

Steve Carlson ([00:00](#)):

Welcome To our third week in a series of four podcasts each week, we have been focusing in on different quality of worker wellness that might strengthen you as you support caregivers in the grips of addiction and or mental illness. Today's mindful meditation underscores what Victor Frankl, a World War II concentration camp survivor, who stated, "I recommend that the Statue of Liberty be supplemented by a statue of responsibility on the west coast." This powerful statement represents two opposing, but complimentary ideals that undergird a healthy society. It is probably also true that without responsibility, there is no freedom and therefore, perhaps freedom and responsibility are so interconnected that they are essentially the same thing. Today's meditation will support you in working with both freedom and responsibility in order to empower your clients to live freely and responsibly in all aspects of their lives. Particularly as it relates to caring for their children.

Steve Carlson ([01:35](#)):

As we begin, today's meditation, settle yourself into a comfortable position. If you are driving, please be mindful of the road and your safety, as well as the safety of others. Wherever you are begin by taking in a deep breath. If you are able allow your arms to rest comfortably at your sides, you can either close your eyes or soften your gaze. As you center yourself by simply paying attention to your breath. As you inhale, follow your breath in and down toward your diaphragm, hold onto your breath a few seconds and exhale. With your next inhale with conviction and resolve, repeat these words in this moment right now, I am completely free in this moment. Right now I am completely free.

Steve Carlson ([02:41](#)):

Exhale slowly, settling in deeper into a peaceful state. Now, once again, inhale slowly and deeply repeating this to yourself in this moment, I am free to be exactly who I essentially am. In this moment. I am free to be exactly who I essentially am. Exhale slowly, as you settle further into what is called presence, a state of consciousness that is grounded in the now. Take in one last breath, breathe in slowly and repeat to yourself in every present moment. I am free to choose my response to any person or situation I encounter today. In every present moment, I am free to choose my response to any person or situation I encounter today.

Steve Carlson ([03:51](#)):

This quality of freedom is inherent to our being. With this freedom we are offered and gifted the ability to be responsible with our freedom and to do no harm to others while contributing to the greater good. Freedom and responsibility must coexist. Many people have and still do live in societies and circumstances without one or the other. One such man was Victor Frankl, a Jewish psychiatrist who was born in Vienna in 1905. During the Nazi occupation and Holocaust Frankl and his entire family with the exception of his sister, Stella were detained in the Terezin ghetto north of Prague and later sent to Auschwitz. Stella was able to escape to Australia. In 1940 Victor obtained a visa to America, but decided to let it expire, not wanting to desert his elderly parents who eventually were killed along with his brother and wife in the death camps.

Steve Carlson ([05:08](#)):

After spending five years in a German work camp on April 27th, 1945, Victor Frankl and his fellow Holocaust survivors were liberated by us troops. Full of despair about the realization of his losses, Frankel uh, found support in his friends and in his determination to rewrite a book that he was working on at the time of his confinement at Auschwitz, where the unpublished manuscript was destroyed. In his

book, Frankel uses his experiences and observations of those who like him survive the atrocities of the camps and those who died when they lost hope and meaning giving into the power of hopelessness and despair. A theme of all Victor Frankel's publications are his thoughts on the human ability to find meaning in misery. Resilience, in the grips of oppression and the importance of embracing life even in the face of great adversity. These writings and ideas are summed up in one of his titles, *Yes, to Life, In Spite of Everything*. Victor Frankel demonstrates that although we usually cannot choose our circumstances, we are always free to choose how we respond to these circumstances. He once said between stimulus and response, there is a space in that space is our power to choose our response in our response lies our growth and our freedom.

Steve Carlson ([06:57](#)):

As you continue on with your day, as you do the work of protecting children and supporting recovery and parents and caregivers, take with you the story of Victor Frankl. From his life we know it is possible to live with both freedom and responsibility, even in our most challenging moments. As you meet with caregivers today, remember that you are responsible to them, but you are not responsible for them. They too have the freedom to choose their way. You are responsible to bring your best understanding of the truth of the situation with acceptance, compassion, and clarity. And when the difficulty of your work feels heavier than you can handle pause for a moment and access the resilience that is inherent to who you essentially are. A resilience that is inside you and always available. When you hold to your roots of resilience, you will find the freedom to express yourself while holding to the responsibility of the task you have to do. And in your resilience, you are modeling to parents and caregivers that they too have the freedom to choose how they respond to their circumstances with responsibility to do the right thing. A final word of encouragement from Victor Frankl. He wrote *Everything can be taken from a person, but one thing, the last of the human freedoms that is to choose one's attitude in any given set of circumstances to choose one's own way*. Be well, do good work. And in all things live freely and responsibly. Namaste.

Funding Statement ([09:10](#)):

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