

## **The Meaning of Life**

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Machine translation of the German essay "Der Sinn des Lebens".

### **"Life has no meaning except the meaning we give it."**

– Thornton Wilder (1887–1975)

In nature's view, the meaning of life is life itself, which is meant to multiply.

There is probably nothing more beautiful than death – only nature has indoctrinated us with something else: the life instinct. With this, we were deprived of the possibility of simply ending our own lives and returning – back to a state neutral in both happiness and pain. In other words: we are condemned to live.

Uncomfortably, along with the life instinct, the pain of life was also implanted in us. This means that everything we do serves to reduce the pain of life. Nature denies us the possibility of completely eliminating the pain of life without also eliminating life itself.

In children, the pain of life is embedded in a different way; They are literally flooded with happiness hormones – they must eventually reach sexual maturity. But with puberty, the natural meaning of life strikes. Now, for the first time, humans truly sense the purpose of life dictated by nature: to reproduce. This realization is often associated with painful experiences of love. It is important to know that time also heals wounds. Behind post-pubescent love lies the sex drive invented by nature. This ruthlessly ensures reproduction. However, human diversity also leads to varying intensities of the sex drive. In people tormented by the sex drive, this unfortunately sometimes results in highly irrational actions. For people who cannot share sexuality, nature has provided only a self-gratifying act. This ultimately unsatisfying alternative is still unfairly frowned upon by society.

A person can be content if he or she is allowed to experience some tenderness outside of the natural goal. Unfulfilled sexuality promotes the search for relief from life's pain.

Thanks to the human mind, mankind was able to invent God thousands of years ago. With devotion to God and a little spiritual acrobatics, mankind can experience a legitimate balm that relieves life's pain. Rituals, prayer, and "introspection" are proven activities that produce happiness hormones.

Inevitably, after the invention of God came the invention of religions. And believers rightfully enjoy the security in this community that relieves life's pain. Even if religious leaders make unreasonable demands, believers still owe it to them. Because without having to think for themselves, believers achieve (manipulated) bliss. It is unfortunately a fact that religious leaders also try to ease their own pain of existence on the shoulders of believers. And sometimes they even succeed in satisfying their sex drive in the process.

In the search for ways to alleviate life's pain, humans also turned to the consumption of alcohol and other drugs. Self-deception therapies such as "I'm fine" and the like are widespread distraction methods today.

Necessary activities such as work, social obligations, and, unfortunately, also power-based behavior and sports are also used as distractions.

As in the animal kingdom, where the strongest eats the weaker, humans also act – usually in a more covert, subtle, and occasionally even socially acceptable way,

which legitimizes even the worst actions. Behind this lies the sexual drive – one must be stronger or more attractive in order to be able to pass on one's own genetic code.

Willfully escaping this natural bondage is only possible if one looks forward to the inevitable

coming of death. Unfortunately, social constraints also spoil this possibility for us. If one communicates one's attitude in this regard, psychiatry is immediately called in.

Thus, we have almost no choice but to give life an intellectually invented meaning – and to live relaxedly towards a natural death. In anticipation of one's last breath, which finally releases us from the pain of life and the life drive, as well as from all other associated drives, one can live more relaxed.

As can be seen from the previous explanations, the discrepancy between what the human intellect expects of the meaning of life and what nature has given us could hardly be greater. Bridging this gap intellectually is practically impossible. The approximate solution is

perhaps: "Winning by giving in, or rather, by accepting." That means finding a viable path with what nature has dictated to us and with our intellect. Anyone who is overwhelmed in this regard, would do well to seek help.

Despite the devastating realization about the meaning of life, the Thornton Wilder quote mentioned at the beginning still makes sense. But it also needs to be put into perspective – because a human element isn't always necessary for the meaning of life. Sometimes "life" can be enough meaning.

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