

The Existential Struggles of the Human Soul: Our Universal Plight

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20 Longings that flow from Our Universal Human Condition:

- (1) Authentic Love: To Love & Be Loved in Return;
- (2) Objective Beauty &
- (3) Destiny/Adventure Worthwhile;
- (4) Identity: Who Are We? Where Did We Come From? Where Are We Going?
- (5) Genuine Fulfillment;
- (6) Goodness;
- (7) Happiness;
- (8) Lasting Hope: Someone/Something to Believe In;
- (9) Long for Forgiveness in View of Wrong Doings We have Committed (e.g., Against Others)/Redemption;
- (10) Immortality;
- (11) Justice;
- (12) Meaning & Purpose Of Our Lives;
- (13) Peace & Contentment
- (14) Purpose/Relevance;
- (15) Restoration;
- (16) Significance & Lasting Value;
- (17) Sublime Experiences;
- (18) True & Lasting Pleasure;
- (19) Ultimate Intelligibility;
- (20) Wholeness.

Possible Attitudes, Results, & Outlooks of Unmet Existential Expectations & Needs:

Alienation/fear
Anger
Apathy/Boredom
Bankruptcy & Brokenness
Failure & Emptiness
Collapse of Personhood
Chronic Disappointment
Cultivation of certain vices that control our personhood
Cynicism
“Dance to our DNA”: That is all we are; no free will.
Decadence & Pursuit of Profanity
Deprivation
Despair: A General Dread
Determination: We try harder & harder for better results
Diversion (s): Don’t want to face the angst of this situation
Disbelief in final causation (*telos*)
Divisiveness
Despondency
Duplicitious Behavior
Envy against those who have experienced fulfillment, meaning, & value;
Resentment toward God, others, and all that we once held dear
Exhaustion
Experimentation with other worldviews
Fact/value split
Frailty/Mortality
Hedonism: The only thing that is valuable is pleasure. Maximize pleasure; minimize pain.
Hatred
Hollowness
Lack of Forgiveness
Pain, death, and suffering is our final end
Disbelief in formal and final causes
No ultimate justice/no ultimate accountability
Nihilistic Outlook
False Pleasures (false pleasures are vaporous)
Rebellion & Violence
Resignation: a giving up.
Self-destruction
Silence
Tragedy
Triviality
Unhealthy Doubt

We forge our own identities: We become what we do. It is our choice; we are held responsible for our own choices;

We “create” our own “realities.”

UNMET EXPECTATIONS:

A. When we discover:

- (1) our existential longings are not fulfilled...
- (2) our existential needs are not met...
- (3) disappointments or emptiness accompany the long-term goals we have actually achieved...
- (4) Physical pleasures are vaporous...
- (5) Material goods, jobs, relationships, popularity or recognition, wealth, sensuality, power, or physical beauty do not fill the void within...

B. We are faced with two possible conclusions:

- (1) Existential needs cannot ever be met; nothing will ever satisfy us. We are left exhausted or resigned to live for “punctuated moments of happiness” knowing that our lives are ultimately meaningless. There is no “story line” for this universe.

OR

- (2) Personal & Infinite God is the only One who will satisfy our deepest longings, needs, and expectations. As a result, we intimately pursue God while enjoying but not living for that which is vaporous.

The question becomes whether we have good arguments and evidences for God’s existence.