

# Meaning In Life...

---

*Something to do...*  
*Someone to love...*  
*Something to hope for...*  
IMMANUEL KANT

HAVING STRUGGLED THROUGH THE COMPLEXITY of Kant's "Critique of Pure Reason" as a college student years ago, I was awestruck by the simplicity of the quote above. In so few words, this eighteenth century philosopher captured what I believe to be the key ingredients to meaningfulness and happiness in life. Near the end of his life, Freud concluded that what is most important in one's life are work and love, reflecting part of Kant's thinking.

*Something to do* may include work, a job, one's career. It may also include those activities we engage in at various times from which we derive pleasure or purpose. A home project like redecorating a room or a hobby like fishing may be "something to do" which adds meaning to one's day, and therefore to one's life.

*Someone to love* may conjure up more conventional images of a husband or wife. But love is multifaceted and may also include the love of a child, a sibling, a parent, a friend, or even an acquaintance we hope to befriend. If love may be simply defined as the giving of oneself to another, the complexity of love lies in how we give and how freely we give "...without any strings."

*Something to hope for* may include wishes and goals. Wishes are often passive flights of fancy: what we fantasize, dream about, though do not necessarily act upon to attain. Goals are purposeful and active: what we take steps toward achieving through action in the real world. "Something to hope for" gives meaning to our future, regardless of how bleak or plentiful our past has been or our present may be. And, with greater meaning ascribed to our future, our present becomes, if not more enjoyable, certainly more tolerable.

Individuals, couples, and families may sometimes find themselves at an impasse or painful setback with one or some combination of "something to do," "someone to love," and "something to hope for." At such times seeking professional therapy services may help one get through the impasse or reverse the setback.

---

For further information, please contact:

Michael Baron, Ph.D.  
P.O. Box 2848  
Corrales, NM 87048  
505-THERAPY (843-7279)  
michael@michaelbaronphd.com  
www.michaelbaronphd.com