

When Life Calls Out to Us: The Love and Lifework of Viktor and Elly Frankl

By Haddon Klingberg Jr.

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“The only authorized biography of Victor Frankl, whose life story and reflections have inspired tens of millions. Haddon Klingberg records and preserves the Frankl legacy, with his own eloquent and moving reflections.” -- David G. Myers, Hope College, author of *The American Paradox: Spiritual Hunger in an Age of Plenty*

Written in response to the horrors he experienced and witnessed during the Holocaust, Viktor Frankl’s landmark book, *Man’s Search for Meaning*, has sold millions of copies and been translated into twenty-seven languages. But although Frankl’s thought and philosophy have been widely analyzed, until now little has been written about his life, and about the deeply loving, intensely spiritual relationship that led him and his wife to dedicate their lives to reducing pain and oppression in the world.

In a book that is at once a wonderful love story and a tribute to two extraordinary people, Haddon Klingberg, Jr., draws on a wealth of anecdotes, told to him by the Frankls themselves, to describe their separate early lives and their fifty-two years as husband and wife. Returning to Vienna after spending three years in four different concentration camps, Frankl, whose first wife and family died in the camps, turned to writing as a way of finding some purpose in his life. But it was Elly Schwindt, a woman half his age, who helped him put the pieces of his broken life together. Married in 1947, the Frankls created a life of hope and faith, a life committed to proclaiming the oneness of the human family, challenging materialistic values, and encouraging the pursuit of meaning.

When Life Calls Out to Us chronicles a spiritual journey infused with tragedy but sustained by love, wisdom, faith, and humor. Klingberg’s extensive interviews, not available anywhere else, reveal the full richness of the Frankls’ lives and beautifully illuminate their enduring contributions toward a better world for all people.

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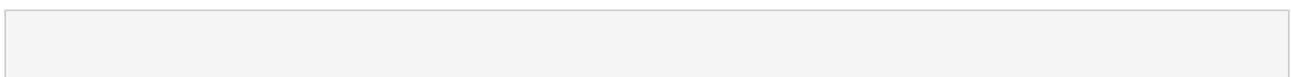
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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review

After three years in four concentration camps during World War II, Jewish neurologist Victor Frankl returned to Vienna to resume his medical practice. When he met an operating room assistant named Elly, it was "love at first eyesight," and over the next five decades, their romance, described in *When Life Calls Out to Us*, helped inspire the development of Frankl's famous philosophy of logotherapy. For this book, the Frankls cooperated fully with author Haddon Klingberg Jr., a psychologist who conducted hundreds of hours of interviews, extensively researched the Holocaust, and mastered all of Frankl's primary publications (most notably *Man's Search for Meaning*). Unfortunately, Klingberg is also gaga for his subjects, fetishizing every detail of their lives. (Victor loved Captain Kangaroo and MacDonal'd's cheeseburgers "minus the mushy bread.") Readers already enamored of the Frankls will likely be entranced by the book; the rest may wish Klingberg had better emulated the linguistic skills of his hero, whose text, he says, were "sophisticated, yet precise and plain. No pointless words. No petty chatter." --*Michael Joseph Gross*

From Publishers Weekly

For more than five decades, Viktor Frankl's memoir of his Holocaust experience, *Man's Search for Meaning*, has introduced his method of existential psychotherapy, or logotherapy, to millions of readers. Imprisoned in various concentration camps, Frankl survived degradation, despair and suffering by focusing his mental powers on his life's meaning and purpose. Having lost the manuscript of his first book while in the camps, Frankl spent his time constructing words and sentences as a way of making meaning. Psychologist Klingberg, a friend and confidante of Frankl, offers an intimate chronicle of the psychotherapist's life and work. A precocious reader, by the age of 15 Viktor was corresponding with Freud. By the time he was 19, he had published his first major paper in a psychology journal. We also learn about Viktor's unquenchable thirst for women and his early promiscuity. While Klingberg chronicles Frankl's life from birth to death (in 1997), the centerpiece of the book is Viktor's relationship with his second wife, Elly. His first wife died in the camps and, shortly after his own liberation, while he was serving as a doctor, he met Elly, a nurse in the same hospital. She provided Frankl with the spiritual strength and vision and love that enabled him to produce *Man's Search for Meaning*. Through numerous interviews with the Frankls, Klingberg reconstructs their life together from the time they met to Viktor's death in his 90s. Dedicated followers of Frankl will welcome this biography, but Klingberg's pedestrian prose, turgid style and hagiographic treatment will present struggles for even the most earnest readers.

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From the Inside Flap

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Darren Marshall:

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