

How Philosophy Can Help Us Grieve: Navigating the Wake(s) of Loss¹

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ABSTRACT: How might approaching loss *philosophically* help us grieve? What does it mean to approach something philosophically? Why might such an approach be advantageous to studies of grief? In my paper, I discuss the abovementioned queries (focusing primarily on methods most commonly, though not exclusively, associated with the analytic tradition) and offer an example of how philosophy has helped me navigate the wakes of loss faced with respect to the passing of my father. In the process, I discuss the field of philosophical counseling (in general), a specific brand of practice advanced by Dr. Elliot D. Cohen, and offer a brief account of the basic tenets and steps of its leading modality, Logic-Based Therapy (LBT).

KEYWORDS: analytic philosophy, cognitive-behavioral therapy, critical thinking, Elliot Cohen, emotions, grief, logic-based therapy, philosophy, philosophical counseling, psychology, reason

INTRODUCTION²

How might approaching loss *philosophically* help us grieve? The following paper explores the value of philosophy and its methods to studies of grief. First, I discuss what it means to approach something philosophically, focusing primarily on methods most commonly (though not exclusively) associated with the analytic tradition. I discuss also philosophy's relevance (or "fitness") to matters of life and death and argue that—in terms of its aims, subject matters, and qualitative features—it is well-equipped for studies of grief. Second, I discuss the field of philosophical counseling and a specific brand of practice advanced by Elliot D. Cohen. A brief account of the basic tenets and steps of its leading modality, 'Logic-Based Therapy' (LBT), are provided. Third, I discuss the definition of grief with which I will be working and examine why and how philosophy (and LBT) can be advantageous to studies of grief. To illustrate this point, I offer an examination of two excerpts from a personal narrative written shortly after the passing of my father. Further, to make clear the connection between these excerpts

and the benefits of living an examined life, I offer a critical assessment of the unique sort of participation with grief that I feel the philosophical discipline affords one and why this sort of participation has therapeutic value.

A PHILOSOPHICAL APPROACH

What does it mean to approach something philosophically? In its most basic sense, it means that one approach a topic of investigation—for example, the experience of grief—in a way that honors critical thinking (or reasoning). This includes that one enlist, in her approach, various methods commonly associated with philosophy, such as: (a) argument, (b) refutation, (c) systematic doubt, (d) dialectic, (e) justification (of beliefs), (f) logic, and so forth. In a more robust sense, to approach something philosophically also seems to involve several other features such as: open-mindedness, a sense of wonder, optimism, sincerity, humility, and dialectical justness, among others.³ While critical thinking and these various methods and attributes are, I feel, crucial to understanding the nature of philosophy (and thus what I mean here by “taking a philosophical approach”), it does not follow that all philosophers operate in the same way or exhibit all of the abovementioned attributes. There is broad variability in the field and those who partake in it.

Now, while philosophy can be described in various ways, the above methods and attributes perhaps best exemplify it as *a thinking activity and way of life*. In addition, the elements of philosophical thinking obtain regardless of one’s conception of philosophy—i.e., philosophy as theoretical or applied.⁴ While there has been much debate about what differentiates theoretical from applied philosophy, the distinction can roughly be characterized as follows. Theoretical philosophy is concerned with answering or clarifying matters of thought, while applied philosophy is concerned with answering or clarifying matters of action. But this distinction is muddled at best due in part to the interdependence of belief and action, and with respect to what one feels the aims (and value) of philosophy consist. First, claims Cohen, to separate applied and theoretical philosophy into two distinct species is to create a false impression as each area of focus bears substantially on one another.⁵ Beliefs have an effect upon actions and vice-versa. Second, many philosophers maintain that philosophy’s primary aim is conceptual analysis⁶ whilst others claim that its practitioners must (in addition to such analysis) translate those concepts into practical terms, so as to “forge a coherent mode of living.”⁷ Pure philosophy tends to reflect the former view, while applied philosophy the latter. But, as Louis I. Katzner notes, “that ‘philosophy’ was not always understood in this way can of course be seen from even the most cursory readings of works such as Plato’s *Republic*. And that not all . . . philosophers [accept] this view can be seen by attending [for example] to the writings of pragmatists, Marxists, and existentialists.”⁸ While I give no greater attention to this matter here, the points raised against the applied-theoretical division and in favor of philosophy’s conceptual and practical aims, find particular agreement with my account of philosophy. That is, *if* (as Plato’s *Dialogues* suggest), philosophy is: to live the examined life,⁹ to follow reason where it leads,¹⁰ and to do so “so that [one could] be better for the rest of [her] life,”¹¹ then at base, philosophy is both

theoretical and applied. It is a thinking activity *and* a way of life. Not one or the other. Thus, I treat the two analogously¹² (as inseparable or “intimately bound up”¹³ components of what philosophy entails).

With this conception of philosophy in mind, let us look at a few charges made against philosophy in terms of its “fitness” to deal with matters of everyday living. One such attack stems from the view that the subject matters with which philosophy concerns itself (in addition to its aims) are largely irrelevant. In response, while it is true that some of philosophy’s subject matters are somewhat “out there,” it is not the case that all (or even most) of its subject matters are removed from matters of everyday life.¹⁴ Philosophy is, at its very core, grounded in the here and now, not some otherworld. Its aims include getting closer to the truth about such matters as justice, rights, knowledge, virtue, and happiness; and, further translating this understanding into action. What is more, “insofar as philosophy in its pursuit of wisdom and knowledge has the goal of making one a better person, so too it has the cooperative goal of enabling others to do the same with themselves.”¹⁵ Thus, on an individual and collective scale, philosophy is not unfit to matters of living but, rather, among the most relevant of fields. In this connection, philosophy is also relevant to matters of death and dying. To paraphrase Socrates: philosophy is to live well, so that one can die well. Hence, philosophy is germane to our experiences and understanding of life and death and, not coincidentally, particularly well-suited for studies of grief (a point that I shall expound upon later in this paper).

Another attack against the “fitness” of philosophy stems from the view that philosophy, in its preferential treatment for reason, disregards emotion. As such it is ill-equipped to deal with the numerous emotion-filled experiences of life. A few things can be said here. First, just because a discipline values reason—or even, as in the case of philosophy, places it at its helm—does not mean that it disregards emotion or that it considers emotion to be insignificant. Second, the activity of philosophy is often grossly misinterpreted. On the one hand, many people consider philosophy to be nothing other than the use of logic and/or—in the case of those who refer to philosophy more accurately as critical thinking (or philosophical reasoning)—often do so erroneously because they conflate logic with such reasoning.¹⁶ To be clear, *logic* is the study of argument . . . of “the methods and principles used to distinguish good . . . from bad . . . reasoning.”¹⁷ Above all, it is “a tool;”¹⁸ it “supports [the] application [of reason],”¹⁹ but is not itself ‘reasoning.’ *Philosophical reasoning* is “a special kind of thinking.”²⁰ It is a “process that moves one from premises to conclusions,”²¹ and one that, according to Michael Scriven, must not be confused with “*calculating* or *measuring* or *ignoring emotions* . . . Sometimes it involves these things and sometimes it rejects them.”²² Further, he claims, one ought to reject the view that reasoning is diametrically opposed to the passionate activities of imagination, creativity, and intuition; “[R]easoning is a constructive and creative activity that leads us to new knowledge. . . . [I]t requires imagination nurtured by a rich and varied experience.”²³ Therefore, it would be a great mistake “to suppose that [emotional], imaginative and creative thought processes are somehow separable from critical and logical ones.”²⁴ Instead, the process of reasoning (as many psychologists have discovered)

is “extremely complex and highly emotional, consisting of [at times] awkward trial-and-error procedures illuminated by sudden—and sometimes apparently irrelevant—flashes of insight.”²⁵

In a similar vein, while there are certainly aspects of philosophy that can feel or look overwhelmingly cold and non-emotional, it does not necessarily follow that they are cold and non-emotional. To be sure, philosophy consists of arguments that proceed in a particularly logical fashion; but this procession is (in its own unique way) highly emotional, driven and fueled by a passionate desire for truth and love of reason. The matter is further complicated by personal style, subject matter and approach. ‘Personal style’ refers to the unique mode of articulation an individual philosopher adopts. Some philosophers are more emotive in flavor than others.²⁶ Second, there are subject matters, such as ‘love’ and ‘sorrow’ for example, which are more obviously visceral in nature than others. As a result, dialogue about such topics are often discussed and interpreted in ways that embrace and highlight the emotional aspect of argumentation. Grief would certainly apply here. Third, philosophers typically proceed from one of two categories: analytic or continental.²⁷ Each tradition is said to represent a distinct approach to philosophy, though precisely how and to what extent they differ is up for debate. While time does not permit extensive consideration of this topic, it is worthwhile to mention at least some of the most common variances or “twists” on philosophy that each camp is said to employ. These are: (a) methodology, (b) attitude, and (c) style.²⁸ However, one should note, that such differences are largely generalized and, further, that the analytic-continental distinction is not without its critics.²⁹

With this in mind, let us first consider methodology. According to C. G. Prado:

The heart of the analytic/continental opposition is most evident in methodology, that is, in a focus on analysis or on synthesis. Analytic philosophers typically try to solve . . . delineated philosophical problems by reducing them to their parts and to the relations in which these parts stand. Continental philosophers typically address large questions in a synthetic or integrative way.³⁰

Otherwise stated—analytic philosophy *isolates*, continental philosophy *integrates*. In both cases, it is important to note that preference for one does not necessarily eliminate the other.³¹ An appeal to analysis in one’s approach (for example) does not imply that she must forgo synthesis altogether, and vice-versa. This methodological variance can be explained, in part, by appealing to the attitude held by each tradition regarding the role of science and history (to philosophical investigation). Generally speaking, analytic philosophers tend to be staunch advocates of science, whereas continental philosophers are less sympathetic. As a result, the continental tradition “does not (typically) see itself as abutting, or seeking to ground support or complement, the world of scientific research,”³² which is in gross contrast to the analytic tradition wherein science fulfills an exquisite exemplary role. This is also true, asserts Neil Levy, with regard to its subject matter and style. In particular, he claims, analytic philosophy is more often realist and reductively materialist than continental philosophy.³³ It likewise tends to reflect a style that is more scientific in approach, one that involves proposing hypotheses and theories, testing them in light of data, and discussion and control by peers.³⁴

As it concerns history, the continental tradition is largely wedded to the idea that history is the “horizon within which all problems are understood.”³⁵ It tends to approach its problems “textually and contextually,” avows Simon Critchley, and “holds that philosophical problems do not fall from the sky ready-made.”³⁶ In contrast, analytic philosophy often operates from the premise that philosophical investigation can be abstracted away from various preconditions. *Additionally*, history and science are intimately connected to each tradition’s view of truth. According to Robrecht Vanderbeeken:

[In] continental philosophy . . . Truth (with a capital ‘T’) is to be approached in a therapeutic manner. . . . Unlike analytic philosophers, conflicting information is not necessarily a contradiction that we need to overcome or dispend with. . . . [Instead, an] inconsistency can . . . be transformed into a paradox that opens up new creative perspectives and that somehow enables us to speak the impossible.³⁷

Further, there is a tendency in Continental Philosophy “to continuously readdress the classical philosophical questions, *not* with the intention to find a final answer, but to generate new insights and to learn about the cultural, social, and historical relativity of our knowledge. In contrast, the analytic tradition (oft regarded as “a problem-solving activity”³⁸) *is* interested in “finding a final answer” and, further, less patient of relativistic conceptions of truth, by and large preferring objective truths instead.³⁹

In regard to style, “any reader of canonical texts in the traditions will immediately notice a difference of philosophical style and idiom. . . . [According to Ralph Humphries] . . . Apart from the inevitable technical refinements and complications of terminology, the style of analytic philosophy seeks to realize a simplicity, clarity and concision of expression.”⁴⁰ And, while the use of metaphor and analogy is not eschewed, there is little aesthetic embellishment in the writings of analytic thinkers. In contrast, Continental philosophy is typically less terse and more liberal in its approach. It “does not, as a matter of policy, eschew the art of rhetoric. Its language can leave the realm of sober prose and produce (what might be thought of as) a poetical density, more suggestive or evocative than straightforwardly declarative.”⁴¹ As such, continental writings are generally said to reflect a greater amount of “literary flair.”

While the above distinctions can help one gain a general perspective on the analytic-continental distinction, one should be mindful of the fact that they are still generalizations. Many continental philosophers, for example, write in ways more consistent with the analytic tradition, and vice-versa; some continental thinkers embrace analysis over synthesis; and, attitudes toward science and history (and truth) can be embraced to lesser or greater degrees by members of either camp. In the end, it is fair to say that most philosophers don’t fit squarely into either category. “[E]very philosopher, if they are at all comprehensive,” claims Kile Jones, “can be found to make [the analytic-continental] line more blurry.”⁴² Ultimately, despite whatever distinctions or variances obtain, it is my claim that insofar as an individual: (1) honors critical thinking, (2) enlists in her approach various methods commonly associated with philosophy, and (3) engages in philosophical investigation in ways consistent with the such attributes as open-mindedness, dialectical

justness, sincerity, etc.—she is “approaching something philosophically” and participating in ways consistent with philosophy (as a thinking activity and way of life). What is more, philosophy *is* relevant to matters of life and death in terms of its aims, subject matters and qualitative features; is *not* opposed to emotion; and, *is* well-equipped for studies of grief. With this in mind, let us now turn our attention to the topic of philosophical counseling.

PHILOSOPHICAL COUNSELING

The movement of philosophical counseling (Phi-C) emerged in roughly the 1980s relative to the efforts of Gerd Achenbach and others. Its origins, however, date back to ancient philosophy. Thinkers such as Socrates, Plato, and Epicurus (for example) championed the belief that philosophy could be used to help people think through their problems and live happier lives. Loosely speaking, Phi-C is a “movement with several organizations and many individuals who share a love of philosophy and a common goal of using . . . philosophical wisdom [and techniques] as a means to improve the day-to-day lives of individuals.”⁴³ While the field has seen steady growth over the past three decades, its practitioners vary widely in both their views and techniques. Samuel Knapp and Alan C. Tjeltveit capture this first point of variance by way of their appeal to ‘narrow-scope’ and ‘broad-scope’ views when they state:

[T]he term *narrow-scope* . . . refer[s] to those who address issues that typically appear outside the realm of psychotherapy and within the realm of philosophy. . . . By way of contrast, . . . the term *broad-scope* . . . refer[s] to those who address issues that typically appear within the realm of psychotherapy. Their goals include helping people in interpersonal relationships or life crises, or those coping with anxiety or depression.⁴⁴

While this distinction is not without its problems,⁴⁵ it does seem to provide some good general insight about what sorts of views exist. Knapp and Tjeltveit also discuss the various techniques present in the field. Some practitioners “use approaches that overlap with nondirective psychological approaches. . . . [While others] are more directive, using methods similar to those of cognitive or rational-emotive behavior therapy.”⁴⁶ But what precisely *is* Phi-C and how does it relate to psychological counseling (or, more specifically, psychotherapy)?

Roughly construed, Phi-C is a therapeutic “approach that aims toward philosophical critique, self-investigation, and insight”⁴⁷ and “addresses life problems that arise from philosophical problems in the implicit worldview of the client.”⁴⁸ Its activities are concerned with:

the pursuit of meaning, wisdom, conflict resolution, and conceptual inquiry into the philosophical questions, concerns, and conundrums that beset each client . . . [and has as its] general purpose [the aim of] help[ing] clients examine and live their lives more reflectively and meaningfully.⁴⁹

While a general consensus exists among its practitioners that Phi-C “aims toward philosophical examination and understanding through the guidance of a professionally trained philosopher,”⁵⁰ there is less agreement on what specific philosophical methods apply and how Phi-C relates to psychotherapy. For the

purposes of our discussion, I concur with Jon Mill's assessment of an appropriate method being one that is eclectic and open to the objective criteria of assessment and standardization.⁵¹ In particular, it should be "(i) rationally and theoretically justified, (ii) internally coherent, (iii) sensitive to the efficacy of treatment outcome, (iv) subject to duplication, procedural experimentation, and empirical research, (v) open to verification, falsification, and modification, (vi) flexible with respect to content, context, and form, and (vii) generalizable as a training device."⁵² Of course, it is also important to note (as Mills indicates) that:

[C]ertain aspects of the art of philosophical [or psychological] discourse in applied settings is dependent on many personal features of the counselor that cannot be mechanically repeated, formally taught, copied or acquired *without repeated experience and supervised trainings*.⁵³

In regard to Phi-C's relationship to psychotherapy, there are some practitioners who choose to separate Phi-C from psychotherapy altogether, in effect drawing a distinct line between "the philosophical" and "the psychological." However, such a feat seems dubious, rash and unwarranted.⁵⁴ As Mills elaborates:

[I]t is an . . . empirical fact that philosophical activity is psychologically embodied . . . [That is,] psychological processes infiltrate all cognitive activities and human relations, including philosophical rumination and the dynamics of the counselor-client dyad. In order to think and reason philosophically, basic psychological operations (such as attention, concentration, perception . . . [and] memory) help govern the nature of consciousness and further serve as the ground or psychic foundation which underlies higher modes of abstraction, comprehension, and reflective judgment.⁵⁵

A more promising view of philosophical counseling is that it is a *form of psychotherapy*. Eugene Fischer asserts that philosophical efforts can count "literally" as a form of therapy when "its paramount aim[s] [are] to solve emotional or behavioral problems, to put a (preferably lasting) end to unwarranted and disabling emotions or unreasonable behavior that fails to be autonomous."⁵⁶ And Mills claims that "[w]hile a legitimate case may be made that not *all* forms of philosophical practice are psychotherapy,"⁵⁷ if its general aim is ameliorative, corrective and/or transformative and if it "claims to possess efficacy or provide any real benefit to clients, then it is therapeutic by definition."⁵⁸

With this in mind, and if philosophical counseling is in fact a form of psychotherapy, what then distinguishes it from other forms of psychotherapy? In its most basic sense, the answer lies in its philosophical focus. That is, the former is philosophically informed, while the latter is psychologically informed. However, as Mills points out, a philosophical focus does not mean (or require) the negation of psychological reflection.⁵⁹ In fact, both types of investigation can (and ought) to inform one another. In a more sophisticated sense, the answer can be found by appealing to a conceptual distinction. Mills provides valuable insight once again when he states:

While philosophical activity is psychologically embodied, it is distinct in terms of [the] form in which it appears. This conceptual distinction defines one's theoretical orientation which in turn guides applied methodology, and thus has practical implications with respect to how philosophical counseling is . . . carried out.⁶⁰

In other words, philosophical counseling is *a form of psychotherapy that is differentiated from other forms of psychotherapy by its philosophical emphasis and the unique theoretical and methodological considerations born from such an emphasis*.⁶¹ Succinct and sufficiently panoptic, Mills's account seems to me to be a particularly viable one, especially insofar as it embraces the connection between philosophy and psychology and, further, does so without reducing or "collapsing philosophical inquiry to psychological processes [or] eliminating the . . . examination of psychological forces"⁶² relevant in/to one's system of belief. With this platform in mind let us now consider a specific breed of philosophical counseling.

PHILOSOPHICAL COUNSELING: LOGIC-BASED THERAPY⁶³

As noted earlier, while there is a general consensus in the field regarding the basic aims of Phi-C, its practitioners vary widely in their specific views and techniques. This splintering can be thought of in terms of unique breeds of practice. Our discussion will focus on Dr. Cohen's⁶⁴ brand of Phi-C—a sort that is at once: a hybrid discipline that combines psychology and philosophy; a form of counseling that uses philosophical methods and theories; and, a type of "applied philosophy"⁶⁵ that, in its specific application, becomes psychological.⁶⁶ The leading (though not only)⁶⁷ modality of Dr. Cohen's unique form of practice is logic-based therapy (LBT).⁶⁸ LBT is a variant of Rational-Emotive Behavior Therapy (REBT).⁶⁹ LBT shares with REBT numerous qualities, including:

- (1) The hypothesis that many (though not all) behavioral and emotional problems are rooted in irrational thinking
- (2) A belief in the positive correlation of rational thought and health and happiness
- (3) A strong alliance with empirical science
- (4) The provision of instructive measures relative to the identification and refutation of fallacies
- (5) A belief in willpower and the importance of partaking in willpower strengthening exercises
- (6) The provision and encouragement of "homework assignments" (e.g., bibliotherapy, humor), emotive techniques (e.g., role playing, rational-emotive imagery), and behavioral techniques (e.g., relaxation protocols, self-monitoring)
- (7) The same three-pronged concept of 'emotion,' which holds emotions to consist of cognitive, physiological, *and* behavioral components⁷⁰

LBT differs from REBT, however, in its *explanation* of emotions and behaviors, the increased magnitude of fallacies with which it works, and with respect to its provision of 'transcendent virtues' (a set of positive values in which to aspire in overcoming fallacies). Finally, LBT remains amenable to the fact that medication may be a necessary component of therapy, but maintains that no medicine can do one's rational thinking for him/her. That is, medication may help remove

obstacles to one's logical thinking, but is not a substitute for it.⁷¹ With these basic characteristics in mind, let us consider in more detail LBT's model of counseling.

First, recall the three-pronged definition of emotion to which LBT appeals (and shares with REBT), i.e., that emotions are a synthesis of cognitive, physiological, and behavioral elements. Where the two deviate is in their respective explanations of emotion (and behavior). While REBT offers a *causal-based* explanation, LBT offers a *justification-based* explanation. To clarify, according to REBT there are three 'psychological points' of an emotion (and/or behavior): (a) activating event, (b) belief system, and (c) emotional and behavioral consequence. For example:

A – I go into deep financial debt as a result of irresponsible spending habits

B – I feel like a failure/worthless

C – I am/get depressed

Here, it is not point A or point B alone that causes C, but the combination thereof, i.e., A + B = C. LBT recasts REBT's 'psychological points' into logical terms—not as steps in a chain of causality but rather as elements of a process of reasoning. It uses the practical syllogism to convert REBT's 'ABC Theory' to a mode of inference from premises to conclusions. In so doing, LBT: (a) links "the logic of belief statements with emotional states in terms of inferential structures"⁷² and, (b) "links the prescriptive force of logic to the management of emotional states, and hence to psychology, by recognizing the intimate connection between how a client *feels* and how they *think*."⁷³ Implicit here are two important claims: (a) emotions and behaviors are decisions (conclusions), and (b) in light of 'a,' we are largely responsible for our emotions and behaviors.⁷⁴ In order to eradicate any misconceptions it is important to mention three things. First, a person may not say, "I *want* to be depressed" but he or she may deduce self-damning conclusions from premises and accept the behavioral implications of depression.⁷⁵ Second, only deliberate (intentional) behaviors are logical corollaries of the premises of practical reasoning (i.e., deduced conclusions). Non-deliberative behaviors—for example, overt behavior (e.g., crying or trembling) and internal physiological changes that might accompany emotion (e.g., respiratory changes, cardiac function)—are more properly thought of by LBT as causal consequences. Third, insofar as emotions and deliberate behaviors are deduced from premises (as opposed to being mere effects—like a flame is an effect of a struck match), and assuming we are the one's doing the reasoning, then we are largely responsible for our own emotions and behaviors.⁷⁶ In this connection, we are also largely responsible for and capable of (in theory) addressing and overcoming unhealthy emotions and behaviors so as to live happier, healthier lives. Bruce W. Fraser adds valuable insight to this claim when he states:

If human intelligence is the product of extended evolutionary processes, and logic is central to human intelligence, then the ubiquity of logic as well as its prescriptive force should be tied to the evolutionary response of the brain to its environment. Some reasoning patterns are better than others at promoting survival, and presumably those are the patterns that lead to true conclusions and predictions. On such a view, the prescriptive force of logic emerges with its survival value, and the centrality of logic to our conceptual scheme, as well as its applicability to

the natural world, follows as a matter of course. . . . [T]here is a strong theoretical case for embracing a logic-based approach to therapy. . . . For if logic derives its prescriptive force from its value in promoting the successful navigation of a complex world (this idea being captured abstractly in the concept of truth), then the rationale for utilizing logic in the clinical setting becomes clear: Logic is the system by which maladaptive thinking and behavior is corrected in the interest of psychological health and happiness.⁷⁷

In order to see how LBT may be utilized for such ends, let us explore the steps of its application.

THE FIVE BASIC STEPS OF LBT

There are five basic steps involved in LBT:

- (1) Identify the client's emotions
- (2) Identify and/or find (if suppressed) the premises of the client's emotional reasoning
- (3) Refute any irrational premises
- (4) Find antidotes to the refuted premises
- (5) Assign exercises aimed at strengthening willpower

I shall discuss steps one and two together, and then address the remaining steps separately. First, let's return to LBT's three-pronged definition of emotion. According to LBT, we can identify an emotion by considering its *cognitive* component, which can in turn be divided into two dimensions: (1) the rating (R), and (2) the intentional object of the emotion (O). In this connection, emotions themselves (as compared to just the cognitive component) can be identified in terms of their particular ratings and intentional objects ($E = R + O$). One should note here that while emotions can be separated for analytic purposes, LBT does *not* maintain that the emotion itself is merely the sum of these elements. In this way, LBT opposes a reductionist characterization of emotions.⁷⁸ That said, let us consider the specifics of each facet, beginning with dimension one—the rating. The *rating* is the *prescriptive, evaluative part of emotional cognition*.⁷⁹ It is prescriptive because it implies an 'ought' or 'ought not' and is conditional. The rating is directed by a *rule* of some sort (i.e., a standard by which one rates oneself, others or events) that may or may not be explicitly articulated.⁸⁰ A rule always rates an emotional object. This brings us to dimension two—the intentional object. *Intentional objects*⁸¹ may be either existent or non-existent and can always be expressed in propositional form or statements. Also involved in emotional cognition is the filing of a report. The *report* affirms and describes perceived facts or states of affairs relative to the intentional object. In essence, a report "files" one's particular situation in a cognitive drawer that can be easily accessed by the conclusion. Like a rating, a report can also receive direction from a rule.⁸² Finally, the *conclusion* is the deduced emotion/behavior. The conclusion contains a rating element as well, but one that is an *actual* rating as opposed to conditional. All of these components of emotional reasoning can be recast in standard form (if O then R; O, therefore R).⁸³

With the above in mind, it is important to note that most people do *not* map out their emotional reasoning in this way.⁸⁴ Often one has to work backwards in order to identify their premises (and respective components). Once this has been done, however, the remaining steps of LBT can be applied—(a) the refutation of irrational premises, (b) the prescription of antidotes, and (c) exercises aimed at strengthening willpower. Questioning one’s premises is the starting point of refutation; it allows you to uncover any flaws that might exist. Strictly speaking, a *fallacious argument* is an unsound (defective) argument and a *fallacy* is the defect in the argument itself.⁸⁵ Once a fallacy is exposed (identified), it can be refuted. *Refutation* is a method/process whereby an argument is shown to be irrational or unjustified. The refutation of a premise shows you what’s wrong with it. It sets the stage for finding a remedy because it provides a functional analysis of what needs to be corrected (where the antidote needs to be applied). In addition, knowing how to refute irrational thoughts can help you weaken the appeal it may have for you. LBT uses classical methods of refutation, such as: *reductio ad absurdum*, providing *counter-examples*, showing that a premise commits an *informal or formal fallacy*,⁸⁶ or showing that an *unwarranted inference* has been made in one’s reasoning (for example, a ‘fascistic inference’). A fascistic inference (a term coined by Dr. Cohen) is an inference that occurs by way of making erroneous (irrational) inferential leaps from “I prefers/I desires” to ‘musts,’ ‘oughts’ and ‘shoulds.’ Such inferences essentially command, demand or dictate the ontic terms of the universe based on premises about one’s own subjective desires or preferences.⁸⁷

Once a refutation is arrived upon a suitable antidote can be found and willpower exercises assigned. *Philosophical antidotes* are philosophically driven correctives that help individuals overcome fallacious reasoning; and, an *antidote* to a premise is another more reasonable premise that corrects it.⁸⁸ A philosophical antidote:

- (1) Corrects a flaw in one’s faulty thinking (including the deflation of absolutistic rules that disrupt reasoning)
- (2) Always involves a reframing of one’s situation
- (3) Does not distort the realities of one’s circumstances
- (4) Is not effective against one’s irrational thinking *unless* it prescribes something (this oft requires that a new standard by which to hold/rate oneself is provided)
- (5) Will largely define the expression of emotional/behavioral virtues one adopts (A successful antidote will typically be one that resonates with a person/has import)
- (6) May not always be consistent with another equally rational antidote to the same problem (In other words, being rational does not mean that ‘one-size-fits-all,’ although it does entail that reason obtains in all cases)
- (7) Is not beyond the possibility of refutation (or examination), and
- (8) Is found and strengthened by way of appealing to the wisdom and philosophical insights of thinkers across the ages

One additional point to be made is that a philosophical antidote is *not* a cure. That is, while an antidote can help one recover from faulty thinking it does not guarantee that one will never slip again. As such “daily doses” of antidotal reasoning are needed. *Antidotal reasoning* is the prescriptive form of an antidote; it is the reasoning one goes through when formulating and prescribing a corrective. The formulation process can be thought of as ‘preliminary antidotal reasoning.’ It involves searching the philosophical archives for perspective and enriching the antidote chosen. The prescription process can be thought of as ‘participatory antidotal reasoning.’⁸⁹ It involves constructing and testing out the antidote in logical form (in a new ‘if-then’ format). In addition, antidotal reasoning can be positive or negative in value (e.g., should, should not) and can work together to effect change. Positively-charged antidotes can be useful because they give one positive instruction about what to do, rather than what not to do; negatively-charged antidotes can be useful in clearing the way for a ‘should’ antidote.⁹⁰ While LBT is open to prescribing both types of antidotes, it aims for positively-charged ones and aspires to help clients attain happiness as defined by various transcendent virtues.⁹¹ *Transcendent virtues* are a set of positive values in which to aspire in overcoming fallacies.⁹² They are ‘virtues’ because they involve dispositions of character acquired through practice, and ‘transcendent’ because they constitute higher human capabilities. In this way, LBT promotes a sort of positive psychology; it instructs one how to avoid fallacies but also provides rational correctives aimed at achieving a particular state of well-being (i.e., happiness).⁹³ Transcendent virtues such as:

[Metaphysical] security, courage, respect, authenticity, temperance, moral creativity, empowerment, empathy, good judgment, foresightedness, and the ability to think scientifically are goals that all or at least most human beings could reasonably accept as goals worth striving for regardless of whatever individual constructions of *happiness* they may have. Thus, whether a client is religious or secular, these are rational values that could still be embraced. It is in this manner that these virtues appear to be consistent with . . . philosophical conceptions of happiness—from Bentham, Mill and Kant to Plato and Aristotle.⁹⁴

Further, according to LBT, philosophy, virtue, happiness, and health are correlated. Specifically, living the examined life *leads* to happiness. Kenneth Sayre provides valuable insight here when he states: “When the discourse planted and nurtured by dialectic finally matures into philosophical understanding it achieves . . . a kind of ‘immortality’ . . . and grants its possessor ‘well-being’ . . . in the highest degree of which humankind is capable.”⁹⁵ Further, insofar as proper reasoning is related to reduced negative (self-defeating, harmful) emotions/behaviors and increased positive (constructive, helpful) emotions/behaviors, then philosophy is related to a way of being that has “far-reaching benefits, including a stronger immune system . . . and a cardiovascular system that is less reactive to stress. . . . They lift your mood; increase optimism, resilience, and resourcefulness; and help counteract the effects of painful experiences, including trauma.”⁹⁶ That said, however, we must keep in mind that overcoming faulty reasoning and aspiring to live a happier way of life requires more than just an intellectual grasp of how

to reason properly. It requires effort and practice.⁹⁷ This brings us to the final step of LBT—willpower.

By *willpower* LBT means: (a) the power or ability to refrain from doing something (either before you do it or while in the midst of doing it), and (b) the power to continue doing something even though you are strongly inclined not to. Willpower has the ability to fight off irrational thinking in two ways: (1) if your chosen antidote is negatively-charged, then you can “flex your willpower muscle” to hold yourself back from doing what you should not do, and (2) if your chosen antidote is positively-charged, then you can “flex your willpower muscle” to push yourself to do what you should do. Implicit here is the claim that human beings have an inherent power of will that can be used to overcome fallacies in one’s emotional/behavioral reasoning and aspire to and cultivate the transcendent virtues.⁹⁸ Thus, willpower is an important part of the human emotional fabric, is vital to emotional control (or realignment), and provides depth to the claim that human beings are by nature “free” (i.e., have choice, agency). While LBT does not attempt to resolve the ‘free-will/determinism debate’ it holds that human beings have the ability to overcome self-destructive emotional and behavioral reasoning by exercising their willpower. That is, on a practical and confirmable level human beings can (and do) exercise rational control regardless of any deeper scientific or philosophical explanation.

In this connection, LBT speaks of overcoming *cognitive dissonance* (overcoming the tendency to act irrationally despite one’s awareness that it is irrational). A person can be said to be in a state of cognitive dissonance when: (a) he or she simultaneously believes the conflicting conclusions from two or more practical syllogisms, and (b) when he or she is stuck in a suspended state wherein a tension is experienced between what is emotionally accepted versus what is intellectually accepted. In the case of the former, a person essentially files her report of perceived affairs under two conflicting rules—one rational and the other irrational. As it regards the latter, in such a state two opposing sets of premises are present—one backed by bodily feelings and images and the other not. Hence, from a physiological and behavioral standpoint, one is disposed (or tends) to act and feel in ways supported by the faulty premises despite the intellectual recognition that one ought not continue on such a path. While cognitive dissonance can be uncomfortable, it is an important step in making constructive change because it marks the beginning of correcting and overcoming one’s irrational thinking with rational thinking. One should note, however, that correcting or overcoming irrational thinking does not always require that one pass through a state of cognitive dissonance. That is, there are situations where irrational thinking is present but cognitive dissonance *as a suspended state* is not.⁹⁹ For example, it is possible to realize that one is being irrational and quickly correct it. However, ordinarily when one is thinking according to the cardinal fallacies of LBT they involve dispositions to think, feel, and act a certain way that lead to cognitive dissonance when they are challenged.¹⁰⁰ Consider again the earlier claim that antidotes are not cures. Namely, while an antidote can help one recover from faulty thinking (and states of cognitive dissonance) it does not guarantee that one will not fall prey to such irrational reasoning again. As such, “daily doses of antidotal reasoning” are

required. Willpower exercises can lend a hand to this process. Keeping the basic steps and aims of LBT in mind, let us now turn our attention to the therapeutic benefits of such an approach to grief.

PHILOSOPHY AND GRIEF

Philosophy brings to studies of grief an inexhaustible amount of value. Recall our opening discussion about what precisely philosophy *is*. Philosophy is a thinking activity and way of life. Further, its aims, subject matters, and qualitative features make it particularly relevant (or fit to serve) matters of investigation relative to life and death. In this connection, insofar as grief is a part of life (in the same way that loss is a part of life), then philosophy is well-suited for the journey. Of course, while “approaching grief philosophically” is not the only way in which to inquire about and study grief, it is (I feel) particularly advantageous insofar as it grants its “investigators” a unique sort of relationship with grief—one that allows its participants to both “observe” *and* “experience” its subject matter more completely.¹⁰¹ What the philosophical discipline affords one is the ability to “see and feel” grief (that is, to grapple with the concept and the experience of grief) in ways that appeal to and increase one’s objective and subjective understanding of it.¹⁰² Metaphorically, philosophy arms its cognizers with a set of oars and a looking glass; it provides a means by which to approach, recognize and navigate the vicissitudes inherent in life, and does so in a way that honors the critical art, value and function of both “diving in” and “floating above.” Such an approach has therapeutic value and obtains whether one desires to gain a better understanding of grief in general (e.g., grief studies, theories of grief), of one’s own experience of grief (and ways in which to navigate its waters), or as applied in practical (or clinical) form—such as philosophical counseling—to assist others in their understanding of and dealings with grief. To begin, let us first consider the definition of ‘grief’ with which I will be working.

The nature of grief has been conceived of in numerous ways. Some examples include grief as: “a moral episteme entangled with . . . [deep] emotional response;”¹⁰³ “a mental state or process . . . [with an objective,] dedicatory . . . quality;”¹⁰⁴ and, “a kind of process [that involves] a complex pattern of activity and passivity, inner and outer, which unfolds over time . . . [whose] parts ‘hang together into a coherent whole’.”¹⁰⁵ For the purposes of our discussion, I shall appeal to the general notion¹⁰⁶ of ‘grief’ (or ‘grieving’) offered by Thomas Attig, according to which grief is characterized as an active and choice-filled response. Specifically:

When we are bereaved, we normally grieve. . . . On the one hand, grieving is our emotional reaction when we experience the death of another as a loss. . . . Grief in this sense is . . . a reactive agony, that happens to us after bereavement happens to us. . . . On the other hand, grieving by another definition is our *active response to loss*. When we grieve in this second sense of the term, we don’t simply react passively or automatically to death and bereavement. We engage with the loss, come to terms with our reactions to it, reshape our daily life patterns, and redirect our life stories in the light of what has happened. . . . [G]rieving in [this] sense of the term . . . is pervaded with choice. [It] is not . . . [a] matter of what happens to us but rather a matter of what we do with what happens to us.¹⁰⁷

Grieving is also a *relearning* of sorts that involves “problem-solving, addressing definable tasks, [and] life-long projects of adjustment in the most fundamental dimensions of our being.”¹⁰⁸ Further, it should be thought of in ways that respect the individuality of the bereaved and appreciate (but do not) reinforce feelings of helplessness.¹⁰⁹ Grieving as ‘grief work’ — “as a process of responding to identifiable challenges”¹¹⁰ — asserts Attig, accomplishes this; it suggests that grieving is a matter of coming to terms with what happens to us, takes time and effort, and involves choice.¹¹¹ With this conception of ‘grief’ in mind, let us now explore in detail how philosophy (and LBT) has helped me “actively respond” to the challenges of loss. I shall begin by providing two excerpts from a personal narrative written shortly after the time of my father’s death.¹¹² Then, I will apply the five steps of LBT to these excerpts. The aim of this exercise will be to illustrate how my (ongoing) dealings with grief have fallen prey to some common fallacies of reasoning and what precisely I have done (and continue to do) to correct these errors and, thus, strive for a healthier, happier life.

Excerpt One:

“I’m not perfect, kid,” he would say. “Yeah, yeah, I know,” I would reply, all the while thinking that “perfect” is exactly what he was. . . . The truth is, my dad was perfect for me even if he wasn’t “perfect” in an absolute sense. He was exactly the father that I needed and, without hesitation, exactly the kind of friend I needed, too. And he came into my life at precisely the right time; though, I must admit that I struggle still with being able to say definitively that he left with the same sort of exactitude in which he arrived. Of course, death is just a part of life; I know this. . . . For my questioning his time of departure is not a reflection of his judgment or even of the fairness of life; it is, rather, really only a testament to my missing him so terribly and wishing, furthermore, that he was still here.

Excerpt Two:

Truth be told, life is a bitch, or rather she can be. At the least, she seems a fickle one — sometimes fair, sometimes harsh . . . usually an amalgamation of both¹¹³ . . . Brian Andreas writes in his book, *Some Kind of Ride*: “They left me with your shadow saying things like ‘Life is not fair’ and I believed them for a long time. But today, I remembered the way you laughed and the heat of your hand in mine and I knew that life is more fair than we can ever imagine if we are there to live it.”¹¹⁴ While I certainly do agree with Andreas’ message, I must confess that the way in which my father was inevitably forced to spend his twilight years was anything but fair. Despite his last minute dealings, *he was a great man who did great things*. And he was a great man until the day he died, despite perhaps what he might have thought about this, given the debilitating effects of Parkinson’s on his body and mind.

With the above excerpts in mind, let us begin with step one of LBT — identifying my emotion. What am I feeling? I am experiencing grief. But what are the undercurrents of my grief? In excerpt one, I seem to acknowledge and be comfortable

with my father's imperfections (e.g., "The truth is, my dad was perfect for me even if he wasn't "perfect" in an absolute sense") but show discomfort with the timing of his departure. I seem also to struggle with the fairness of it all and want for him to still be alive.¹¹⁵ In excerpt two, I waffle back and forth between "being o.k." with things being out of balance and "not being o.k." with such "injustices." I also seem to struggle with what my poppa might have been feeling about himself prior to his death. In the cases of both excerpts, two basic undercurrents (distillation of factors) obtain—*perfection* and *fairness*. For the purposes of streamlining our discussion, I shall deal with these two aspects simultaneously.

Now, for step two. Recall that, an emotion can be identified in terms of its rating and intentional object. In so doing, we are able to construct the standard form of our emotional reasoning and analyze it accordingly. Recall also that most people do *not* map out their emotional reasoning in standard form. I am no exception; so I have to work backwards to fill in the premises of my reasoning (my deduced conclusion of 'grief'). I ask: "What about the timing of my father's death am I struggling with? Would a later departure have been different?" I respond: "In just a few more months we would have been in Montana . . . where he wanted to be. Instead, we were in California." And, as it regards my poppa's "general hand dealt" I ask: "What is it about his situation that is troubling me?" I respond: "Well, that Parkinson's was even a factor at all . . . and that he had to even deal with its challenges in general is troubling . . . but . . . my father was so bright and so active and so proud. He was more amazing than anyone I know . . . and Parkinson's made him feel otherwise so often." Let's recast this in standard form:

- If we were in Montana like my poppa wanted to be when he passed, *then* I wouldn't struggle (as much) with the timing of his departure; *and*, if Parkinson's had not been a factor at all (perhaps) my father would not have felt like he was less than he really was or (obviously) have had to deal with the challenges he was forced to deal with relative to general course of the disease, *then* I wouldn't struggle (as much) with the timing of my father's departure and the general hand he was dealt. [Major premise]
- We weren't in Montana (where he wanted to be when he passed), my father had Parkinson's and had to deal with the general challenges it posed, including the fact that it made him feel like he was less than he really was. [Minor premise]
- ∴ I struggle with the timing of my father's departure and the general hand he was dealt. [*Grief*] [Conclusion]

Now that my emotional reasoning is laid out in logical form I am in a position to analyze it. The first question I must ask is: "Does my argument involve any suppressed (or assumed) premises? Am I missing anything needed to "validate" my reasoning?" Yes. Let us focus on my major premise (i.e., If we were in Montana like my poppa wanted to be when he passed, etc., then I wouldn't x and y). What suppressed rule might be directing these ratings? Specifically, what makes me

think that I wouldn't struggle (as much) had we been in Montana? Equally, might factors/situations other than Parkinson's have played a similar role in my poppa feeling the way he felt and/or posed similar challenges? I reply: "Parkinson's took such a toll on my poppa. If anything, he/we should've at least been in the one place he wanted to be when he went. It's not fair. He deserved at least that. Moreover, that my poppa had to deal with the challenges of Parkinson's at all—it's just cruel. I mean, yes, there are other things could have affected him in similar ways or posed similar challenges . . . but there's no getting around the fact that he did struggle significantly precisely because of Parkinson's. It makes my heart hurt . . . like there is no justice at all." At its core, it sounds like my struggle with my poppa not being in Montana when he passed and that he had to deal with Parkinson's at all has much do with the fact that I feel he should have been in Montana and he should not have had to deal with Parkinson's. That is, if life were the way it should be (fair, just in some way), then he should have had what he wanted and further should not have had to deal with Parkinson's. Let us map out these sentiments accordingly:

- *If life is not fair or just, then things are terrible, my heart hurts, I struggle.* [Suppressed reasoning]
- Life is not fair or just.
- ∴ Things are terrible, my heart hurts, I struggle.

And,

- *If life were the way it should be (fair, just in some way), then my poppa should have had what he wanted and lived Parkinson's-free.* [Suppressed reasoning]
- My poppa didn't get what he wanted and had to deal with Parkinson's.
- ∴ Life is not fair or just.
- *If we were in Montana like my poppa wanted to be when he passed; etc., then I wouldn't struggle (as much) with the timing of my father's departure and the general hand he was dealt (**because life would be fair and just in some way and it must be this way!**).* [Original reasoning (truncated) with suppressed reasoning exposed]
- We weren't in Montana (where he wanted to be when he passed), etc.
- ∴ I struggle with the timing of my father's departure and the general hand he was dealt (**because life is not fair or just in some way and it must be this way!**). [Grief]

Ultimately, although grossly simplified here, what seems to be driving much of the pain I am experiencing is a suppressed rule that I am adhering to which demands life to conform to what "should be" and, further, maintains that if it doesn't conform to some ideal state then things are terrible, painful, heartbreaking. While *wanting* life to be ideal, perfect, fair and just is understandable, the *demand*

that it be so is irrational. We could go on to try and expose further suppressed premises (perhaps in the minor premise), but in logic if any premise is shown to be irrational or fallacious, the argument itself will be unsound and the belief/deduced emotion will be irrational. As a result, my grief (my deduced emotion) is irrational.¹¹⁶ With this in mind, let us quickly move on step three, four and five.

Upon laying out the premises and conclusion(s) of my reasoning, I am able to show that my reasoning fails (and thus refute my argument) at the level of its major premise by revealing and contesting a suppressed irrational rule (specifically, LBT's 'fallacy of demanding perfection'). This rule is irrational because the inferential leap from "I prefer/I want" to "it *must* be this way" is unwarranted. Thus, the grief that I am experiencing is itself irrational. I can now find a suitable antidote—one aimed at replacing the suppressed irrational rule with a new, more rational rule/premise—as well as pinpoint a transcendent virtue that can serve as a goal by which to aspire in overcoming my fallacious reasoning. In our current example, the virtue in LBT that corresponds with the 'fallacy of demanding perfection' is the 'transcendent virtue of metaphysical security.' This virtue involves the ability to accept imperfections in the world, optimism about realistic possibilities, and a focus on controlling only what's in one's power to control. In prescribing such an antidote, I might say to myself: "I should try to change my absolutistic demands to preferences" or "I should give up the absurd concept of a *perfect* universe and instead focus on the many amazing things my father achieved and joys he felt." Then, in order to strengthen these prescriptives, I might refer to or ponder similarly aimed philosophical insights from various thinkers. Lastly, in attempt to help the correctives "stick," I might assign myself various willpower exercises. Some particularly relevant examples might include focused bibliotherapy assignments accompanied by behavioral techniques (when grief seems to "rush in") such as meditation, controlled breathing, and/or imagery. Finally, with all of the above in mind (and especially so given the deep bond that my father and I shared), I should remind myself that navigating the wakes of loss will likely not be a journey with an end nor an ocean without swells. Rather, it will be a sinking and emerging, a gasping for air and a riding the curl. It will, like all things worth a damn it seems, be a dance of sadness and joy.¹¹⁷ For the paradox of loss is that without love the wakes (of loss) are never as treacherous nor the undercurrents as strong; yet only *with* love is the swim worth taking in the end.

CONCLUSION

In section one I discussed what it means to "approach something philosophically." I suggested that it entails that one honor critical thinking (reasoning), enlist in her approach various methods commonly associated with philosophy, and engage in philosophical investigation in ways consistent with the Socratic "method." Insofar as an individual embraces these components, she is participating in a way consistent with philosophy (as a thinking activity and way of life). Further, philosophy is concerned with thought and action. Not one or the other. As such, it is theoretical and applied in its essence. Further, philosophy is not (as some might claim) ill-equipped to deal with matters of everyday living. First, the aims

and subject matters with which philosophy concerns itself are germane to our experiences of life and death, not “out there” or grounded in some otherworld. To paraphrase Socrates, philosophy is to live well, so that one can die well. In this way, philosophy is particularly well-equipped for studies of grief. Second, just because philosophy places reason at its helm does not mean that it disregards emotion or even that it considers emotion (and its various expressions) to be insignificant. While there are arguments in philosophy that appear to consist of nothing other than “cold logic,” if one is to look more closely she will find them to be immensely impassioned. What is more, while philosophy utilizes logic it is not analogous or equivalent to logic (as some would have it). The study of logic supports the application of reason and helps us to distinguish good from bad arguments. Philosophical reasoning is a special kind of thinking, or more specifically, a process that moves one from premises to conclusion. Contrary to popular belief, it is not opposed to imagination, creativity and intuition; all play important roles in critical thought. Such reasoning is also complex and highly emotional. The matter of philosophy being characterized as “opposed to emotions” is further complicated by personal style, subject matter and distinct approach. First, academic and non-academic factors contribute to an individual philosopher’s mode of articulation; some adopt more emotive styles than others. Second, subject matters in philosophy vary; some are more obviously visceral in nature than others. Third, variances associated with the analytic and continental traditions can result in “twists” on the methods of philosophy one employs; this can, in turn, affect the “emotional” quality of a discussion. Generally continental philosophers embrace synthesis over analysis; value poetic and evocative modes of expression; and, hold history and relative truths in high regard. In contrast, analytic philosophers embrace analyses over synthesis; value simple, clear, and precise modes of expression; and, hold science and objective truths in high regard. However, such distinctions are overgeneralizations and oversimplifications. As such, they are of questionable value and tentative at best.

In section two I discussed the field of philosophical counseling (in general), Dr. Elliot D. Cohen’s brand of practice, and the basic tenets and steps of its leading modality, ‘Logic-Based Therapy.’ First, I offered a brief account of the movement (of philosophical counseling) and its historical genesis as well as a broad overview of the variances of views and techniques present in the field. While a general consensus exists among its practitioners that philosophical counseling “aims toward philosophical examination and understanding through the guidance of a professional trained philosopher,” there is less agreement on what specific methods apply and as it concerns its relationship to psychotherapy (or psychology). With respect to ideal method(s) I concurred with Jon Mills’s assessment that an appropriate method is, generally speaking, one that is open to the “objective criteria of assessment and standardization” and, more specifically, one that is rationally and theoretically justified; internally coherent; sensitive to the efficacy of treatment outcome; subject to duplication, procedural experimentation, and empirical research; open to verification, falsification, and modification; flexible with respect to content, context, and form, and; generalizable as a training device. As it concerns its relationship with psychology, I maintained that conceiving of

and approaching philosophical counseling in such a way that divorces philosophy from psychology is rash and unwarranted and argued instead that it should be seen as a unique form of psychotherapy. Further, while I conceded to the possibility that not all forms of philosophical counseling are psychotherapy, I agreed once again with Mills that if its aim is “ameliorative, corrective and/or transformative” and “if it claims to possess efficacy or provide benefit to its clients, then it is therapeutic by definition.” I also argued in favor his account of philosophical counseling being a form of psychotherapy that is differentiated from other forms of psychotherapy by its philosophical emphasis and the unique theoretical and methodological considerations born from such emphasis. Second, I discussed Dr. Elliot D. Cohen’s brand of philosophical practice—a breed of counseling which is best described as a hybrid discipline that combines psychology and philosophy; a form of counseling that uses philosophical methods and theories; and a type of applied philosophy that, in its specific application, becomes psychological (i.e., *philo-psychotherapy*). The basic tenets of its leading modality, LBT, were then reviewed. LBT is a dynamic, philosophical form of cognitive-behavior therapy (CBT), or more precisely, a variant (or philosophically evolved version) of Albert Ellis’s Rational-Emotive Behavior Therapy (REBT). LBT shares with REBT: (a) the hypothesis that many (though not all) behavioral and emotional problems (troubles, disturbances) are rooted in irrational thinking, (b) a belief in the positive correlation of rational thought and health and happiness, (c) a strong alliance with empirical science, (d) the provision of instructive measures relative to the identification and avoidance of fallacies (i.e., errors in reasoning), (e) a belief in willpower and the importance of partaking in willpower strengthening exercises, (f) the provision and encouragement of “homework assignments” (e.g., bibliotherapy, humor), emotive techniques (e.g., role playing, rational-emotive imagery), and behavioral techniques (e.g., relaxation protocols, self-monitoring), and (g) the same three-pronged concept of emotion, according to which emotions consist of cognitive, behavioral and physiological components. LBT differs from REBT in its *explanation* of emotions and behavior (i.e., LBT offers a justification-based versus a casual explanation), the increased magnitude of fallacies with which it works, and with respect to its provision of ‘transcendent virtues’ (i.e., a set of positive values in which to aspire in overcoming fallacies). In addition, LBT claims that emotion and behaviors are decisions (conclusions) and, in light of this, we are largely responsible for them. In this connection, we are also largely responsible for and capable of (in theory) addressing and overcoming unhealthy emotions and behaviors to live healthier, happier lives. Finally, I briefly discussed the five basic steps of LBT and offered specific examples of how these steps might be applied in a therapeutic setting. To review, the five steps of LBT are: (1) identify the client’s emotions, (2) identify and/or find (if suppressed) the premises of the client’s emotional reasoning, (3) refute any irrational premises, (4) find antidotes to the refuted premises, and (5) assign exercises aimed at strengthening willpower.

In section three I discussed the unique sort of participation with grief (or other matters of investigation) that the philosophical discipline affords one and why this sort of participation has therapeutic value. Specifically, in connection with the discussion provided in section one, I claimed that insofar as grief is a part of

life (in the same way that loss is a part of life), then philosophy is well-suited for the journey. Further, I claimed that allowing reason to be one's guide (while not the only way to inquire about and study grief) is a particularly advantageous approach insofar as it grants its "investigators" a unique sort of relationship with grief—one that allows its participants the ability to "see and feel" grief (i.e., to grapple with the concept and the experience of grief) in ways that appeal to and increase one's objective and subjective understanding of it. In this way, philosophy has therapeutic value and obtains whether one desires to gain a better understanding of grief in general (e.g., grief studies, theories of grief), of one's own experience of grief (and ways in which to navigate its waters), or as applied in practical (or clinical) form—such as philosophical counseling—to assist others in their understanding of and dealings with grief. Next I offered various explanations of grief and discussed the particular definition to which my investigation appealed. In accord with Thomas Attig, I maintained that grief can be characterized as an active and choice-filled response, a relearning, and should be thought of in ways that respect the individuality of the bereaved and appreciate (but do not reinforce) feelings of helplessness. Finally, I explored how philosophy (and LBT) has helped me "actively respond" to the challenges of loss. In so doing, I provided two excerpts from a personal narrative written shortly after my father's passing, followed by a discussion outlining the steps of LBT applied to each of these excerpts. My aims here included making clear how my (ongoing) dealings with grief have fallen prey to some common fallacies of reasoning and what precisely I (and living the examined life) have done (and continue to do) to correct these errors in hopes of living a healthier, happier life.¹¹⁸

ENDNOTES

1. A version of this paper was presented in the *National Philosophical Counseling Association* meeting as part of the American Philosophical Association, 110th Annual Conference (Eastern Division, 2013) and in poster form at the Association of Death Education and Counseling, 35th Annual Conference (2013).

2. This paper is dedicated to my father, teacher, mentor, and friend—Lee B. Waian, PhD. You are deeply and invariably missed.

3. These desiderata of philosophy are discussed in detail (in the context of the Platonic Question) by J. Angelo Corlett in his book *Interpreting Plato's Dialogues* ([Las Vegas: Parmenides, 2005], 45–57). According to Corlett, "Although there is no formalized Socratic Method, it is nonetheless helpful to take a close look at how Socrates is portrayed doing philosophy in Plato's dialogues. In so doing, we might gain a better understanding into the nature and value of philosophy itself, and better appreciate what is truly fundamental to it" (47). See also: Marisa Diaz-Waian and J. Angelo Corlett, "Kraut and Annas on Plato," *Epoché: A Journal for the History of Philosophy* 16.2 (2012); Diaz-Waian, "Excavating Plato's Cave" (<http://sdsu-dspace.calstate.edu/handle/10211.10/2034>).

4. "[P]hilosophical thinking activities employed by pure philosophers are, in general," avows Elliot D. Cohen, "the same as those employed by pure philosophers. Both attempt to build logical arguments, engage in logical analyses of arguments, examine assumptions

of such arguments, and define key terms" ("The Activity of Philosophy," in *Philosophers at Work: Issues and Practice of Philosophy* [Belmont, CA: Harcourt, 2000], 8).

5. Cohen, "The Activity of Philosophy," 8. Consider also the parallel between thanatology and thanatogy practice. Specifically, Luciana Mascarenhas Fonseca and Ines Testoni assert: "[R]eflecting upon thanatology and discussing the application of death studies in various environments is *fundamental* to adapting practice to different realities. Thanatology theory took shape as death studies and research, whereas thanatology practice manifests primarily as formal death education, end-of-life care, and bereavement counseling" (Luciana Mascarenhas Fonseca and Ines Testoni, "The Emergence of Thanatology and Current Practice in Death Education," *Omega* 64.2 [2011]: 163). Emphasis added.

6. Historically speaking, this view seems to be dominated by twentieth-century Anglo-American philosophers from the analytic tradition. See Louis I. Katzner, "Applied Philosophy and the Role of the Philosopher," *International Journal of Applied Philosophy* 1.2 (1982): 32.

7. Ibid.

8. Ibid.

9. Plato, *Plato: Complete Works*, ed. J. M. Cooper and D. S. Hutchinson (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 1997), *Apology*, 29b; 38a. All references to Plato's works herein are taken from this source.

10. Plato, *Euthyphro*, 14c; *Phaedo*, 82d; *Laws*, 667a.

11. Plato, *Euthyphro*, 16.

12. Notwithstanding the discussion held in the subsequent section of this paper in which 'philosophical counseling' is referred to as a type of applied philosophy.

13. Cohen, "The Activity of Philosophy," 8.

14. One might also consider that many of our greatest scientific accomplishments and advances in life have been the brain-children of thinkers (e.g., Einstein, Newton, Kepler, Copernicus) whose ideas (and matters of investigation) seemed, at the time, wildly radical and "out there."

15. Corlett, *Interpreting Plato's Dialogues*, 56.

16. In other words, while logic is part of reasoning (or critical thinking) it is not reasoning itself. While reasoning (or critical thinking) is part of philosophy it is not philosophy itself. And while logic is part of reasoning (or critical thinking) *and* philosophy, it is not equivalent to either.

17. Irving M. Copi and Carl Cohen, *Introduction to Logic*, 9th ed. (New York: MacMillan Publishing Company, 1994), 2.

18. Michael F. Goodman, *First Logic* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, Inc., 1993), 3. It is no surprise, Goodman notes, that "Aristotle called his treatise on logic 'Organon' (organ or instrument)" (3).

19. Copi and Cohen, *Introduction to Logic*, v. In his book, *With Good Reason: An Introduction to Informal Fallacies*, 5th ed. (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1994), S. Morris Engel considers the case for considering logic as a sort of science or art. He states: "A case can be made for viewing logic in either of these ways. Some have argued that logic is nothing but a science, in that it investigates, systematizes, and demonstrates rules of correct reasoning. . . . Others have argued that logic's main value is that it improves our reasoning powers and strengthens our ability to evaluate the correctness of arguments and to detect their weaknesses. Having such utility, they say, logic must be considered an art as well as a science for it not only informs the mind but trains it as well" (7).

20. Copi and Cohen, *Introduction to Logic*, 3.

21. Michael Scriven, *Reasoning* (New York: McGraw-Hill, Inc., 1976), 38.

22. *Ibid.*, 5.

23. *Ibid.*, 37.

24. *Ibid.* One might also consider the role of wonder in philosophy: "this is an experience which is characteristic of a philosopher, this wondering: this is where philosophy begins and nowhere else" (Plato, *Theaetetus*, 155d).

25. Copi and Cohen, *Introduction to Logic*, 4.

26. Typically, individuals with an analytic background tend toward language that is less emotive than individuals with a continental background, and vice-versa. However, this is not always the case.

27. This "split" is relative to Western philosophy. Roughly speaking, the analytic tradition, "started as a reaction to Kant's epistemology in the Vienna Circle, picked up its linguistic impetus through Wittgenstein, became strictly formulated by Logical Positivists and others, and continues today strongly in philosophy of mind, among other disciplines;" and, the continental tradition "started with German idealism, which was translated into phenomenology, reconstructed in existentialism, and is currently still in postmodernist mode" (Kile Jones, "Analytic versus Continental Philosophy," *Philosophy Now* 74 [2009]: 10).

28. One can also look at historical and geographical contingencies.

29. For example, Stanley Rosen claims the names 'analytic' and 'continental' to be of "questionable value" because they "obscure the continental origins of analytical philosophy and also imply that continental thinkers do not engage in analytical thinking" (Stanley Rosen, "The Identity of, and the Difference between, Analytical and Continental Philosophy," *International Journal of Philosophical Studies* 9.3 [2001]: 341). I attempt in my discussion to be particularly sensitive to this latter point.

30. As cited in Jones, "Analytic versus Continental Philosophy," 8. In a similar vein, analytic philosophy tends toward taxonomy and compartmentalization of philosophical problems more so than the continental tradition (Ralph Humphries, "Analytic and Continental: The Division in Philosophy," *Monist* 82.2 [1999]: 256).

31. Cf. n29.

32. Humphries, "Analytic and Continental: The Division in Philosophy," 256.

33. Levy is careful to distinguish here the fact that not all work in analytic philosophy is realist. However, he claims, "analytic philosophy has a realist orientation. We might best express this by saying that the consensus in analytic philosophy is that the burden of proof is on those who would deny realism" (Levy, "Analytic and Continental Philosophy: Explaining the Differences," *Metaphilosophy* 34.3 [2003] 290n3). Further, that analytic philosophy tends to be more "reductively materialist" does not mean that its practitioners must adopt views that are wholly reductive in character (i.e., reducing the whole to the sum of its parts).

34. Pascal Engel (paraphrased) as cited in Levy, "Analytic and Continental Philosophy: Explaining the Differences," 290.

35. Levy, "Analytic and Continental Philosophy: Explaining the Differences," 296.

36. As cited in Levy, "Analytic and Continental Philosophy: Explaining the Differences," 289.

37. Robrecht Vanderbeeken, "A Plea for Agonism between Analytic and Continental Philosophy," *Open Journal of Philosophy* 1.1 (2011): 19.

38. Levy, "Analytic and Continental Philosophy: Explaining the Differences," 293.

39. On a related note, many analytic philosophers are said to be “impatient” with continental philosophy insofar as they feel it “confuses the context of discovery with the context of justification” (Levy, “Analytic and Continental Philosophy: Explaining the Differences,” 288).

40. Humphries, “Analytic and Continental: The Division in Philosophy,” 255.

41. *Ibid.*, 257.

42. Jones, “Analytic versus Continental Philosophy,” 8.

43. Samuel Knapp and Alan C. Tjelteit, “A Review and Critical Analysis of Philosophical Counseling,” *Professional Psychology: Research and Practice* 36.5 (2005): 559.

44. *Ibid.*

45. For example, while Knapp and Tjelteit raise some valid concerns regarding the assumptions of broad-scope philosophical counselors, their discussion seems only to consider broad-scope philosophical counselors of a *particular sort*. There are philosophical counselors who could be categorized as ‘broad-scope’ insofar as they “address issues that typically appear within the realm of psychotherapy” but who also, it seems, embrace a far more sophisticated view of mental illness, its complications, and the role of psychology. In effect, they are (might be) able to escape such criticisms. For greater detail see: Knapp and Tjelteit, “A Review and Critical Analysis of Philosophical Counseling,” 561–2.

46. Knapp and Tjelteit, “A Review and Critical Analysis of Philosophical Counseling,” 559.

47. Jon Mills, “Ethical Considerations and Training for Philosophical Counseling,” *International Journal of Applied Philosophy* 13.2 (1999): 149. Mike W. Martin describes it as “the application of ethics, critical thinking, and other philosophical resources in helping individuals cope with problems and pursue meaningful lives” (Mike W. Martin, “Ethics as Therapy: Philosophical Counseling and Psychological Health,” *International Journal of Philosophical Practice* 1.1 [2001]: 1).

48. Eugene Fischer, “How to Practice Philosophy as Therapy: Philosophical Therapy and Therapeutic Philosophy,” *Metaphilosophy* 42.1–2 (2011): 57.

49. Mills, “Ethical Considerations and Training for Philosophical Counseling,” 150.

50. Jon Mills, “Philosophical Counseling as Psychotherapy: An Eclectic Approach,” *International Journal of Philosophical Practice* 1.1 (2001): 2

51. Specifically, “a philosophical counseling method should in principle be subject to peer review, objective critique, replication, experimentation, and conform to reliable and valid procedures” (*ibid.*, 3).

52. *Ibid.*

53. *Ibid.* Emphasis added. In particular, Mills offers the following as examples: “(i) the timing, meter, punctuation, and tone of questions, clarifications, suggestions, interpretations, challenges, and confrontations, (ii) what to listen for and why, (iii) when to be silent and when to speak, (iv) what, when, and how to say something that is therapeutically helpful, (v) the style and tact of delivery, (vi) types of appropriate and inappropriate disclosures, (vii) and the personal mannerisms, attitudes, demeanor, and empathic attunement that accompany good counseling” (*ibid.*). Dale G. Larson also provides some valuable insight here when he states, “questions—the kinds we ask as helpers—are the most overused and misused of all the helping microskills. We know that beginning helpers use more questions than experienced helpers. . . . There is a dramatic difference, too, in the effects of different kinds of questions [e.g., closed and open]” (Dale G. Larson, *The Helper’s Journey: Working with People Facing Grief, Loss, and Life-Threatening Illness* [Champaign, IL: Research Press, 1993], 180–1).

54. One might also recall that long before psychology became a separate branch of human inquiry, the study of mind was the province of philosophy. The point here is not one of supremacy, but rather that the two fields are inextricably related—the philosophical roots of psychology run deep and any attempt to entirely divorce one from the other seems a fool's errand.

55. Mills, "Philosophical Counseling as Psychotherapy: An Eclectic Approach," 3. He further states: "[P]hilosophical counseling is a *philo-psychological process* that takes place between two or more people always under the influence of myriad conscious and unconscious mental forces, cognitive states, affective conditions, subjective and intersubjective perceptions, persuasions, suggestibility, interpretations, and distortions, and the explicit and cryptic expectations, hopes, fears, apprehensions, disappointments, confusion, and anxieties that saturate any helping dynamic" (4).

56. Fischer, "How to Practice Philosophy as Therapy: Philosophical Therapy and Therapeutic Philosophy," 53. Fischer contrasts two types of therapeutic philosophical work: (1) philosophical therapy, and (2) therapeutic philosophy. *Philosophical therapy* refers to the aim of solving "emotional and behavioral problems that arise in ordinary life, prior to or independently from philosophical reflection"; *therapeutic philosophy* refers to "emotions and behaviors constitutive of emotional and behavioral problems [that] may arise in the course of and as a result of philosophical reflection" (53).

57. Mills, "Philosophical Counseling as Psychotherapy: An Eclectic Approach," 7. Mills has in mind here philosophical practitioners who have as their primary objective pedagogical persuasion, as opposed to educational objectives that may apply/occur in the context of helping but are not necessarily the sole focus (27n14).

58. *Ibid.*, 6. Mills also avers that such philosophical counseling shares with psychotherapy a focus on the "process of self-development through healing (*therapeia*)" (7) and that insofar as philosophical counseling: "(i) constitutes a professional relationship whereby a recognized expert is consulted to render services, (ii) receives clients for a fee, (iii) aims toward personal growth, adjustment, autonomy, wellness, increased mental health, or self-insight, (iv) professes treatment efficacy, (v) is pedagogical, preparatory, and constructive, and (vi) models generalizable skills that can be applied to everyday life, then it is psychotherapy" (6–7).

59. *Ibid.*, 5.

60. *Ibid.*, 9.

61. *Ibid.*, 24. Martin makes a similar distinction when he claims: "Philosophical counseling remains distinctive insofar as it makes philosophical methods and perspectives central, together with devoting more explicit attention to values that is common in most psychotherapy" (Martin, "Ethics as Therapy: Philosophical Counseling and Psychological Health," 21).

62. Mills, "Philosophical Counseling as Psychotherapy: An Eclectic Approach," 9.

63. All discussion about LBT (including commentary provided in footnotes) will come from the following sources *collectively* unless otherwise indicated or cited specifically: Elliott D. Cohen, *The New Rational Therapy: Thinking Your Way to Serenity, Success, and Profound Happiness* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2007); "The Basics of LBT," in *Theory and Practice of Logic-Based Therapy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, forthcoming); "Logic-Basics: Some Preliminary Distinctions for Logic-Based Therapy" (Institute of Critical Thinking, 2012); "I Want, Therefore It Must Be: Treating Fascistic Inferences in Logic-Based Therapy" (Institute of Critical Thinking, 2012); *Critical Thinking Unleashed* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2009).

64. In contrast to the philosophical counseling advanced by Dr. Lou Marinoff (Elliott D. Cohen, *What Would Aristotle?: Self-Control through the Power of Reason* [Amherst, NY: Prometheus Books, 2003], 16–7) and more broadly, as compared (for example) to the works of Gerd Achenbach, Ran Lahav, and Eite Veening (Mills, “Ethical Considerations and Training for Philosophical Counseling,” 149).

65. Recall my earlier rendering of philosophy being, at base, both theoretical and applied. Hence, my use here of parenthetical quotes.

66. See: Cohen, *What Would Aristotle?: Self-Control through the Power of Reason*; Elliott D. Cohen, “Philosophy with Teeth: The Be Wedding of Philosophical and Psychological Practices,” *International Journal of Philosophical Practice* 2.2 (2004): 1–12.

67. That LBT is not the sole modality of Dr. Cohen’s practice is to say that various counseling techniques can (and often are) utilized based on the needs of a client.

68. Also referred to as ‘new rational therapy.’

69. REBT was developed and advanced by Dr. Albert Ellis in the 1950s. For greater detail see: Elliot D. Cohen, “Albert Ellis’ Philosophical Revolution: An In Memoriam Tribute,” *International Journal of Applied Philosophy* 21.2 (2007): 143–7.

70. Cohen lists the four metaphysical assumptions of LBT as: “(1) Human beings logically deduce the cognitive-behavioral components of their emotions from premises, (2) Human beings are inherently fallible and the premises of their behavioral and emotional reasoning tend to contain fallacies, (3) Behavioral and emotional problems tend to stem from absolutistic, perfectionistic constructs of reality, [and] (4) Human beings have an inherent power of will that can be used to overcome fallacious behavioral and emotional reasoning” (Elliot D. Cohen, “The Metaphysics of Logic-Based Therapy,” *International Journal of Philosophical Practice* 3.1 [2005]: 1). See also: Albert Ellis, “The Philosophical Basis of Rational-Emotive Therapy (RET),” *International Journal of Applied Philosophy* 5.2 (1990): 35–41; Elliot D. Cohen, “Logic, Rationality and Counseling,” *International Journal of Applied Philosophy* 5.1 (1990): 43–9.

71. Kevin Aho makes a somewhat related claim about the role of medicine in therapy when he asserts: “The existential orientation in psychiatry arose from dissatisfaction with the prevailing attempt to medicalize human suffering. But ‘dissatisfaction’ does not entail the wholesale rejection of scientific approaches. . . . If a patient can be pulled out of a state of catatonic anxiety by means of medication, electroconvulsive therapy, or hospitalization then medical interventions do not necessarily have to be viewed as dehumanizing and repressive, but as a way of recovering the patient’s capacity for transcendence” and “medical techniques may help [a] patient function at work, sleep better, and cope with the various stresses of life, but they can never fill the void lying at the core of the human condition” (Kevin Aho, “Is Existentialism Anti-Psychiatry?” [paper presented at the annual meeting of the National Philosophical Counseling Association at the Eastern Division Conference of the American Philosophical Association, Atlanta, GA 2012]).

72. Bruce W. Fraser, “What’s Love Got to do with it? The Epistemic Marriage of Philosophical Counseling and Psychology,” *International Journal of Philosophical Practice* 2.2 (2004): 4.

73. *Ibid.*

74. That we are largely responsible for our emotions and behaviors is also a claim that finds support in REBT.

75. This point was clarified to me by way of personal correspondence with Dr. Elliott D. Cohen.

76. Thus, LBT is in line with our general acceptance about holding people responsible for his/her actions and/or responses.

77. Fraser, “What’s Love Got to do with it?,” 13–4. Fraser goes on to state: “Moreover, the role of logic as a corrective to faulty thinking also grounds it firmly in the realm of psychology, since logic is now understood as part of the representational framework that interacts with belief systems, emotion, and the world. (The scientific characterization of logic, the placing of logic on the same epistemological footing as psychology, also connects it intrinsically to the study of emotion and behavior). Thus, Cohen’s LBT is not only consistent with the mandate linking logic to psychology, it reflects the central insights of philosophical naturalism” (14).

78. According to personal correspondence held with Dr. Elliot Cohen regarding this point: *emotions* (and behaviors) *are like a musical composition, which can be broken into melody, harmony or rhythm etc., but the composition is not the same as the addition of these elements.* Nevertheless, the trained listener can tune into any of these elements as they proceed. *The trained LBT practitioner is a trained listener who can tune into the cognitive component of the client’s emotions and help him/her to improve this aspect.* When that happens, a new composition emerges, hopefully one that has less sour notes and more consonant rhythms.

79. All emotions include a rating dimension—negative (to be thought of here as ‘unhealthy’) and positive (to be thought of here as ‘healthy’). Emotions can also have neutral ratings or ratings of indifference (e.g., apathy).

80. More often than not, rules are not explicitly articulated. Instead, they are suppressed components of one’s reasoning.

81. According to LBT, all states of consciousness, including emotions, refer to objects outside of themselves. ‘Outside’ does not necessarily mean outside one’s skin. There can be emotions about emotions (e.g., one can be upset about being upset—here the object of the emotion is that very emotion). ‘Outside itself’ is a somewhat unfortunate way of saying that *emotions always have a referent.* One might recall here, Edmund Husserl’s claim: The essence of consciousness . . . is the so called intentionality. Consciousness is always conscious of something (paraphrased).

82. A report can also do its own rating (e.g., ‘Those stupid masses of tangled wires caused me to trip’). By including in the report that the wires are ‘stupid’ you both describe and rate a perceived state of affairs. In such cases, the report is not purely factual or descriptive.

83. For example: [P1] People who go into deep financial debt as a result of irresponsible spending habits (O) are failures (R); [P2] I am in deep financial debt due to my irresponsible spending habits (O); [C] I am a failure (R). P1 reflects the *major premise* of one’s emotional reasoning and consists of O and R (which receives its evaluative direction from some rule). Here, the object of emotion—i.e., going into deep financial debt as a result of irresponsible spending habits—is receiving its rating by way of the rule that one ought not go into debt in such a way and anyone who does is, by virtue of failing to meet that standard, a failure/worthless. P2 reflects the *minor premise* of one’s emotional reasoning and consists of an affirmation of O relative to one’s particular circumstances. C reflects the *conclusion* or emotion deduced from its premises (in this case, depression is a likely candidate).

84. For example, if you feel angry or anxious at time x, rarely do you work through your reasoning and try to uncover its premises in the heat of the moment or amidst the chaos; you just *feel* angry or anxious.

85. LBT also provides an *operational* definition of ‘fallacy’ wherein a fallacy is a mistake in reasoning that tends to frustrate personal and interpersonal happiness. In its aim to assist people overcome erroneous reasoning and attain happiness, LBT provides a list of fallacies (‘Cardinal Fallacies’) to which people commonly fall prey. The ‘cardinal fallacies’ consist of both fallacies of rating and reporting.

86. *Formal fallacies* are arguments that are unsound in their form or structure. An irrational argument can never be sound because an irrational argument implies either a lack of validity or a lack of verity. *Informal fallacies* are arguments that are unsound in their content, as opposed to their form or structure. The presence of a fallacy in an argument precludes the premises leading to the conclusion in a decisive way. For greater detail see: Engel, *With Good Reason: An Introduction to Informal Fallacies*.

87. According to LBT there is, it seems, a human tendency to make fascistic inferences. Why? What one wants and desires is, subjectively, at the forefront of one's own consciousness. So, when one wants something the desire tends to spill over into the external world beyond the confines of one's own subjectivity. LBT holds that many emotional/behavioral problems are rooted in this egocentric predicament. Further, LBT maintains that not all fascistic inferences are irrational; some demands are reasonable and worth making (e.g., just because someone had a difficult upbringing does not mean that I should tolerate her abuse). *Irrational musts* are absolute and dogmatic while *rational musts* are provisional and contingent. The former tell us we must never *under any circumstances* X and, equally, that we must always *be able to* X. In contrast, the latter takes into account the notion that, *if other things are equal*, we must not X. These sorts of commands make sense if we understand them objectively. Ultimately, people can (and likely will) disagree on what constitutes the extenuating circumstances of a rational must. However, no rational debate about such matters can even occur when one *insists* on absolutistic musts.

88. An antidote argues against the irrational rule by providing a new, more rational rule by which to file one's report.

89. The terms 'preliminary antidotal reasoning' and 'participatory antidotal reasoning' are my own distinctions and were verified as accurate renderings in personal correspondence with Dr. Elliot D. Cohen.

90. Sometimes a 'should' antidote clears the way for another 'should' antidote.

91. This should not be confused, however, "with the specific therapeutic goals that a client and an LBT therapist might mutually agree on. For example, in couples counseling, the therapeutic goal might be to overcome conflict in the relationship. As is not uncommon, suppose each partner demands perfection of the other and damns the other when he or she falls short. The LBT therapist would help the client identify the 'fallacy syndrome' consisting of demanding perfection and damning others. . . . Since the transcendent virtue of demanding perfection is metaphysical security (being hopeful in the face of realistic possibilities, humble in the face of the uncertainty of the universe, and tolerant of its imperfections) and since the transcendent virtue of damnation is respect, the LBT therapist would aim at helping clients cultivate these virtues. That is, the specific virtues sought in therapy would depend on what irrational ideation is behind the specific problem the clients have come to therapy to address" (Elliot D. Cohen, "The New Rational Therapy: A Response to Martin," *International Journal of Applied Philosophy* 21.1 [2007]: 136).

92. The 'Cardinal Fallacies' of LBT have corresponding 'Transcendent Virtues.' Cf. n85.

93. To assist in this endeavor, LBT provides a list of the most common fallacies of reasoning (i.e., 'Cardinal Fallacies') and a variety of virtues (i.e., 'Transcendent Virtues'). Cf. n85.

94. Cohen, "The New Rational Therapy: A Response to Martin," 136. Emphasis provided.

95. Kenneth Sayre, *Plato's Literary Garden: How to Read a Platonic Dialogue* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1995), xvii.

96. Rick Hanson and Richard Mendius, *Buddha's Brain: The Practical Neuroscience of Happiness, Love and Wisdom* (Oakland, CA: New Harbinger Publications, Inc., 2009), 75.

97. Effort (active participation) is an implicit part of philosophical reasoning and with respect to the application of such reasoning in various aspects of one's life.

98. LBT also maintains that it generally takes an extreme effort of the will to overcome irrational thought born by instances of socialization (e.g., stereotyping, traditions, oppression) because the feelings and sensory images associated with such thought processes have been "spinning one's wheels" for many years.

99. I raised this point about cognitive dissonance in the course of my personal correspondence about LBT with Dr. Elliot D. Cohen.

100. Larson makes a similar claim in his discussion about a clients' frame of reference when he states: "Many assumptions and beliefs that people have about life and themselves are implicit and are only brought into awareness when they are threatened by events that contradict them" (Larson, *The Helper's Journey*, 180).

101. Not necessarily at the same time.

102. A philosophical understanding of x involves "seeing and feeling" x.

103. Purushottama Bilimora, "On Grief and Mourning: Thinking a Feeling, Back to Bob Solomon," *Sophia* 50 (2011): 285.

104. Janet McCracken, "Falsely, Sanelly, Shallowly: Reflections on the Special Character of Grief," *International Journal of Applied Philosophy* 19.1 (2005): 142.

105. Peter Goldie, "Grief: A Narrative Account," *Ratio* (New Series) 24.2 (2011): 137.

106. I use the term 'general' here because there are some aspects advanced by Attig (regarding his conception of grief and bereavement) that I might place less emphasis on than he. For example, in describing bereavement Attig states: "Bereavement shakes our 'assumptive world' far more deeply than simply causing us to question beliefs we have long held or to rethink plans of action [i.e., reflective activity]. Rather, bereavement uproots our souls; it takes us away from the shape of life where we have come to experience ourselves at home, and it makes us aware of how much we have taken for granted [pre-reflective activity]" (Thomas Attig, "Meanings of Death Seen Through the Lens of Grieving," *Death Studies* 28 [2004]: 349–50). While I agree with the depth of what is being expressed here relative to the experience of grieving (and bereavement), as it concerns our current discussion, I am hesitant to follow suit with the emphasis Attig seems to place on the supremacy of pre-reflective experience (over reflective experience). Nevertheless, by and large, I find Attig's conception of 'grief' particularly compelling.

107. Attig, "Meanings of Death Seen Through the Lens of Grieving," 343–4.

108. *Ibid.*, 359. Insofar as "choice," "effort," "active participation," "coming to terms with," "engaging with," "reshaping," "redirecting," "problem-solving," "addressing and defining," "adjustment," and "contending with" are components of relearning one's world (relearning how and relearning that), the steps of LBT seem well-suited for the task. See also: Thomas Attig, *How We Grieve: Relearning the World* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, Inc., 2011).

109. Attig maintains that stage/phase and medical theories tend to provide inadequate theories of grieving insofar as they oft fail to meet the above criteria. See: Attig, "Meanings of Death Seen Through the Lens of Grieving," 345–6.

110. *Ibid.*, 346.

111. *Ibid.* Attig also argues "the best grief work theory will avoid reductionism in characterizing the work that grieving encompasses. . . . Grieving is not simply physical labor. . . . Nor is it merely emotional expression and adjustment. Nor is it entirely psychodynamic accommodation. . . . Nor is it simply meaning reconstruction. . . . Nor is it merely behavioral modification. . . . Nor is it entirely family or community adjustment to loss,

reassignment of roles, and shared meaning-making. . . . Grieving is each of these things all at once. It is misleading to characterize the work of grieving as if we ordinarily do any of these things in splendid isolation from the others. They are seamlessly interwoven into the fabric of our lives as dimensions of the whole persons we are" (346).

112. The full dedication/narrative can be found in the 'Preface' section of my thesis, "Excavating Plato's Cave." Available at <http://sdsu-dspace.calstate.edu/handle/10211.10/2034>.

113. Of course, if I had to speak literally, life would not have any of these value statements attached. Life just IS. It is a process—a process of which we are a part and which we have the ability to affect and ideally perfect. Life can certainly be considered amazing in its own right (and ought to be). But it seems that is only when we speak of morality (and thus things which fall under the scope of reason) when labels of "fairness" come into play. In other words, while life *itself* cannot be considered fair (or otherwise), things that take place *within* the process of life can certainly be considered so. This is because reason (and all that reason entails) concerns a notion of rights. It concerns what we consider to be valuable and important as individuals and a collective people. It also concerns a general belief in the importance of balance and harmony. And when these things are violated or infringed upon in ways that shake us to the very core—resonating into the chambers of our hearts a discord of immeasurable proportion so as to leave us barely capable of picking up our grief-stricken heads—this is so because we desire a certain sense of justice. By and large in the end, we desire that which is good and that which is beautiful.

114. Brian Andreas, "More Fair," in *Some Kind of Ride: Stories and Drawings for Making Sense of It All* (Decorah: StoryPeople, 2006), 33.

115. This struggle becomes more apparent in light of the second excerpt. Thus, even though I state the opposite in excerpt one, I do not wholly embrace the idea.

116. It is important to note that *not all cases of grief* (or other sorts of emotions oft considered "negative," for that matter) *are irrational*. In my case, there are a number of occasions in the full narrative wherein my experience of grief (i.e., my emotional reasoning) is quite rational. *What differentiates a rational emotion from an irrational emotion (or emotional experience) is that the reasoning in irrational emotions is, for one reason or another, unsound (e.g., false premises, unwarranted inferences).*

117. I smile to myself here, recalling my father's fondness for Confucius's claim: "The gem cannot be polished without friction, nor man perfected without trials." This parallels the idea of a life "perfected" (and presumably "worth a damn") being one that involves ups-and-downs, joys and sadness.

118. I would like to thank Dr. Elliot Cohen and Dr. Samuel Zinaich, Jr. for their constructive criticism, guidance and support.