions of the human being as “psychonoëtic antagonism” (Frankl, 2004, p. 63). This is distinct from the psychophysical parallelism insofar as the changes in psychosomatic dimensions don’t constitutively affect and change the noëtic dimension (in terms of potentiality of freedom to will, will to meaning, meaning to life, conscience, responsibility, etc.) but rather it only limits the potential expression and influence of noëtic constituents onto the rest of experiential constituents of human being.

Frankl (2000) also integrated into this three-dimensional anthropological model the psychoanalytical structure of the mind. From a psychoanalytical perspective, the structure of a human mind can be outlined in three layers, namely (1) the *unconscious* mind, representing those aspects of one’s experience that are usually not easily accessible to awareness (such as primitive, instinctual desires and impulses); (2) the *preconscious* mind, outlining those aspects of one’s experience that are not in a foreground of one’s experience but can nevertheless be accessed by awareness when approached with sufficient amount of attention; and (3) the *conscious* mind, standing for the immediate aspect of one’s experience deriving from sensory inputs and mental processing (Luborsky et al., 2011, p. 24). This threefold categorization of the human experience interacting with the three dimensions of human being sheds additional light on the variety of processes manifesting in each of the three dimensions. Particularly interesting is the outlining of the noëtic dimension in terms of these three layers of human experience, since according to Frankl (2000), the unconscious layer of human experience is not only constituted out of biological impulses but also of noëtic qualities or potentials, such as conscience, a nonreflected state of being, etc. (pp. 31, 36). Since the brief summary of these three dimensions has already been explored elsewhere (Srakar & Virtbauer, 2015, pp. 17–20), this chapter focuses particularly on outlining the active constituents of these dimensions relevant for further discussion.

The concept of dimensional anthropology can be approached from two theoretical angles, firstly from the third-person perspective and secondly from the first-person perspective. The third-person perspective can be observed in Frankl’s formulation of the three dimensions and their constituents as static categorical units, while the first-person perspective can be observed in his formulation of the interdimensional dynamics, where dimensional constituents become the bearers of processes occurring between the three dimensions. The process-oriented aspect of his theoretical model is an important theoretical opening highly relevant for further discussion. As such, an attempt is made in the following few paragraphs to briefly present and situate Frankl’s constituents of three dimensions as various processes rather than static theoretical units.

Although a human being’s experience is a unique, indivisible whole of *being* (Frankl, 1946/1986, p. xvi), concepts of the psychophysical parallelism and psychonoëtic antagonism outline a constant process of interdimensional changing in the context of three conditions, namely “(1) the instincts; (2) inherited disposition; and (3) environment” (p. xxiv). As such, somatic, bodily processes influence the experience of psychological processes (and vice versa), and the experience of noëtic processes conditions the overall outcome of the experience of somatic and

psychological processes in terms of potential suffering arising from the moral sensibility regarding the effects of one's reaction to the previous experiential moment. From a process-oriented perspective, the experiential bearers of this interdimensional dynamic can be summarized as follows: (a) the somatic dimension comprising of biochemical processes within the body and various sensory-motor processes related to them; (b) the psychological dimension comprising of processes of cognition, emotion, perception, attention, memory etc., which are manifesting as "emotional states, its moods, sensation of drives, instincts, desires and passions... [as well as] intellectual talents, acquired behavior patterns and social impressions" (Lukas 2000, p. 9); and (c) the noëtic dimension comprised of processes of "independent decisions of will ('intentionality'),⁶ material and artistic interests, creative design [(creativity)], religious and ethical sensitivity ('conscience'), understanding of values, and love" (Lukas 2000, pp. 9–10). Among various interdimensional processes, two of them hold key therapeutic positions: *self-detachment* and *self-transcendence*. Self-detachment is the process of shifting the attention or embracing a less-identified attitude (for example through humor) towards the experiential content of suffering (deriving either from the environment or from within); self-transcendence is the process of shifting attention from motivation for action based on egoistic wishes and desires to motivation for action based on ethical understanding and fulfillment of meaning through creative, experiential, and attitudinal existential values (Frankl 1946/1986, pp. 290–294; 1969/1988, pp. 70–74).

With the deriving of human beings [sic] capacity to distance themselves out of the noö-psychic [psychonoëtic] antagonism, the concept of "dealing with oneself" is initiated. This concept describes the high pedagogic-therapeutic goal of logotherapy, a goal that is appraised higher than self-awareness. Sufficient awareness in and of itself can never remain its ultimate purpose; rather it is much more a transitional stage that ought to lead beyond the self. Logotherapy's requirement for such "aiming-beyond-the-self" turns itself into a life-training course that breaks open the confining sphere of psychotherapy and leads into a "training towards accountability." (Lukas 2000, p. 54)

In the context of ethical processes manifesting in the noëtic dimension, one of the key concepts relevant for later discussion is also the concept of conscience, which represents a particular process of ethical perceiving, valuing, deciding, and responding. According to Frankl (1969/1988), the meaning to be fulfilled in any particular moment of existence manifests as an intuitive discovery of one's conscience rather than a cognitive construction of one's inference etc., since conscience "has the power to discover unique meanings that contradict accepted values" (p. 63). As such, the content of this ethical process (termed as conscience) is not a prescription of set of values and rules of certain tradition, but rather a set of values characterized by ontologization, existentialization and phenomenologization of morality.

⁶*Intentionality* should be understood in its narrower meaning in the context of logotherapy and its motivational theory. In this sense, it does not refer to "intentionality" as a technical term used within phenomenological discourses (as an experience of being conscious of something); rather, it contains a slight notion of action or orientation towards activity, which is absent in the traditional definition.

According to Frankl (2000), this process experientially culminates as a “pre-reflective ontological self-understanding” (p. 122), described as “the premoral understanding of meaning [...] rooted in the prelogical understanding of being” (p. 127). Frankl expanded this idea:

By virtue of what I call the *pre-reflective ontological self-understanding*, or what is also called “the wisdom of the heart,” [the man in the street] knows that being human means being responsible for fulfilling the meaning potential inherent in a given situation. What is even more important, [he] knows that meaning may be found not only in creating a work and doing a deed, not only in encountering someone and experiencing something, but also, if need be, in the way in which he stands up to suffering. (p. 122)

The Five Aggregates (pañcakkhandā)

The anthropological model of Theravāda Buddhism was orally outlined by a wandering ascetic (*samaṇa*) Siddhattha Gotama also known as the Buddha or “Awakened One” somewhere between 500 and 400 BCE in eastern India. It was written down in a textual form of Pāli Canon around first century CE (Gethin, 1998, p. 42; 2008, pp. xv–xvii). This model has emerged as a response to contemporary theories and explorations on the topic of unchangeable, permanent nature of self (*attā*), developed within Jain and brahmanical (Upaniṣadic) traditions, as well as in later periods within the traditions of *Sāṃkhya* and *Yoga* (Gethin, 1998, p. 134). The Buddhist thought explored the human experience from a different perspective than other Indian schools, as it critically examined the above-mentioned postulate in terms of “descriptive analysis of the nature of experience, or, to put it simply, of just what it is that seems to be going on all the time” (Gethin, 1998, p. 135). As such, the Buddha formulated the concept of five aggregates (*pañcakkhandā*) “as a scheme of categories for analysing human identity and for explicating the structure of experience [as-such]” (Bodhi, 2000a, p. 840). According to this model, a human experience can be outlined in terms of five experiential categories, namely, materiality (*rūpa*), feeling (*vedanā*), perception (*saññā*), volitional formations (*saṅkhāras*), and consciousness (*viññāṇa*) (*Samyutta Nikāya*, trans. 2000, pp. 886–887, *SN III 47*), which are perpetually held together by their mutual causal connectedness.

The Buddha described in detail the process of mutual interconnectedness of constituents of human experience with the concept of dependent origination (*paṭiccasamuppāda*), which elaborates (through outlining 12 mutually interconnected links with numerous persistent feedback loops) a complex nonlinear causality present in the underlying patterns of one’s everyday experience (*Samyutta Nikāya*, trans. 2000, pp. 533–534, *SN II 1*). Although a complete survey of this concept is beyond the scope of this work, it should be perceived as highly relevant for tackling the dynamics between the various manifestations of the five aggregates (*pañcakkhandā*). One of the key points put forth by the concept of dependent origination (*paṭiccasamuppāda*) is namely the experiential insight, that what binds the five constituents of human experience (*pañcakkhandā*) is not the experiential self

(*attā*), but the causality as such. As Gethin (1998) pointed out, “the fact that experiences are causally connected is not to be explained by reference to an unchanging self that underlies experience, but by examining the nature of causality” (p. 139). As such, from the first-person perspective, each one of these five categories contains “a multiplicity of phenomena that share the same defining characteristic” (Bodhi, 2000a, p. 840), and are according to the Buddha’s analysis perceived as impermanent (*aniccā*), painful (*dukkha*), and non-self (*anattā*) (*Samyutta Nikāya*, trans. 2000, pp. 868–870, *SN III 21–23*). Any identity that a human being assumes, or a self that one presupposes to exist, is regarded as a wrong view of self (*sakkāyadiṭṭhi*), which experientially manifests due to human being’s habitual clinging (*upādāna*) to one’s bodily sensations, emotions, thoughts, etc. As long as clinging (*upādāna*) persists as the main perpetual manifesting force of human experience, the five aggregates (*pañcakkhandā*) are addressed as the five aggregates subject to clinging (*pañcupādānakkhandhā*) (*Samyutta Nikāya*, trans. 2000, pp. 863–864, *SN III 14*), sometimes also translated as “the five ‘bundles of grasping-fuel’” (Harvey, 2013a, p. 32). As such, this early Theravāda Buddhist anthropological model perceives a human being as an interconnectedness of five categorically different experiential functions (*pañcakkhandā*), which are distinctively lacking any unchanging experiential substance that might be referred to as the self (*attā*) of the human being (Bodhi, 2000a, p. 841).

The aggregate of materiality (*rūpakkhandā*) is classified into two subgroups (Ñānamoli, 1999, p. 898, Table 1). Firstly, there is the so-called primary materiality (*mahābhūta*) constituted out of four elements (*dhātu*), namely, earth (*pathavi*), fire (*tejo*), water (*āpo*), and air (*vayo*), manifesting as constituents of the biology of human body as well as the experiential qualities of hardness, fluidity, warmth, and motion (Buddhaghosa, trans. 1999, pp. 343–347, *Vism 348–351*; see also Anālayo, 2003, p. 164). Out of these four primary elements, the second subgroup manifests as the so-called derived materiality (*upādā-rūpa*), which represents 24 forms manifested as a result of clinging (*upādāya*). The 24 derived forms stand for: five sense organs [eye (*cakkhāyatana*), ear (*soṭāyatana*), nose (*ghānāyatana*), tongue (*jivhāyatana*), body (*kāyāyatana*)]; four objects of sensing [visible datum (*rūpāyatana*), sound (*saddāyatana*), odor (*ghandāyatana*), flavor (*rasāyatana*)];⁷ three faculties [femininity faculty (*itthindriya*), masculinity faculty (*purisindriya*), life faculty (*rūpajīvitindriya*)]; heart-basis (*hadaya-vatu*); two modes of expression [bodily intimation (*kāyaviññatti*), verbal intimation (*vacīviññatti*)]; space element (*ākāśadhātu*); three characteristics of materiality [lightness of matter (*lahutā*), malleability of matter (*mudutā*), and wieldiness of matter (*kammaññatā*)]; four phases of materiality [growth of matter (*upacaya*), continuity of matter (*santati*), ageing of matter (*jaratā*), and impermanence of matter (*aniccatā*)]; and physical nutriment (*āhāra*) (*Samyutta Nikāya*, trans. 2000, p. 895, *SN III 59*; Buddhaghosa, trans. 1999, pp. 358–359, 442–444, *Vism 364, 443–444*; see also Boisvert, 1995; Ñānamoli, 1999).

⁷Touch is regarded as a component of the three primary elements (earth (*pathavi*), fire (*tejo*), and air (*vayo*)) and is as such excluded from this list (Ñānamoli, 1999, p. 805).

The aggregate of feeling (*vedanākkhanda*) stands for “bare affective quality of an experience” (Dhamma & Bodhi, 2000b, p. 80) and is usually outlined in three types, namely, pleasant (*sukha*), unpleasant (*dukkha*), and neutral (*adukkhamasukha*) (*Samyutta Nikāya*, trans. 2000, pp. 914–916, *SN III 86–87*; Buddhaghosa, trans. 1999, pp. 462–463, *Vism 460*; see also Anālayo, 2003). It arises together with the contact (*phassa*) between the consciousness (*viññāṇa*) and the bodily or mental object received through one of the six senses (*indriya*), namely the five sense organs [eye (*cakkhāyatana*), ear (*sotāyatana*), nose (*ghāṇāyatana*), tongue (*jivhāyatana*), body (*kāyāyatana*)] and the mind (*mano*) (*Samyutta Nikāya*, trans. 2000, pp. 895–896, *SN III 59–60*; see also Boisvert, 1995; Hamilton, 1996). The aggregate of perception (*saññākkhandha*) stands for the cognitive function of apperceiving the distinct features of encountered object and it arises similarly as the aggregate of feeling (*vedanākkhanda*), namely based on the contact (*phassa*) of consciousness (*viññāṇa*) either with the five senses and their objects or with the mental objects manifested in the mind. As such, it can be understood as a process of organization of received sensory and mental experiential inputs into the recognizable, knowable qualities of encountered object (*Samyutta Nikāya*, trans. 2000, pp. 915–916, *SN III 87*; Buddhaghosa, trans. 1999, pp. 464–465, *Vism 462*; see also Dhamma & Bodhi, 2000b; Hamilton, 1996; Harvey, 2013a).⁸ The aggregate of volitional formations (*saṅkhārakkhanda*), conditioned in the same manner as the previous two aggregates, stands for all of the remaining aspects of human experience,⁹ such as intentionality, emotions, reasoning, intellectual and creative processes, described as various combinations of 50 distinct components that together form or construct a stable connection between the rest of aggregates, thus putting forth a multilayered but coherent experience. These 50 distinct components are further organized into three groups based on their ethical characteristics as (a) meritorious, beautiful, or profitable (*kusala*); (b) demeritorious, unwholesome, or unprofitable (*akusala*); and (c) neutral or indeterminate (*avyākata*) mental activity (*Samyutta Nikāya*, trans. 2000, pp. 895–896, 915–916, *SN III 60, 87*; Buddhaghosa, trans. 1999, pp. 464–478, *Vism 462–472*; see also Boisvert, 1995; Harvey, 2013a; Ñāṇamoli, 1999). The aggregate of consciousness (*viññāṇakkhanda*) stands for the cognitive function of being aware of or being conscious of the present experiential content arising from the biological or psychological sources and it is conditioned by name-and-form (*nāmarūpa*),¹⁰ described as the five senses and the mind (*Samyutta Nikāya*, trans. 2000, pp. 896–897, 915–916, *SN III 61, 87*). The condition of name-and-form

⁸The latter two aggregates, although represented as a distinct, standalone aggregates, are nevertheless regarded by later Abhidhammic categorization as subcategories of the aggregate of volitional formations (*saṅkhārakkhanda*) reformulated as mental factors (*cetasika*) (Anuruddha, trans. 1993, pp. 77–78, *Abhidh-s II 2*).

⁹Excluding the function of knowing or cognizing, which is assigned to the aggregate of consciousness (*viññāṇakkhanda*).

¹⁰The term is sometimes translated also as mind-and-body. This translation might be more appropriate in the current discussion, but for the sake of uniformity with Ñāṇamoli’s translation of *Visuddhimagga* (Buddhaghosa, 1999), the translation “name-and-form” is used.

(*nāmarūpa*) represents the key principle of the uniqueness of each individual human being and can be understood as the “conceptual and formational individuality” (Hamilton, 1996, p. 135) derived from the dynamics between the rest of aggregates (Harvey, 2013a, p. 33; Ñāṇamoli, 1999, pp. 900–901, Table 3; Olendzki, 2013, p. 57).

An important developmental step in expression and organization of the Buddha’s teachings in the Theravāda tradition took place with a formulation of the third part of the Pāli Canon¹¹ also known as *The Basket of Higher or Further Dhamma* (*Abhidhamma Piṭaka*). It is constituted out of seven books, namely, *The Enumeration of Phenomena* (*Dhammasaṅgāṇī*), *The Book of Analysis* (*Vibhanga*), *The Discourse on Elements* (*Dhātukathā*), *The Concepts of Individuals* (*Puggalapaññatti*), *The Points of Controversy* (*Kathāvatthu*), *The Book of Pairs* (*Yamaka*), and *The Book of Conditional Relations* (*Paṭṭhāna*), which elaborately tackle various doctrinal aspects of the Buddha’s teaching and systemize them into a complete psychological and ethical presentation of the full-fledged soteriological system of early Buddhist thought (Dhamma & Bodhi, 2000a, pp. 11–13; Gethin, 1998, pp. 46–48). In these texts an important shift occurs in the presentation of anthropological model, since the concept of the five aggregates (*pañcakkhandā*) is replaced and reinterpreted by the concept of four ultimate realities (*dhammas*), which outlines four irreducible components of existence (*dhammas*) namely, materiality (*rūpa*), mental factors (*cetasikas*), consciousness (*citta*), and *nibbāna*. This model of human experience reshapes and elaborates the aggregate of materiality (*rūpakkhandā*) into 28 types of materiality (*rūpa*), the aggregates of feeling (*vedanākkhandā*) and perception (*saññākkhandā*) into 2 mental factors (*cetasikas*), volitional formations (*saṅkhārakkhandā*) into remaining 50 mental factors (*cetasikas*), and the aggregate of consciousness (*viññāṇakkhandā*) into 89 and 121 types of consciousness (*citta*). From the first-person perspective, materiality (*rūpa*) stands for a cognizable object, mental factors (*cetasikas*) stand for various cognitive procedural elements occurring simultaneously with the cognition of the object, and consciousness (*citta*) stands for the cognition-as-such. An ordinary, conditioned human experience is a combination of various components of the first three ultimate realities (*dhammas*), while *nibbāna* stands for the unconditioned aspect of reality, outside of the triadic experiential framework of cognizable object, cognitive procedural elements and cognition-as-such (Dhamma & Bodhi, 2000b, pp. 26–27, 76).

A... distinguishing feature of the *Abhidhamma* is the dissection of the apparently continuous stream of consciousness into a succession of discrete evanescent cognitive events called *cittas*, each a complex unity involving consciousness itself, as the basic awareness of an object, and a constellation of mental factors (*cetasika*) exercising more specialized tasks in the act of cognition. Such a view of consciousness, at least in outline, can readily be derived from the Sutta Piṭaka’s analysis of experience into the five aggregates, among which the four mental aggregates are always inseparably conjoined, but the conception remains there merely suggestive. In the *Abhidhamma Piṭaka* the suggestion is not simply picked up, but is expanded into an extraordinarily detailed and coherent picture of the functioning of consciousness both in its microscopic immediacy and in its extended continuity from life to life. (Dhamma & Bodhi, 2000a, pp. 8–9)

¹¹ The first two parts of Pāli Canon are namely *The Basket of Discourses* (*Sutta Piṭaka*) and *The Basket of Monastic Discipline* (*Vinaya Piṭaka*).

Mindfulness (*sati*) and Its Cultivation

According to the analysis put forth in the Abhidhammic textual sources, mindfulness (*sati*) is understood as a universal beautiful mental factor (*sobhanasādhāraṇa*), situated in a group of mental factors (*cetasikas*) that are ethically wholesome or beautiful (*sobhanacetasika*) (Anuruddha, trans. 1993, p. 85, *Abhidh-s II 5*). “Ethically wholesome” in this context refers to a mental moment infused with non-greed (*alobha*), non-hatred (*adosa*), and non-delusion (*amoha*), which is conducive for arising of future ethically wholesome mental moments that altogether stimulate the progress towards cessation of one’s experiential suffering (Dhamma & Bodhi, 2000b, pp. 85–86). According to Gethin (2013), mindfulness (*sati*) is outlined in the early Abhidhammic texts as a “recollection (*anussati*), recall (*paṭissati*), remembrance (*saraṇatā*), keeping in mind (*dhāraṇatā*), absence of floating (*apilāpanatā*), [and] absence of forgetfulness (*asammussanatā*)” (p. 270).

As a mental quality, *sati* represents the deliberate cultivation and a qualitative improvement of the receptive awareness that characterizes the initial stages of the perceptual process. Important aspects of *sati* are bare and equanimous receptivity, combined with an alert, broad, and open state of mind. One of the central tasks of *sati* is the de-automatization of habitual reactions and perceptual evaluations. *Sati* thereby leads to a progressive restructuring of perceptual appraisal, and culminates in an undistorted vision of reality “as it is”. The element of non-reactive watchful receptivity in *sati* forms the foundation for *satipaṭṭhāna* [or presence of mindfulness (Anālayo, 2003, p. 43)] as an ingenious middle path which neither suppresses the contents of experience nor compulsively reacts to them. (Anālayo, 2003, p. 266)

According to the Theravāda Buddhist tradition, cultivation (*bhāvanā*) of mindfulness (*sati*) represents a key element on the eight-fold noble path (*ariya-aṭṭhaṅgikamagga*), since it leads towards the development of one of its factors (*aṅga*), namely, the right mindfulness (*sammā-sati*) (Harvey, 2013b, p. 83). Right mindfulness (*sammā-sati*) is described as having four characteristics, namely, diligence (*ātāpī*), mindfulness (*sati*), freedom from desire and aversion (*vinneya abhiijhādomanassa*), and clear comprehension (*sampajāna*). *The Discourse on the Establishment of Mindfulness (Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta)* (Anālayo, 2003; *Dīgha Nikāya*, trans. 1995, II 290–315; *Majjhima Nikāya*, trans. 1995, I 55–63), one of the key early instructional texts on cultivation of mindfulness (*sati*), outlines four objects of contemplation that lead to cultivation of right mindfulness (*sammā-sati*), namely the body (*kāya*), feelings (*vedanā*), states of consciousness (*citta*), and the mental objects (*dhammas*) (*Dīgha Nikāya*, 1995, pp. 335–350, *DN II 290–315*; *Majjhima Nikāya*, trans. 1995, pp. 145–155, *MN I 55–63*; see also Anālayo, 2003; Dhamma & Bodhi, 2000b).

The cultivation of mindfulness (*sati*) is in Buddhist tradition a component of two types of meditation practices, namely the meditation for calm (*samatha*) and for insight (*vipassanā*). The two types differ from each other, in that *samatha* leads to concentration absorptions whereas *vipassanā* develops insight into the three characteristics of existence, i.e., impermanence (*anicca*), non-satisfactoriness (*dukkha*) and non-self (*anattā*). In the practices for calm (*samatha*) one develops and holds attention (*manasikāra*) on the chosen object for a prolonged period of time with the

aim to naturally calm the mental and physical reactions to the present experience. According to Virtbauer (2016), “the point of this practice is to concentrate entirely on an embodied process that is concretely and directly connected to one’s life in the present moment” (p. 74). The calming of mental and physical reactions cultivates the arising of beautiful mental factors (*sobhanasādhāraṇa*) that are conducive for early developmental aspects of the mental factor of wisdom (*paññā*) to arise and, together with attention (*manasikāra*), form the so-called wise attention (*yoniso manasikāra*). The cultivation of wise attention (*yoniso manasikāra*) further provides a stable foundation for arising of mindfulness (*sati*) and clear comprehension (*sampajāna*). Such intense concentration can lead to highly peaceful and joyful experiential states known as full absorptions (*jhāna*). But these states are still not the ultimate goal of the practices (Anālayo, 2003, p. 60; Dhamma & Bodhi, 2000b, pp. 79, 90; Gethin, 2004, p. 213). In the practices for insight (*vipassanā*) one observes, with the help of both mindfulness (*sati*) and clear comprehension (*sampajāna*), not any particular object but rather the process-oriented nature of reality itself or experience-as-such, with the aim of cultivating wisdom (*paññā*), which can be defined as a clear insight into the three characteristics of every single phenomenon, namely, impermanence (*anicca*), painfulness (*dukkha*), and non-selfness (*anattā*), ultimately leading to *nibbāna* (Gethin, 2004, p. 215).

Theoretical Introduction of Mindfulness (*sati*) into Frankl’s Dimensional Anthropology

As mentioned, logotherapy and Theravāda Buddhism derive from distinct cultural backgrounds and consequently their descriptions of the human being and its ontological characteristics differ in many ways. As such, the first part of this section explores the possibility of introducing the five aggregates (*pañcakkhanda*) into dimensional anthropology, while the second part attempts to outline mindfulness (*sati*) and its cultivation as an ethical embodied process that could potentially be situated in a noetic dimension of human being.

Potential Accommodation of Two Anthropological Models

According to Walsh and Shapiro (2006), the reconciliation of such culturally different anthropologies, as in the case of a dimensional anthropology and the five aggregates (*pañcakkhanda*), can theoretically be approached through the process of so-called *accommodation*, which stands for “expanding and enriching conceptual categories” (p. 228) of one system with the ideas of another, in this case of dimensional anthropology with those of five aggregates (*pañcakkhanda*). A dimensional anthropology offers a broad theoretical framework to approach the model of the five

aggregates (*pañcakkhanda*), since it aims as a model to describe a human being as holistically as possible within the given limitations of its linguistic and cultural context. On the other hand, the model of five aggregates (*pañcakkhanda*) outlines the human being not so much as a whole but rather as various interconnected processes. In this context, it is worth mentioning Gendlin's (1999, p. 233) observations that both reductionistic and holistic anthropological models shed light onto the human being in a particular manner but nevertheless can be complemented with a process-oriented approach. As such, the following attempt at accommodation of the two models can be perceived as a potential enrichment of Frankl's (1969/1988, pp. 22–30) anthropological combination of reductionistic (three ontologically different dimensions of human being) and holistic (interconnectivity of the three dimensions of human being forming an anthropological unity) model with the process-oriented model of Theravāda Buddhism.

In this case, the somatic dimension—the biological and chemical processes of the physical body (as outlined through the findings in the field of natural and medical sciences)—can be accommodated with the aggregate of materiality (*rūpakkhanda*), particularly with a part of the aggregate describing the physical parts of body. The psychological dimension can be accommodated with various aspects of aggregates of materiality (*rūpakkhanda*), feeling (*vedanākkhanda*), perception (*saññākkhanda*), and volitional formations (*saṅkhārakkhanda*). First, it can include psychological aspects of the aggregate of materiality (*rūpakkhanda*), which relates to the experiential aspects derived through the body, such as the experience of hardness, fluidity, warmth, and motion (Buddhaghosa, trans. 1999, pp. 343–347, *Vism* 348–351). Second, it can situate the aggregate of feeling (*vedanākkhanda*), which can be located on the border between the somatic and psychological dimensions of the human being, since it can arise together with cognition either through the five “body” doors (objects put forth by five sense organs) or the “mind” door (mental objects put forth by memory) (Buddhaghosa, trans. 1999, pp. 463–464, *Vism* 461). Third, it can accommodate the aggregate of perception (*saññākkhanda*) in its totality, and fourth, it can also include those 11 volitional formations (*saṅkhārakkhanda*), that are ethically neutral (*avyākata*), five of which are present in every single moment of experience regardless of the presence of the rest of experiential ingredients (ethically beautiful (*kusala*) or unwholesome (*akusala*)), while the remaining six are appearing only occasionally. In this context, it is worth mentioning that the aggregate of feeling (*vedanākkhanda*) shouldn't be understood as a synonym for emotions. According to Kuan (2008), “emotion can be [understood as] the transition from the original feeling [(*vedanā*)] to *saṅkhāra* (volitional formation)” (p. 28), and thus is a mixture of many different elements besides the affective tone accompanying them.

The noëtic dimension can be accommodated with the remaining 39 constituents of volitional formations (*saṅkhārakkhanda*), since the noëtic is a dimension of ethical sensitivity (Lukas, 2000, p. 10). As such, it can embrace 25 beautiful or ethically wholesome (*kusala*) formations as well as 14 ethically unwholesome (*akusala*) ones (Ñāṇamoli, 1999, p. 899, Table 2). In this context, it is worth mentioning Frankl's (2000, p. 126) exploration of the concept of conscience, which is described in terms

of ontologization, existentialization and phenomenologization of morality. Such a description of the characteristics of ethical processes can be argued to resemble the embodied ethics of Theravāda Buddhist thought and can be correlated to the constituents of the volitional formations (*saṅkhārakkhandā*) and their division into beautiful or ethically wholesome (*kusala*), unprofitable or ethically unwholesome (*akusala*), and neutral or indeterminate (*avyākata*) mental factors (*cetasika*). Furthermore, it is worth mentioning Crumbaugh's (cited in Frankl, 2000) interpretation of the logotherapeutic concept of will to meaning as a form of perceptual organization:

Man not only strives to perceive his environment as a meaningful totality, but he strives to find an interpretation which will reveal him as an individual with a purpose to fulfil in order to complete this total Gestalt—he strives to find an *apologia pro vita sua*, a justification for his existence. The Gestalt laws of organization, subsumed under the law of *Prägnanz*, or filledness, represent an unlearned striving to construct meaningful, unified Gestalten from all elements of experience. Frankl's will to meaning can be considered another way of looking at the same concept, though there is an advantage in his thinking, for it is a particularly human idea, pointing up man's distinctive ability to perceive or find meaning not merely in what is, but in what can be. This is the ability which Max Scheler has called the capacity for free contemplation of the possible, and which he considers the factor that separates man from the lower animals....

The will to meaning is primarily a perceptual phenomenon. It follows that if innate tendencies toward perceptual organization exist, it may be claimed that they manifest a striving toward organization of experience into ontologically significant patterns. (p. 114)

As such, striving toward organization of experience into ontologically significant patterns could perhaps be related to the processes outlined by volitional formations (*saṅkhārakkhandā*), since it points towards a crucial aspect of one's existence, namely that the manner in which one perceives the current experience and interprets it ("how" one experiences) clearly conditions one's reaction to that experience. According to the model of dependent origination (*paṭiccasamuppāda*) (*Saṃyutta Nikāya*, trans. 2000, pp. 533–534, *SN II 1*), the five aggregates (*pañcakkhandā*) represent various elements of the 12 links, which point toward the fact that all five aggregates (*pañcakkhandā*) always arise together and condition each other non-linearly. Hence, in every single moment the volitional formations (*saṅkhārakkhandā*) condition consciousness or cognition (*viññāṇa*), which in turn conditions the cognized name-and-form (*nāmarūpa*) or newly assembled perception of the aggregates. The response to the experiential outcome of these conditions is also a combination of particular types of volitional formations (*saṅkhārakkhandā*), consciousness (*viññāṇa*), etc., which again condition the cognized name-and-form (*nāmarūpa*) of the "response." In this manner, the flux of experience is continuously being reshaped by its active elements. In this context, one can observe that both logotherapy and Theravāda Buddhism aim to cultivate—through the process of organizing experiential content into ontologically significant and ethically informed patterns—the human being's capability of meaningfully responding to life. Of course, the complete survey of the proposed compatibility between will to meaning and components of volitional formations (*saṅkhārakkhandā*) is beyond the scope of this chapter. Nevertheless, further research in this area might be relevant, since the

discussed models of organization of experience can perhaps be related to the logotherapeutic techniques as well as to the contemplative practices of Theravāda Buddhism.

In the context of interdimensional dynamics between the three dimensions as described by Frankl, one can further observe some similarities with Theravāda Buddhism. Firstly, both systems of thought understand a human being as being conditioned by somatic and mental influences and that the exchange between the somatic and psychological dimension occurs through mutual conditionality, explained by Frankl through the concept of “psychophysical parallelism” (Frankl, 2004, p. 63), and by the Buddha through the concept of dependent origination (*paṭiccasamuppāda*) (*Samyutta Nikāya*, trans. 2000, pp. 533–534, *SN II 1*). Furthermore, both systems of thought understand that human beings are capable of changing their attitudes towards their experience (be it benevolent or painful). Frankl put forth this idea through the concept of “psychonoëtic antagonism” (Frankl, 2004, p. 63), while the Buddha expressed it through its outline of transcendental dependent origination (*lokuttara-paṭiccasamuppāda*) (*Samyutta Nikāya*, trans. 2000, pp. 555–556, *SN II 31–32*; Thānissaro, 2008, pp. 72–74). According to Bodhi (2000b, p. 1045), one can find instances in the textual sources of Theravāda Buddhism, where it is clearly expressed that even the Awakened ones (*arahants*), those who have reached the peak of insight into the nature of human being, still experience the pain deriving from the body, but despite that pain, their minds remain free from mental suffering. Such attitude closely resembles Frankl’s approach towards the unchangeable suffering deriving from the somatic and psychological dimensions in which he outlined the human capacity to rise above the pain and live a meaningful life despite the chronic bodily pain.

As shown in Fig. 1, the aggregate of consciousness (*viññāṇakkhandā*) hasn’t been situated in any particular dimension, since with its triadic correlation with the contact (*phassa*) and the experienced object (*nāmarūpa*), it cannot be located in any of the particular dimensions, but can best be perceived as a joint connecting them and arising in every moment together with several components from all of the three dimensions. Despite being present in every single dimension, it is explained exclusively only as the process of cognizing and hence shouldn’t be misunderstood as any sort of self, since according to Theravāda Buddhism, “[t]he self as an independently existing, stable, and substantive agent that exerts downward control over mental activity is seen as a by-product of ignorance, a misguided reification of disparate mental processes” (Kudesia & Nyima, 2015, p. 912).

The *Nikāyas* tell us that every cognitive event depends not upon a duality between subject and object, but upon a trinity of sense organ, sense object and consciousness. The coming together of these three constitutes contact (*phassasparśa*), the starting point of any episode of knowing.... The events cognized by cognition are the collisions between inner and outer world, the interaction of stimuli such as light and sound waves (etc.) upon the sensitive matter of retina and inner ear (etc.) that translate these modulations into the neuronal activity we call consciousness. The knowing of an object by means of an organ is not the same as the subject-object relation. Consciousness is not a subject, but an activity, a process, an event occurring moment after moment. It is a relationship between organs of sensation and thought on one hand, and objects of sensation and thought on the other. It is a natural inter-

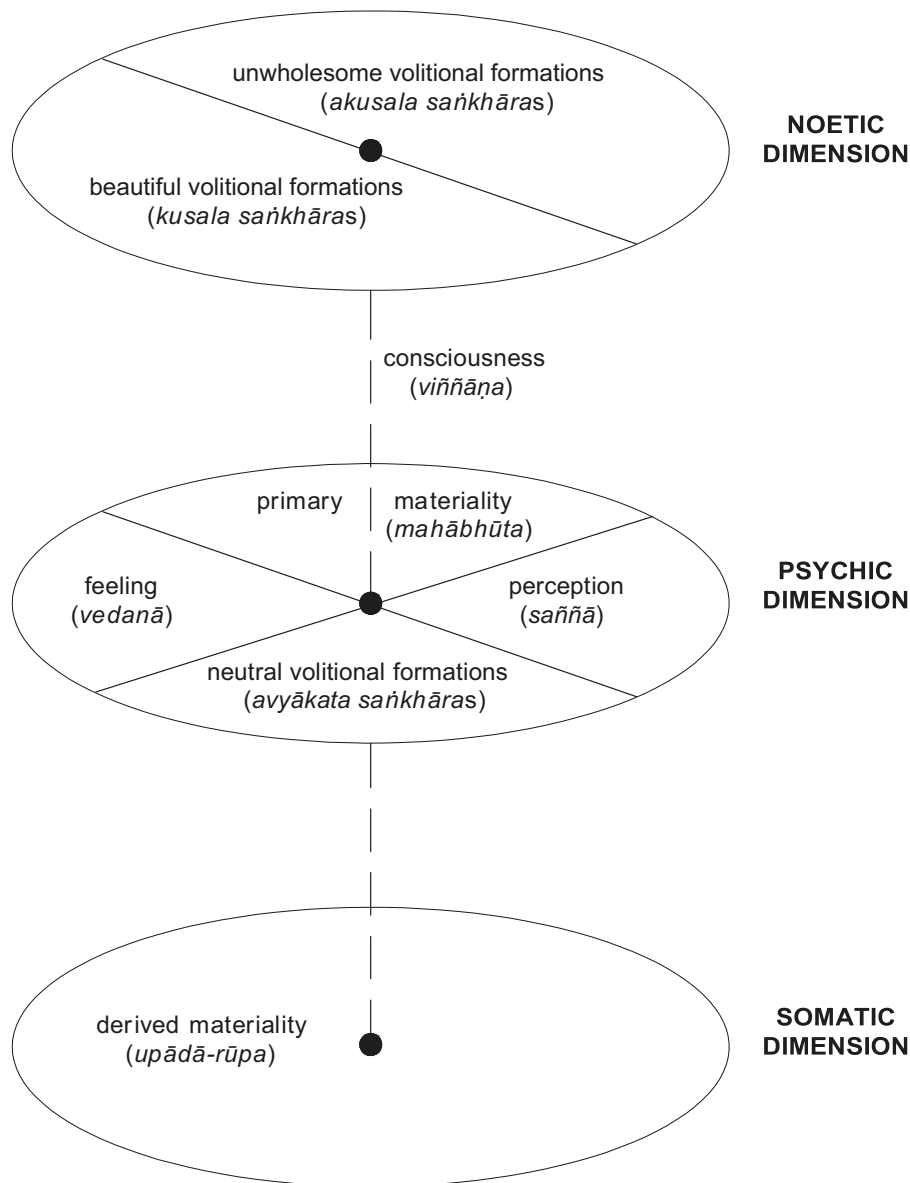


Fig. 1 Accommodation of constituents of the five aggregates (*pañcakkhandā*) into three dimensions of Frankl's anthropology (Although Fig. 1 outlines dimensional anthropology and the five aggregates (*pañcakkhandā*) in terms of various static components they should nevertheless be understood in terms of interrelated processes. According to the logotherapeutic concepts of psychophysical parallelism and noëtic antagonism as well as Theravāda Buddhism (dependent origination (*paṭiccasamuppāda*)) all statically represented components are actually dynamically interrelated in every single moment of one's experience.)

face between the sensitive matter of the body's sense receptors (which would include the brain) and the data contained in the surrounding (and internal) environment that is mediated by mental states of knowing. This mentality is likely an emergent property of materiality, but the virtual world constructed of this mental activity presents as a robust phenomenology of experience. (Olendzki, 2013, pp. 67–68)

This points towards one of the most obvious distinctions and potential incompatibility between the two systems, since logotherapists explain the human being at the core of its noëtic dimension as an existential self (person), capable of rising above the given situation and choosing a meaningful attitude towards one's experience. On the other hand, Theravāda Buddhist practitioners point to the human being at the core of its conditionality as a non-self (*anattā*). The questions of whether a human being is a self or non-self and in what way can a lived experience of these notions be theoretically conceptualized have already been approached within contemporary scientific dialogue. These attempts opened up many new dilemmas and showed that the concepts of self and non-self due to their highly complex and multilayered nature cannot be easily outlined in a uniformed theoretical presentation, and that further interdisciplinary investigation is still needed (Gallagher, 2011, pp. 27–28; Olendzki, 2006, p. 250). Nevertheless, if one takes into consideration this basic anthropological difference between logotherapy and Theravāda Buddhism, a few interesting questions arise within the context of theoretical accommodation and its potential practical applications. Can logotherapy exist as a therapeutic system without the fundamental premises of a permanent self? What are the implications for logotherapeutic practice if there is no permanent self? In what ways would logotherapeutic techniques change if the fundamental premises of permanent self are altered? Do they change at all? Does their therapeutic effect change? Does the change occur perhaps only at the level of the language through which the technique is mediated and contextualized during logotherapeutic sessions and as such, does not impact the desired effects? The following brief reflection should be regarded only as a preliminary attempt at tackling some of the above-mentioned questions. These issues require an in-depth exploration and comparison of both discourses, something which is beyond the scope of this work. As such, further research in this area is recommended.

One could argue that, despite the differences in formulation of the anthropological models, they could perhaps point towards the same thing, albeit in a different terminology, expression, and scope. This can be observed in instances in which Frankl (2000) described the self in a quite similar way to the Theravāda Buddhist understanding of conditionality of the human being. For example: “The self does not yield to total self-reflection. In this sense, human existence is basically unreflectable, and so is the self in itself. Human existence exists in action rather than reflection” (p. 36). Similar approaches to human experience can be perceived in the Buddha's description of 62 wrong views of self (*sakkāyadiṭṭhi*) (*Dīgha Nikāya*, trans. 1995, pp. 73–90, *DN I 13–46*) highlighting various forms of discursive cognitive reflection on the notion of self, all of which are being perceived as uncondusive for overcoming suffering (*dukkha*) and should be abandoned by direct experiential insight into the nature of human existence (Gethin, 1998, p. 162). As already mentioned, the concept of non-self (*anattā*) aims at dissolving the process of habitual clinging (*upādāna*) and identification to phenomena, which is perpetuated through the manifold expressions of the idea of “inherent subject” to whom phenomena manifest. In this context, it is worth mentioning an attempt made to explain in

Western philosophical terminology the issue of habitual clinging (*upādāna*) (addressed by the concept of non-self (*anattā*)) as the so-called *ontological addiction*, which

is defined as “the unwillingness to relinquish an erroneous and deep-rooted belief in an inherently existing ‘self’ or ‘I’ as well as the ‘impaired functionality’ that arises from such a belief.”... The ontological addiction formulation is a means of operationalizing within Western clinical domains the Buddhist view that suffering, including the entire spectrum of distressing emotions and psychopathologic states, results from adhering to a false view of self and reality. Therefore, within Buddhism, wisdom refers to the gradual development of insight that allows and facilitates an individual to undergo recovery from ontological addiction by reconstructing their view of self and reality. (Shonin et al., 2014, p. 125)

In this context, ontological addiction could perhaps be related to the neurotic mindset characterized by excessive occupation with one’s own self (in a form of discursive thinking) also known in logotherapeutic literature as *hyperreflection*. As shown in the above paragraph, the concept of non-self (*anattā*) has a clear soteriological function in the system of Theravāda Buddhism and thus it could be in some of its aspects (particularly in its aim to change the experiential framework of currently experienced content) related to Frankl’s approach outlined in his theory of meaning and values, in which he explained the means to bypass or overcome the hyperreflective tendencies of the neurotic mindset particularly through the usage of two logotherapeutic methods, namely dereflection¹² and paradoxical intention,¹³ in order to lower the level of so-called “anticipatory anxiety” and “compulsive self-observation” (DuBois, 2004, p. xxxiii; Fabry, 1975, pp. 274–275; Frankl, 1946/1986, pp. xix–xx). The similarity between logotherapeutic techniques and aspects of Theravāda Buddhist contemplative practices is an interesting and important topic for further investigation, since it might shed additional light on the differences and commonalities between their understanding and application of the concepts of existential self and non-self (*anattā*).

¹²Dereflection deals with excessive attention to one’s own self, and it helps the patient “to ignore the symptoms” (Frankl, 2004, p. 207) by addressing ones “capacity for self-transcendence” (DuBois, 2004, p. xxxiii), thus shifting the patient’s focus from the symptom to something other than the self. As a consequence of the shifted focus, the natural processes, which before were inhibited by the attention itself, slowly begin again to unwind effortlessly at their natural pace.

¹³Paradoxical intention deals with excessive attention to one’s perseverance against an undesired situation or object. It directs the patient’s focus on the very thing, situation, or action he or she is afraid of. “Encouraging the patient to do, or wish to happen, the very things he fears engenders an inversion of intention” (Frankl, 1969/1988, p. 103). By doing this, “the human capacity of ‘self-distancing’” (DuBois, 2004, p. xxxiii) is mobilized, and the patient’s habit of fighting against or fleeing from the feared situation, deed or thing, is slowly supplemented by a playful attitude towards the fear, which is often filled with and enhanced by the humor of the patient.

Cultivation of Mindfulness (sati) as a Noëtic Process

Since both systems of thought developed their anthropological models based on ethical qualities of human existence, the main solid point for the dialogue and potential enrichment of the practice of logotherapy with Theravāda Buddhist teachings and contemplative practices for establishment of mindfulness (*sati*) lies in their common understanding of the human as being conscious and responsible. The teachings of early Buddhism outlined its soteriological approach through the eight-fold noble path (*ariya-aṭṭhaṅgikamagga*), traditionally summarized or grouped into three interconnected categories, namely morality (*sīla*), concentration (*samādhi*), and wisdom (*paññā*) (Harvey, 2013b, p. 83). Likewise, Frankl outlined a logotherapeutic approach towards relieving human suffering through an orientation to meaning and values, formulating a dynamic map of three existential forms, namely creative, experiential, and attitudinal values, through which one can discover a meaning to fulfill in every single situation (Frankl, 1969/1988, pp. 70–74; 1946/1986, pp. xix–xx). Although their general goals to some extent perhaps differ (logotherapists aiming towards a meaningful existence in the mundane world (*samsara*), while Theravāda Buddhists aiming experientially beyond the mundane existence (*samsara*)), they both nevertheless understand the human being as being capable of conscious ethically infused change or transformation, and are thus bringing forth a similar necessity to cultivate one’s responsibility towards life.

According to Virtbauer (2016), the Theravāda Buddhist approach to suffering should be regarded as “a kind of pragmatic spiritual psychology and ethics.... [These are expressed through] an applied first-person psychology of analysing and understanding the mind-and-body through an embodied meditation practice” (p. 72). The practice of logotherapy is theoretically similar to the contemplative practices of Theravāda Buddhist (and vice versa), particularly in the context of so-called attitudinal values, where one is called upon to change oneself when facing unchangeable suffering such as pain (incurable diseases), guilt, and death. “It is prerogative of being human, and a constituent of human existence, to be capable of shaping and reshaping oneself” (Frankl, 1969/1988, p. 73). According to Frankl, the human being’s action and realization of potentiality of one’s existence is directed forth in every single moment by one’s will to meaning, which puts a human being into a clear position of decision-making and ethical evaluation of one’s potential response to the present experience of his existence. These types of attitudinal change manifest in the noëtic dimension of the human being through one’s ability of self-detachment and self-transcendence. Although the intensity of application of these two abilities (self-detachment and self-transcendence) might differ between the two systems due to their cultural and historical contexts of usage, one can nevertheless observe similar principles (perhaps expressed differently) at the very core of Theravāda Buddhist contemplative practices, where “the most obvious ‘health-psychological’ and therapeutic benefit of mindfulness practice refers to the ability to train oneself in greater psychological flexibility [deriving from] the mental

capacity to concentrate willingly” (Virtbauer, 2016, p. 76). For example, one can observe such principal commonalities in the contemplative practices that aim at cultivation of four immeasurables or divine abidings (*brahma-vihāras*), namely, loving-kindness (*mettā*), compassion (*karuṇā*), empathetic joy (*muditā*), and equanimity (*upekkhā*) (Buddhaghosa, trans. 1999, pp. 288–319, *Vism* 295–325), where one uses a mental image of other living beings as a meditation object and actively cultivates an attitude of non-greed (*alobha*) and non-hatred (*adosa*) towards them. These four qualities are described by some authors also as “conduct-related terms” (Shonin et al., 2014, p. 131), since they are not only highly relevant for the meditative process as such, but rather have strong implications for the everyday ethical behavior of an individual. As such, mental ethical focusing of one’s attention on someone other than oneself could perhaps be related to the process of self-distancing, while the cultivation of specific benevolent ethical attitudes that accompanies it might be pointing towards the process of self-transcendence.

Part of meditation training has to do with learning to focus the mind on a particular object or on a series of emerging objects, but most of the training has more to do with cultivating particular qualities of mind by means of which the object is regarded. The technology of awareness is a matter of how the aggregate of consciousness (*viññāṇa*) interacts with the aggregate of material form (*rūpa*) as it manifests in the sense organs of the body and the sense objects of the environment; but the development of mindfulness and insight is rather a matter of how the aggregate of formations (*saṅkhāra*) co-arises with the other aggregates. (Olendzki, 2013, p. 57)

According to the above-presented potential accommodation of the five aggregates (*pañcakkhanda*) into dimensional anthropology (Fig. 1), one can observe that the aggregate of volitional formations (*saṅkhārakkhanda*) is situated both in psychic and noëtic dimensions of human existence and hence is highlighting the implicit position of mindfulness (*sati*) within the proposed theoretical accommodation. Since mindfulness (*sati*) is categorized as a universal beautiful mental factor (*sobhanasādhāraṇa*), which is traditionally positioned in terms of aggregates under the beautiful volitional formations (*kusala saṅkhāra*), one could argue that mindfulness (*sati*) can be potentially situated in the noëtic dimension. Furthermore, one could closely relate mindfulness (*sati*) and its various aspects also to the aggregate of perception (*saññākkhanda*), which as already mentioned, is in the later Abhidhammic thought regarded as one of the universal (neutral) volitional formations (*saṅkhārakkhanda*) or mental factors (*cetasika*). According to Kuan (2008, pp. 41–56), there are four aspects and functions of mindfulness (*sati*): (a) simple awareness functioning as perceiving of the currently manifesting sensory objects, (b) protective awareness functioning as conscious regulation of mind’s reaction to sensory data by sense restraining and moral evaluation, (c) introspective awareness functioning as monitoring of the regulation of mind’s reaction to sensory data, and (d) deliberately forming conceptions functioning as bringing to mind the experientially invoked remembering of experiences conducive to the development of concentration (*samādhi*) and wisdom (*paññā*). Kuan also noted:

The practice of mindfulness consists in conducting the wholesome functioning of *saññā* (apperception/conception), one of the five components of personality [(five aggregates (*pañcakkhandā*))] according to Buddhism. It also shows that *saññā* is linked with cognition and also emotion, which includes the secondary feeling (*vedanā*) as a subjective reaction to the mere reception and registration of sensation. Avoiding cognitive problems, mindfulness prevents *saññā* from going astray to conceptual proliferation (*papañca*), which is obstructive to the insight that leads one to liberation. On the other hand, mindfulness prevents feelings from developing into emotional disturbances; through transformation of *saññā* it conduces to the surmounting of emotional agitation and hence the attainment of... equanimity (*upekkhā*). This practice helps to achieve an optimal cognitive capability and emotional state, and thereby enables one to attain the ultimate religious goal. (p. 10)

In this sense, could mindfulness (*sati*) relate to what Frankl (2000) termed the pre-reflective ontological self-understanding, described as “the pre-moral understanding of meaning... rooted in the pre-logical understanding of being” (p. 127)? In the context of contemporary Western psychological idiom various interpretations of the term mindfulness (*sati*) are being developed, but for the purpose of this discussion the following attempt at description might be appropriate: “*Mindfulness is a state of heightened meta-awareness in which discursive cognition is diminished and attention is solely focused on and receptive to goal-relevant aspects of the present moment*” (Kudesia & Nyima, 2015, p. 923). To some degree, mindfulness (*sati*) could be perceived as pre-logical understanding of being, since it stands for the process of immediate experiential “perceiving” of the human being in form of various sensations, thoughts, emotions, etc. (rather than thinking about these aspects of human experience). At the same time, it could be described as pre-moral understanding of meaning, since according to practitioners of Theravāda Buddhism, with such immediate experiential “perceiving” of the human being, a specific knowing (*sampajāna*) accompanies it, which is incompatible with ethically unwholesome states of being or responses to one’s experience (ethically characterized by greed (*dosa*), hatred (*lobha*), and delusion (*moha*)). To some extent, this also overlaps with Frankl’s (1969/1988) formulation of the human being’s main motivational source as the will to meaning, which was contrasted in his writings to Freud’s will to pleasure and Adler’s will to power.¹⁴ Additionally, an important aspect of cultivating mindfulness (*sati*) that shouldn’t be neglected is that the goal is not the development of attention (*manasikāra*) or any other particular psychological ability, but rather wisdom (*paññā*), since “ancient Buddhist texts understand the presence of mindfulness as in effect reminding us of who we are and what our values are” (Gethin, 2013, p. 270). This makes additional theoretical opening in terms of proximity of ethical understanding of human being between logotherapy and Theravāda Buddhism, since mindfulness (*sati*) doesn’t represent only a psychological function

¹⁴ In this context, will to pleasure might be interpreted as action derived from greed (*lobha*), while will to power might be interpreted as action derived from partly greed (*lobha*) and partly hatred (*dosa*), since comparison with the other has to contain in itself a simultaneous non-acceptance of the self and other.

or trait, but stands as “*an embodied ethical act, process, and practice*” (Grossman, 2015, p. 17), a characteristic very similar to Frankl’s (2000) pointing towards the present moment of actualization of ethics (p. 29).

Future Perspectives

There are various points that would require further investigation of potentially enriching dialogue between proponents of logotherapy and Theravāda Buddhism. Although description of dimensional anthropology in this work attempts at clear and summarized presentation, additional research needs to be conducted about its existential and phenomenological philosophical roots, in order to fully grasp the theoretical width and depth of Frankl’s anthropological model and its various applied forms in psychotherapeutic contexts (Correia et al., 2016, p. 16). Similarly, a much more detailed inquiry into Theravāda Buddhism and analysis of its approach to human experience needs to be conducted in order to truly grasp the depth and complexity of its refined teachings.¹⁵

From the perspective of accommodation, one of the most critical points to be addressed in future dialogue is to first establish a precise translation of logotherapeutic concepts into the vocabulary of Theravāda Buddhism and vice versa in order to find the points at which these concepts collide, differ, or are unique in themselves. As Shonin, Van Gordon, and Griffiths (2014) observed, “there currently is no unified and structured system for the effective interpretation, classification, and operationalization of Buddhist terms, principles, and practices within [psychological and psychotherapeutic] clinical settings” (p. 124), which brings a huge challenge to the future explorations in these fields.

Through the investigation of these topics, a few directions might be valuable for future research. First, one can observe an interesting parallel between Frankl’s concept of meaning (and its related expressions) and the Theravāda Buddhist concept of mental factors (*cetasika*). In this context, it is worth mentioning the mental factor (*cetasika*) of desire (*chanda*), which could, in combination with wholesome (*kusala*) mental factors (*cetasika*), perhaps enrich and more precisely define Frankl’s terminology, such as will to meaning and freedom to will (Dhamma & Bodhi, 2000b, pp. 82–83). Second, the concept of conscience (Frankl, 2000, p. 119) could be explored in more depth through the lenses of both the theoretical and practical aspects of Theravāda Buddhism—theoretical in terms of Abhidhammic analysis of human experience, and practical in terms of contemplative methods for calm (*samatha*) and insight (*vipassanā*). Finally, it might be fruitful to compare the Theravāda Buddhist contemplative methods with logotherapeutic techniques, since

¹⁵ Additionally, practical application of these two approaches to life should also be cultivated in order to get a first-person experience of the two systems and their similarities as well as differences.

the mechanisms of achieving the ethically desired change in the experience of human beings seem to be (at least from the perspective of current preliminary research) quite similar in terms of directing and applying attention towards a meaningful object (be it a deed, a human being, or a particular attitude towards experience) in order to alleviate human suffering.

Conclusion

Research of mindfulness (*sati*), as currently approached within psychological and psychotherapeutic scientific circles, emphasizes particularly its cognitive and behavioral aspects, which often situate Buddhist-derived interventions into a limited paradigm of contemporary psychoanalytic and cognitive-behavioral therapeutic approaches. The dialogue between proponents of logotherapy and Theravāda Buddhism can be perceived as an attempt made within existential-humanistic tradition of psychotherapy to introduce Buddhist-derived interventions, particularly those which foster the cultivation of mindfulness (*sati*), into their current approach towards relieving human suffering. As noted, the practice of logotherapy can be enriched by the Theravāda Buddhist concept of five aggregates (*pañcakkhandā*) to such a degree that it could theoretically incorporate in its anthropological model the concept of mindfulness (*sati*) without neglecting its ethical foundation. The introduction of mindfulness (*sati*) into a therapeutic tradition, which is highly characterized by tackling ethical aspects of human living as a means to relieve human suffering, can potentially have strong implications for contemporary developments in the research field of Buddhist-derived interventions. It can offer a fruitful theoretical framework from which Western psychotherapeutic and psychological discourses can approach mindfulness (*sati*) with the inclusion of its ethical aspects as emphasized within the traditional teachings of Theravāda Buddhism. As such, this work attempts to contribute to the currently almost-nonexistent or rather highly preliminary dialogue between logotherapy and mindfulness (*sati*) by providing an initial anthropological framework that could serve as a solid theoretical foundation for further research in the area of applying the methods for cultivation of mindfulness (*sati*) into the logotherapeutic clinical setting. Furthermore, within a broader context, it aims to contribute to the enrichment of the dialogue between practitioners of existential-humanistic psychotherapeutic paradigms, Theravāda Buddhism, and Buddhist-derived interventions (Fabry, 1975, pp. 274–275; Littman-Ovadia & Niemiec, 2016, p. 388; Nilsson, 2014, p. 168; Virtbauer, 2016, p. 72).

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