

Search for Meaning Vocabulary Text

Hello, this is AJ, welcome to the vocabulary lesson for “Search for Meaning.”

Our first word is admonished, to admonish. And Viktor Frankl said “He admonished his students.” To admonish means to command or to ask someone to do something very strongly.

So, for example, I say “Don’t study grammar! Don’t study grammar!” I am admonishing you, right? I’m telling you to do something. I’m commanding you. So to admonish, again, is to tell someone to do something kind of strongly or to ask very strongly. “Please, don’t study grammar! Please, don’t study grammar! Please, don’t do it!” I am admonishing you. I’m asking very strongly. It’s kind of between and commanding, to admonish.

Our next word is to pursue or pursued. You probably know this word already, but very quickly. To pursue means to chase, to try to get something; to follow it and try to catch it. So Viktor Frankl says that “Happiness cannot be pursued.” You cannot chase it. You cannot grab it. He said “it must ensue.” To ensue means to happen, to happen. It means to happen next, to come after, so it’s the opposite.

So he’s saying that you cannot grab happiness, you must let happiness come to you. Happiness happens automatically. To ensue means to happen. Happiness happens. You can’t get it. It’s not a thing you can grab. It’s something that just happens. It’s a result, it’s a consequence. It happens after something else, so to ensue means, again, to happen, to happen next, to happen after, to ensue.

Our next word is unintended. He said that “Happiness and success are the unintended side effects of focusing on a cause greater than one’s self.” Unintended means, obviously, not intended. To intend means to want something consciously, to try to do something consciously, so unintended means by accident, by accident.

He’s saying happiness happens accidentally. Success happens accidentally. You don’t focus on it, you’re not trying to do it, but it happens. It’s a side effect. It’s not the direct effect it’s a small effect, it’s an accidental effect.

So he’s saying that if you focus on something bigger than yourself, helping other people, happiness will come automatically. You’re not trying to get happiness, it’s unintended, but it will happen. So, again, unintended means something you’re not trying to do or something that happens accidentally.

And our next word is byproduct. Happiness is the byproduct of helping other people. Again, byproduct is very similar to side effect. It's an extra product, is what it means. A byproduct means an extra product, it's something extra.

So the main thing is helping people. That's your main focus. It's the main thing you're doing. But then there's something extra, the extra thing is happiness. So you focus on helping other people, but you get a byproduct, you get something extra. The extra thing is happiness, the extra thing is success. Success is a byproduct of helping other people. It's an extra thing, an extra result. Again, byproduct- byproduct- byproduct.

And, finally -- this is a quick vocabulary lesson, just one more word -- conscience, conscience. Now this is spelled differently than conscious. They sound very, very close. They're very, very close in pronunciation. The difference is there's a little bit of an "en", "en" sound at the end of this word...con-science, con-science, conscience, conscience. Hear the little "ah, ah, en, en, en" sound at the end? Conscience.

Conscience means your morals. It's your ideas of right and wrong. It's the part of your mind that tells you something is right, good or something is wrong, bad. That's your conscience.

So Viktor Frankl says "You must listen to and follow your conscience, always." You must always follow your feelings of right and wrong. If something is right you must do it, even if it's difficult, even if you are criticized, even if you lose your job. You must always do what you think is right, what is good. Follow your conscience; follow your feeling of goodness. All right, so conscience, that's our last word.

So that is the end of the vocabulary lesson for "Search for Meaning." I hope you enjoyed it. I hope you will find your own meaning for learning English and for your life, something bigger than just yourself, so that you can feel excited, happy and passionate about your life.

All right, I will see you next time.