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The Logic of Comprehensive or Deep Emotional Change

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Abstract

The article proposes an analogue of conceptual change in the context of comprehensive or deep emotional change and growth, and explores some aspects of its logic in that context. This is not to reduce emotions to concepts, but to say that concepts express the sense that is already inherent in experience and reality. When emotional states change so thoroughly that their applicable concepts become completely different, they shift from one logical structure to another. At the moment or phase when one conceptual structure transforms into another, two logically incompatible descriptions both apply to the same state at the same time. As a result, the correct description of this moment and its development involves conceptual confusion, non sequitur, and logical contradiction. In these contexts, the sense itself of the emotional experience and process is partly characterized by what are otherwise violations of sense. Failure of sense is part of how these experiences make sense. The article explores some of the consequences of this paradox of sense for the nature and experience of deep emotional change and for the meaning of change itself in this context.

Key words: Emotions, logic, sense, development, change, confusion, paradox

The Logic of Comprehensive or Deep Emotional Change

Cognitive psychologists have studied conceptual change, or learning to think in terms of concepts whose logic is not represented in the learner's existing set of concepts.[1] Part of the interest of this kind of change is that it involves a logical leap. Since the criteria for thinking logically or consistently depend on the conceptual structure we are dealing with, and in this case what we are learning is a new conceptual structure, the criteria for logical consistency are precisely what we need to learn and so do not have available to us. Consequently, in this context the process of learning a new concept cannot be logically continuous and coherent, but instead must involve a logically discontinuous shift from one type of consistency to another. Baltas, for example, notes that the new conceptual structure "can be perceived only as senseless from the vantage point of the old paradigm," so that we can only teach the new concept "by judiciously employing . . . pictures and metaphors that . . . *bring out* the nonsensical, precisely, character of the basic concepts at issue."[2]

In this article I want to propose one kind of emotional change and growth as an analogue of a particular variety of conceptual change, and to explore some aspects of the character of the logic of this kind of emotional change.[3] As I shall explain below, the particular kinds of change I have in mind are comprehensive emotional change and comprehensive conceptual change.

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[1] For example, Carey (1985); Vosniadou, Baltas, and Vamvakoussi (2007); Vosniadou (2013).

[2] Baltas (2007, p. 78).

[3] I have discussed the logic of this kind of emotional transformation at length elsewhere in the context of psychotherapy and in particular psychoanalysis (Barris 2003). Here I want to explore its characteristics in its own right, independently of those frameworks.

Certain kinds of emotional transformation noticeably involve peculiarities of logic.[4] I shall try to show in the course of the paper that in many cases these are characterized by the kind

[4] In these examples and in the paper as a whole I shall be discussing emotional change in the context of our experience of the relevant emotions and on the basis of the nature of that experience. It is true, of course, that our emotions can also be affected externally by environmental and bodily changes; medication, for example, can alter our mood completely. It may seem that in that kind of case what accounts for the change has nothing to do with the content of the emotional experience, so that nothing follows for the logic of the change from the nature of our experience of it.

But if this were true, it would only be so in the extreme case—if this case were possible, and if it were ever found to occur—in which the external cause both produced its whole effect instantaneously and also affected our emotions unilaterally, that is, without itself being reciprocally constrained by the specifics of the emotional state. If, instead, the cause took time to produce its effects, our emotions would undergo a process of transformation in their own right, and the nature and intelligibility of this process, even if it played no additional causal role in the change, would then require an account involving the nature of its own content. And if the change was the result of reciprocal effects between our emotional states and the external cause, the nature of our emotions would partly dictate the specifics of how the external cause operated on them; as a result, the operation of this cause would be subject to the logical constraints belonging to the content of the emotional change. Consequently, in either case, the description and explanation of the changes would still present the logical puzzle for which I argue in the text.

Even if the extreme case were possible, then, the many less extreme cases, where the change is either more gradual or reciprocally caused or both, would still require an account of

of logical inconsistency I have mentioned. For example, it is commonly recognized that we can only resolve an emotionally troublesome state by acknowledging and facing it, so that the first step of resolving the problem is not to try to modify it at all, but instead to make room for it to be exactly as it is. It is true that sometimes this step of un-interfering acknowledgement is just a preparatory identification of the problem, prior to resolving it, and so is really not part of the

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and based on the nature of our experience of emotional change, and in particular an account of the kind I offer.

This extreme case is, of course, a fiction. In fact, however, even if it were otherwise, in that case of instantaneous and unilaterally effected change the emotional state itself would not, strictly speaking, undergo change into another state at all, but would simply cease to exist and be replaced with a different emotional state. Consequently, this hypothesis of externally caused change really concerns a different topic from that of emotional change, or at least it concerns emotional change in a fundamentally different sense from the one I have taken as my topic. It is true that a common argument in this kind of context is that the correct conclusion is that there is in fact no such thing as emotional change in the sense I am discussing, and that the kind of understanding of it I propose is instead, for example, a “folk theory” expressed in “folk vocabulary” that has very little if anything to do with the truth of what is happening to the emotions. But since we all frequently undergo precisely this kind of emotional change in very palpable detail, often to the extent of struggling to cope with its overwhelming effects, surely the burden of proof falls on its deniers. Without, however, presupposing the exclusive truth of the causal explanations of the hard sciences, or defending that truth on the circular basis of those same sciences’ claims and standards for establishing truth, this is not a proof that is so far available or even, with any certainty, conceivable.

attempt to resolve it. But it is inherent in at least some kinds of emotionally troubling states that it is difficult to face them, so that this step really is part of the process of the resolution of the problem itself. This is why it is typically and rightly regarded as an achievement within that process. In these cases it is often clearly recognizable, in contrast, that an immediate attempt to resolve the problem on first becoming aware of it would in fact be an evasion of it, an attempt to get rid of it so as not to have to face it. Acknowledging the problem, then, can genuinely be part of dealing with and resolving the problem, and not just a preparatory step.

Some specific kinds of emotional state make this easier to see. If the initial state is, for example, one of comprehensive self-contempt, then simply acknowledging this state for what it is, neutrally and without any concern immediately to reject or change it, is already a suspension of and so a change in that formerly comprehensive state of self-contempt. We are now seeing a significant part of ourselves without contempt.

Since in this kind of case the step that initiates the change is itself part of the change, there is a sense in which the change is already in process when it begins, that is, a sense in which the change must already have started in order to start. That is why, for example, it is not helpful to tell a depressed—or a deeply joyful—person simply to get a grip or to snap out of it. For a change from her comprehensively affecting state to begin, something logically discontinuous from all the emotional resources available to her needs to occur. If she can successfully shake the state off, it is not in consequence of a logical decision she could have made: Her state would first need to have shifted before she could have the emotional resources to carry out that decision. The change occurs, then, either as a logical circle or a non sequitur with respect to anything in the preceding emotional state from which it could arise.

A converse example is that the very act of trying to escape a comprehensive mood only entangles us further in it. If we are depressed, everything to which we turn only confirms our depression. Sad things make us sadder, happy things make us feel worse for not being able to enjoy them, and neutral things make no difference or even accentuate our misery by their indifference to our state. As a result, while our not trying to change the situation simply leaves us in it, aiming to change it only re-establishes it. When these moods do change, as they usually do, this change necessarily involves a discontinuity with all the relevant content of the original state. The change occurs, again, as a logical non sequitur.

For a final example, it is easy to see that if a change has happened and we are still preoccupied with the past, even if this is by way of celebrating the change, we have not yet moved on from the previous state. As long as we are still attentive to the process of changing from the previous state, the previous state is still emotionally significant to us and the change is not complete. The change only succeeds when it has become irrelevant. In other words, the change succeeds only by the self-contradiction of eliminating itself as something that has a meaningful part in the relevant circumstances.

I will discuss these examples further, together with others, in the following sections.

The specific kind of conceptual change I have in mind is a change from a conceptual structure foundational to and so affecting our entire relevant framework of sense—or, for that matter, simply a change from that entire framework itself—into another, incompatible conceptual structure or framework.[5] Correspondingly, the kind of emotional change I have in

[5] While there is disagreement as to whether the idea of this kind of contrast and shift between global sense frameworks can have any meaning (see, for example, Davidson 1984), the case for it has been argued in philosophy of science (e.g., Kuhn 1970; Feyerabend 1993, especially

mind is a change from a comprehensive or globally affecting emotional state describable in terms of one conceptual structure to a comprehensively affecting state only describable in terms of another, incompatible conceptual structure.

Before I discuss this further, let me note that to explore emotions in these terms is not to reduce them to concepts, but to understand emotions as being in part cognitive in their own right. It is to understand them as being partly types of awareness, ways of construing aspects of the world and of "seeing these aspects as" something. It is also to understand emotions as having a meaningful structure that can be grasped cognitively. In both these ways, as themselves awareness and as objects of awareness, emotions have a conceptual dimension.

Conversely, concepts themselves are the sense of what they apply to, and not only abstractions of that sense that we manipulate. The possibility that these abstractions (to consider them that way for the moment) can apply to their referents as concepts depends on the reality in the referents of the meaning or sense those abstractions express. Otherwise, they are simply not the concepts of those referents, but just another kind of object meaninglessly placed alongside the referents. Consequently, the concepts or cognitive grasp we have of emotions express the meaning or sense of the emotions themselves.

Further, it follows that, since the sense which concepts express has a logical structure, emotions themselves also have a logical structure. They make sense in certain ways and not in others.

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chapter 16), political philosophy (e.g., Lyotard 1988; MacIntyre 1988), and with respect to the relations between philosophical systems (e.g., Collingwood, 1940; Hall, 1960). See also the responses to Davidson by MacIntyre (e.g., 1988, p. 374), Putnam (e.g., 1990, p. 104), and Winch (1964, p. 318).

To return to the thread of my discussion, then: Conceptual change that involves or affects all of the conceptual structures relevant to an issue or element of the world has unique logical features. Where the changing conceptual structure is foundational to our entire relevant framework of sense, or where it is that framework itself, it is not simply that there is a shift from understanding one conceptual structure to understanding another. Instead, since the conceptual structure affects or constitutes our entire relevant resources of conceptual sense, when we move to a new conceptual structure it is that original structure itself that is undergoing the transformation into the new structure. That is, our conceptual structure itself undergoes a change into a structure whose conceptual sense is by definition incompatible with its own and so is a sense whose possibility it wholly excludes. As a result, in this global kind of shift of sense, as in more qualified ways in any conceptual change, the process of learning a new conceptual structure is partly characterized by non sequiturs, conceptual confusions, and contradiction.

But in this global kind of shift (and, again, in more contextualized ways in any conceptual shift) these are not simply or only errors on the way to discovering sense. For, as I have argued, the new conceptual order is not simply a new region of sense that we can learn and add to our previous range of concepts, but is comprehensively excluded by the entire existing sense structure. The change is therefore not only a shift to another conceptual structure but can only occur through and as a transformation of our existing structure of sense itself. Consequently, the logical leaps here are part of the transformation of the structure of sense itself as it itself makes room for kinds of sense that it excludes. That is, while these inconsistencies are

logical errors and violations of sense, in this kind of context they are also part of the functioning of sense itself.[6] The logic of these kinds of transformation is deeply and legitimately paradoxical.

The possible relevance of this kind of conceptual change to the examples of emotional transformation I gave above should already be evident.

When emotional states change so thoroughly that their applicable concepts become completely different, then, they shift from one logical structure to another. When this is a change from a comprehensive or globally affecting emotional state to another globally affecting state only describable in terms of an incompatible conceptual structure, logical paradox occurs. At the moment or phase when one conceptual structure transforms into another, two logically incompatible descriptions both apply to the same state at the same time. As a result, the correct description of the sense of this moment and its development involves conceptual confusion, non sequitur, and logical contradiction.

These are the legitimate descriptions of this kind of transition and so the legitimate expressions of its sense. In other words, in these contexts the sense itself of the emotional experience and process is partly characterized by what are otherwise violations of sense. Or, differently expressed, the logical coherence itself of the emotional experience is partly characterized by incoherence or inconsistency.

Bizarre as this may seem, it is confirmed by our intuitive experience of emotional transformation, which sometimes consciously involves moments of being unable to understand or make sense of elements of that process or the process itself. That is, our experience is of a

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[6] I argue elsewhere, more generally, that sense as such inherently involves and so is partly structured as a departure from itself, and so inherently includes elements of failure of sense (Barris 2015a, sections 1-2, especially pp. 64-5; 2015b, chapter 6, especially section 4).

process that includes moments of senselessness as part of its reality, and that consequently cannot be accurately and completely described without including these elements. For example, once we have recovered from being greatly distressed by an issue, we sometimes wonder what all the fuss was about, and we can no longer conceive being so taken up with that issue. Conversely, while we are still caught up in a comprehensive emotional state we sometimes find change from it inconceivable. As I discussed above in the case of depression, for example, everything to which we turn confirms our depression, and as a result we can feel hopeless, unable to imagine feeling differently. The same inability to conceive of feeling differently can happen in the case of powerful positive moods and states as well. The examples of emotional change I gave at the start of the paper, too, include moments of incoherence or incomprehensibility that are often part of our conscious experience of change. So, for instance, it often strikes us that we have no idea how or why our mood shifted, or how or why we gained the motivation to work towards a change in our emotional state.

The account I propose here suggests that these experiences are not the results of misperception or incapacity to grasp what is really happening in this kind of transformation, but instead that they accurately register its reality.

I will discuss these kinds of examples, too, further in the following sections.

I shall call this kind of thoroughgoing emotional transformation deep emotional change, to register that it is not just a feature of the emotional state that changes, nor that the state as a whole is simply replaced by another state, but that to produce the replacing state the very nature or sense itself of the initial emotional state, the state itself as a whole, changes. That is, what it means to be that very state becomes different, and consequently the working of sense itself

changes in the context of that emotional change. As a result, the sense itself of the change partly violates sense, and so becomes unexpected.

An obvious immediate objection is that logical failure or inconsistency cannot be part of a legitimate description of anything, and so cannot reflect anything legitimate about the sense of what is described. Even in the language analytic tradition of philosophy, however, heavily committed as it is to the unacceptability of contradiction, there is a growing literature on the legitimacy and manageability of logical inconsistency and contradiction in the contexts of both formal logical systems and informal reasoning.[7] In the continental tradition, on the other hand, contradiction is often understood and argued, as I do, to play a role in the structure of sense itself.[8] There is a case to be made, then, for the general legitimacy of the kind of paradox for which I argue here, and its possibility cannot reasonably be dismissed in advance. In the context

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[7] On formal systems, see, for example, Priest (2001); Bremer (2005). On informal reasoning, see, for example, Johnstone (1978, e.g., p. 45); Priest (2002).

[8] See, for example, Deleuze (1990); Heidegger (1994); Derrida (1996). My understanding of the logic of this paradox differs from that shared by these postmodern continental thinkers. In contrast with the position they share, I argue that this contradiction in the context of the foundations of sense is so fundamental that it ultimately eliminates even its own sense as a contradiction, with the result that it restores unqualified sense and unproblematic meaning (see especially sections 2 and 4). I believe that Derrida is a (somewhat inconsistent) exception from other postmodern thinkers in this respect, and defends the same position that I do, but this is not the usual view of Derrida. I think Giorgio Agamben is an exception too, but I am less sure of my understanding of his thought. I discuss postmodern thought in this context at length in Barris (2015b), and Derrida in particular and at length in Barris (2003).

of deep emotional change, I shall try to show both why this paradox is a necessary part of the logic of that kind of change, and that it resolves itself in ways that sharply limit its potentially disconcerting consequences.

Another possible immediate objection is that logical relations only characterize propositions and not the reality to which those propositions refer. Although this is a presumption widely held in contemporary philosophy, I do not believe it is tenable. As I have argued above, that concepts—and consequently the propositions that employ them—can apply to the world depends on the reality of their sense in their referents. Along related lines, Peirce, for example, argues that since true propositions describe what occurs in reality, and there are true vague statements, vagueness occurs in reality.[9] Dewey argues similarly that "indeterminate situations . . . are disturbed, troubled, ambiguous, confused, full of conflicting tendencies, obscure, etc. It is the *situation* that has these traits. *We* are doubtful because the situation is inherently doubtful. . . . For nature is an environment only as it is involved in interaction with an organism, or self."[10] More broadly, Ortega y Gasset argues that it is a mistake "to suppose that the truth is originarily an attribute of judgment, of thinking. . . . If someone were to inquire into the nature of the truth of a judgment, the reply would be forthcoming to the effect that it is a character it possesses whenever what we think therein about a thing corresponds to what the thing in question is. The truth is thus transferred from the judgment to the being of the thing."[11]

Philosophers, psychologists, anthropologists, and students of religion have long recognized that there are personal transformations, including transformations of mood and

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[9] Peirce (1958, pp. 215-218).

[10] Dewey (1938, pp. 105-106).

[11] Ortega y Gasset (2002, p. 91).

emotional disposition, that are systematically thoroughgoing and so involve an ineliminable logical inconsistency or leap of some kind rather than a smooth transition from one state to the other that is describable in simply rational terms. Well-known examples include Hegel, Kierkegaard, Jung, and Gestalt therapists. In recent years there has been a lot of discussion on similar lines of "transformative experience."[12] More field-specific examples include research in transpersonal psychology,[13] and a combination of Jung and Hegel by Giegerich.[14] The idea of this kind of transformation is also well represented in accounts of negotiating difference and change in our multicultural and postmodern age.[15] All of these approaches, however, have either settled for the understanding that these leaps are simply irrational and so have dismissed reason as having a contribution to make (for instance, Kierkegaard), or else have incorporated these logical leaps within a larger or more developed context that includes, for example, contradiction as an element or moment that the "higher" consistency of the wider context transcends and resolves and so ultimately subordinates to coherence (for instance, Hegel; Pearce and Littlejohn). The recent discussion of transformative experience, for its part, has not addressed the logical structure of the change but instead has focused, for example, on issues like the possibility of rational choice between entering into and avoiding such transformations, since the character of the new state is unanticipatably different from that of the current state in which we have to make the decision.

[12] For example, Paul (2015).

[13] For example, Braud and Anderson (1998); Hart, Nelson, and Puhakka (2000).

[14] Giegerich (2007).

[15] For example, Kegan (1994); Pearce and Littlejohn (1997).

None of these approaches, that is, seems to have taken contradiction and, more generally, incoherence as fundamental to the structure and working of sense itself in these kinds of context. In other words, they have not understood incoherence to be here, as I argue it is, an irrationality that already participates in and is part of the rational process itself, an irrationality that cannot be resolved and transcended by a higher consistency because in these contexts it is ultimately a part of relevant consistency itself and so provides part of the criteria for resolution. Further, as a result, none of these theorists has explored the paradoxical kinds of logical functioning or patterns of development and resolution that this legitimate or sense-participating type of unresolved incoherence contributes to deep emotional transformation.

At least, this is the case in Western thought and research, to which I restrict myself here. As it happens, however, relevant Eastern thought, like that of Zen Buddhism and Daoism, is typically interpreted in both Eastern and Western scholarship in accordance with the alternatives of ultimately absolutizing or subordinating incoherence that I describe above. The account of change I propose, however, supports an alternative interpretation of those Eastern traditions that, I believe, is workable and would allow us to draw on those traditions extensively for further insight.

To state my aim in this paper more precisely, then, I shall try to show that a phase of logical incoherence is a necessary part of the logical sense itself of deep emotional transformation, and that as a result the overall sense and structure of that kind of change have logically paradoxical features. I shall illustrate the existence of this kind of paradox and explore some aspects of its character through examples of some of the ways in which it appears. As I discussed above and shall try to show further, we encounter and recognize paradoxical features of deep emotional change independently of the conceptual considerations I propose here, so that

one reason for trying to identify and explore this conceptual paradox in this context is that it allows us to give a logical account of otherwise puzzling features of familiar experiences.

1. The Logical Shift in Deep Emotional Transformation

There are emotions, emotional dispositions, and moods that affect or express the meaning and value of our lives or our world as a whole, or that affect or express as a whole the meanings and value of something within our lives or world. I have described this kind of global significance as involving the entire relevant framework of sense or all the relevant conceptual structures. For example, when we are depressed, the whole world is bleak, and even otherwise pleasant or cheerful events can make us feel even worse as reminders of meanings they do not have for us. Conversely, when we are at peace or happy, we can experience even painful elements of life as having their meaningful and appropriate place, contributing to a rich life. The same kind of comprehensiveness occurs in states of feeling hopeless, or contented, or overwhelmed with grief, or deeply depressed, or exhilarated. Examples of states that affect or express as a whole something within our lives or the world include self-hatred, self-confidence, insecurity about one's self-worth, automatic respect for authority figures, and bias (positive or negative) towards a type of activity or person.

Many of these states are conceptually and therefore logically incompatible with each other. In the case of depression and happiness, for example, the same events and issues have meanings in one state that exclude those they have in the other. One way in which this conceptual incompatibility is expressed is that when a transformation happens from one globally affecting state to another, incompatible one, before the change we cannot conceive the changed state as a genuine possibility, and after the change we cannot genuinely conceive the way we felt

before as a possible way of feeling. We can conceive of these states partially, in the abstract, as objects we can reflect on from the outside without feeling them ourselves or, say, as a possible state for other people. But while, for example, we are in a state of feeling hopeful we cannot, by definition, genuinely enter into a sense of all-encompassing depression or of hopelessness in which possibilities of hope feel unconvincing.

Each emotional state, then, is inconceivable to the other or, differently expressed, excludes the meanings of the other. This is not just a subjective impression: Each state has a conceptual structure in whose terms the meanings of the other conceptual structure cannot exist as legitimate meanings. We can begin to explore those other meanings as initial possibilities, but they turn out to be incompatible with meanings that in our current state are actual. Because of these mutually exclusive structures of meaning, then, a change from one of these states to another consists in steps in which some essential or characteristic features of preceding phases of the change become literally meaningless and so irrelevant as conceivable features of the change, and new essential features characterize both the current state and the processes that can be relevant to accounting for its emergence.

As a result, the descriptions or metaphors that are appropriate to characterize the process of change themselves change, so that the process as a whole is accurately described in a series of non sequiturs. For example, if a process successfully leads to a new appreciation of our circumstances—for instance, a process in which depression is a moment of growth, a feeling which is doing justice to the loss of the old and also appropriately acknowledging the worrisomely unknown new—at some point the outcome will involve simply going about our business, without any concern for the old or for the new as notably new: Otherwise we have not yet settled into the new state. In that case, then, the appropriate description of the process as

leading somewhere becomes replaced by a description to which leading anywhere is irrelevant and in fact meaningless. It is not just that one emotional state or phase is replaced by another, but that it is replaced by another that excludes it as a meaningful state, and that this sequence of mutually exclusive meanings is part of the same, single or unified process. This outcome may then be followed by other phases in which we return to registering the change and appreciating it, and these phases may be necessary to consolidate the change, perhaps in areas of our lives to which we have not yet considered its relevance. But each of these phases, if they successfully consolidate the change, will similarly lead to a state that excludes their defining concerns. This unified process, then, consists in different phases whose meanings exclude each other. In other words, this development is not just a collection of different states, but involves non sequiturs within a process.

What is more, as I have noted, these conceptually or logically mutually exclusive states do not only follow each other sequentially within an overall unity that is the collection of these separate phases, but they also emerge *from* each other. Because they are each states involving all the conceptual structures relevant to them, when change happens from one to the other, one can only emerge from the other: There is no other relevant context from which it can develop. In the case of the example above, it is the phase accurately described as leading to change that itself brings about the phase accurately described as one to which the idea of change is meaningless. That is, a phase of sense or meanings that excludes the very sense of another phase itself brings about that other phase.

This means that the meanings that constitute the sense of the initial phase bring about a state for which they themselves do not exist. In other words, they render themselves meaningless. Further, in and through the development of their own sense, new, incompatible

meanings emerge, so that at some point the transition is correctly described by mutually exclusive conceptual structures simultaneously. In both respects—the transition of meanings to meaninglessness, and the emergence of simultaneously relevant incompatible conceptual structures—the process involves moments or elements of incoherence. And, again, this incoherence emerges in and through the working and development of relevant sense itself. In this kind of context, then, sense itself, or meaning and meaningful connection, including logical consequence, is in some fundamental sense continuous with senselessness and includes it as part of its own working as sense.

Here senselessness cannot simply be dismissed as a failure of sense, because it is sense itself that produces it. For the same reason, these points or elements of incoherence are not, for example, an artifact of the limitations of our descriptive abilities or of language, but correctly express the reality of the emotional state at those points. The sense that produces this failure of sense is, as I have suggested, the sense that expresses the reality of the situation.

There is, then, a logical shift in the process of deep emotional transformation, and this shift in turn involves a shift in the character or functioning of logic itself. This paradox of logic or sense has important further consequences for the sense and structure of deep emotional transformation, and in the following sections I explore some of these. As I mentioned, I shall also try to show that we encounter and recognize paradoxical features of deep emotional change in everyday life, so that one reason for exploring logical paradox and its functioning in this context is that it allows us to give a logical account of otherwise puzzling features of familiar experiences.

2. The Change in the Meaning of Change Itself

One important consequence of this global shift in relevant meanings is that the meaning that change or transformation itself had when the change began also changes to a new, incompatible meaning for which the first has no relevance. In fact, part of this shift is that change becomes entirely meaningless with respect to the initial issue or what the initial issue has become. This is an intuitively recognizable aspect of deep personal change or growth, independently of the deeper conceptual issues I have raised here. It is already suggested in the example given in the last section, in which I noted that if we are still concerned with change, we have not yet settled into the new state.

This aspect of the shift is more sharply brought out in connection with moving away from globally relevant states that are experienced as a problem or in moving towards globally different states that are experienced as a resolution. In the case of change away from a troubling state, as long as we are still concerned with change itself at all, we still partly inhabit the field of concepts and concerns in which the problem exists as a problem. Since this is a globally affecting field of concerns, we are then still partly suffering from the problem. A successful change ultimately involves no longer being concerned to change.

Differently expressed, a successful change ultimately involves not experiencing the original state as something from which we need to change, and so involves not experiencing it as a problem. This paradox too is an intuitively recognizable idea: that we have not fully resolved an issue until we can face and accept the troubling past without being significantly troubled by it any longer, without, for example, finding it intolerable and so needing to get away from it, or needing to maintain a particular understanding of it against its original meaning for us. That is, for the problem to be fully resolved, we need to accept the troublesome issue in its original character without a concern for resolving it. In other words, we need to accept it for what it was

before it was resolved. Another widely recognized intuitive way of putting this is that to resolve deep emotional irresolution we need to accept ourselves for what we are and for what we have always been: Differently expressed, we need to see that there was no real problem in the first place. This then resolves the problem that we nonetheless really were experiencing.

Part of what it means that the concept of change has lost its meaning with respect to the original troubling state is that it is not just that this meaning has been affected at a certain point in the process, but that, paradoxically, after this point it cannot be said ever to have been meaningful in this context at all: The concept has no meaning in this connection which could have applied at any point. This is what is expressed by the intuitive and equally paradoxical insights that sometimes part of what we need is to change so as to accept ourselves as we are and consequently as we always have been, or that we need to become who we already are. The sense of this extreme aspect of the paradoxical shift in meanings is given by the globally relevant character of the shift. All the relevant elements of the world are included in the old state, so that there are no relevant new elements that can replace them in the new state. In other words, it is not that new phenomena emerge in the course of this shift, but that the meaning of the *old* phenomena, what it means to be *those* phenomena, shifts. The content of the initial, formerly troubling state is what is meant in the new state: It is that initial content itself that now means differently and, what is more, now has always meant differently. Consequently, change has become meaningless with respect to what that initial state itself, as it was at the start, now means. Change has become irrelevant with respect to the whole process, including its start.

In deep emotional change, then, part of the resolution of emotional difficulties is to recognize that no change is needed. But this is nonetheless itself a very significant change. The result is that we need to change in order not to need that kind of change, and in fact in order

never to have needed that kind of change. In other contexts, this would simply be incoherent and a logical impossibility. As I have suggested, however, in the context of deep emotional growth this kind of statement is widely recognized as making intuitive sense. My proposal is that if we understand deep emotional change as involving more than one conceptual structure, each globally relevant and incompatible with each other, then we can account for the sense of this logical paradox.

To take the significance of the loss of the meaning of change a step further, the fact that the completion of the transformation consists in the loss of its meaning suggests that the most direct way to participate in bringing about the change at the start is not to try to change at all, and instead to begin by simply letting the troublesome state in its initial form be. Of course, the state is global and consequently affects all our attitudes, so we cannot simply let it be: Any attitude we take toward it can only be troubled. But we can include that inability to let it be as part of what we let be, what we do not try to change but simply go along with. In doing so, we are already inhabiting a different conceptual structure to which the troublesome state is irrelevant, although we are doing this in a way that is still in tension with the preponderantly remaining troublesome state, and so is still only weak.

As in other cases in this context, the sense of this idea of change by actively being unconcerned with change is intuitively recognizable. If, for example, our troublesome state consists in self-hatred, then it makes intuitive sense that to condemn our self-hatred is to engage in another form of self-hatred and perpetuate the problem. Consequently, it makes sense that to break the cycle of self-hatred, we need to be compassionate towards our self-hatred itself: not simply reject it as conflicting with compassion, but make an understanding place for it itself.

What I am proposing in addition to this intuitively recognizable sense of it is that, because this sympathetic acceptance of the problem involves already inhabiting a different conceptual structure from that in which the problem has its meaning, this acceptance of the problem is not only necessary to but is also already part of the accomplished resolution, is already effective at the roots of the problem.

Because the shift in meaning in this kind of change is only complete when the concept of change itself loses its meaningful relevance, part of what this shift involves is that, when the change is complete, the original meaning of the troublesome emotional state or issue is in a substantial sense still available to us unchanged, exactly as it was. (Or, perhaps more accurately, it is once again available to us as it was, after the conflicting vicissitudes of meaning in the transformation process.) The difference is that it is now not part of the lived conceptual structure we inhabit, and so no longer exists for us as having the effects on us, whether troubling or affirming, that it previously had. That is, it no longer exists *as a problem* or, in the case of positive states, as essential to our well-being. We now grasp it only abstractly, as part of a conceptual structure we can artificially conceive but cannot take seriously as part of the sense the world now makes for us, and therefore as playing a role in the substance of our lives.

Again, we often intuitively recognize this possibility in this kind of change. For example, we can come to experience ongoing anxiety as, while painful or difficult to deal with, not something wrong with us, not a deep problem. In other words, it no longer affects us globally, and so as a problem that we cannot get perspective on or relief from. Differently expressed, it no longer affects us as relevant to the entirety of who we are, to our general being. Further, we can even come to experience that anxiety positively, as, say, a positive aspect of the vulnerability that allows a richly lived life. Or we can come to experience self-rejection as part of a complexity in

us that allows us to grow in meaningful and important ways. In other words, exactly the same emotional state we began with can persist as meaningful for us but without any longer having the significance of being a significantly troublesome problem, or, in the case of a positive state, without any longer being the focus of our well-being.

What is more, it is commonly recognized that in order to have moved successfully away from the old state we *must* still be able to be aware of it in its original meaning for us. If we cannot be aware of that meaning at all, we have not resolved the problem but simply run away from it; we have blocked it out and are in denial about it. That is, we commonly recognize that we have moved on from the original state in a way that does justice to it only when we can acknowledge it as it was for us, but without being comprehensively affected by its unsettling character.

I suggested above that an initial sympathetic acceptance of a comprehensively affecting emotional problem, without a concern to change and resolve it, is already part of its accomplished or final resolution. That the change of emotional state is only complete when the original issue or state is in a substantial sense available to us in its original meaning may help further to give the sense of this suggestion.

In fact, given that acceptance of the original issue in its original meaning is part of the resolved state, it may even sometimes happen that our acceptance of the problem without concern to change is itself already, or will without further development settle in as, the complete resolution of the problem.

As I discussed above, in this kind of globally relevant change it is not that we stand outside the relevant meanings and judge their legitimacy, and then externally decide on and impose a change on them. There is nowhere relevant outside them to stand. Instead, it is the

meanings themselves that render themselves meaningless and make room for meanings that they currently exclude. It is sense itself that brings about this loss of sense and its transformation.

Further, it is not only that the moments of loss of meaning allow new meanings to emerge by no longer forming an obstacle to them and so, as it were, getting out of their way. More fundamentally, as in the case of comprehensive change's transforming the meaning of change itself, the moments of loss of meaning themselves actively make room for the emergence of new meanings—as equally also for the re-emergence of old ones—because, since the loss of meaning in which they consist is comprehensive, loss of meaning itself loses its meaning in turn, and so in its own working makes room again for meaning. Comprehensive incoherence—or the conceptual confusion, non sequitur, and contradiction I have noted in this context of deep emotional change—necessarily makes incoherence itself incoherent, and so of itself works on itself to make active room for the emergence of coherence.

I discuss further in section 4 the self-resolution of paradox and incoherence in this context. Also, since even the fact that paradox and incoherence have ever played a role in the process of structuring the emergent sense must lose its meaning if the process is to succeed, as otherwise the relevance of their role would make incoherence and paradox meaningful within the new sense and so undermine that sense, I discuss in section 4 too the self-resolution of this paradoxical role.

In the light of these characteristics of the change, it makes entire sense that the way to initiate the process is to let it take care of itself. If we try actively to participate in the process by, for example, directing or assisting the change of the comprehensively relevant emotions we experience, we entangle ourselves further in the troublesome current meanings. The most direct thing we can do to participate in their change, then, is to suspend our active participation and to

give ourselves over to the process. In that way we also make room for our transformation even with respect to our nature as participants.

It follows from these considerations that comprehensive/global emotions or feelings are not simply or only static states. It is true that in one sense they genuinely are static states, because their conceptual structures exclude the meanings of alternative states, even when those are states into or from which they are changing in the context of deep emotional change. But to say that emotional states are characterized by a conceptual structure and that in globally relevant contexts this structure transforms itself is another way of saying that in these contexts emotional states are self-transforming. Consequently, while in one sense comprehensive emotions genuinely are static states, they are also processes. (They are genuinely both states and processes: That is, they are wholly or through and through states and also wholly or through and through processes, in all the mutual exclusivity of these two alternatives. Because of the elimination of the meaning of change, too, in the process by which they change, the process itself makes room for their being in some contexts changeless states, and in fact makes room even for itself as a whole to be in some contexts a changeless state. I discuss this further in section 4, again, in connection with the way in which this kind of process involves stages.)

In fact, more deeply, to the extent that these emotions and so the processes in which they in one sense consist are part of our substance, they are processes or activities of our general being. They are part of the sense and substance of who we are, in process. In this light, we might think of deep emotional growth (and consequently also, among other contexts where this occurs, of psychotherapy) as just this self-transformation of the meaning of our being, put into motion and also resolved by the inherent self-shifting of its own moments of loss of meaning and coherence.

It also follows, in turn, that troubled feelings are themselves already a process of working towards their own resolution. Contented feelings too, as we intuitively expect, become unsatisfying in the end simply by virtue of our continued experience of them, even without any external interference; and, as a spontaneous result of that experience, we come to feel the need to move on from them. When, then, we accept our initial state without concern for changing it, as I suggested above is the way to allow comprehensive change to happen, we are not only making contact with the already accomplished resolution. We are also giving ourselves over to and participating in an active process of change towards a further extension and consolidation of that resolution.

3. Looking Towards Change

The paradoxical character of comprehensive emotional transformation, with its component of logical senselessness, is also relevant for our thinking about deep emotional change before it starts. As I have argued, looking from the point of view of the comprehensively troubled state towards the wished-for change, this kind of change is in fact inconceivable. The kind of state we are considering is one that affects all the relevant meanings. There are therefore no available meanings that could express an alternative state. We can conceive that state as an abstract structure, but not as a lived, genuine reality that can connect with our current reality. Our concrete experience confirms this description. It is common in these situations, for example, that we feel hopeless. And when we respond to others with those kinds of feelings it is widely recognized that if we simply dismiss the person's deeply troubled sense of things as inaccurate or unrealistic we trivialize and fail to do justice to the gravity of their experience.

But we can both do justice to the legitimacy of the experience of unqualified hopelessness and also make room for hope, if we understand the hopeful state, as I have argued we rightly should, as belonging to a completely different conceptual order, one that is genuinely not conceivable in or applicable to the present conceptual order but that can, however, meaningfully follow from a logical leap. This leap, as I have argued, is not just a random absurdity or an act of bad faith and self-delusion, but is a logical absurdity that emerges from the working of sense itself, which in this context of a shift in comprehensive conceptual structures can make room for and then give way to what it excludes. In other words, this is a logically legitimate logical leap, and so allows us legitimately and realistically to make room for the sense of what we truly cannot currently conceive.

As I have argued, the most direct and effective way to put into motion and find the inconceivable resolution of the new conceptual structure is to start by not trying to get there, but instead by simply accepting the troublesome state as where one is. (If one cannot accept this, then one can start by accepting that one cannot accept it, which is the same thing at another level; and so on.) The resolution is then already under way and, what is more, is also partly already in place. In giving oneself over to the self-working of the process, one takes advantage of this resolution-bringing paradox together with its undoing and resolving of the relevant paradoxes of sense themselves.

There is in fact a variety of ways in which a shift to a new conceptual structure can allow us to conceive solutions that are not available to us in the initial structure. More particularly, part of why the shift of meanings allows this is that its global character can change the meaning of relevant “solution” or “resolution” itself. Some of these ways in which these solutions or, more precisely, their sense can become available have already emerged in the course of the previous

sections. For example, the original problem may come to change its meaning so that it is itself no longer a deep or comprehensive problem, no longer something essentially wrong with one, or its meaning may even change so that it is now a positive state, and therefore requires either no deep solution or no solution at all. I discussed these possibilities above in connection with anxiety and self-rejection. Another possibility is that some of the concepts indirectly connected with the troublesome emotional state may lose their meaning, so that some of its presuppositions or implications change and as a result open up unexpected perspectives on it. The example above of the problem's coming to mean something that is not a problem in fact also illustrates this possibility: As part of this change the idea of "resolution" has become meaningless with respect to that emotional state. A third possibility is that newly relevant concepts, which in the old structure were not connected with the troublesome emotions or which did not exist there at all, may emerge in the new structure and contribute to thinkable perspectives on and solutions for the emotional issues. Finally, as this discussion has already shown, combinations of some or perhaps even all of these are possible.

Both before and after deep emotional change, then, we cannot genuinely conceive the other side of it. But in both cases we do sometimes need to take that other side into account to do justice to our real possibilities or to the legitimacy and effects of our experience. Consequently, in deep emotional life, precisely in order to deal realistically with our concrete, immediate, and lived emotional experience, we sometimes need to take seriously our abstract or artificial awareness of the other sides of this kind of change, currently meaningless as these are to our lived emotions and to the sense the world makes for us. (Concepts, then, are sometimes crucially relevant to the inner working of emotional life even where they do take the form of detached abstractions.)

4. Stages in Deep Emotional Transformation and More on the Change of Change Itself

One consequence of the loss of sense of the idea of change itself is that this kind of transformation proceeds in stages. For change to happen at all, the idea of change has to have meaning with respect to the emotional state, but for the change to succeed, the idea of change must subsequently become meaningless with respect to that state. Consequently, there are at least two stages or phases in which the change happens.

Now, because this change is a comprehensive or all-encompassing change of relevant sense, each phase in which this global change occurs includes its own version of the meaning of the whole process; and, for the same reason, each phase also wholly excludes any conflicting sense or meaning of the whole process, and so excludes the possible sense or meaning of any other phase. For each phase, then, its version expresses the only possible meaning of the process. As a result, within each phase that phase is simply the whole process of change, and there is no meaning to the idea of phases of that change as a whole.

Nonetheless, from the perspective I am proposing that is on, and so outside, the phases—a perspective that, I have argued, is necessarily in part incoherent, but in a way that is legitimated by the requirements of sense itself, and that is self-resolving—we can conceive the phases in the way I have described, as each globally transforming or re-writing possible sense, and so as stages of this deep kind of change in which sense itself renders itself meaningless and makes way for what it wholly excludes.

Of course, this description of the phases is itself incoherent; but because it is part of a reflection on the comprehensive change of sense, it belongs to the kind of perspective whose incoherence is required by sense itself and ultimately also resolves itself.

It is in this sense, then, that the process has stages, even though for each of the stages that stage is the whole process and, given the global character of the relevant meanings, that stage is so legitimately and without qualification.

There are also sub-stages within and between these larger stages. For example, to return to the case of change involving the resolution of a troublesome state, when we have initially entered the new state we then need to come to terms with the fact that we have been through a profound change to get there. We no longer need to deal with the reality and concerns of the previous state as experienced in its own right; that state is no longer properly or fully conceivable to us. But we are capable of being aware that we had previously been in a state that we now cannot properly make sense of. This means that an "outside" to our sense of reality (whatever the content of that "outside" may be) is possible or, in other words, that our sense of reality is questionable and so cannot be taken for granted. As a result, we are not yet at ease in the new state and so not yet fully in it, have not yet fully settled into the sense that is defined by its conceptual structure. Another phase, then, is necessary to complete the transformation.

We recognize and express this part of the experience of change and its unsettling character intuitively when we are struck, for instance, by the fact that we have been through a deeply difficult period that now seems to have no point: "What is wrong with me that I was so consumed with that obviously baseless issue?" Or, "I feel better, but not for any particular reason, and there seems to be no good reason why I felt bad before: Why do things go senselessly wrong in this way? The randomness of the way this happens is frightening; it could unaccountably happen again."

In order to settle fully into the new state, we need to come to terms, not any longer with the reality and concerns of the previous state, but with our current unease with the awareness

simply that there was that now-unintelligible previous state. That is, we need to come to terms with the fact that this kind of profound and baffling change occurred at all, and with the resulting implication that this kind of change is possible, that it is one of the things that can happen.

It may seem that there is a logical problem with our being able to come to terms with the fact of change itself in this way. Since this phase of coming to terms with the possibility of deep change still itself involves our settling fully into the state in which this kind of change in turn is meaningless, we will then have experienced that same kind of change of relevant sense yet again, now at the meta-level of the change from being unsettled by the fact of the original change. As a result, we will need to come to terms with that unsettling change in turn. And in doing so, that same kind of change of a meaningful emotional state to its having no meaning will happen yet again, and we will need to come to terms with that in turn, and so on. This process, then, would continue ad infinitum. This is another way of expressing the idea that we cannot escape by a logically consistent process from a conceptual structure whose meanings are globally relevant, since any attempt to do so would necessarily rely on those same meanings. (Expressed this way, the problem is one of circularity rather than infinite regress.)

This problem would in fact hold in the context of the univocal sense and logic that characterize a single conceptual framework. The framework I am proposing, however, allows us to account for our being able to come to terms with the fact of deep change without being caught in this infinite regress. Since, as I have discussed, in the context of comprehensive emotional change the meanings of the initial state render themselves meaningless, the process of change itself brings us to the point where we are no longer concerned with those meanings, and this is true for the meaning of change itself too when that subsequent concern arises. We do not need to reflect on the problem and as a result re-create it: The meaning of the issue itself undermines

itself in and as part of the shift to the new conceptual structure that characterizes the new emotional state. And it does so not by establishing a way around the incoherence or flaws in the sense of that process, but, as I have argued, in virtue of the logic of those flaws themselves in this context of comprehensive change, where they are flaws that apply to all relevant sense. This comprehensive incoherence is also an incoherence of incoherence itself, which consequently of itself eliminates its own meaning as incoherence and in this way, in a non sequitur legitimated in this context by the requirements of sense, works to allow and require a coherent sense of the process to emerge in its place.

In this and similar ways, then, precisely because the paradoxes and logical incoherences in this process result from its character of being a comprehensive shift in meaning, they undermine their own meaning in turn and so resolve themselves and even the effects of their own presence in the process of bringing about the sense that excludes them.

There is another important way in which the fact of stages within deep emotional change connects with the undermining of the meaning of change itself. Their very existence as stages, that is, their character as discrete and stable enough to be identified as stages, despite being parts of an event that essentially consists in change and so excludes stable persistence, also expresses and needs to be accounted for with reference to the elimination of the meaning of change itself as part of the change. As I noted above, in each phase the relevant meanings shift globally from those of the preceding phase in the same way as they do in the overall process, and this change includes the same kind of shift in the meaning of change itself to meanings which it excludes and ultimately to its having no relevant meaning at all. This elimination of the meaning or relevant meaning of change as part of its own process or, in other words, its self-elimination, emerges in the fact that that each of the phases has a stable integrity, a structure that does not itself change,

and that this stable plateau is nonetheless part of the process of change and contributes to it partly through its very stability. With respect to this sort of contribution, for example, this kind of process of change often depends on developments that can only occur within the stable contexts, isolated from change, in which the phases consist.

Considering stages within deep emotional change more generally, there are also reasons following from the general nature of conceptual structures why this kind of process needs to occur in stages. These structures consist in a great variety of concepts that are connected with, depend on, and underpin other concepts. These relations between the concepts may be either logical relations resulting from their sense, or associations resulting from the accidental history of a person or culture whose concepts they are, or they may be both. Since each of these concepts concerns different issues from the others, each needs to be attended to and to transform according to its own requirements and constraints. As a result, the change cannot happen all at once, but only after a variety of separate changes have happened. Further, because there are often relations of dependence between these concepts, it often happens that one needs to be attended to before another can be dealt with. The concepts may also be mutually dependent, and then something like a back-and-forth movement between them has to take place, in which adjustments in the one allow adjustments in the other, which in turn allows further adjustments in the first, and so on.

For example, being afraid may be associated for someone with being worthless. Consequently, before the fear can be faced and resolved, its connection with worthlessness may need to be re-understood, or the concern about worthlessness may need to be faced in its own right and become less significant for the person. It may also happen here, however, that the connection between the two concepts only emerges as a result of first struggling with the issue of

fear on its own. In that case, there may be stages like struggling with the issue; recognizing that there is a presupposed connection with another issue or concept; identifying what that other concept is; returning to the issue of fear to get a degree of further resolution so as to allow the emotional room to explore and rethink the issue of worthlessness in its connection with feeling fear; and so on.

Further, our concepts of fear and worthlessness are also given their sense partly through their relations to yet other concepts, and these again through others. Consequently, the person may need to take a detour through concepts not directly connected, either logically or in her own associations, with the issue of fear at all, in order to gain a perspective on her concept of fear and/or on her concept of worthlessness.

More straightforwardly, she may simply need to take a break from dealing with the issue in order to get relief from the emotional difficulties and strain of dealing with it. She might also or instead need a break to allow her to gain the emotional room for perspective on the issue and/or to develop further emotional resources to face it. This kind of break might take the form of simply suspending attention to that issue altogether or, for example, of turning to deal with different issues that, like worthlessness, are also relevantly connected with fearfulness.

In the context of deep emotional transformation, the emotional relief that this kind of break allows is in fact already one and the same thing, viewed from a different angle, as an insight-granting conceptual distance from or perspective on the conceptual structure of the issue. The need for emotional relief is itself, after all, an emotional state, and consequently has a conceptual structure. And since the need is for relief from the relevant issue, this conceptual structure refers to that issue and so to its sense and conceptual structure in turn. In other words, this emotional distance is also a conceptual distance, a sense structure that is different from but

refers to that of the original issue. As a result, it partly consists in a reference to and so a grasp of the sense of that issue from the outside, and so at least to some extent involves a grasp or sense of its structure and so of its boundaries or limits.

I have noted at various points that deep emotional change is a self-transformation of the relevant conceptual structure. This discussion of the distance that is achieved by an emotional break for relief fits with that idea. First, because in these contexts the emotional issue affects all relevant sense, a move away from it is still a move within the same broader conceptual structure. Here, in particular, the move away is to a break from what is nonetheless an ongoing emotional state, and so the move occurs within that state rather than as a genuine departure from it. Second, the character or sense of the initial emotion is itself a central part of what brings about the need for relief from that emotion, and so of what motivates this move away from it. In other words, the meaning (or the effects of the meaning) of the initial emotional state is itself central to what brings about this movement within its own conceptual structure. That is, it is the emotional state's own sense, and so its own conceptual structure, which partly produces this shift within that conceptual structure. As a result, this move away from the emotional issue is not only a movement within the conceptual structure of this issue but is also a movement *by* and so *of* that structure. It is the structure shifting to gain distance from a part of itself, as it were wriggling within itself to shift some of the relations that compose it.

Further, however, in this shift the structure is altering the importance and relevance, and so the meaning, of the part it now has perspective on. And since the meaning of the structure as a whole is reciprocally constituted by the meaning of its substantial parts, in changing the meaning of the part this shift to gain distance is in the end altering the meaning of the whole structure.

Consequently, in this shift the structure is gaining distance from and perspective on not just a part of itself, but itself as a whole. The structure is distancing itself from itself.

Taking a needed break, then, while genuinely a break from the process of deep emotional change, is in fact also an integral stage or part of that process itself.

In addition to the reasons for stages in deep emotional change that follow from the general nature of conceptual structures, there are also pragmatic reasons why this kind of change needs to happen in stages. First, when the state from which we are changing is a troublesome one, it takes time simply to come to terms with the daunting fact that we need to deal with the unsettling issue. Then, it takes time to get a good sense of what the feelings and concepts are which we are dealing with, especially when the emotional states at issue involve complicated constellations of connected feelings and concepts. For these reasons, too, then, a certain stable period of staying with each of these concerns is a necessary part of the process of transformation.

In general, for the same reasons that a logical leap is part of the overall change of a comprehensive emotional state, there are also logical discontinuities and moments of incoherence in the shift from phase to phase within the change. Non sequitur, contradiction, and conceptual confusion consequently do not just occur as a single moment of this kind of change, but are distributed throughout it. Further, they are distributed in a varied way that has its own structure of development, as each stage contributes to the shift according to the shift's progressively changing logical makeup and requirements.[16]

[16] For discussion of this kind of structure of development of these forms of legitimate incoherence, in the different but related context of the logic of dreams, see Barris (2014, section 2).

5. The Change in the Meaning of Sequence

Another important consequence of the shift in meaning in these contexts, and in particular in the meaning of change, is a shift in the meaning of sequence or succession, including that of the sequence of the stages of transformation I have mentioned.

For example, there can be a transition from a comprehensive state of disabling fear in a particular type of situation to a comprehensive state of comfort in that type of situation. This does not mean that no fear or anxiety is felt in the comfortable state, but that in this state fear is not a disabling feeling. Here fear occurs in the context of a more basic state of comfort or security that is unaffected by that fear, and its meaning is consequently limited and partly constituted by that context. We have resources that are independent of and more basic than the experience of fear to keep it in perspective, to help deal with it, and, by focusing on those resources, to escape or get relief from it. Because the states are comprehensive, we can describe the shift as one from comfort always experienced in the more fundamental context of fear, to fear always experienced in the more fundamental context of comfort. We feel fear, then, in both states. In the fearful state, however, to indulge the fear is to remain subject to our fearful state, to make no movement towards its resolution. But in the early stages of the newly achieved comfortable state, in which indulging an experience of fear has come to have no further, overwhelming consequences, indulging the fear can contribute to our progress toward resolution, because this experience confirms the knowledge that the fear is limited in this way, and so we further establish and consolidate our comfortable disposition. We confirm and further establish that fear is no longer a problem, no longer an issue that we even need to resist or do something about. And, as I have argued, progress in this direction and to reach this point is in fact necessary for the change to become complete.

On each side of the change, then, progress or sequential direction itself means something incompatibly different. Before the change, only moving away from the initial state is progress, but after the change, moving towards the initial state, being more like it, is part of progress. And both of these mean progress with respect to the same process of change.

If this description is correct, it follows that at the central moment of transition, progress simultaneously and incoherently means both or neither of these incompatible and individually comprehensive and so exhaustive alternatives. At that point, the meaning of progress itself is in transition between incompatible conceptual structures. This is expressed, for example, in the common understanding that when the transition is still being consolidated (and so, in terms of the account I propose, is still relevant to the meanings involved), it is compatible with and even part of making progress that there are moments of "backsliding" that in themselves play no role in the success and so in the progress of the transition, and that in themselves are therefore simply returns to the troublesome state. Taken in the context of the overall change, however, these moments of return do not mean that the transition is failing, but, precisely as exceptions to the forward movement, are understandable parts of the progressive process, and even contribute to it by allowing its consolidation and strengthening. In this in-between context, then, random moments of "going backwards" are compatible parts of "going forwards."

This shift in the meaning of sequence follows necessarily from the overall structure of comprehensive change. I gave an intuitive example of this consequence at the start of the paper, in proposing that there is a substantial sense in which this kind of change must already have begun before it can begin. In very general terms, because the shift is between comprehensive and mutually exclusive conceptual structures, all the relevant meanings are different in the new structure from the old. Consequently, what the initial emotional state itself means and so what it

is are inconceivably different in the new state. In fact, before the new state has actually begun to emerge, the initial state of that change cannot even mean the initial state of that change, since in this comprehensive context the change itself is wholly inconceivable until the new state's conceptual structure has begun to emerge and so to give meaning to an alternative to the initial state. The initial state, then, only comes to have possible meaning as the state from which that change begins, and so can only be the initial state for a change of this overall kind at all, in the light of the new state. The movement that begins from the initial state can therefore only begin when the new structure that results from that movement is already partly in place.

(Reverse-wise, once the comprehensive new structure is fully in place, a change toward it from a different state is in turn inconceivable. That is, it is only during the process of the transition itself that the movement can meaningfully be said to happen and in particular to begin. As I have argued, the change of all relevant sense can have no meaning in the initial state before this kind of change has actually begun, and it loses all meaning after it occurs; consequently, it only has meaning while it is occurring. Just as each comprehensive emotional state on each side of the change has its own conceptual structure which excludes all meaning beyond it and which other structures of meaning therefore necessarily exclude in turn, so too does the event of the change between them.)

Conversely, as another of the examples I gave at the start of the paper illustrates, once we have reached the new structure, as long as we still find change meaningful we are not yet fully in that new structure. But as I discussed in connection with the stages of change in section 4, once the change has happened, we do need to come to terms with the fact of deep change itself. At that point the fact and relevance of that kind of change is meaningful for us. In addition, we may need to mourn for the loss of what and where we have been. That is, because the change has

happened, we do find it meaningful, but because we find it meaningful the change has not yet fully happened. The change, then, requires us to abandon change itself, and that adjustment of abandoning change is what brings the change fully about. Once we are there, we are not there yet; and adjusting to not being there is what finally brings us there. In other words, getting there renders itself the penultimate step of getting there, and the ultimate step presupposes that we are already there. This is a more detailed version of some of the working of the paradoxes of achieving resolution by not trying to do so that I discussed above in connection with the change of the meaning of change itself.

6. Concluding Remarks

As I noted at the start, when I argue that deep emotional change is characterized by a conceptual logic, I am not reducing emotion to lifeless cognitive abstractions, but instead arguing that logic, concepts, and cognition are themselves of the substance of our lives and reality. Equally, however, in saying that this kind of logic involves elements or moments of incoherence and incomprehensibility, I am not saying that emotions cannot be grasped by logic, that emotional life sometimes simply does not make sense and we cannot understand it. Instead, I am arguing that logic and sense themselves sometimes operate *by and as* partly not making sense, and consequently understanding itself sometimes operates *by and as* partly not understanding. In those contexts, registering the validity and meaningfulness of that unqualified and incomprehensible incoherence, that is, registering how this incoherence, just as it is, is part of the deeper working of sense, is a well-founded and so successful insight into exactly the nature of what we are looking at. In other words, failure of sense and incomprehension are sometimes part of what sense and understanding *are* when they succeed.

I have argued, then, that in deep emotional change there is a failure of sense that itself makes sense, and that this legitimate failure of sense is part of how deep emotional change as a whole makes sense.

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