EMOTIONS AS JUDGMENTS OF VALUE

Emotions, I shall argue, involve judgments about important things, judgments in which, appraising an external object as salient for our own well-being, we acknowledge our own neediness and incompleteness before parts of the world that we do not fully control. I therefore begin with a story of such evaluations, a story involving fear, and hope, and grief, and anger, and love.

I. NEED AND RECOGNITION

In April 1992 I was lecturing at Trinity College, Dublin.1 Because my mother was in the hospital convalescing after a serious but routine operation, I phoned at regular intervals to get reports on her progress. One of these phone calls brought the news that she had had a serious complication during the night, a rupture of the surgical incision between her esophagus and her stomach. She had developed a massive internal infection and a fever, and, though she was receiving the best care in a fine hospital, her life was in jeopardy. This news felt like a nail suddenly driven into my stomach. With the help of my hosts I arranged to return on the next flight, which was not until the next day. That evening I delivered my scheduled lecture, on the subject of the emotions - a blueprint for the series of lectures on which this book is based. I was not the exuberant self-sufficient philosopher delivering a lecture - or rather, not only that - but at the same time a person invaded by the world, barely containing tears. That night I had a dream

1 Nussbaum (1998) recasts this material in the form of a philosophical dialogue; ultimately the dialogue will be revised for a book that I am writing on the topic of the dialogue form.
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in which my mother appeared in my room in Trinity College, in her hospital bed, very emaciated and curled into a fetal position. I looked at her with a surge of tremendous love and said, “Beautiful Mommy.” Suddenly she stood up, looking young and beautiful as in old photographs from the time when I was two or three. She smiled at me with her characteristically embracing wit, and said that others might call her wonderful, but she very much preferred to be called beautiful. I woke up and wept, knowing that things were not so.

During the transatlantic flight the next day, I saw, with hope, that image of health before me. But I also saw, more frequently, the image of her death, and my body wanted to interpose itself before that image, to negate it. With shaking hands I typed out paragraphs of a lecture on mercy, and the narrative understanding of criminal offenders. And I felt, all the while, a vague and powerful anger – at the doctors, for allowing this crisis to occur, at the flight attendants, for smiling as if everything were normal, above all at myself, for not having been able to stop this event from happening, or for not having been there with her when it did.

Arriving in Philadelphia I called the hospital’s intensive care unit and was told by the nurse that my mother had died twenty minutes earlier. My sister, who lived there, had been with her and had told her that I was on my way. The nurse invited me to come over and see her laid out. I ran through the littered downtown streets as if something could be done. At the end of a maze of corridors, beyond the cafeteria where hospital workers were laughing and talking, I found the surgical intensive care unit. There, ushered in by a nurse, I saw, behind a curtain, my mother in bed, lying on her back, as so often I had seen her lying asleep at home. She was dressed in her best robe, the one with the lace collar. Her makeup was impeccable. (The nurses, who were very fond of her, told me that they knew how important it had been to her always to have her lipstick on straight.) A barely visible tube went into her nose, but it was not hooked up to anything. I wept incontrollably, while the nurses brought me glasses of water. An hour later I was on my way to my hotel in a hospital van, carrying her red overnight bag, with her clothes and the books I had given her to read in the hospital – strange relics that seemed to me not to belong in the world any more, as if they should have vanished with her life.

In the weeks that followed, I had periods of agonized weeping;
whole days of crushing fatigue; nightmares in which I felt altogether unprotected and alone, and seemed to feel a strange animal walking across my bed. I felt, again, anger – at the nurses for not prolonging her life until I arrived, although I knew that they were following her written instructions not to take "extraordinary measures"; at the doctors for letting a routine operation lead to catastrophe, although I had no reason to suspect malpractice; at people who phoned on business as if everything were normal, even though I knew they had no way of knowing otherwise. For it seemed appropriate to be angry, and not possible to be angry at mortality itself. Above all, I felt anger at myself for not being with her on account of my busy career and my unswerving determination to work, which had always caused me to see her less frequently than my sister had. And though I told myself that I had in fact seen her often in recent months and had checked her condition carefully with the doctors before going to Ireland, I blamed myself still, for all the inattentiveness and the anger and all the deficiencies in love that I could find in my history with her, and some that I may possibly have invented. As I completed my lecture about mercy and forgiveness, I blamed myself most acutely.

I did, however, complete my lecture, and delivered it shortly after traveling with my daughter to the funeral. And I noticed this: that the ongoing structure of daily life with my daughter, with my work, with friends and colleagues and people I love, the relatively unaltered structure of my expectations as to what would happen in that daily life the next day and the next, made the grief less chaotic for me than it was for my sister, who had lived close to my mother and seen her almost every day. Although I believe we loved her equally, there was an asymmetry in the way life dealt with that love, and this brought about an apparent asymmetry in emotional duration. On the other hand, although my present life was less disrupted I had the odd sensation of having been robbed of a history, of being no longer a person who had a family history. For this reason the sight of my ex-husband, arriving at the funeral, filled me with joy, because I could recognize in him twenty years of life with my mother, and knew that he could recognize it in me, and prove that it had existed. At the funeral the speeches of many whose lives she had helped also gave me joy, since they proved the continuity of her influence in the world. And the exertion of something like my usual professional activity, as I gave a speech on behalf
of the family, made me feel less helpless, although I viewed this very fact with suspicion, as a possible sign of deficiency in love.

In this story we see several features of the emotions that it will be the business of my argument to try to explain: their urgency and heat; their tendency to take over the personality and to move it to action with overwhelming force; their connection with important attachments, in terms of which a person defines her life; the person’s sense of passivity before them; their apparently adversarial relation to “rationality” in the sense of cool calculation or cost-benefit analysis; their close connections with one another, as hope alternates uneasily with fear, as a single event transforms hope into grief, as grief, looking about for a cause, expresses itself as anger, as all of these can be the vehicles of an underlying love.

In the light of all these features, it might seem very strange to suggest that emotions are forms of judgment. And yet it is something close to this thesis that I shall defend. I shall argue that all of these features not only are compatible with, but actually are best explained by, a modified version of the ancient Greek Stoic view, according to which emotions are forms of evaluative judgment that ascribe to certain things and persons outside a person’s own control great importance for the person’s own flourishing. Emotions are thus, in effect, acknowledgments of neediness and lack of self-sufficiency. My aim in Part I is to examine this view and the arguments that support it, adding some further distinctions and arguments to the original view.2

2 Some elements of a related philosophical position are in Lyons (1980), Gordon (1987), and de Sousa (1987). None of these, however, stresses the evaluative nature of the emotions’ cognitive content. That aspect of emotions was already stressed in Pitcher (1965), one of the earliest and most forceful critiques of the dominant Humean view, and still one of the most interesting accounts of the emotions’ intentionality; see also Kenny (1963), Thalberg (1964). Another pioneering work that stresses the connection of emotions to values is Solomon (1976, 2nd ed. 1993). Solomon also stresses the intentionality characteristic of emotions (pp. 111–19) and criticizes dominant “hydraulic” and “feeling” models (pp. 77–88, 96–102). But his approach is in other respects very different from the one taken here. Heavily influenced by existentialism, he thinks of emotions as involving value-positings that are willed and altogether subjective, and therefore speaks of emotions as “the source of our values” and things that “create our interests and our purposes,” or even “constitute our world” (all p. 15). My approach does not take a stand one way or another on the nature of value, but tries to present the valuational nature of our appraisals from the internal viewpoint of the person having
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As I shall argue in Chapter 2, we need to substitute a broader and more capacious account of cognition for the original Stoic emphasis on the grasp of linguistically formulable propositions. This modification is necessary in order to give an adequate account of animal emotions, of the emotions of human infants, and also of many emotions of adult human beings. Other modifications will involve investigating the role of social norms in emotions (Chapter 3), and providing an account of the development of emotions in infancy and early childhood (Chapter 4). Nonetheless, I shall argue that emotions always involve thought of an object combined with thought of the object's salience or importance; in that sense, they always involve appraisal or evaluation. I shall therefore refer to my view as a type of "cognitive-evaluative" view, and sometimes, more briefly, as a type of "cognitive" view. But by "cognitive" I mean nothing more than "concerned with receiving and processing information." I do not mean to imply the presence of elaborate calculation, of computation, or even of reflexive self-awareness.

My focus will be on developing an adequate philosophical account. But since any adequate account in this area must respond, I believe, not only to the data of one's own experience and to stories of the experience of others, but also to the best work done to systematize and account for emotional experience in the disciplines of psychology and anthropology, I shall turn, as well, to those disciplines, where it happens that views related to mine have recently been gaining the ascendancy – in cognitive psychology, in work on helplessness and control, and on emotion as "appraisal" of that which pertains to a creature's "thriving"; in anthropology, in work on emotion as an evaluative "social construction"; and in psychoanalysis, in work on early object relations and their evaluative dimensions.

Throughout, the *explananda* will be the genus of which some species

the emotional experience. More recently, Ben-Ze'ev (2000), in an excellent and wide-ranging book, has given appraisal a prominent role in his account, and has defended appraisal views against opponents. (See, in particular, his effective response on pp. 541–2, n. 49, to the objections against such views made by Griffiths [1997], with all points of which I am in strong agreement.) Although his account is more open-textured than the one to be presented here, and although he denies that the evaluative element is primary in distinguishing emotions from nonemotions (p. 70), he also grants, referring to the present book, that if the account of the appraisal or evaluation is sufficiently complex, his objections do not hold (p. 70 and p. 540, n. 44). Another significant recent account is Green (1992).
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are grief, fear, love, joy, hope, anger, gratitude, hatred, envy, jealousy, pity, guilt. The members of this family are, I shall argue in Chapter 2, importantly distinct both from bodily appetites such as hunger and thirst and from objectless moods such as irritation and endogenous depression. There are numerous internal distinctions among members of the family; but they have enough in common to be analyzed together; and a long tradition in Western philosophy, beginning with Aristotle, has so grouped them. Nor is this grouping a peculiarity of the Western tradition: similar, though not identical, classifications also occur in other traditions of thought. We also find this grouping in everyday experience, where we do treat emotions differently than we do moods, appetites, and desires, although we may not have a good theoretical account of why we do so. Therefore, we have at least a roughly demarcated category of phenomena before us that can be scrutinized to see what their common features might be, although we should be prepared, as well, to find that the boundaries of the class are not clear and that there are noncentral cases that share only some of the features of the central cases. It is not to be expected that any explanatory theory will preserve all the phenomena intact; but my assumption will be that a criterion of correctness for a theory on this topic is that it should preserve the truth of the “greatest number and the most basic” of these experiences, and that it should be able to provide a convincing explanation for any errors in classification that it eventually ascribes to experience.

II. THE ADVERSARY: INTENTIONALITY, BELIEF, EVALUATION

The Stoic view of emotion has an adversary. It is the view that emotions are “non-reasoning movements,” unthinking energies that simply push the person around, without being hooked up to the ways in which

3 See Marks and Ames (1995) for Asian traditions. For conversations on this point about Chinese traditions I am indebted to Lothar von Falkenhausen, about Ghanaian traditions to Kwasi Wiredu, and about Balinese emotions to Unni Wikan (on whose work see further in Chapter 3). One salient feature of the Ghanaian tradition is that emotions are treated from the first as a sub-category of thought; this is apparently also the case in Bali.

4 See Pitcher (1965) for an excellent discussion of this issue.

5 See Aristotle, Nicomachean Ethics 1147a.
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she perceives or thinks about the world. Like gusts of wind or the currents of the sea, they move, and move the person, but obtusely, without vision of an object or beliefs about it. In this sense they are “pushes” rather than “pulls.” Sometimes this view is connected with the idea that emotions derive from an “animal” part of our nature, rather than from a specifically human part — usually by thinkers who do not have a high regard for animal intelligence. (I shall be arguing that animals are capable of a great deal of thought and discrimination, and that we have to invoke these capacities to explain their emotions.) Sometimes, too, the adversary’s view is connected with the idea that emotions are “bodily” rather than “mental,” as if this were sufficient to make them unintelligent rather than intelligent. Although I believe that emotions are, like other mental processes, bodily, I also believe, and shall argue, that seeing them as in every case taking place in a living body does not give us reason to reduce their intentional/cognitive components to nonintentional bodily movements. We probably do not have reason even to include in the definition of a given emotion-type reference to any definite bodily state — though this is a much more contentious point that will require further argument. Certainly we are not left with a choice between regarding emotions as ghostly spiritual energies and taking them to be obtuse nonseeing bodily movements, such as a leap of the heart, or the boiling of the blood. Living bodies are capable of intelligence and intentionality.

The adversary’s view is grossly inadequate, as we shall see. In that sense, it might seem to be a waste of time to consider it. The fact that it has until recently been very influential, both in empiricist-derived philosophy and in cognitive psychology — and through both of these

6 For my general position on mind/body reduction, see Nussbaum and Putnam (1992).
7 For a good account of why it assumed preeminence, see Deigh (1994), who argues that removing intentionality came to seem characteristic of modern scientific approaches, by contrast with their medieval predecessors. See the illuminating criticisms of both philosophical and psychological versions of the approach in Kenny (1961), who realizes that there is a close kinship between Humean philosophy and behaviorist psychology. See also the account of the “Traditional View” in Pitcher (1965); of the “hydraulic” and “feeling” models in Solomon (1976), pp. 77-88, 96-102; of feeling and behaviorist views in Lyons (1980), Chapter 1; and cf. also Green (1992). Hume’s own view is complex: see Davidson (1976) and Baier (1978). Kenny is certainly correct about some central passages, and these aspects of the view have had enormous influence; but Hume complicates his own account at crucial points, making it more plausible than some official statements suggest. A highly influential source of the adversary’s view, which I
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in fields such as law and public policy\(^8\) – gives us somewhat more reason to spend time on it. An even stronger reason is given by the fact that the view, though inadequate, does capture some important aspects of emotional experience, aspects that need to figure in any adequate account. If we understand why the view has the power that it undeniably does, and then begin to see why and how further reflection moves us away from it, we will also understand what we must not ignore or efface in so moving away.

Turning back, now, to my account of my mother’s death, we find that the “unthinking movements” view does appear to capture at least some of what went on: my feeling of terrible tumultuousness, of being at the mercy of currents that swept over me without my consent or complete understanding; the feeling of being buffeted between hope and fear, as if between two warring winds; the feeling that very powerful forces were pulling the self apart, or tearing it limb from limb; in short – the terrible power or urgency of the emotions, their problematic relationship to one’s sense of self, the sense one has that one is passive or powerless before them. It comes as no surprise that even philosophers who argue for a cognitive view of emotion should speak of them this way: the Stoic philosopher Seneca, for example, is fond of comparisons of emotions to fire, to the currents of the sea, to fierce gales, to intruding forces that hurl the self about, cause it to explode, cut it up, tear it limb from limb.\(^9\) Such images, furthermore, are found in many cultural traditions, and thus cannot be explained away as idiosyncrasies of the Western tradition.\(^10\) It seems easy for the adversary’s view to explain these phenomena: for if emotions are just unthinking forces

\(^8\) We see such views, for example, in the behaviorist psychology of Posner (1990), and to some extent in Posner (1992). For the role of such views in the criminal law, with many examples, see Kahan and Nussbaum (1996). The adversary’s view is not the traditional common law view, but a recent incursion, under the influence of Humean and behaviorist psychology.

\(^9\) See Nussbaum (1994), Chapter 12, for discussion of these metaphors.

\(^10\) Lutz (1988) suggests that only the Western tradition treats emotions as forces of nature; but such metaphors are ubiquitous in poetry from India and China, in the African novel, and elsewhere.
that have no connection with our thoughts, evaluations, or plans, then they really are just like the invading currents of some ocean. And they really are, in a sense, nonself; and we really are passive before them. It seems easy, furthermore, for the adversary to explain their urgency: for once we imagine them as unthinking forces we can without difficulty imagine these forces as extremely strong.

By contrast, my neo-Stoic view appears to be in trouble on all of these points. For if emotions are a kind of judgment or thought, it seems difficult to account for their urgency and heat; thoughts are usually imagined as detached and calm. It seems difficult, too, to find in them the passivity that we undoubtedly experience: for judgments seem to be things that we actively make or do, not things that we suffer. And their ability to dismember the self also seems to be omitted: for thoughts are paradigmatic, it would seem, of what we control, and of the most securely managed parts of our identity. Let us now see what would cause us to move away from the adversary’s view. Later on we shall see how a neo-Stoic view responds to our worries.

What, then, makes the emotions in my example unlike the thoughtless natural energies I have described? First of all, they are about something: they have an object. My fear, my hope, my ultimate grief, all are about my mother and directed at her and her life. A wind may hit against something, a current in the blood may pound against something: but they are not in the same way about the things they strike in their way. My fear’s very identity as fear depends on its having some such object: take that away and it becomes a mere trembling or heart-leaping. The identity of the wind as wind does not in the same way depend on any particular object against which it may pound.11

Second, the object is an intentional object: that is, it figures in the emotion as it is seen or interpreted by the person whose emotion it is. Emotions are not about their objects merely in the sense of being pointed at them and let go, the way an arrow is released toward its target. Their aboutness is more internal, and embodies a way of seeing. My fear perceived my mother both as tremendously important and as threatened; my grief saw her as valuable and as irrevocably cut off from me. (Both, we might add – beginning to approach the adversary’s point about the self – contained a corresponding perception of myself

11 See Pitcher (1965) for an excellent formulation of this point.
and my life – as threatened in the one case, as bereft in the other.) This aboutness comes from my active ways of seeing and interpreting: it is not like being given a snapshot of the object, but requires looking at the object, so to speak, through one’s own window.\textsuperscript{12} This perception might contain an accurate view of the object, or it might not. (And indeed it might take as its target a real and present object, or it might also be directed at an object that is no longer in existence, or that has never existed at all. In this way, too, intentionality is distinct from a more mechanical sort of directedness.)\textsuperscript{13} Once again, we should insist that aboutness is part of the emotions’ identity. What distinguishes fear from hope, fear from grief, love from hate – is not so much the identity of the object, which might not change, but the way in which the object is seen. In fear, one sees oneself or what one loves as seriously threatened. In hope, one sees oneself or what one loves as in some uncertainty but with a good chance for a good outcome.\textsuperscript{14} In grief, one sees an important object or person as lost; in love, as invested with a special sort of radiance. Again, the adversary’s view proves unable to account either for the ways in which we actually identify and individuate emotions, or for a prominent feature of our experience of them.

Third, these emotions embody not simply ways of seeing an object, but beliefs – often very complex – about the object. (It is not always easy, or even desirable, to distinguish an instance of seeing \textit{X as Y}, such as I have described here, from having a belief that \textit{X is Y}. I shall deal with this issue in the next chapter; for now I continue to use the language of belief.) In order to have fear – as Aristotle already saw\textsuperscript{15} – I must believe that bad events are impending; that they are not trivially, but seriously bad; and that I am not entirely in control of warding them off.\textsuperscript{16} In order to have anger, I must have an even more complex

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\begin{enumerate}
\item See Solomon (1976), Pitcher (1965), and Lyons (1980), Chapter 9. Ben-Ze’ev (2000) has valuable discussions of this aspect of emotions throughout his book: see, for example, pp. 49–51, 106–9.
\item On the role of this independence of an actual object in the concept of intentionality, see Caston (1992).
\item Fear and hope can often involve the same set of facts, but differ in their focus – on the danger in the former case, on the possible good outcome in the latter. As Seneca said, “You will cease to fear if you cease to hope. Both belong to a mind that is in suspense . . .” (\textit{Moral Epistle} 5.7–8, on which see Nussbaum [1994], p. 389).
\item \textit{Rhetoric} II.5.
\item Aristotle adds that one has fear only when one believes there is some chance for escape (\textit{Rhet.} II.5, 1383a5–6). One might argue with this one, thinking of the way in which
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set of beliefs: that some damage has occurred to me or to something or someone close to me; that the damage is not trivial but significant; that it was done by someone; probably, that it was done willingly. It seems plausible to suppose that every member of this family of beliefs is necessary in order for anger to be present. If I should discover that not A but B had done the damage, or that it was not done willingly, or that it was not serious, we could expect my anger to modify itself accordingly, or go away. My anger at the flight attendants who smiled was quickly dissipated by the thought that they had done so without any thought of disturbing me or giving me offense. Similarly, my fear would have turned to relief – as it so often has – had the medical news changed, or proved to be mistaken. Again, these beliefs are essential to the identity of the emotion: the feeling of agitation all by itself will not reveal to me whether what I am feeling is fear or grief or pity. Only an inspection of the thoughts discriminates. Nor is the thought purely a

one fears death even when one does know not just that it will occur but when. There is much to be said here: does even the man on death row ever know for sure that he will not get a reprieve? Does anyone ever know for sure what death consists in? And of course one never knows what death is like, or what may be beyond it. In that sense, there is always an element of uncertainty, since even the most determined atheist may hope for an afterlife. And yet Aristotle’s assertion still seems too dogmatic: we fear bad things even when we know that they will happen. More precisely, we dread these things; if we should deny that dread is a species of fear, we might preserve Aristotle’s claim. But I think we do think of dread as a type of fear.

17 Aristotle insists that the damage must take the form of a “slight,” suggesting that what is wrong with wrongdoing is always that it shows a lack of respect (Rhet. II.2, 1378a31–3). This is a valuable and, I think, ultimately very plausible position for many cases, but I am not going to defend it here.

18 Rhetoric II.2–3. Aristotle adds that anger involves the thought that it would be good for the agent of the damage to be punished, and even that this is a pleasing thought (1378b1–2). The Stoics, similarly, categorize anger as an emotion involving thought about a future good event. This is plausible for some cases, but probably not for all. There may be genuine cultural difference between the orgé described by Aristotle and the anger described in my story; but in the anger I describe, the reactive side seems to be primary.

19 In my case, however, one can see that the very magnitude of an accidental grief sometimes prompts a search for someone to blame, even in the absence of any compelling evidence that there is a responsible agent involved. It seems better that there should be someone to blame than that the universe should be a place of accident in which one’s loved ones are helpless. Blame is a valuable antidote to helplessness (see Chapter 2). One reason for our society’s focus on anger associated with medical malpractice may be that there is often no way of proving that medical malpractice did not occur – so it becomes a useful target for those unwilling to blame hostile deities or evil spirits.

20 Anger at oneself is a more intractable phenomenon, since it is rarely about only the events at hand (see Chapter 4).
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heuristic device that reveals what I am feeling, where feeling is understood as something without thought. For it seems necessary to put the thought into the definition of the emotion itself. Otherwise, we seem to have no good way of making the requisite discriminations among emotion types. Here again, then, the adversary’s view is too simple: severing emotion from belief, it severs emotion from what is not only a necessary condition of itself, but also a part of its very identity.

Finally, we notice something marked in the intentional perceptions and the beliefs characteristic of the emotions: they are concerned with value, they see their object as invested with value or importance. Suppose that I did not love my mother or consider her a person of great importance; suppose I considered her about as important as a branch on a tree next to my house. Then (unless I had invested the tree-branch itself with an unusual degree of value) I would not fear her death, or hope so passionately for her recovery. My experience records this in many ways – not least in my dream, in which I saw her as beautiful and wonderful and, seeing her that way, wished her restored to health and wit. And of course in the grief itself there was the same perception – of enormous significance, permanently removed. This indeed is why the sight of the dead body of someone one loves is so intolerable: because the same sight that is a reminder of value is also an evidence of irrevocable loss.21

The value perceived in the object appears to be of a particular sort. It appears to make reference to the person’s own flourishing. The object

21 One might wonder how value is being defined here, and whether it will not need to be defined with reference to emotion, thus creating a troublesome (though not necessarily vicious) circle. (For one version of this objection, see Gibbard [1990], pp. 130–1.) But this need not be so. Emotion judgments are a subclass of value judgments, on my view. They pertain to objects that figure in the person’s own scheme of goals and projects – and, in central cases, to objects that are seen as not fully controlled by the person. There will therefore be other value judgments that won’t involve emotion, and even other judgments involving the notion of the human good. For example, I might think that intellectual activity is a human good; for myself, however, I specify this good by doing philosophy; my attitude toward mathematics will be that it is very valuable, but I have no emotions about it one way or another, given that it isn’t an important part of my life. Again, I might, as a musician, think that Indian classical music is very valuable – and yet have no emotions about it or its pursuit; I just don’t know very much about it, I am not engaged in it. How to define value is yet another matter, not exactly the easiest definitional question in philosophy. We might mention notions of what’s worth pursuing, what is a good use of someone’s time, what it seems good to do or attend to.
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of the emotion is seen as important for some role it plays in the person’s own life. I do not go about fearing any and every catastrophe anywhere in the world, nor (so it seems) do I fear any and every catastrophe that I know to be bad in important ways. What inspires fear is the thought of damages impending that cut to the heart of my own cherished relationships and projects. What inspires grief is the death of someone beloved, someone who has been an important part of one’s own life. This does not mean that the emotions view these objects simply as tools or instruments of the agent’s own satisfaction: they may be invested with intrinsic worth or value, as indeed my mother surely was. They may be loved for their own sake, and their good sought for its own sake. But what makes the emotion center around this particular mother, among all the many wonderful people and mothers in the world, is that she is my mother, a part of my life. The emotions are in this sense localized: they take their stand in my own life, and focus on the transition between light and darkness there, rather than on the general distribution of light and darkness in the universe as a whole. Even when they are concerned with events that take place at a distance, or events in the past, that is, I think, because the person has managed to invest those events with a certain importance in her own scheme of ends and goals. The notion of loss that is central to grief itself has this double aspect: it alludes to the value of the person who has left or died, but it alludes as well to that person’s relation to the perspective of the mourner.

Another way of putting this point – to which I shall often return – is that the emotions appear to be eudaimonistic, that is, concerned with the person’s flourishing. And thinking for a moment about ancient Greek eudaimonistic ethical theories will help us to start thinking about the geography of the emotional life. In a eudaimonistic ethical theory,

22 On this aspect, see Lazarus (1991), to be further discussed in Chapter 2. Solomon (1976) holds that the goal of emotions is always to “maximize” “personal dignity and self-esteem” (see pp. 160, 181). This, I think, makes them far too egoistic, and my own account should be sharply distinguished from this one. Even compassion, as I argue in Chapter 6, is always eudaimonistic; but it can include the well-being of distant others as an element of value in my scheme of ends and purposes.

23 I retain this spelling, rather than using the English word “eudaemonic,” because I want to refer directly to the ancient Greek concept of eudaimonia, which is compatible with as many distinct conceptions of what that good is as one cares to propose; the English word has acquired associations with one specific type of view, namely, the view that the supreme good is happiness or pleasure.

31
the central question asked by a person is, “How should a human being live?” The answer to that question is the person’s conception of eudaimonia, or human flourishing, a complete human life. A conception of eudaimonia is taken to be inclusive of all to which the agent ascribes intrinsic value: if one can show someone that she has omitted something without which she would not think her life complete, then that is a sufficient argument for the addition of the item in question.24 Now the important point is this: in a eudaimonistic theory, the actions, relations, and persons that are included in the conception are not all valued simply on account of some instrumental relation they bear to the agent’s satisfaction. This is a mistake commonly made about such theories, under the influence of Utilitarianism and the misleading use of “happiness” as a translation for eudaimonia.25 Not only virtuous actions but also mutual relations of civic or personal love and friendship, in which the object is loved and benefited for his or her own sake, can qualify as constituent parts of a person’s eudaimonia.26 On the other hand, they are valued as constituents of a life that is my life and not someone else’s, as my actions, as people who are in some relation with me.27 For example, an Aristotelian really pursues social justice as a good in its own right: that is why she has put it into her conception of eudaimonia. She doesn’t want just any old conception, she wants the one that values things aright, in the way that a human being ought to. Once she puts it into her conception, however, she both seeks the intrinsic good of justice and seeks to be a person who performs just actions for their own sake. It is not irrelevant to her that she get to perform those actions; if she is in prison and unable to act, she will view her life as incomplete. Her own presence in the action is ethically salient, although she does not view the action as simply a means to her own states of satisfaction. This, it seems, is what emotions are like.

24 On this see Aristotle, Nicomachean Ethics, I; and for a particular case, IX.9, on the value of phila. For an excellent discussion of this aspect of Aristotle’s view, see Williams (1962).
25 For the misreading, and a brilliant correction, see Prichard (1935) and Austin (1970). “Happiness” is misleading if it is taken to suggest that the end or goal is a state of pleasure or contentment. As Austin shows, the English word once had a wider range, inclusive of fine actions that brought no pleasure in their train.
26 For a good account of this, where phila is concerned, see Cooper (1980).
27 The contrast between such eudaimonistic and more impartialist views is brought out, and distinguished from the contrast between egoism and altruism, in Williams (1973).
They insist on the real importance of their object, but they also embody
the person's own commitment to the object as a part of her scheme of
ends. This is why, in the negative cases, they are felt as tearing the self
apart: because they have to do with me and my own, my plans and
goals, what is important in my own conception (or more inchoate
sense) of what it is for me to live well.28

There is much more to be said about types and levels of eudaimon-
ism, and about the relationship between the self-referential element (the
“my” in “my plans and goals”) and the element of general evaluation
(that the object is important, or valuable) in emotions of many types;
we shall return to these issues in section V. For now, I simply insist
that emotions look at the world from the subject's own viewpoint,
mapping events onto the subject's own sense of personal importance or
value.

III. NECESSITY AND CONSTITUENT PARThOOD

We have now gone a long way toward answering the adversary. For I
have argued that his view, while picking out certain features of emo-
tional life that are real and important, has omitted others of equal and
greater importance, central to the identity of an emotion and to dis-
criminations between one emotion and another: their aboutness, their
intentionality, their basis in beliefs, their connection with evaluation.
All this makes them look very much like thoughts, after all; and we
have even begun to see how a cognitive/evaluative view might itself
explain some of the phenomena that the adversary has invoked on his
side— the intimate relationship to selfhood, the urgency. But we are far
from being all the way to a neo-Stoic view, according to which the
emotions are defined in terms of evaluative judgment alone. For the
considerations we have brought forward might be satisfied, it seems,
by a weaker or more hybrid view, according to which beliefs and
perceptions play a large role in emotions, but are not identical with them.

28 As we shall see, “have to do with” should not be construed as implying that the
emotions simply take a conception of eudaimonia as their object, saying “X is part of
my scheme of ends.” If that were so, they would be in error only if they were wrong
about what conception of value I actually hold. On the neo-Stoic view they are about
the world, in both its evaluative and its circumstantial aspects.
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We can begin to map the possibilities by posing three questions:

1. Are the relevant beliefs constituent parts of the emotion in question?

2. Is having such beliefs a necessary condition for having the emotion in question?

3. Is having such beliefs a sufficient condition for having the emotion in question?

The answers to these questions are logically independent. One may hold that the beliefs are necessary with or without holding them to be sufficient, and vice versa. A claim of necessity is compatible with, but does not entail, a claim of constituent parthood, since the beliefs might be necessary as external causes of something that in its own nature does not contain belief. So much is also true of a claim of sufficiency. Beliefs might be a constituent part with or without being a necessary constituent of the emotion’s identity. And they might be a part that does not guarantee the presence of the whole or, on the other hand, a part that by itself suffices for the presence of the whole (whether causally or because it is the only part there is).

We have gone far enough, I think, to rule out the external-cause form of necessity and of sufficiency: for I have argued that the cognitive elements are an essential part of the emotion’s identity, and of what differentiates one emotion from other emotions. Examination of philosophical attempts to define the emotions over the ages confirms this hypothesis: for again and again, whether the view announces itself as a cognitive view or not, the cognitive content is brought into the definition. Aristotle, Chrysippus, Cicero, Seneca, Spinoza, Smith, even Descartes and Hume (for whom this creates some tension within their general theories of mind) – all of these figures define emotions in terms of belief. Nor, as we shall see in Chapter 2, have attempts in psychology to jettison the cognitive elements of the definition met with success. Neither a characteristic feeling nor a characteristic mode of behavior would appear sufficient to define emotions such as envy, hope, grief, pity, and jealousy, or to differentiate one of these from the others. In some cases (for example, anger and fear) there are at least prima facie candidates for such a defining feeling, although I have argued that the

29 As I have noted, I shall ultimately include forms of seeing X as Y that may or may not count as belief, depending on how one defines the notion of belief.
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full-fledged emotion requires more than this feeling (and shall later argue that this feeling isn’t always present). In others, such as hope and envy, we can’t even begin to specify such a defining feeling. We seem to be left, then, at the least with constituent parthood, with, that is, the thesis that the cognitive elements are part of what the emotion is – whether in a form in which the belief part suffices for the presence of the other parts, or in a form in which it is merely necessary.

What might those other parts be? The adversary is ready with an answer: nonthinking movements of some sort, or perhaps (shifting over to the point of view of experience) objectless feelings of pain and/or pleasure. A number of questions immediately come to mind about these feelings: What are they like if they are not about anything? What is the pleasure in, or the pain at? How are they connected with the beliefs, if they do not themselves contain any thought or cognition? And so forth. I shall address those questions in section VI, arguing that no such feelings are absolutely necessary definitional elements in any of the emotion types.

A problem remains, however, for the claim of necessity, and we should investigate it before we proceed further. It appears that people sometimes change their minds about the beliefs that underlie their emotions, but continue to have the emotions nonetheless. Sandra, who was terrified by a dog during childhood, may learn that dogs are no danger to her well-being; but she still fears dogs. Jack may decide that he was wrong to accept his parents’ belief that African-Americans are ruining the country; but he still has intense anger against them. Does this mean, after all, that one may remove the evaluative beliefs without removing the emotions?31

The examples do not support such a conclusion, for the simple reason that we may often hold contradictory beliefs, especially in cases involving long habituation. In childhood I came to think that the U.S. Supreme Court is in California. (I thought this because I often heard the words “Earl Warren” and “California,” of which he had been the governor, coupled together, and also the words “Earl Warren” and “Supreme Court.”) I put it on the map of my mind in that place, somewhere around Sacramento. To this day, whenever I hear the words

31 See Greenspan (1988).
“Supreme Court” I see that dot on the map. I have known for about forty-five years that this is a false belief, and yet I still retain the belief in some form. I find myself using it to make inferences about how far colleagues will be traveling when they go there, and what sort of weather they are likely to encounter. I sometimes get to the point of making embarrassing blunders in speech. I make similar errors in other matters involving spatial beliefs that have become deeply habitual. Having lived for forty-eight years on the East Coast, I formed the habit of thinking that when I am away from home and set out to drive home, I will be driving east. I have the greatest difficulty to the present time not thinking that Chicago is east of South Bend and even of Ann Arbor. I get on the highway going the wrong way sometimes, and even when I don’t, I have the strong bodily feeling that I am driving east when I am on my way home. (When the sun is facing the wrong way, it strikes a dissonant note in my mental landscape, and I think that something is wrong with the sun.)

If this can be so with respect to matters on which nothing depends, it is likely to be far more true concerning the evaluative beliefs that we lay down in childhood, frequently in connection with attachment relations of deep intensity. Changing these, as Seneca knew, requires a lifetime of patient self-examination, and even that is not always successful. Sandra still sees dogs as dangerous to her well-being in particular cases, although she also holds a general belief that contradicts this. (And maybe it doesn’t, notice: it would be irrational to believe that dogs never cause harm, so what she probably believes is that many dogs don’t cause harm.) Jack may be teaching himself some moral truths, but his deep-seated habits wipe those off the slate at times, and he is again in the grip of his past. In the same way, Seneca believes that honor isn’t very important, but: when someone seats him at a place at table that he thinks insulting, he is in the grip of his habits.32 Here Seneca has no temptation to say that the emotion is nonjudgmental: the whole problem is that he does judge that he has been significantly insulted, even while he knows that the matter is not significant. So the case against necessity is unconvincing; to rebut it we need only point to the fact that the mind has a complex archaeology, and false beliefs, especially about matters of value, are difficult to shake.

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IV. JUDGING AND ACKNOWLEDGING, AND SUFFICIENT CONDITIONS

In order to prepare for a fuller elaboration and defense of the neo-Stoic view, we must now, however, say more about judgment. To understand the case for the view that emotions are judgments, we need to understand exactly what a Stoic means when she says that; I think we will find the picture intuitively appealing, and a valuable basis for a critique of a familiar Humean belief – desire framework for the explanation of action (see Chapter 2) – although the Stoic view will turn out to be overly focused on linguistically formulable propositional content, and will therefore need a good deal of modification. According to the Stoics, then, a judgment is an assent to an appearance. In other words, it is a process that has two stages. First, it occurs to me or strikes me that such and such is the case. It looks to me that way, I see things that way – but so far I haven’t really accepted it. Note that this view does not require any metaphysics of internal representations that allegedly mirror the world: the Stoics are just talking about the way things look to people, and this way may or may not be conveyed to the mind through internal representational mechanisms.33

At this point there are three possibilities. I can accept or embrace the way things look, take it into me as the way things are: in this case the appearance has become my judgment, and that act of acceptance is what judging is. I can repudiate the appearance as not being the way things are: in that case I am judging the contradictory. Or I can let the appearance hang there without committing myself one way or another. In that case I have no belief or judgment about the matter one way or the other.34 Consider a simple perceptual case introduced

34 Aristotle points out that such an unaccepted “appearance” may still have some motivating power, but only in a limited way: as when a sudden sight causes one to be startled (but not yet really afraid) – see De Anima III.9, De Motu Animalium, ch. 11. Seneca makes a similar point concerning the so-called pre-emotions or propatheiai: see De Ira II.3; it is remarkable that Richard Lazarus reinvents, apparently independently, the very same term, “pre-emotions,” to describe the same phenomenon in the animals he observes – see Lazarus (1991), to be discussed in Chapter 2. The Greek skeptics suggest that one might live an entire life being motivated by appearances alone, without any beliefs – pointing to the alleged fact that animals are so moved. But their case is
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by Aristotle.\textsuperscript{35} The sun strikes me as being about a foot wide. (That's the way it looks to me, that is what I see it \textit{as}.) Now I might embrace this appearance and talk and act accordingly; most children do so. If I am confused about astronomy, I may refuse to make any cognitive commitment on the matter. But if I have a confident belief that the sun is in fact tremendously large, and that the way it looks is deceptive, I will repudiate the appearance and embrace a contradictory appearance. There seems nothing odd here about saying both that the appearance presents itself to my cognitive faculties and that its acceptance or rejection is the activity of those faculties. Assenting to or embracing a way of seeing something in the world, acknowledging it as true, seems to be a job that \textit{requires} the discriminating power of cognition. Cognition need not be imagined as inert, as it is in the Humean tradition. In this case, it is reason itself that reaches out and takes that appearance to itself, saying, so to speak, “Yes, that's the one I'll have. That's the way things really are.” We might even say that this is a good way of thinking about what reasoning is: an ability in virtue of which we commit ourselves to a view of the way things really are.

Stoics thought that assent was always a voluntary act, and that we always had it in our power to assent or refuse to assent to any appearance. (Or at least adults had this power; for the voluntarist view was part of their argument for denying emotions to children and nonhuman animals.) Thus they developed an extreme voluntarist view of personality, coupled with an exigent doctrine of self-monitoring that Epictetus summarizes in the maxim, “Watch over yourself like an enemy lying in wait.” We do not need to accept these aspects of Stoic psychology in order to accept their general picture of judgment. Indeed, we may remind Stoics that in other texts they spoke of appearances that “dragged us by the hair to assent” (although they did not include emotion-related appearances in that category). Even so, habit, attachment, and the sheer weight of events may frequently extract assent from us; it is not to be imagined as an act that we always deliberately perform.

When we understand assent in this broader way, we understand, too, how the view, so broadened, will ultimately be able to ascribe dubious, since, for one thing, it seems to misdescribe the cognitive equipment of animals – see Chapter 2.

\textsuperscript{35} \textit{De Anima} III.3.
emotions to young children and nonhuman animals, who, to a greater
or lesser extent, lack the capacity to withhold assent from the appear-
ances with which life confronts them. Whenever they accept a way the
world seems as the way it is, they can be said to have judgment in my
sense. We should notice, however, that the Stoic picture of animals and
children is actually quite implausible: for very often, as soon as they
gather experience, they are able to form thoughts of the sort, “This
person is smiling, but he isn’t really a friend,” or “This looks good to
eat, but it’s really not.”

Let us now return to my central example. My mother has died. It
strikes me, it appears to me, that a person of enormous value, who was
central in my life, is there no longer. It seemed to me as if a nail from
the world had entered my insides; it also felt as if life had suddenly a
large rip or tear in it, a gaping hole. I saw, as well, her wonderful face
– both as tremendously loved and as forever cut off from me. The
appearance, in however many ways we picture it, has propositional
content or at least combination: it combines the thought of importance
with the thought of loss, its content is that this importance is lost. And,
as I have said, it is evaluative and eudaimonistic: it does not just assert,
“Betty Craven is dead.” Central to the propositional content is my
mother’s enormous importance, both in herself and as an element in
my life.

So far we are still at the stage of appearing – and notice that I was
in this stage throughout the night before her death, throughout the
long transatlantic plane ride, haunted by that value-laden picture but
powerless to accept or reject it; for it was sitting in the hands of the
world. (There are not always two stages in this way: for often the look
of the world and the inexorability of the truth of that look bear in on
one simultaneously.) I might have had reason to reject the appearance –
if, for example, I had awakened and found that the whole experience
of getting the bad news and planning my return trip had been a night-
mare. Or in a different way I might have rejected it if the outcome had
turned out to be good and she had in fact no longer been threatened. I
did accept that she was endangered – so I did have fear. But whether
or not she was or would be lost – that I could not say. But now I am

36 For a detailed discussion of these aspects of the Stoic view of judgment, see Deigh
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in the hospital room with her body before me. I embrace the appearance as the way things are. Can I assent to the idea that someone tremendously beloved is forever lost to me, and yet preserve emotional equanimity?

The neo-Stoic claims that I cannot. Not if what I am accepting is that very set of propositions, with all of their evaluative elements. Suppose I had said to the nurses, "Yes, I see that a person I love deeply is dead and that I'll never see her again. But I am fine: I am not disturbed at all." If we put to one side considerations about reticence before strangers and take the utterance to be nondeceptive, we should say, I think, that one among three things is very likely to be the case. First, this person may really not attach much importance to the person who died. For social reasons, she may be claiming to do so, but she may have long ceased to love the dead person. We could figure this out, if we had enough evidence about her other statements and actions.

Second, and a more common possibility: the person may in fact be grieving already, but may not be ready to acknowledge this fact to herself, because it is scary to be helpless. This case, like the other cases of nonconscious emotion that I shall consider in section VIII, must be introduced with great caution, since it would compromise the entire argumentative strategy if we were to recognize too many such cases, granted that we are commending our view for its superior power to explain experience. But, as I shall later argue, we may admit some such cases under specific conditions: if the person's pattern of behavior seems best explained by the hypothesis of an unconscious fear, or anger, or grief. We have an even more powerful case if the person can be brought under certain circumstances to acknowledge this fact about the pattern of her conduct.

So: John's mother has recently died. He knows that she is dead, but he says he is fine and sincerely denies having grief. Still, he acts strangely. He is unjustifiably angry with people and things around him. He shows an unusual determination not to be helped in any way. Under questioning, this person suddenly admits that he is experiencing grief and anger directed at his mother: grief at the death, anger at the fact that her dying has turned him into a needy and helpless child.

The third possibility, and perhaps the most common, is that the knowledge of the evaluative significance of the death has not yet sunk in. John sort of knows his mother is dead, and sort of doesn't. He is
not really assenting to propositions having to do with her central importance in his life, although she really was important in his life. He may be saying those words, but there is something in him that is resisting. Or if he assents to something, it is not to that same proposition. He may be assenting to the proposition, “Mrs. Y is dead” (his mother’s proper name). Or even (if we suppose that “my mother” could possibly lack eudaimonistic evaluative content) to the proposition, “My mother is dead.” What he is not fully acknowledging or taking in is the thought, “A person whom I deeply love, who is central to my life, is dead.” For to recognize this is to be deeply disturbed.

This case is very close to my second case. Both reflect the fact that people dislike being helpless and passive, and therefore characteristically resist the knowledge of deaths of loved ones, or of their own illnesses. The difference will be that in my second case John has internalized the knowledge and his actions have been changed by it; in the third case, the knowledge is still being kept at bay, and to that extent has not yet influenced the pattern of his other judgments and actions.

Notice, then, that it is of crucial importance to get clear about the precise content of the thought we ascribe to the person. For if we were to make the salient thought one with no evaluative content, say, “Betty Craven is dead” (my mother’s proper name),37 we would be right to think that the acceptance of that thought could be at most a cause of grief, not identical with grief itself. Again, if we put value in without the reference to the self, saying that the content of the thought was, “Betty Craven, a most valuable person, is dead,” again – we would not have a thought that we could plausibly identify with grief. The neo-Stoic claims that grief is identical with the acceptance of a proposition that is both evaluative and eudaimonistic, that is, concerned with one or more of the person’s important goals and ends. We have not yet fully made the case for equating this (or these) proposition(s) with emotion: but so far it appears far more plausible that such a judgment could itself be an upheaval.

It is, and should remain, an empirical question whether one of these three possibilities must always be the case, when there appears to be

37 Of course the minute we insert the name of a human being there is already some evaluative content; and some moral theories would urge that this is all the value that there should properly be, in any response to any death. I shall address this in Chapters 6 and 7.
belief without emotion. If we found a large number of convincing cases that answered to none of these three descriptions, we might have reason to cast doubt on the sufficiency thesis. But these phenomena of denial and avoidance are so well recognized, and so ubiquitous, that we do not yet appear to have a group of counterexamples that would cause us to lose confidence in it.

We must now add one further element. For the Stoics, the judgments that are identified with emotions all have a common subject matter: all are concerned with vulnerable things, things that can be affected by events in the world beyond the person’s own control, things that can arrive by surprise, that can be destroyed or removed even when one does not wish it. These are the person’s “external goods” – external not in the sense that they must lie outside the perimeter of the person’s body, but in the sense that they elude the person’s complete control. They held that when one’s mind took as its intentional object an element of life that the person regarded as utterly secure – such as her own virtue – then the resulting state would not be an emotion. If we call it joy, we should recognize that it is a different type of joy, one that isn’t really emotional.38

Should we accept this further claim, defining emotions in terms of a definite subject matter? Here we come close to building surprise and change into the definition of emotion itself, a move that has recently been made by psychologist Keith Oatley and philosopher Aaron Ben-Ze’ev, but one that we will have reason to reject in Chapter 2.39 And we also seem to compromise our methodology: for people do speak of joy at their own good character, as even Seneca acknowledges; so we are saying of a large class of experiences that people have classified them to some extent wrongly. It is a little difficult to assess the Stoics’ move, since most of us do not agree with them about the fully controllable na-

38 See Seneca, letter 39.
39 Oatley (1992), Ben-Ze’ev (2000); see Chapter 2, section III. Particularly revealing is Ben-Ze’ev’s attempt to account for the steady background fear of one’s own death in terms of the change theory. He holds that all emotions involve “a perceived change whose significance is determined by us” (p. 16), but almost immediately states that “our possible death is always in the background of our existence: it reminds us of our profound vulnerability” (p. 16). Then, in the very next sentence, he continues as if no problem had surfaced: “This type of change expresses our profound vulnerability and dependence on external factors which we do not control” (p. 16). (A footnote at this point refers to the argument of the present chapter of this book.) Much though I admire Ben-Ze’ev’s book, I do not find this particular move convincing.
ture of our thinking and our virtuous inclinations; we tend to think that no mental state or activity is fully under our own control. Our idea that emotions take these as objects may be influenced by this difference. But it still seems to be a kind of dogmatism to assert in the very definition of emotion that the object must be vulnerable to reversal. It would be still more dogmatic to insist that the content of an emotion-thought must record a belief that some change has actually occurred.

We can say something close to this without that dogmatism. Many of the specific emotions have vulnerability to reversal built into their own characteristic definitions. Fear, hope, pity, anger, envy, jealousy, grief – all these must take an object of the sort that the Stoics demand, since their propositional content asserts that there is change or that change is a possibility. Some varieties of joy and love are like this as well: internal to their very specific cognitive structure will be the thought of perilous fortunes, or the likelihood of change. Erotic love notoriously involves the thought of instability in this way, as the Baron de Charlus’s mind reports, linking love with envy, jealousy, suffering, and astonishment. Some varieties of joy and love, by contrast, will not be like this; their cognitive structure will differ in consequence, as will their relationship to other emotions, and the experience of being in their grip. This is really what the Stoics have said already; we have simply removed the dogmatic assertion, “and these are not really emotions.” (Spinoza’s view is closer, since he makes intellectual love of God a real kind of love, yet lacking in some of the baneful properties of other love.)

In short, most of the time emotions link us to items that we regard as important for our well being, but do not fully control. The emotion records that sense of vulnerability and imperfect control. We will see shortly how this emerges in the complex combination of circumstantial and evaluative considerations that must be present in the relevant thoughts. For now, we can observe that this means that the acceptance of such propositions says something about the person: that she allows herself and her good to depend upon things beyond her control, that she acknowledges a certain passivity before the world.

At this point, we are in a position to conclude not only that judg-

40 This is still not equivalent to the claim that emotions record a change that is actually thought to have occurred, as in Ben-Ze’ev’s view (see preceding note).
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ments of the sort we have described are necessary constituent elements in the emotion, but also that they are sufficient. For we have argued that if the emotion is not there we are entitled to say that the judgments themselves are not fully or really there. The arguments of the previous section suggested that we should view this sufficiency internally, as that of a constituent part that itself reliably causes whatever other parts there may be. For I spoke of the way in which the relevant judgments were at least a part of the identity conditions of the emotion. But we need to return to this issue now that we have elaborated the view of judging that underlies our claim, since it still may seem counterintuitive to make the emotion itself a function of the cognitive faculties (of thought, in its most general sense) rather than a nonrational movement produced in some way by cognition.

Well, what element in me is it that experiences the terrible shock of grief? I think of my mother; I embrace in my mind the fact that she will never be with me again – and I am shaken. How and where? Do we imagine the thought causing a fluttering in my hands, or a trembling in my stomach? And if we do, do we really want to say that this fluttering or trembling is my grief about my mother’s death? The movement seems to lack the aboutness and the capacity for recognition that must be part of an emotion. Internal to the grief itself must be the perception of the beloved object and of her importance; the grief itself must estimate the richness of the love between us, its centrality in my life. The grief itself must contain the thought of her irrevocable deadness. Now of course we could say that there is a separate emotional part of the soul that has all these abilities. But we seem to have lost our grip on the reason for housing grief in a separate noncognitive part: thought looks like just the place to house it.

The adversary might now object that this is not yet clear. For even if we concede that emotion’s seat must be capable of many cognitive operations, there also seems to be a kinetic and affective aspect to emotion that does not look like a judgment or any part of a judgment. There are rapid movements, feelings of pain and tumult: are we really to equate these with some part of judging that such and such is the case? Why should we not claim that the judgment is a cause of emotion, while identifying emotion itself with these movements? Or we might even grant that judgment is a constituent element in the emotion, and, as a constituent element, a sufficient cause of the other elements
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as well, and yet insist that there are other elements, feelings and movements, that are not themselves parts of the judgment. I have already begun to respond to this point by stressing the fact that we are conceiving of judging as dynamic, not static. Reason here moves, embraces, refuses; it can move rapidly or slowly, it can move directly or with hesitation. I have imagined it entertaining the appearance of my mother’s death and then, so to speak, rushing toward it, opening itself to take it in. So why would such a dynamic faculty be unable to house, as well, the disorderly motions of grief? And this is not just a cheat: I am not stuffing into thought kinetic properties that properly belong to the arms and legs, or imagining reason as accidentally colored by the kinetic properties of the bloodstream. The movement toward my mother was a movement of my thought about what is most important in the world; that seems to be exactly what there is to be said about it. If anything, the movement of my arms and legs, as I ran vainly through South Philadelphia to University Hospital, was a kind of vain mimesis of the movement of my thought toward her. It was my thought that was receiving, and being shaken by, the knowledge of her death. I think that if we say anything else we lose the close connection between the recognition and the being shaken that experience gives us. The recognizing and the upheaval, we want to say, belong to one and the same part of me, the part with which I make sense of the world.

It seems, moreover, that the adversary is wrong to think of the judgment as an event that temporally precedes the grieving — as at least some of the causal language suggests. When I grieve, I do not first of all coolly embrace the proposition, “My wonderful mother is dead,” and then set about grieving. No, the real, full recognition of that terrible event (as many times as I recognize it) is the upheaval. It is as I described it: like putting a nail into your stomach. The appearance that she is dead sits there (as it sat before me during my plane ride) asking me what I am going to do with it. Perhaps, if I am still uncertain, the image of her restored to health sits there also. If I go up to embrace the death image, if I take it into myself as the way things are, it is at that very moment, in that cognitive act itself, that I am putting the world’s nail into my own insides. That is not preparation for upheaval, that is upheaval itself. That very act of assent is itself a tearing of my self-sufficient condition. Knowing can be violent, given the truths that are there to be known.
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We have spoken of a judgment as an assent to an appearance: so we now have a question. Is the emotion the act of assenting, or is it a state that results from that act? The same issues arise about belief and judgment more generally, since both may persist through situations of many kinds. Although initially there may be an act of acceptance, and judgment is defined in terms of that act, there is also an ensuing state, namely of having that content inside, so to speak; one accepts or assents to that proposition continuously. It seems that emotions have exactly this twofold character: we initially assent to or acknowledge a proposition, and then there it is, part of our cognitive makeup. In grief, given our propensity to distance ourselves and to deny what has occurred, we may have to go through the act of accepting many times, before the proposition securely rests there; but all this is part of the life of an emotion, just as the initial acceptance and the ensuing retention are parts of the life of any judgment. But we should insist on two things: first, that even the initial act makes a claim – it says, yes, this is how things are; and, second, that even the subsequent retention involves the continuous acceptance of that claim, saying, again and again, yes, this is true, this is how things are.

I have spoken of truth. And it is, of course, a consequence of the view I have been developing that emotions, like other beliefs, can be true or false, and (an independent point) justified or unjustified, reasonable or unreasonable. The fact of having an emotion depends on what the person’s beliefs are, not on whether they are true or false. So if I believe my mother to be dead and grieve, and she is not really dead, my emotion is in that sense false. We are not likely to speak of it as

41 On reasonableness, see the excellent discussion in Pitcher (1965), pp. 339-41. Pitcher notes that love, unlike other emotions, is not typically thought to be either reasonable or unreasonable, thus making the same observation that Adam Smith did about its difference from other emotions; I shall return to this in Parts II and III.

42 See the good discussion of this in Ben-Ze’ev (2000), pp. 15-16. Thus Gordon (1987), who insists on equating emotion with a certain sort of knowledge (and who makes it clear that he means to be distinguishing knowledge from simple belief), seems just wrong here: conviction and acceptance, not truth, are what carry the day. De Sousa’s (1987) account of the “objectivity” of emotion seems to me to make a similar mistake, though in a far more subtle and elegant way. Emotions are part of my view of the world, and responsive to changes in belief in much the same way that other judgments are (though there are also some differences that I shall discuss in Chapter 4). But they are still beliefs about the world, not just about my conception of the world, and so they can be false.
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“false grief,” since the term “false” means both “not accurate” and “fraudulent,” and in this context we standardly use it to mean “fraudulent” or “feigned.” We do not want to confuse the important issue of sincerity with the issue of true or false content, and so we will call the grief “mistaken” or “inappropriate” rather than false. But the propositional content is nonetheless false.

In a different way, the judgment can be false if I am wrong about the evaluative aspects of the judgment: my emotion says (inter alia) something about mothers, namely that they have a tremendous value, and that this element too can be true or false. As I shall shortly elaborate in section V, eudaimonism has two aspects: we are saying that such-and-such is an important part of my own scheme of goals and ends, but we typically think that this is so because of some real value the item possesses: it is such that, without that thing (or a thing of that sort), my life would be incomplete. And in building a conception of eudaimonia for themselves people often seek to build in just those items about which such true evaluative claims can be made. I am not trying just to get any old conception, I am trying to get the one that values things aright. For this reason, Chrysippus plausibly said that grief (along with other emotions) contains not only the judgment that an important part of my life has gone, but that it is right to be upset about that: it makes a truth-claim about its own evaluations. It asserts the real value of the object, it says that getting upset is a response to something really important, not just a whim. Emotions can be true or false in that sense too. Often, trying to avoid the implication that statements about value can be true or false, we say instead that they are “appropriate” or “inappropriate.” The language of appropriateness, however, confuses the issue, since things can be appropriate or inappropriate in many different ways: it doesn’t single out the aspect of value-correctness that we want to single out. Chrysippus’s “and it is right to get upset” does very well, and makes a truth claim of the relevant sort.43

43 Could an emotion mistakenly estimate the other aspect of a eudaimonistic judgment, the reference to one’s own scheme of goals and ends? Certainly I can be wrong about what is important to me. But this will frequently emerge in the fact that I don’t have emotions of the type I would have if such goals were important to me. I’m inclined to think that sometimes it is possible to have an emotion whose content does not accurately reflect my real scheme of ends – but that these will be cases of attempted self-persuasion, for example, talking oneself into liking or cherishing someone one really
A point commonly made about the emotions, purportedly in order to distinguish them from beliefs, is that they have a different “direction of fit”: in belief, we are trying to fit our mental attitude to the world; in emotion, we are trying to make the world fit our mental attitude.\textsuperscript{44} I think that there are several confusions in this picture. First of all, as we have just seen, emotions do attempt to fit the world – both to take in the events that really do take place, and to get an appropriate view of what matters or has value.\textsuperscript{45} Second, they really don’t try to get the world to fit them. Emotions may or may not engender desires for action, which might, if successful, make the world a better world for the objects of our emotions. (I shall discuss this issue further in Chapter 2.) But even when they do engender such desires: does the world thereby fit the emotions better? Fear says that there is danger at hand. If that emotion is correct, then the world right now does contain danger. If I change the world by successfully evading the danger, the emotion presumably will change accordingly. Now the world no longer contains that danger, so I don’t have fear any longer. But the idea that we are trying to make the world fit the emotions suggests, oddly, that it doesn’t fit them already. That was not so in the case of fear: what I was trying to do was not to make the world fit my fear, but to make it a place where fear is no longer appropriate. Fear already fit the world; that was the problem that gave rise to the desire for evasive action. Even in hope, where we focus on the good prospects, the content of the emotion is that there are these robust good prospects; and that is either true or false right now. If I make the good prospects realities, then hope will turn into joy. So I haven’t made the world more like the emotion, I have changed the world and the emotion.

doesn’t like, or talking oneself into grieving for someone one really doesn’t love – and the emotions will have to that extent a factitious and insincere character. They can thus be called “false” in the more usual sense, as well as in the sense that their content is inaccurate.\textsuperscript{44} For a good discussion of this idea, and a much more subtle version of the distinction, see Wollheim (1999), pp. 45–51.\textsuperscript{45} Thus I differ from Solomon (1976), who analyzes emotions as self-created valuations that are then subjectively posited. Whatever one ultimately says about the complex question of the objectivity of value, the experience of emotion does not have this free-floating existentialist character. In grief, fear, and so on, one feels bound by the world, by the way its important items are configured. Moreover, this idea of responsiveness to reality is probably intrinsic to the emotions’ adaptive evolutionary significance; see Chapter 2.
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In short: the objection denies the evident fact that emotions are responsive to the way the world already is. It does not succeed in establishing any interesting asymmetry between emotions and beliefs.

V. EUDAIMONISM, INTENSITY, THE PERSONAL POINT OF VIEW

Let us now return to the topic of eudaimonism. Emotions, I have said, view the world from the point of view of my own scheme of goals and projects, the things to which I attach value in a conception of what it is for me to live well. For Aristotle, these goals typically form a system of some sort, and they are always goals that the agent, in some form, commends to others. But real people are usually not this systematic. We value things, often, without asking how all our goals fit together; sometimes they do not fit together well, and sometimes painful emotional conflicts ensue. So we should distance ourselves from this part of the ancient eudaimonist idea: emotions have to do with whatever I do value, however well or badly those things fit together.

Next, we should also insist that not all the things that I value are things that I commend to others. For Aristotle, the search for value is the search for what is good for a human being. Often this search for value in general is indeed part of the emotional life. In my love for my mother, for example, is the thought that parents are extremely important, and that people should cherish their parents if they have them. Indeed, in much grief for parents this general element is very prominent: for people think, I no longer have a chance to love and cherish my mother, and this leads easily to the wish that one had cherished her more, which is often bound up, in turn, with the thought that people who have parents should cherish them while they have them. In love of children, this general element is also very important. Before people have a particular child, they usually wish for a child, sometimes for a long time. So when they have the particular one, and love that one, they also usually continue to value the idea of having a child, and to think this a valuable thing in life generally.

The same thing happens, frequently, with goals and attachments of other kinds. In an attachment to one's own country, there is frequently the thought that this country has valuable things about it, and that it is a good country. When a goal is freely chosen, we can expect this
element to become even more prominent: in opting for a given profession, I appraise it as containing something of value, sometimes just for me, but often for people more generally. These general thoughts come at many different levels of specificity and generality, a topic to which I shall return in section VIII.

However, these examples bring out some significant limitations of the ancient eudaimonist picture. I have already said that ancient eudaimonism overestimates the amount of order and structure in most people's schemes of goals. But in several further ways emotions diverge from the picture of a system of ends that I commend to others as valuable in a human life generally. First, my goals and ends, the things to which I attach importance, may contain some elements that I think good or valuable for myself, but do not especially commend to others. A career may seem valuable to me, and I may be able to say why, without my thinking that others have reason to pursue it. In some cases this will be because the goal is a concrete specification of a more general goal that I do commend to others. For example, I might think that everyone should have some interest in the arts, while being, myself, a passionate music lover with little interest in (and no emotion about) architecture. At the same time, internal to my passion about music are some general thoughts about the importance of art that represent common ground between myself and the lover of architecture.

We can develop this point further by speaking about the role of specification of general ends in a eudaimonist theory of value (and in many of our common deliberations in life). In reflecting about how a human being should live, a person may commend some very general goals as good for human beings in general: for example, friendship, parental love, civic responsibility. But she will also deliberate about which more concrete specification of each of these general ends she will prefer; some of this work still involves asking which specifications are to be commended for human beings in general. At some point in the process, however, we get to items that are not commended for all human beings, but are just her own ways of realizing the general human ends in her situation and context. For example, if the general

46 See Richardson (1994) for the best account of this, with reference to Aristotle, but offered as an account of a process we commonly undertake in life.
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goal were artistic cultivation and performance, she might realize this
by playing the clarinet, but she would believe that other human beings
can equally well realize it by dancing, or singing, or playing the oboe.
(In fact, in this case she will actively wish that others do not all play
the clarinet, since then the general good of musical performance could
not be well realized.) The ancient eudaimonist picture does allow for
this type of specification of ends; but it does not fully develop the idea.

Here, however, we arrive at a second, and more serious, limitation
of the ancient eudaimonist project: people cherish and value things that
they do not really think good, things that they would not be prepared
to commend as good to others. Often they love a person, or a house,
or a country, just because it is theirs, the one they have grown up with.
At times they may actively disapprove of the person or country that
they love – but, after all, it is theirs, and in some way or other they
love and cherish it. And thoughts about the good may prove less
powerful, in shaping a conception of importance for me, than habit
and time. (I think Finland a fine nation, and in some sense I value it,
on reflection, more than I do the United States. To some extent I also
love it. But I still feel like a stranger there, and I have a certain love for
the United States that is not at all proportional to my reflective evalua-
tion.) Often thoughts about the good and thoughts about what I have
lived with are entangled in countless ways, and it is hard for anyone to
separate them.47 Ancient eudaimonism has little to say about these
complexities.

Third, it may be very important to certain emotions not to engage
in a great deal of reflective weighing of the goodness of an object.
Ancient accounts of love often seem lacking in the idea of the uncondi-
tionality of love. Whether the object of my love is a child, or a parent,
or a lover, there seems to be something deficient about taking the
inventory of the person’s good points, as though the love is somehow
based upon them. It isn’t that the search for good points is totally
irrelevant to love; but especially where the relationship is nonchosen,
as in the love of parent for child or child for parent, it ought to take a
back seat. We love the one we love, whatever bad traits they have and
express. The failure to make room for this sort of unconditionality is a

47 See “Love and the Individual,” in Nussbaum (1990), for some reflections on this tangle.
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notorious limitation of ancient eudaimonism, to which I shall return in Part III.48

In short, the ancient eudaimonist framework will be a good one for thinking about the emotional life only when we acknowledge that people’s sense of what is important and valuable is often messy, disorderly, and not in line with their reflective ethical beliefs.

But so far we have left out, or so it seems, the most important thing of all, something that lies deep in ancient eudaimonism but that is never explicitly recognized. Emotions contain an ineliminable reference to me, to the fact that it is my scheme of goals and projects.49 They see the world from my point of view. The fact that it is my mother is not simply a fact like any other fact about the world: it is what structures the geography of the whole situation, and we cannot capture the emotion without including that element. It’s not just the fact that Betty Craven has died. It’s the fact that Betty Craven is my mother. In short, the evaluations associated with emotions are evaluations from my perspective, not from some impartial perspective; they contain an ineliminable reference to the self.50

Thus, in my grief I endow my mother with (at least) three different

48 See ibid., and further discussion of this element of love in Chapters 11, 12, 13, and 16.
49 We might relate this point to John Perry’s famous discussion of indexicality, “The Problem of the Essential Indexical” (1979). Consider a famous example of Perry’s. He is in a grocery store. He notices sugar leaking out onto the floor. He decides to follow the trail of the sugar, so that he can tell the person that a bag is leaking. He follows the trail around and around the store – and eventually realizes that it is his own grocery cart that is the source. Perry’s point is that the discovery that it is him is not just the discovery of the name of the person; it’s a different kind of discovery, one that we cannot describe without the use of indexicals themselves. And this element is crucial to explaining what he does. Perry argues: if he had said, “I came to believe that John Perry is making a mess,” he would no longer have explained why he stopped and looked in his own cart. We’d have to add, “and I believe that I am John Perry,” bringing the indexical back again (pp. 4–5). Following Perry, we should then conclude that emotions can’t be propositional attitudes in the classical sense, where propositions are understood to be detachable from their context and to have truth value in an absolute sense, rather than just for a person at a time (p. 6). As we have seen, emotions contain some elements that are detachable; but a crucial core is not.
50 See Foot (1988), with the example of cops and robbers: what is good for one is not good for the other, and up to a point they do not contradict one another – although, as Foot also stresses, a person’s scheme of values also contains general interests that are interwoven with the personal interests. My account of the locatedness of the emotions is closely related to the distinction between “I-desires” and “non-I desires” in Williams (1973), who distinguishes aptly between the egoism/altruism distinction and the I/non-I distinction.
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roles: as a person of intrinsic worth in her own right; as my mother, and an important constituent of my life’s goals and plans; and as a mother, that is, a type of person that it would be good for every human being who has one to cherish (though obviously they shouldn’t all cherish the same one). Only one of these three ways of focusing on my mother makes reference to me; and this one, I have insisted, does not consider her a person of merely instrumental importance. And yet, this one appears to be crucial in making the difference between love and nonlove, grief and nongrief.

Once again, then: my view emphatically does not make the emotions egoistic, unless one should hold that any attachment to one’s own parents, by contrast to the parents of others, is a form of egoism – a harsh doctrine. It does make them localized, and in that sense in tension with completely impartialist forms of morality. It is clear that the mixture of self-referential and non-self-referential considerations may differ in different emotions, and also in the emotions of different people. But we must emphasize that the eudaimonism of emotions does not imply that grief is not really grief for the death of the loved person. Consider this passage from Proust:

The idea that one will die is more painful than dying, but less painful than the idea that another person is dead, that, becoming once more a still, plane surface after having engulfed a person, a reality extends, without even a ripple at the point of disappearance, from which that person is excluded, in which there no longer exists any will, any knowledge . . .

This emotion is still eudaimonistic: it is localized within Marcel’s own life. It contains prominently and centrally the thought of a loss that looms large from the person’s own viewpoint. But it sees the lost person’s life as a feature of the world’s landscape, and abhors the sight of a world from which that feature has been removed.

Are all emotions eudaimonistic? Do all, that is, make reference to my important goals and projects? Do all contain the self-referential element that lies at the heart of the eudaimonist structure? The most

51 Although, in the end, understanding why some of the other features get a grip on me may ultimately lead back to the self, as in, “Well, it’s not a particularly great country, but it is the one I’m used to, the one I grew up in.”

52 Remembrance of Things Past, III.519. References are to volume and page number in the Moncrieff/Kilmartin translation.
striking exception would appear to be the emotion of wonder, which I shall discuss further in Chapter 4. This emotion responds to the pull of the object, and one might say that in it the subject is maximally aware of the value of the object, and only minimally aware, if at all, of its relationship to her own plans. That is why it is likely to issue in contemplation, rather than in any other sort of action toward the object. Another related emotion would be reverence or awe: again, awe, for example in a religious context, is an acknowledgment of the surpassing value of the object, not just from the person’s point of view, but quite generally.53

Wonder is sometimes an important ingredient in other emotions. In grief there is, I think, often a kind of wonder – in which one sees the beauty of the lost person as a kind of radiance standing at a very great distance from us. Describing his mourning for Albertine, Proust’s narrator writes:

My imagination sought for her in the sky, at nightfall when we had been wont to gaze at it while still together; beyond that moonlight which she loved, I tried to raise up to her my tenderness so that it might be a consolation to her for being no longer alive, and this love for a being who was now so remote was like a religion; my thoughts rose to her like prayers.54

In this tender moment – one of the few times that Marcel gives the impression of really loving Albertine herself – we see a love that has moved not only beyond the egoism characteristic of Marcel, but also to some extent beyond eudaimonism as well, a fact well brought out by the religious imagery. It is still in the framework of a fundamentally eudaimonistic attachment, however, for it is for his Albertine, and not some chance woman, that he grieves.

In Chapters 4 and 6 I shall argue that wonder plays an important part in the development of a child’s capacity for love and compassion. Children whose capacity for this response to the world is strengthened through imaginative play have a more robust capacity for nonpossessive love, and for bringing distant others into their system of goals and plans; in this way I shall qualify the eudaimonism of the account of

53 Wonder and awe are akin, but distinct: wonder is outward-moving, exuberant, whereas awe is linked with bending, or making oneself small. In wonder I want to leap or run, in awe to kneel.
54 Remembrance of Things Past, III.522.
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these emotions. But I shall insist that in love and compassion the object must ultimately be seen as a part of the person’s own scheme of ends: a eudaimonistic judgment must ultimately be formed in order for the emotion to occur. Wonder, as non-eudaimonistic as an emotion can be, helps move distant objects within the circle of a person’s scheme of ends. We may, then, maintain the eudaimonism of the theory in a general way, holding that it is essential to the explanation of why emotions such as grief, fear, and hope focus on some events and not others, without dogmatically forcing it into a case where it seems not to play a central role.55

Finally, we need to discuss the issue of importance. For now that we have a fuller account of the emotions’ eudaimonism, we can see that this feature also helps us to explain why some emotions seem like great upheavals, and others seem less momentous. For these differences of intensity themselves involve object-directed intentionality: they are explained by the importance with which I invest the object (or what befalls it) among my own goals and projects. If the importance is beneath a certain threshold, I will not have an emotion at all. The loss of a toothbrush does not occasion even a mild grief; someone who takes a paper clip off my desk does not make me even a tiny bit angry. But above that threshold, differences of intensity are occasioned by differences in the eudaimonistic evaluation. The anger we feel is proportional to the size of the harm that we think has occurred; the grief we feel is proportional to the extent of the loss. People grieve only mildly for a person who has been a small part of their lives.

Two nights ago, I went to bed thinking that Todd Martin had been knocked out of the U.S. Open (since he had lost the first two sets to a tough opponent.) I felt a little sad. When I woke up, I found out that he had won in five sets. I saw him on TV dancing around the court, and I felt a surge of joy. But of course it was a trivial sorrow and a trivial joy. While one watches a tennis match, one is intensely focused on the athlete one likes, and so an emotion can develop as one temporarily comes to think the match very important – and perhaps also

55 One might mention respect, too, as a non-eudaimonistic emotion, but I would disagree, since I think respect is best understood as a pattern of thought and action, rather than as an emotion.
identifies with the aging Martin, with his graying temples, so like one's own if one did not dye one's hair. But when normal life resumes, the evaluation assumes its usual low level. Todd Martin just isn't a very important part of my life.

Emotions are of course frequently disproportionate to their objects. But this is usually because the person has a skewed view of the object, seeing it as more or less important than it really is. People will often suffer greatly over trivial losses – if they are used to the things involved, or think them their due.\(^{56}\) Again, they may make the object a vehicle for concerns and anxieties that come from their own lives, and thus invest it with a significance that seems peculiar – as one might do with a sports star or one's favorite team. But once again, it is the nature of the eudaimonistic evaluation that explains the intensity of the emotion.\(^{57}\)

To the extent that the emotional response seems out of line with the person's own view of the object, or with her own assessment of what has occurred, we typically suppose that she really had a deeper concern for the object than she had realized (Proust's account of self-knowledge through emotion); or that the present object has a symbolic significance, standing for another absent object; or that there is some further hidden content that really explains her emotion. We should not be dogmatic about this, since we would then be in danger of simply waving away objections rather than replying to them. But I think that once we have the historical materials of Chapter 4 on the table, we will see that the view contains rich resources for understanding such cases, and that we really can establish that such mistakes about significance occur, and why they occur.

VI. ARE THERE NECESSARY NONCOGNITIVE ELEMENTS?

We have now argued that judgments of the requisite sort are necessary for the emotion; that they are not external causes, but constituent parts of what the emotion is; and that they are sufficient for emotion, if they

\(^{56}\) See examples in Chapter 6 where people ask for compassion in connection with trivial losses.

\(^{57}\) Again, wonder is exceptional: the intensity of my wonder seems proportioned only to the value I see in the object, not to its value for me in my scheme of goals and ends.
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have the requisite eudaimonistic evaluative content. Now we must con-
front an especially difficult and delicate question: are there other con-
stituent parts to the grief that are not themselves parts of the judgment
(the evaluative thought)?

In any particular instance of grieving there is so much going on that
it is very difficult to answer this question if we remain at the level of
token-identities between instances of grieving and instances of judging.
How do we decide which of the many things that are going on contem-
poraneously with the grief are or are not parts of the grief? Since we
are talking about living sentient beings, and since having some feelings
of some type is probably a necessary condition of waking mental life
for any sentient being, we could assert that any instance of emotion,
given that it is a part of the waking life of a sentient being, has as its
necessary condition the presence of some feeling or other. But we don’t
have any clear reason to say that these things are parts of the grief
itself. We do not seem to have said any more than that a pumping heart
is a necessary condition of any episode of emotion; but we would not
be inclined to say that a pumping heart is a constituent part of my
grief. And yet if we confine ourselves to a particular episode of emotion
we have difficulty finding arguments bearing on the question of
whether a given feeling or bodily process is or is not a necessary part
of its internal conditions of identity.

We have a more powerful argument – and also a deeper understand-
ing of the phenomena – if we ask instead about the general identity
conditions for grief, and whether there are elements necessary for grief
in general that do not seem to be elements of judgment. In other words,
if these elements should be missing, would we withdraw our ascription
of grief? This is an extremely difficult question, about which we should
be open-minded and humble, and prepared to change our minds. But I
provisionally believe that the answer is that we do not find any such
elements. There usually will be bodily sensations and changes of many
sorts involved in grieving; but if we discovered that my blood pressure

58 It is here that my view differs most from that of Ben-Ze’ev (2000): his view is more
open-ended, including appraisals, feelings, and motivations into the account of emo-
tion. Because he does not look for necessary and sufficient conditions for emotion, but
instead for prototypes, which particular cases may resemble to a greater or lesser
degree, it is difficult to compare our views, or to say how he would deal with the
problems I raise here for claims that feelings and bodily movements are necessary for a
given emotion type. To that extent, his view and mine may not really differ.
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was quite low during this whole episode, or that my pulse rate never got above sixty, we would not, I think, have the slightest reason to conclude that I was not really grieving. (Quadriplegics lack altogether the usual connections between central blood pressure and heart rate regulatory mechanisms and peripheral effector mechanisms, and yet we have no difficulty thinking that such people really have emotions.) If my hands and feet were cold or warm, sweaty or dry, again this would be of no necessary criterial value, given the great variability of the relevant physiological connections.59

And although psychologists have developed more sophisticated so-called measures, based on brain activity, it still seems intuitively wrong of them to use them as definitive of being in an emotional state. This is recognized in other recent work where a more cautious claim is typically made: for example, that the functioning of the amygdala is a necessary condition of normal emotional activity.60 We do not withdraw emotion ascriptions otherwise grounded if we discover that the subject is not in a certain brain state. Indeed, the only way the brain state assumes apparent importance, in such experimental work, is through a putative correlation with instances of emotion identified on other, experiential grounds. Moreover, as we shall see in the next chapter, emotions cause physiological effects: so it is extremely difficult to say which effects are consequences and which are even plausible candidates for being parts of the experience itself.61

We should certainly grant that all human experiences are embodied, and thus realized in some kind of material process. In that sense, human emotions are all bodily processes. But the question is, are there any bodily states or processes that are constantly correlated with our experiences of emotion, in such a way that we will want to put that particular bodily state into the definition of a given emotion-type? And here we run up against an issue well known to biological researchers:

59 The psychologists’ term “arousal” typically refers, often quite imprecisely, to changes of this sort: see Chapter 2. Gibbard (1990), p. 131, proposes that we think of evaluations as emotions minus “physiological arousal,” but the precise meaning of “arousal,” and its relation to the wide spectrum of the emotions, remains unclear.


61 Seligman (1975) shows with powerful experimental evidence that the subject’s cognitive condition may actually cause further physiological states that are sometimes (wrongly, in his view) identified with emotions.
the plasticity of the human organism, or, in other words, the multiple realizability of mental states. There is plasticity within a given subject: functions previously performed in one part of the brain may be assumed by another. Even in quite large-scale ways, the brain is a remarkably versatile and plastic part of the organism: people with damage to one hemisphere can frequently replicate a function associated with that hemisphere in the other hemisphere. Given this type of plasticity, there will also be variation between subjects: a function performed in one hemisphere in subject A may be performed in the other in subject B. For these reasons, if we said that grief is always of necessity accompanied by the firing of so-and-so many neurons of such and such type, we would be likely to find hundreds of cases for which this just isn’t quite right. (And of course if we add to this reservation the fact that we will ultimately recognize in nonhuman animals emotions very similar to those we find in humans, the case for inserting a specific neural activity into the definition becomes weaker still.)

It would appear that the facts that prevent us from putting the physiological description into the definition are permanent facts about the type of organism we are, and the versatility of our design. However, we can certainly say that we are ready to change our minds, if things should turn out to be otherwise. In Chapter 2 I will return to the issue of physiological explanations, arguing that research in neuroscience in many ways confirms the type of view advanced here, and offers further illumination in connection with it.

(Another issue that arises here, and which will concern us in future chapters, is that much of the philosophical/religious tradition has ascribed emotions to god or gods,* often imagining god to be a bodiless substance. Thus if we should adopt an account that makes a particular physiological process a necessary condition for an emotion of a given type, its consequence would be that all of these thinkers are talking nonsense when they make these ascriptions. We may or may not believe that their accounts are correct, but it is a heavy price to pay to adopt from the start a view that entails that they are suffering from a profound conceptual confusion. I think that they are not confused.

*For the sake of evenhandedness toward monotheists and polytheists, I reject the convention whereby we standardly find ‘God’ but ‘gods.’ I depart from this practice when discussing historical texts in Part III, in order to follow standard usage in translating them.)

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Whether we believe that bodiless substances exist or not, the reason it makes sense to imagine a bodiless substance having genuine emotions is that it makes sense to imagine that a thinking being, whether realized in matter or not, could care deeply about something in the world, and have the thoughts and intentions associated with such attachments. And that’s all we really require for emotion. We can happily state that in human beings thought and emotion are, even necessarily are, enmattered forms, without concluding that this must of necessity be so for every emotional being. People who don’t like this argument are free to ignore it, since it is not necessary for my conclusion.

More plausible, perhaps, would be certain feelings characteristically associated with emotion. Anger is associated with a boiling feeling, fear with a chilled and queasy feeling. But here we should beware of the word “feeling,” which is remarkably slippery and likely to mislead. We should distinguish “feelings” of two sorts. On the one hand, there are feelings with a rich intentional content—feelings of the emptiness of one’s life without a certain person, feelings of unhappy love for that person, and so forth. Feelings like these may enter into the identity conditions for some emotion; but the word “feeling” now does not contrast with our cognitive words “perception” and “judgment,” it is merely a terminological variant of them. And we have already said that the judgment itself has many of the kinetic properties that the “feeling” is presumably intended to explain. On the other hand, there are feelings without rich intentionality or cognitive content, let us say feelings of fatigue, of extra energy, of boiling, of trembling, and so forth. I think we should say about these exactly what we said about the bodily states: that they may accompany an emotion of a given type and they may not—but that they are not absolutely necessary for it. In my own grief, feelings of crushing fatigue alternated in a bewildering way with periods when I felt preternaturally wide awake and active; but it seemed wrong to say that either of these was a necessary condition of my grief.

We may want to grant here that there are some nonintentional feelings that are frequently associated with a given emotion: take boiling and anger, or trembling and fear. Nonetheless, it appears that here too the plasticity and variability of people (both of the same person over time and across people) prevents us from plugging the feeling into the definition as an absolutely necessary element. Many men report experiencing anger in connection with a boiling feeling; this seems to
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be somewhat less true among women, or among people in general, who are taught to suppress or fear their own anger. My own experience of anger is that it is associated with tension at the back of the neck, or a headache that appears the next day. This doesn’t mean that I am not really angry, as the further examination of the pattern of my statements and actions would show.

There are two distinct points here. First, if we are prepared to recognize nonconscious emotional states, such as nonconscious fear of death or nonconscious anger – as the next section will argue that we should, under carefully defined circumstances – then we cannot possibly hold to any necessary phenomenological condition for that emotion-type. Second, even if we don’t like totally nonconscious emotions, we should recognize that there is a great deal of variability in the feeling states people characteristically experience in connection with a given emotion-type – variability both within a given subject and between subjects. My anger exemplifies both of these points: for at times it is entirely asymptomatic; and then, the following day, it will manifest itself in a headache. In neither case does it have the phenomenology of “boiling” that so many people report. 62

Do we get further by recognizing qualia, and saying that it’s not boiling or trembling we’re after, but the sui generis feeling of anger, which has a constancy across subjects, in something like the way that we imagine that seeing red has constancy? I don’t feel that much is contributed by this move. So far as we can see, what has constancy across subjects is a pattern of thought, which is of course a type of experience. If we are to be convinced that there is anything further that

62 Of similar elusiveness is the concept of “affect” that is fundamental to the noncognitive account of emotion in Stocker (1996). Although Stocker announces his opposition to cognitive views of emotion, and introduces the psychological concept of “affect” as an element that will mark the difference between his view and cognitive views, it later becomes clear that the term is extremely capacious: he announces that “it is useful to have a common term for the affectivity common to emotions, moods, interests, and attitudes” (p. 20). When, finally, he insists that we should recognize unconscious affects, along with many contemporary psychoanalysts (p. 21), we seem to have lost our grip on the notion itself. Certainly it can’t be a feeling, which we recognize by the way it registers in our awareness. Is it a kind of psychic energy? But what kind? And is the kind specific to each emotion-type, or is it something that distinguishes all emotions from nonemotions? Deigh (1998), reviewing Stocker’s book, concludes that the term “affect” is a primitive term. I would say that if it is so understood, Stocker has not made out his case that we need to include it as a distinctive item in the definition of emotions, over and above the elements we have recognized already.
has constancy across subjects, we need to be told something about what this might be. The positing of a sui generis something seems like mere hand-waving. Besides, I shall argue later that the experience of anger is subtly inflected by cultural variation in ways that color perception is not taken to be by the partisans of qualia (although that is not to say that they are entirely correct about color either).

What concessions should we make to the role of feelings? We should grant, I think, that in typical cases emotions are conscious experiences; as with beliefs generally, the nonconscious are atypical cases, and parasitic on the conscious cases. So it feels like something to have an emotion. Much of the time, that feeling might be described as involving something that psychologists typically call “arousal” and that Proust calls “upheaval” – experiences of being shaken up or in ferment. The upheaval is a part of the experience of what it is like to have those thoughts – at least much of the time. But that is not true of all cases: a lot of joy and love won’t feel this way, nor indeed will grief or fear always feel this way. So this is a loose claim, which helps us to understand something, but that probably should not enter into the definitions of emotions. Far less should the more concrete feeling-states, such as trembling and boiling, enter the definition. There is just too much variation among persons, and across times in the same person, for that to be right. Even within a given culture at a given time, we have variants, as my experience of anger shows. George Pitcher puts this point extremely well:

If P comes upon Q just as Q is setting fire to P’s house, and P rushes at him in a blind fury, it seems singularly inappropriate to insist that P must be having certain sensations. In fact P, in such circumstances, probably experiences no sensations of any kind, and yet he is undoubtedly extremely angry. Again, if a person’s attention is too strongly diverted to other matters, he might have an emotion without having the sensations that usually go with that emotion. A young man, P, is being interviewed for an important job, and he is extremely anxious to make a good impression. One of the interviewers, Q, makes an insulting remark to P, and thereafter an observer might detect an icy tone creeping into P’s voice when he addresses Q, although there are no other signs of anger. The iciness is not intentional, however,

Although this term is not consistently used: sometimes, as I have already suggested, it designates a physiological change (elevated heart rate, etc.) that may or may not have a phenomenological concomitant.

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and in fact P is so intent on following the conversation and on creating a good impression, that he is not even aware of it; and he is certainly too engrossed to experience any feelings of anger. I think we might say, under these circumstances, that P was nevertheless angry with Q . . .

Pitcher’s analysis captures the way in which variations in circumstance and personality affect the extent to which people will experience the so-called characteristic feelings of anger and fear. (His case of the interviewee has interesting implications for women’s common failure to experience the sensations of anger: so often we do feel like interviewees, subordinates who must depend on the good will of those in power over us.) If we now add cross-cultural variation to this picture, we will get even more variation. Thus, we characteristically associate grief with a quasi-sensory feeling of blackness; but in a culture such as India, where white is the color of mourning, this is less likely to be the chosen metaphor. In short: we should note the characteristic feeling-words used in connection with emotions (usually metaphorical descriptions), but we probably should not put any specific feeling-description into the definition.

Should we make an exception for pain and pleasure, saying that some emotions, such as grief, are of necessity accompanied by pain, and others, such as joy, by pleasure? Here we have, once again, the problem of the nonconscious forms; but those may rightly be seen as atypical. Even in the typical case, however, we need to know more about how pain and pleasure themselves are being conceived. On some philosophical accounts, pleasure is not a feeling at all, but a characteristic way of doing something, for example, unimpededly (to use Aristotle’s definition). In that way of thinking, to think with pleasure about one’s child’s preciousness will not be to have some extra element, the pleasure, over and above the thinking; it will be to do the thinking in a certain way, viz., unimpededly. I am inclined to think that this is the right direction to go with the analysis of pleasure — at least, that there is no one subjective nonintentional state that is constant across our many pleasurable experiences. So adding pleasure

64 Pitcher (1965), p. 338.
65 See also Plato’s Philebus: Protarchus maintains that pleasure is a single nonvariegated feeling that simply has different sources; Socrates objects, and eventually carries the day. On all this, see Gosling and Taylor (1982), and, for one good philosophical discussion of this perpetual problem, see Gosling (1969).
to the definition of an emotion does not add an independent non-cognitive element.

Is the same true of pain? Again, this is a complex topic. There are pains that seem to be definable in purely physiological terms, or in purely nonintentional psychological terms. But is the pain we associate with grief among them? Aristotle’s definitions of pain-linked emotions always speak of the “pain at . . .”, suggesting that he views pain itself as an intentional state with cognitive content. I believe this is correct, in such cases. We may have nonintentional pains in connection with grief, fear, and pity. These would be dull aches and bodily feelings of nerves being painfully stimulated. But these seem like the “boiling” and the “trembling” – frequent correlates, but not necessary to the identity of the emotion. We also have a type of pain that probably is necessary for grief: namely, the pain *that an important element of one’s life is gone*. But of course that is not a noncognitive element, and we have already included it in our cognitive/evaluative account, which has stressed, with Chrysippus, that such losses are bad and that it’s right to be upset about them.

So we appear to have type-identities between emotions and judgments – or, to put it more elastically, looking ahead, between emotions and value-laden cognitive states. Emotions can be defined in terms of these evaluative recognitions alone, although we must recognize that some feelings of tumult or “arousal” will often accompany them, and sometimes feelings of a more type-specific kind, and although we must recall that they are at every point embodied. If we want to add this very general stipulation to the definition, we may do so, though we must add the proviso that we are talking only about the likely case, in order to retain the possibility of recognizing nonconscious emotions.66

**VII. ARE THERE OTHER COGNITIVE ELEMENTS? IMAGINING THE OBJECT**

But if we do not make these concessions to the presence of the noncognitive, there is one important alteration to the cognitive/evaluative view that we should now make. Although emotions can in a sense be defined

66 And also the proviso that we are talking only about humans, since we don’t know anything about what feeling-states other animals have, and since we may want to hold open the conceptual possibility that a bodiless god has emotions.
by their evaluative-eudaimonistic thought content alone, the experience of emotion usually contains more than that content. It contains rich and dense perceptions of the object, which are highly concrete and replete with detail. Thus, typically, grief is not just an abstract judgment plus the ineliminable localizing element: it is very richly particular. Even if its propositional content is, "My wonderful mother is dead," the experience itself involves a storm of memories and concrete perceptions that swarm around that content, but add more than is present in it. The experience of emotion is, then, cognitively laden, or dense, in a way that a propositional-attitude view would not capture; and it is probably correct to think that this denseness is usually, if not always, a necessary feature of the experience of an emotion such as grief.

What this means is that the emotions typically have a connection to imagination, and to the concrete picturing of events in imagination, that differentiates them from other, more abstract judgmental states. Sometimes, this imagining is best understood as a vehicle for making a eudaimonistic connection with the object. If I am thinking of a distant sorrow, let us say the death of many people in an earthquake in China a thousand years ago, then I think it’s likely that I won’t have grief, unless and until I can make that event vivid to myself through the imagination. What that means is that I won’t really succeed in caring about those people as a part of my scheme of goals and ends without such rich imagining (see Chapter 6).

But even where I already invest the object with significance, imagination is often at work, supplying more than the eudaimonistic thoughts by themselves supply. People differ, and some minds may rely on the sensory more than others; but it is probably a feature of emotions' evolutionary character (see Chapter 2) that they do typically have this sensory richness and this tendency to focus in upon the object. When I grieve for my mother, I see her, and the sight is, like a picture, dense and replete. That density is inseparable from the experience: in fact, it is often tiny details of the dense picture of the person one loves that become the focus for grief, that seem to symbolize or encapsulate that person’s wonderfulness or salience. So human emotions are shaped by the fact that we are perceiving creatures: they derive their rich texture from those sensory abilities. There is no easy way of plugging those into a general definition of emotion, although we might simply
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say that grief is the acceptance of a certain content, accompanied (usually) by relevant acts of the imagination. These acts will be multiple and not easily summarized, but they typically involve a more intense focusing on the object than would be strictly necessitated by the propositional content.

Why does the imagination focus on some objects and not on others, and how is this selection relevant to the thought content of the emotions? Typically there will be connections in both directions: the very fact that a certain person (my mother) is necessary for my nutrition and survival will cause me, in infancy, to focus more intently on her, perceptually, than on other mothers; in this case, it appears to be the antecedent need and attachment that drives the focusing, and yet we do not need to deny that the many details one notices about a person also enrich the love we feel, and that love becomes intertwined with perceptual habits in very many ways. In other cases, the striking properties of a person or thing may elicit our attention first, resulting in the formation of an emotional attachment. This often happens with emotions directed toward nature, and also, sometimes, with romantic/erotic love. (Not always: Proust’s narrator stresses that the particular properties of Albertine are a matter of indifference to him, her relation to his need for maternal comfort far more important. And in general, the object rarely summons love into being without some connection to past memories and habits.) In compassion, our ability to picture vividly the predicament of a person assists in the emotion’s formation, as I shall argue in Chapter 6; we may feel less emotion toward other cases that we can’t similarly imagine with vividness, though they may have a similar structure. Here what the imagination seems to do is to help us bring a distant individual into the sphere of our goals and projects, humanizing the person and creating the possibility of attachment. Compassion itself will still be defined by its thought content, including its eudaimonistic content, as I shall argue in Chapter 6; but the imagination is a bridge that allows the other to become an object of our compassion.

As with feelings and bodily movements, so here: any list of the

67 See Chapter 4, where I mention that infants have a remarkable ability to discriminate between the smell of their own mother’s milk and that of another mother’s milk; this specificity informs the general relation, even as the specific attachment is shaped by the general need for milk.
“relevant” acts would have to be a long, open-ended disjunction, and the whole point is that the imaginings are highly concrete, varying with the particularity of the object and situation. Nor need acts of imagining be present in any particular episode of emotion; what is more likely is they are present at prominent points in its history. (And even here, as I have said, it may be that some individuals rely less than others on these sensory cues.) As I shall argue further in section VIII, we may even have grief and joy and fear that don’t form part of our conscious awareness at all, so long as that is not the standard case, and so long as the propositional content persists throughout. Even when we are conscious of grief, or fear, it’s not evident that we need have the rich dense imagining in every instance. It seems possible to love one’s child, even consciously, while intently perceiving a symphony of Mahler, or the highway in front of one’s car. And: one may be angry at someone without noticing that person very much, if at all, since one may be focusing on the damage to oneself. In that sense, some emotions have a closer connection to the sensory imagination than do others.

In many central cases, however, focus on an object through dense imaginative picturing or sensory attention is a salient element in emotional experience (and, as we shall see in Chapter 2, a likely part of what explains the emotions’ contribution to survival). This feature should probably not be added to the definition of emotions, since it exhibits such great variability and plasticity; and yet it should be mentioned, since it alerts us to features of emotional development and change that we might otherwise not notice. This addition, which is a cognitive addition, helps us to understand some of the problems emotions may pose for morality, and also some of what they bring to morality.

VIII. BACKGROUND AND SITUATIONAL, GENERAL AND CONCRETE

We have now accounted for many aspects of my experience of grief: its localized character, its intensity, its imaginative dwelling on its object. But two further distinctions must now be introduced, in order to capture the multilayered texture of grief: a distinction between general and concrete evaluative judgments, and a distinction between background and situational judgments. It will be seen that these are two
independent distinctions. Generality first: in my grief a number of different evaluative judgments are at work; it is difficult to disentangle them. The judgment that at least some things and persons outside the self have great importance for my flourishing; the judgment that people with certain characteristics of generosity and warmth have such importance; the judgment that one's mother has such importance; the judgment that this particular woman, whose history has been intertwined with mine in so many concrete ways, has such importance – all of these might be invoked to explain my grief, and deciding which is the most relevant will often be impossible without a broader analysis of the pattern of my judgments and actions. They are of course not mutually incompatible; indeed, the first is a sine qua non of any of the rest. In many cases several different levels will be salient. While grieving for my mother in a way that emphasized her particularity and the particularity of my history with her, I grieved also for the fact that I now had no parent.

But sometimes it is important to ask which level of generality is most salient, in grief and in other emotions: for if one loves a person primarily as the bearer of certain properties that might be instantiated elsewhere, the pattern of one's grief, and future love, cannot fail to be different in consequence – a fact that philosophical theories of emotion obsessively exploit (see Chapter 10). This is one reason why there is something especially terrible in the death of a parent: for (despite Antigone's argument in favor of brothers) it is that death that seems the most final and irrevocable, being the death of a part of one's history that has great length and depth, to which no replacement can bear anything like the same relation.

Notice that I have introduced the distinction as one between the general and the concrete, rather than between the universal and the particular. I treat particularity here as a limiting case of concreteness, in the sense that the focus is still on certain descriptions – historical rather than just qualitative – that might in principle be universalized. The question of universalizability arises in two ways: I might ask whether my judgment of my mother's importance implies a judgment that for anyone similarly situated, with a similar history, the parent should similarly be loved by that person; and I might also ask whether a numerically distinct clone with all the same properties, including historical properties, should be similarly loved by me. I believe that the answer to the first question is yes, and that the answer to the second is no. The self-referential element of the emotion-thought, of course, moves us beyond the focus on the concrete description, and is part of the explanation of why we won't accept a clone of our loved one: we want the very one that has been in a close relationship with us.
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It may remain obscure to a person which description of her object is, in fact, the most salient. When it is important to decide this, we can only inspect the pattern of our judgments and actions. In 1995, when I was deciding whether to move to the University of Chicago from Brown, I experienced, as I thought of being in Chicago, a powerful grief. What was its object? If the object was the Brown Philosophy Department, then this was a sign, perhaps, that I should not make the move: Brown was more important to me than I had been inclined to think. On the other hand, there was a good possibility that the object of the grief was a much more vague and elusive object, such as "my past" or "the years of my youth," since I had spent twenty-five years living in Cambridge, Massachusetts, before that. This highly general object, unlike the Brown Philosophy Department, was definitely not in my power to regain; so it would not have been such a good idea to stay in Cambridge simply in order to avoid mourning for twenty-five years of my past. By thinking about situations in which I experienced the grief, and considering the pattern of my other judgments and actions, I decided that the past was probably the real object of the grief, and I did move to Chicago. This case involves two distinct objects; but we proceed in the same way when we are sorting out two different descriptions of the same object.

Of equal importance is a distinction between background and situational emotion-judgments. By this I mean the distinction between evaluative judgments that persist through situations of numerous kinds, and judgments that arise in the context of some particular situation.69

69 The relationship between this distinction and Richard Wollheim's distinction between states and dispositions (see Wollheim [1999], pp. 6–11) is complex. For Wollheim, mental states are transient and episodic, elements in the stream of consciousness; they are always conscious and directly experienced. Dispositions are persisting modifications of the structure of our mental life, which are never experienced directly, and have no subjectivity. They have, nonetheless, psychological reality, prominently including causal properties. Often, a mental state will be an eruption of a disposition; but one might have a transient mental state (an episodic fear of snakes, for example) without having any associated dispositional fear.

My distinction between the background and the situational is, first of all, less dichotomous than Wollheim's distinction. It really suggests a continuum, since "situations" may be more or less enduring, and thus an emotion might be situational and yet relatively enduring; a background emotion is one that persists through situations of different types, and thus is more enduring than that. Another difference is that on my account, the background situational distinction does not perfectly map on to the conscious/nonconscious distinction. One may, I believe, have a situational emotion of
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It is, given our analysis, the distinction between ongoing or background emotions and episodic emotions. For example, my judgment about my mother's importance persisted over time (though I need not have been conscious of it throughout that time); one's judgments about one's own mortality and the badness of death persist, in a similar fashion, throughout one's adult life, though only certain circumstances bring them to consciousness; one's beliefs about the importance of one's own bodily health, and the vulnerability of one's body to disease and injury, similarly persist, unnoticed unless a circumstance calls them into view. And these judgments, I claim, are background emotions. They are not simply dispositional; they have psychological reality, and often explain patterns of action. One loves one's parents, children, spouse, friends, continuously over time, even when no specific incident gives rise to an awareness of the love. In a similar way, many people have an ongoing fear of death that has psychological reality, that motivates their behavior in ways that can be shown, even though it is only in certain circumstances that the fear is noticed. One may be angry over time at a persisting wrong – as, for example, many women live in a state of continuous anger at the domestic injustice that is a part of their daily lives; and yet the anger will surface only in certain circumstances. One may also have background joy – for example, when one's work is going well, when one's children are flourishing, when an important relationship is going smoothly. One may be able to discern such joy in the which one is not aware; as when someone has grief at a particular death without being aware of it (or not yet), or when one is angry at someone for some specific reason without being aware of it. (This nonconscious operation of a situational emotion is analogous to the nonconscious operation of a whole host of concrete beliefs in one's ordinary movements. Thus, when I move across my office, I have and use various concrete situation-focused beliefs about the locations of objects, of which I have no conscious awareness.) On the other hand, background emotions are not always nonconscious. A persisting love or joy may have a distinctive phenomenology, without transforming itself into a situational emotion. Lucretius plausibly argues that the background fear of death has a phenomenology all its own, the feeling of a heavy weight on the chest. On the most important issue, however, Wollheim and I agree: it is important to recognize the existence of enduring structures in the personality that have psychological reality whether or not they are conscious; emotions are among such structures.

In other respects, the complex architecture of Wollheim's book will not be investigated here; as with any highly refined and artfully constructed theory, it is difficult to get into it without seeing the whole topic from that theory's viewpoint; and it is too late in the game for me to do that.
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pattern of one’s actions, and yet in these cases joy frequently manifests itself in a lack of reflexive self-awareness, a complete absorption in the thing one loves.

In short, once one has formed attachments to unstable things not fully under one’s own control, once one has made these part of one’s notion of one’s flourishing, one has emotions of a background kind toward them – on my view, judgments that acknowledge their enormous worth – that persist in the fabric of one’s life, and are crucial to the explanation of one’s actions, though it might take a specific circumstance to call them into awareness. Background emotions need not be nonconscious, just as episodic or situational emotions need not be conscious; but frequently they will be, since they are persisting conditions that are often unnoticed partly on account of their pervasiveness. We may also be unaware of the many ways in which they shape our situational emotions. Thus, grief at the death of a parent is often shaped, rendered more terrible, by the background fear of one’s own death. One has the idea that one is helplessly standing on the edge of an abyss – and that sense of helplessness is surely colored by the sense that one is now the generation next to die.

It is tricky to admit nonconscious emotions into our account, in part because they lack the phenomenological and imaginative features that we have informally linked with our definitions of emotion-types, but in part, as well, for methodological reasons. We began identifying the phenomena by pointing to experiences of emotion, as identified by people who have them. Once we admit that we may be wrong about what we are experiencing, we seem to call into question the entire argumentative strategy. If our theory doesn’t really match experiential classifications so well after all, were we then right to use an appeal to experience against partisans of other views?70

This would be a problem if the nonconscious cases were central or ubiquitous; and it would also be a problem if, even though not central, they were such that people could rarely be brought to acknowledge their presence and the role they play in their own experience. Classical Freudian accounts of the unconscious sometimes suffer from these difficulties. But I am thinking of the nonconscious in a much more ordinary sense, just the sense in which many of our most common beliefs

70 See also the remarks on methodology and on Griffiths (1997) in the Introduction.
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are nonconscious, although they guide our actions in many ways: beliefs about cause and effect, beliefs about numbering, beliefs about where things are, beliefs about what is healthy and harmful, and so forth. We don’t focus on such familiar and general beliefs every time we use them or are motivated by them. And yet, if we were asked, “Do you believe that the refrigerator is to the right of the microwave?” or “Do you believe that if you turn on the faucet the water will run?” or “Do you believe that one dollar is worth more than fifty cents?” or “Do you believe that it would be bad to drink that rat poison?” we would of course say yes. We are repositories of an indefinite number of such beliefs, and we rely on them in our actions. Indeed, if we weren’t like this, if we could use only those beliefs on which we were consciously focusing, we couldn’t possibly survive.

In the case of emotion-beliefs, there may at times be special reasons for not confronting them consciously, for they may be very painful to confront. This means that it may take much longer to get someone to recognize grief or fear or anger in herself than to admit to spatial or numerical beliefs. There is a resistance to the acknowledgment of one’s own vulnerability that must be overcome. To that extent, the Freudian account has force (though the cases I discuss here do not involve repression in its technical sense). But if we are to recognize such background emotions, I claim, we still need good reasons for doing so. The attribution is most secure when it can be validated by the person herself, who ultimately should acknowledge that the pattern of her actions is best explained by that emotion. Short of such acknowledgment, we may point to the pattern, and say to her, “Don’t you think you were angry at Z today?” or “Aren’t you really afraid of that exam?” – and it is possible that we may be correct even if she refuses the ascription. But things are on a far more solid footing if she assents. This means, of course, that the methodological issue no longer poses a problem, since we are dealing with yet another case of emotion that the person identifies as such.

As can be easily seen, the background/situational distinction is logically independent of the general/concrete distinction. A general emotion will frequently also lie in the background, but it may also be situational: many emotions connected with political justice toward groups are of this sort, as is much wonder at the world and its beauty. A
concrete emotion may often be situational, but it may also lurk in the background, as the highly concrete fear of one's own death does throughout much of one's life.

Both of these distinctions are logically independent of the distinction between the self-referential elements in emotion and the non-self-referential elements. The background fear of death usually includes both the highly personal thought that it is bad for me to die and the general thought that death is a bad thing; so too, the fear of a loved one's death involves fear for that person and also for one's own goals and projects. Situational fear and grief contain the same complex mixture of elements. General emotions are not necessarily less eudaimonistic than concrete emotions: I may focus on the importance of parental love for all human beings, or on its importance in my own scheme of goals and ends. Usually I will do both. The least eudaimonistic emotions, especially wonder, may take a very general object (the moral law), or a highly concrete object (some instance of natural beauty). (Is there background wonder? Or does wonder, as I'm inclined to think, always involve a focused awareness of some object? Wonder's non-eudaimonistic character might be relevant here: for what is especially likely to persist in the background is a structure of personal goals and plans.)

For a situational emotion to occur, it is usually necessary that the background judgment be combined with a specific judgment that situates the emotion's object in a concrete way in some actual (or imagined past or future) context. A background fear of death may become situational, when combined with a specific event in which one's vulnerability is made clear. A background anger at domestic injustice may surface as situational anger, given an event in which the woman thinks herself slighted. A pervasive jealousy about all possible rivals for the love of a certain person may be associated with an episode of particular jealousy directed toward a concrete rival.

This classification is still too crude to cover all that takes place. For example, we might find that background love gets transformed by a situation not (or not only) into situational love, but into an episode of grief. It is hard to say at what point the grief itself turns into a background emotion – since in a sense it always fixes on a particular event, and yet it may persist, sometimes conscious and sometimes uncon-
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scious, for a long time. Again, sometimes we want to say that the situational emotion is just an excuse for the surfacing of a background emotion – as happens very often in jealousy, and in domestic anger – and sometimes we want to say that it is the situation that takes priority – as when a person not in general especially motivated by anger gets angry at some particular wrong that occurs.\textsuperscript{71} Again, we must insist that levels of generality and concreteness interweave with the background/situational distinction in many and complex ways: I may have background emotions of a highly specific sort (for example, love of my mother, or of a particular child), and situational emotions at a high level of generality (for example, anger at the situation of women in developing countries who are deprived of equal nutrition and health care).

Finally, we have to notice that some of our background emotions can be further broken down into a persisting attachment and a situational component, usually of some generality. For example, in my case of women’s anger, a background attachment to one’s own worth and self-respect (seen as vulnerable) is combined with a judgment that certain pervasive wrongs were taking place. In background fear of illness, again we find both attachment to one’s own health and a general belief about conditions of bodily life. We might say, in fact, that the central form of a background emotion is always love or attachment to some thing or person, seen as very important for one’s own flourishing – in combination with some general belief to the effect that the well-being of this thing or person is not fully under one’s own control.

Many of these subtler points will occupy us in later chapters. What is important to see now is the way in which one’s general conception\textsuperscript{72} of value shapes the geography of one’s emotional life, setting one up, so to speak, for the contributions of chance. The background emotion acknowledges dependence on or need for some un governable element in the world; the situational emotion responds to the way in which the world.

\textsuperscript{71} Notice, however, that in this case background emotions toward the thing wronged or slighted must be invoked to explain why anger surfaces.

\textsuperscript{72} I do not mean that this has to be a highly articulated or theorized conception; and indeed, frequently one would make mistakes in trying to describe what the conception is by which one guides one’s actions. I mean something like an inner “evaluative grammar,” some set of attachments and evaluative priorities that any person who acts and chooses, like a competent speaker of a language, has at some level, whether or not she could articulate them.
world meets or does not meet one's needs.\textsuperscript{73} To use a very Stoic image,\textsuperscript{74} the background emotion is the wound, the situational emotion the world's knife entering the wound.

Finally we are in a position to describe my case, trying to articulate the many different types of judgment that are at work in it. Its background judgments include the judgment that (assent to the appearance that) my mother is of enormous importance – both as a person in her own right and as an element in my life. (Indeed, the way I view her as an element in my life includes the thought of her worth in her own right.) They include, as well, the judgment that the particular relationship and history that we share has enormous importance; the more general judgment that it is very important to have and love a parent; the judgment that the human beings one loves are mortal and fragile in health; the concrete judgment that I had wronged my mother in various ways by anger and inattention; the judgment that it was possible for love to address these wrongs; and many others – corresponding to background emotions of several interweaving kinds of love, and fear, and guilt, and hope. No doubt that is only a part of the story; subsequent chapters will go into this more deeply.

These background emotions are closely associated with a whole network of beliefs and expectations at many different levels of generality, such as – the belief that it will be important to make my mother happy on her birthday and that I shall do this; the belief that she will read with pleasure the Barbara Pym novel that I gave her to read in the hospital, a novel that I do not like at all myself but know that she will like; the belief that when I next argue with her about politics it will be good not to be too hyper-logical, something she associates with a failure of love; the belief that I will talk to her on the phone in a few hours. And all the rest of a way of life.

\textsuperscript{73} On need and emotion, see also Kenny (1963), pp. 44–51, and Stampe (1986), pp. 167–9. Notice that it is important to distinguish the needs that I have in mind here – needs that enter into the animal's psychology in evaluative judgments – from actual needs (for example, nutritional needs) of which the animal may be unaware. Once again I insist: what is crucial for emotion is what the animal believes, not the truth of the belief. “False needs” (to use the Marxian language) are just as likely to give rise to deep emotions as are “true needs.”

\textsuperscript{74} In Seneca's \textit{Medea}, Medea notes Jason's ongoing love for their children, and observes: “He loves? Good. He is caught. There is a hole wide open for a wound.” See Nussbaum (1994), Chapter 12.
We now combine this with the contribution of the chance events of the world. In the actual event, my grief was, I argued, identical to a judgment with something like the following form: “My mother, an enormously valuable person and an important part of my life, is dead.” Of course, to put it this way is absurdly crude, and by now we can see that in reality we have on our hands not a single judgment, but a network of judgments at many levels of generality and specificity, some remaining in the background and some focusing on the situation, some being expectations that are frustrated by and made void by the situational judgment. But what the crude formulation brings out is the way that a specific episode of grief combines a background judgment of value with a noting of the way the world is with what one values, thus combining one’s ongoing goals and attachments with the perceived reality.

Now that we have recognized the plurality and complexity of the judgments involved in any actual instance of grieving, the adversary, or some ally, is ready to leap in. For now, this new opponent will say, we seem to have granted as well that in any given case there is no particular proposition in this complex network that is necessary for grief. What is necessary is that a certain amount of this network remain in place, and it is by this “family resemblance” to other instances of grieving, not by strict necessary and sufficient conditions, that we seem to have identified grief. But then we can do the same thing for the nonintentional feelings and sensations: there is no particular sensation that is necessary for grief, but what is necessary is that there be some sensations within a given family. So the symmetry between thoughts and sensations seems to be reestablished; and if this has not given the old adversary everything he wanted, its jolt to my search for necessary and sufficient conditions does satisfy this sort of anticognitivist opponent.

To the new opponent I can say, first of all, that I am not persuaded that symmetry has been reestablished, even for the token instance of grieving. For I have a very good idea what sorts of concrete beliefs and judgments to look for in a case of grief, and I have a very good idea

75 Notice that both background and situational judgments have both self-referential (localized) and non-self-referential components.

76 These attachments give rise to desires and projects – and I shall say more about these motivational questions in Chapter 2.
which ones should be considered parts of the grief rather than other incidentally linked features of my makeup at the time. I do not have any such clear idea about sensations, since quite contradictory sensations seemed to me to be linked with my grief at different moments. And I think they will find that if they start to try to pin the relevant “family” down they will be inexorably drawn (despite their dislike of necessary conditions) to talk of “feelings” that are really my “thoughts” under another description, the “feelings” with rich intentional content that I described a while back.

But the really important thing of which the new opponent must be reminded is that we were claiming to find type-identities, not token-identities, and that our claims about the asymmetry between sensation and thought were worked out on this level. And on this level it seems to me to be unshaken. My conclusion was that in any case I have many concrete judgments, not simply the gross and general judgment, “An enormously valuable part of my life is gone.” But of course my concrete judgments entail that one, and that one is the one in terms of which I would wish to identify and define grief. Even if I would not ever put the matter that way to myself, it seems to me that I do have that general judgment. (We should bear in mind that not all of the relevant judgments need be conscious.) And if I did not have that general judgment, I think I would not have grief, whatever specific judgments falling short of that I did possess. But I have argued that there is no general description of a nonintentional sensation that cites, in a similar way, a necessary condition for grieving. If this is correct, the asymmetry holds.

We can now return to the first adversary and his original motivations. For now that we have laid out the view in its entirety, we can see that it does not neglect, but in fact responds very well to, his experiential points. First, our view can explain why the emotions have heat and urgency: because they concern our most important goals and projects, the most urgent transactions we have with our world.77 Views that make emotions cognitive without stressing that the cognitions in ques-

77 This is the language used by Lazarus (1991) to describe the emotions of animals in his experimental work – on this, see Chapter 2.
tion are both evaluative and eudaimonistic have difficulty explaining urgency; mine does not. Indeed, it explains urgency better than does the adversary’s view. For if there is urgency in being hit by a gust of wind, it is not after all a noncognitive urgency – the urgency, if it is there, comes not from the unthinking force, but from my thought that my well-being is threatened by that force. My view, by bringing thought about well-being right into the structure of emotion, shows why it is the emotion itself, and not some further reaction to it, that has urgency and heat.78

Second, the experience of passivity in emotion is well explained by the fact that the objects of emotion are things and people whose activities and well-being we do not ourselves control, and in whom we have invested a good measure of our own well-being. They are our hostages to fortune. In emotion we recognize our own passivity before the un-governed events of life.

And this gives us our third answer to the adversary: the reason why in some emotional experiences the self feels torn apart (and in happier experiences filled with a marvelous sense of wholeness) is, once again, that these are transactions with a world about which we care deeply, a world that may complete us or may tear us apart. No view that makes the emotion just like a physical object hitting us can do justice to the way the world enters into the self in emotion, with enormous power to wound or to heal. For it enters in a cognitive way, in our perceptions and beliefs about what matters. Not just an arm or a leg, but a sense of life, gets the shock of grief.

A fuller answer to the adversary must, however, be given in connection with the account of emotional development to be presented in Chapter 4. One prominent reason why emotions do feel, at times, like

78 In this connection, it is now possible to respond to a point made by de Sousa (1987), who says that the major reason why emotions should not be identified with beliefs or judgments is that these can be hypothetically entertained, while emotions cannot be, are either there in all their motivating force or not there. By now, this alleged asymmetry should seem unconvincing. I may entertain any proposition without assenting to it: those with which emotions are concerned among others. But if I do not assent to the proposition, it will be just as wrong (in the nonemotion case) to say that I actually believe in the truth of the proposition, as it will be in the emotion case to say that I have that emotion. Entertaining the proposition that my coffee cup is red is not believing that it is red; but it is really believing, assenting, taking the proposition into oneself as true, that I am invoking to explain what emotions are.

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external energies not hooked up to our current ways of valuing and appraising is that they often derive from a past that we imperfectly comprehend. We preserve in ourselves emotional material of great moment that derives from our early object relations. Often we have not scrutinized this history, and are not in a good position to say what emotions it contains. Nonetheless, these emotions continue to motivate us, and they do surface at times, sometimes with disturbing intensity, sometimes conflicting with other appraisals and emotions that pertain to our present. It is tempting, at such times, to revert to the adversary’s ways of speaking – which psychoanalysis has frequently endorsed: these are drives or affective forces that really do not have an intentional evaluative content. I shall argue that this would be the wrong conclusion: we cannot explain these emotions and the way they motivate us without thinking of them as value-laden intentional attitudes toward objects.

Seeing them in this way will require us to acknowledge that the intentionality of emotions comes at different levels of sophistication and explicitness. Some emotions, even in an adult, may preserve a preverbal infant’s archaic and indistinct view of the object. We therefore cannot think of all emotions as having a linguistically formulable content. This modification (which I make already in Chapter 2, in response to concerns about animal emotions) will not require us to reject any central contention of the neo-Stoic view. It will enable us to do justice to what is intuitively right in the adversary’s view, as we could not do apart from a developmental account.

IX. “FRESHNESS” AND THE DIMINUTION OF GRIEF

The Greek Stoics introduce a complication into their account that we must now consider – for it arises prominently in the experience of grief. They say that a judgment, in order to be equivalent to an emotion, must be “fresh” – using a Greek word, prosphaton, that is used frequently of food, and also of corpses newly dead, to imply that no decomposition has set in. The point of this is to account for the sort of affective waning or distancing that takes place in grief. The suggestion is that the original proposition is retained, and that the waning must therefore be accounted for in some other way. My violent grief for my
mother’s death has by now grown calmer: but it seems wrong to say that I no longer believe that she is dead, and more terribly wrong to say that I no longer believe her enormously wonderful and valuable.

The adversary is ready to leap in here. For it appears that the Stoics concede that they cannot explain all the phenomena of the emotional life by appealing to cognition alone. They seem to be granting that there is something more to grieving than judgment. And mustn’t this something be an irrational movement or feeling that follows laws of its own, fading while judgment remains intact? The Greek Stoics do not have a clear reply here, or if they do, it has not survived; we know only that Chrysippus said that the phenomenon of fading grief is “hard to figure out.” But we need to try to figure it out, for it poses a threat to the very substance of our theory.

The real question then is: is the difference between my calmed state of August 2000 and my grief-stricken state of April 1992 a cognitive difference, or a noncognitive difference? I believe that it is a cognitive difference, but in four quite different ways. First, we have the fact that as mourning progresses the emotion is more likely to be a background emotion rather than a situational emotion, in the sense that fewer concrete situations will call it to mind. That itself means that, even while it persists, its character will alter and it will be less noticed as troubling.

Second, we must consider the place of the grief propositions in my whole cognitive organization. When I receive the knowledge of my mother’s death, the wrenching character of that knowledge comes in part from the fact that it violently tears the fabric of hope, planning, and expectation that I have built up around her all my life. But when the knowledge of her death has been with me for a long time, I reorganize my other beliefs about the present and future to accord with it. I no longer have the belief that I will see my mother at Thanksgiving dinner; I no longer think of the end of a busy day as a time when I can call her up and enjoy a long talk; I no longer think of a trip abroad as an occasion to buy presents for her; I no longer expect to make happy plans to celebrate her birthday. Indeed, the experience of mourning is in great part an experience of repeatedly encountering cognitive frustration and reweaving one’s cognitive fabric in consequence. I find myself about to pick up the telephone to tell her what has just happened — and then see before me that image of her lying in the hospital bed, with
the tube coming out of her nose. In every area of my life in which she has played a part, I find myself expecting her to appear—and I then must work to cut short and to rearrange these expectations. This feature of grieving is discussed memorably by Proust, and is now central in the psychological literature on mourning. A vivid expression of it is found in C. S. Lewis’s diary account of his mourning for his wife, Helen:

I think I am beginning to understand why grief feels like suspense. It comes from the frustration of so many impulses that had become habitual. Thought after thought, feeling after feeling, action after action, had H for their object. Now their target is gone. I keep on, through habit, fitting an arrow to the string; then I remember and I have to lay the bow down. So many roads lead through to H. I set out on one of them. But now there’s an impassable frontier-post across it. So many roads once; now so many culs-de-sac.79

This feature explains why the process of mourning took a different form for me than it did for my sister, for whom my mother was a regular part of each day. Although we valued and loved her equally, we did not have equal structures of expectation built up around her; and this difference, a cognitive difference, accounted for the difference in the rate at which grief began to fade. The grief thoughts remain; their relationship to other thoughts changes.

But that is not yet emotional change. I have defined emotions by their content, not by their relationship to other parts of our mental content. And I have denied that emotions should be defined in terms of surprise or change, which might involve a relation of their content to other mental contents. (I shall argue this point further in Chapter 2.) This seems right. The life of a person who has made many cognitive adjustments has less cognitive dissonance, less surprise, less frustration: but in and of itself this does not mean that there is less grief there. Mourning is in part a process of removing cognitive dissonance, but it is also a process of managing and to some extent reducing the burden of grief. So we must look elsewhere for that element of the process.

This brings us to a fundamental issue. I have said that the judgments involved in love and grief, in this and other cases, are eudaimonistic:

that is, they evaluate the external object or person as an important part, not of the world from some detached and impersonal viewpoint, but of the world from the viewpoint of the agent’s own goals and projects. I have said that this is fully compatible with valuing the person and seeking to benefit her for her own sake; I have said that the beloved person, and the relationship of love with the person, may enter into my conception of flourishing not merely as means to my own states, but as constitutive parts of my flourishing. But it is also the case that the individuals who will be singled out for this role will be singled out on the basis of their depth in my life, not in someone else’s, and that this sort of recognition of intrinsic worth is not easily separable (if separable at all) from the thought that without this person or relationship my own life is not complete. The thought of grief included prominently, in this way, the thought of a gaping hole in my own life.

This has implications, I think, for the analysis of mourning. First, it implies that not only the relationship of the grief-thoughts to other thoughts, but also the grief-thoughts themselves, change over time. I will still accept many of the same judgments – including judgments about my mother’s death, about her worth and importance, about the badness of what happened to her. But propositions having to do with the central role of my mother in my own conception of flourishing will shift into the past tense. By now, in August 2000, it is no longer as true of me as it was in 1992 that “my mother is an important element in my flourishing”; I now am more inclined to accept the proposition, “The person who died was a central part of my life,” and this judgmental change itself is a large part of what constitutes the diminution of grief. Some things stay constant: my judgments about her intrinsic worth, and about the badness of what happened to her, my judgment that she has figured centrally in my history. We may even say that I do not altogether remove her from my present life, since after all I have hardly ceased to write and think about her. So in one respect, my experience is still an experience of loss. But I put her into a different place in my life, one that is compatible with her being dead, and so not an ongoing active partner in conversation, love, and support. The eudaimonistic element of my beliefs has shifted, and with it the eudaimonistic aspect of my belief that I have suffered a loss. (We might add that what distinguishes normal from pathological mourning is, above all, this change of tense: the pathological mourner continues to put the
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dead person at the very center of her own structure of goals and expectations, and this paralyzes life.\textsuperscript{80}

This raises questions about identity, which are movingly discussed by Proust. For as one reweaves the fabric of one’s life after a loss, and as the thoughts around which one has defined one’s aims and aspirations change tense, one becomes to that extent a different person. This explains why the shift itself does not take place without a struggle: for it is a loss of self, and the self sees forgetfulness and calm as threatening to its very being. As Proust’s narrator describes his first experience of equanimity after the death of Albertine: his soul, becoming conscious of happiness, began to tremble and rage like a lion who sees a snake in his cage. The snake is forgetfulness, and the lion trembles because he knows that it will get him sooner or later.\textsuperscript{81}

Thinking about the issue of importance and centrality brings us, as well, to a second deep issue, which I can only mention here, and which will be confronted more fully in later chapters (especially Chapters 4 and 6). It would appear that there is a second difference between me and my sister, where grief is concerned: namely, that my mother did not, at the time of her death and for some years before that, play the same central role in my daily structure of goals and projects that she continued to play for my sister. This did not stem from alienation or indifference, but from geographical remoteness; nonetheless, it was true that I did not weave my life around hers in the way my sister did. I want to say, and have said, that we loved my mother equally. In one sense that is true: we ascribed intrinsic importance to her in the same way. And yet the partly eudaimonistic account of emotion I have just given seems to cast some doubt on this, suggesting that we did not just mourn differently over time, but also grieved differently from the start, and presumably, by implication, loved differently, at least where reference to our own eudaimonia was concerned. We did not accept the very same propositions. This issue is at the heart of many objections to the emotions, and I shall grapple with it.

But we must finally reach a fourth issue about fading grief, which derives from the qualification to the cognitive thesis that I introduced in section VII. I have said that it is typical of emotion, though not

\textsuperscript{80} See Bowlby (1980).
\textsuperscript{81} Proust, \textit{Remembrance of Things Past}, III.455–6. On the stages of Marcel’s mourning, see also III.470, 487–525, 547–8, 570, 605–9, 637, 641–2, 751.
entirely necessary, that we focus on the object in perceptual imagination, attending to many details that are not strictly relevant to the propositional content (or that serve to concretize the particular importance of the object in a way not altogether captured in the propositional content). But imagination fades in the person’s absence. Doesn’t this mean that there is a much simpler explanation of the diminution of grief than the one I have given? The imagination fades, and this leads the emotion’s content to shift: it is because I no longer see my mother before me that I no longer make her such an important part of my life. Such an explanation is compatible with the previous one, which appeals to a shift in the eudaimonistic propositions, and it doesn’t render the view noncognitive, since imagination is itself a highly discriminating intentional/cognitive faculty. But it suggests that cognitive activities external to the propositional content have a dynamic role in emotional change, influencing the shifting of the propositional content.

This is a complicated question. There is much truth in the idea that emotions, in central human cases, need to be fortified by sensuous perception, lose their vivacity when perception is curtailed, and can be recalled by vivid perceptual reminders (see Chapter 6). Proust, not implausibly, holds that we can recover our past emotional life only through such vivid experiences. But the question now is: what is their relationship to the judgment of salience or importance? Which comes first, so to speak? Is it because I see this particular nightgown, or this particular color of lipstick, that I believe that my mother is enormously central to my life? Or is it because I already consider her at the core of my life that I notice her nightgown with such intensity, and the sight of that lipstick on an immobile mouth fills me with such horror? It seems to me that there is truth in both formulations, but more truth in the latter. It is true that the child’s developing sense of its parent’s centrality is bolstered by many sensory experiences. But in the beginning, as we shall see, the experiences are highly general, and revolve around its own states. It is more the idea of the parent’s great importance for the child’s own nutrition and comfort that causes the child to focus attention on this particular parent, than that there are characteristics of the particular parent that makes her worthy of notice in her own right. The child enters a situation in which it is an established fact that it will die without certain people, and (a separate fact) that it deeply needs their comfort; this shapes what it notices and singles out. As time goes
on, and love develops a more generous and outgoing character, the sensory recognitions will also be more complex. And of course the sheer fact of making a person a large part of one's life entails that one will spend a lot of time in the physical presence of the person, noticing the way the person looks and laying down sensory habits and memories involving that person. But once again, here it is the eudaimonistic choice that leads to the focusing, not the other way around.

Proust is right, I believe, to find in mourning (especially mourning for the death of a parent) the same direction of fit between need and sensory focusing. One misses in a primitive way what held one and gave one comfort: even when one fastens on particular details, such as the nightgown, they are complex eudaimonistic symbols of comfort and support. This suggests that it is more because the need for comfort and support fades that the sensory memory fades, rather than that the memory simply fades out on its own, causing thereby a diminution in the need for comfort and support. Both may be true to some degree; and the balance may vary in different types of relationships. But in the case of a parent's death, the Proustian account of the role of the senses has more depth. Thus, when some triggering perception reminds me of my mother's fall coat, or her way of saying "Martha," or her hairstyle - these memories are painful because they are reminders of the absence of comfort and love, rather than significant in their own right. Attached to a person other than my mother, they would mean nothing at all. They are so many signs of her. That is why they throw me back into the state of a person who has not repaired the hole in her life, who desperately needs those sources of comfort and support, and the very person whom she has loved.

We may admit, then, that fading has a cognitive dimension that is to some degree independent of the thought content, without thinking that this dimension explains very much on its own. At every point it leads us back to the thought content, and takes on significance in the light of that. Perceptual change becomes significant in large part as a corollary of the reweaving of one's needs, goals, and projects.

X. EMOTIONAL CONFLICT

The neo-Stoic view of emotion has implications for the analysis of emotional conflicts - both conflicts between emotions and other judg-
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ments and conflicts among the emotions themselves. In the adversary’s view, these conflicts are viewed as struggles between two forces, simultaneously active in the soul. In the latter case we have two uncomprehending forces battling it out, like two opposing winds; in the former, we have an articulate, reasoning force doing battle somehow with such a wind – and it would appear that the only way it can keep it down is to use force, since the wind does not listen to reason. Both forces go on acting on one another, until one of them wins.

Suppose now I am grieving for my mother; I am also reading Seneca and endeavoring to be a good Stoic, distancing myself from grief with the thought that virtue is sufficient for happiness. (This is in no sense autobiographical.) The adversary’s view will say that my mindless emotional part is doing the grieving, while my reason is thinking philosophical thoughts and also (somehow) trying to restrain me from grief. The neo-Stoic view would urge us, instead, to regard this conflict as a debate between recognition and denial of the importance of the loss that has occurred. At one moment I assent to the thought that an irreplaceable wonderful person has departed from my life. At another moment I deny this, saying, “No human being is worth so much concern,” or “That is just a mortal human being like many others,” or (if I am that morally smug), “You still have your good character, and that is all that counts.” Then the thought of my mother, lying in the hospital bed as I so often saw her lying at home, returns – and I know that she is not like anyone else, and that I love her; and I assent once again to the thought that something has gone from my life that I cannot replace. (Once again: the sensuous details are reminders of significance, and come on stage to speak against the Stoic picture of value.)

The neo-Stoic view claims that this story of oscillation and shifting perspective provides a far more compelling account of the inner life of such conflicts than does the story of battle and struggle – which makes it difficult to understand how reason could restrain a force with which by hypothesis it could not communicate. Once we understand that the crucial cognitions are evaluative, we have no difficulty seeing the conflict as a debate about what is really the case in the world. In this rhythm of embrace and denial, this uneven intermittence of vision, we have a story of reason’s urgent struggles with itself concerning nothing less than how to imagine life. To struggle against grief is to strive toward a view of the universe in which that face does not appear,
luminous and wonderful, on every path, and in which the image of that lifeless form in a posture so like sleep does not stand out, like one of Charlus’s mountains, above the flat landscape of daily life.

With conflicts among emotions, much the same seems true. Conflicts between fear and hope, anger and gratitude, grief and joy – these are badly explained in the adversary’s way, as the battles of unthinking forces. When joy masters grief, as in my experience at the funeral, it is on the basis of certain judgments: in this case, the judgment that my mother was in certain crucial respects not gone from the world. Hope and fear contend in a more subtle way: both seem to require some uncertainty and some possibility of both good and bad outcomes, but they also differ – both (often) in their estimation of the probabilities and, more important, in what they consider salient in the pictured future. A conflict between anger and gratitude toward the same person usually revolves around assessment of harms and benefits conferred by that person, of the person’s level of responsibility for these, and of their importance.

If we now consider in a more general way the passage from one emotion to another, we find that we now have a deeper understanding of why the emotions should be grouped together as a class. It is not only that fear, grief, anger, love, and the others all share certain features, the features I have tried to describe. It is also that they have a dynamic relationship to one another. Given a deep attachment to something outside one’s own control, the very accidents of life, combined with that attachment to an object, will bring the person who is so attached now into intense joy, when the beloved object is at hand, now into fear, when it is threatened, now into grief, when catastrophe befalls it. When another fosters the object’s good (or, to put it another way, the vulnerable aspects of the person’s good) the person feels gratitude; when the other damages the object, she feels anger. When another has such a valuable object and she does not, she feels envy; when another becomes her rival with regard to such an object, she feels jealousy. In short, once she has hostages to fortune, she lets herself in for the entire gamut of the emotions, or so it seems; it will be difficult to admit some while refusing the others (although one might separate anger from the rest, if one were convinced that people never willingly do wrong). So far as the passage from one emotion to the other goes, one is in the hands of the world. In my story, hope and fear alternated,
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not because I wished them to alternate, but because the uncertainties of the situation produced this double thought; grief ensued not because I chose to move from hope into grief, but because an event beyond my control – given my underlying love for my mother – precipitated me into grieving. Anger was the response to the belief that the damage had a blameworthy cause – whether in others or in myself. Depression was in this case one manifestation of grief, responding to the strangeness of living in a world untenanted by that particular form. I could not have said, it seems, “I’ll love my mother, but I will never have fear” – or grief, or depression, or even perhaps anger: for the reasons for those emotions were supplied by life, as it simply happened, in combination with the underlying evaluation itself.

In short, the geography of the world as seen by the emotions has two salient features: uncontrolled movement, and differences of height and depth. Think again of Proust’s description of Charlus. The world of Charlus in love is compared to a landscape full of mountains and valleys, produced as if by “geological upheavals of thought”; and this differentiated landscape is contrasted with the “uniform plain” of his previous unattached life, where no idea stood out as urgent or salient, no evaluation jutted up above any other. His self-sufficient world was, we might say, very much like the world seen from the point of view of a far-distant sun, a world not yet humanized by the earthquakes of human love and limitation, which are at once comic and tragic. His new world of twisted jealousy and towering love is a more agitated world, alive as it is at every moment to small movements of thought and action in a person whom he in no way controls (and who is, besides, especially inscrutable and unreliable). And yet the narrator tells us that this world is a world “enriched” – and enriched by the agitation itself (“par là même”). This normative conclusion remains to be examined. For now, we are beginning to have some idea of what it is to understand emotions as a certain sort of vision or recognition, as value-laden ways of understanding the world.