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Intellectual Autobiography

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PHILOSOPHICAL PROFILES

In the present issue of *Philosophia* we launch a series of invited contributions that present Intellectual Autobiographies of philosophers. Each such contribution is accompanied by a new paper of the same author. The two shed philosophical light on each other. We believe that such Intellectual Autobiographies will render readers of *Philosophia* invaluable service.

We are pleased to have as the first contributor to the series a member of the Editorial Board of *Philosophia*, Professor Aaron Ban-Ze'ev, President and Professor of Philosophy, University of Haifa, Israel.

Asa Kasher, Editor in Chief, *Philosophia*.

Introduction

I am not accustomed to writing about myself; I have always tried to focus on theoretical issues without giving much weight to my personal involvement or progress. However, I do recognize that contemplating my intellectual development may have value beyond understanding my personal growth; it may clarify the nature of the issues discussed. The fact that I defined emotions only after many years of studying them indicates their complexity and the need to characterize them in a unique manner that is different from the way in which we characterize other mental capacities. Does the fact that I have spent most of my academic life studying emotions, and in particular romantic love, indicate something about me? Does my character have any impact upon my intellectual thinking or does the impact operate in the reverse direction? Writing this intellectual autobiography has shed some light for me on a few of these questions, and I hope it will do the same for the reader.

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The Beginning

As a young boy, I already wanted to enter academia and to devote my life to science and a better understanding of ourselves. I was an avid reader; my preference was for factual books, but I also enjoyed poetry and novels. The novels I enjoyed most were the romantic ones—Gustav Flaubert's *Madam Bovary* and Amos Oz's *My Michael*. One of the reasons that I gravitated towards such fiction was that at this age I firmly believed in the romantic ideology and that love can and should often disregard artificial boundaries. In my youth, I read few if any philosophical books. In the ninth grade of high-school I studied history (combined with philosophy) with Michael Strauss. This course opened my eyes to the value and enjoyment of critical philosophical thinking. Strauss was to become (together with Stephen Toulmin) the person who had the greatest impact on my intellectual development.

At the last year of high-school, my eldest brother Yehuda was killed in the Six Day War. He was 32 years old. This deeply painful event is probably a primary factor that has led to my sensitivity toward other people and my subsequent interest in emotions. I believe, however, that this sensitivity was an inherent part of my character before his death. Either way, understanding the human mind became, and has continued to be, my major intellectual concern.

I began my academic studies in 1972 at the University of Haifa. At that time I was not sure which subject to pursue, and I choose two very different subjects—philosophy and economics (not surprisingly, these were the subjects that Strauss had chosen for his undergraduate studies). In the first year I devoted most of my time to economics, in the second year my time was divided more or less equally between the two, while in the third year, I spent most of my time on philosophy. During this year, Strauss, who was the chairperson of the department, assigned me to teach a reading course in epistemology to the second-year students. Some of the students protested to him that it was improper to have a third-year student teaching a second-year class, but Strauss refused to change his decision. In 1975 I began my master's degree in philosophy, and between 1978 and 1981 I completed my doctoral studies at the University of Chicago; my thesis was entitled *Perception as a Cognitive System*.

Epistemology, which basically investigates the impact of our cognitive tools upon our knowledge and beliefs, was indeed the proper place to begin my search to understand the human mind. Before jumping to conclusions about anything, we should first examine the way in which we gather our data. A thorough study of Kant was my first significant research task—I also taught his views in my reading course. My M.A. thesis examined an important aspect of epistemology, that is, the status of a priori principles in science; I focused on Russell's view. A major issue here is whether these principles, upon which the probability of scientific claims is based, have themselves any degree of credibility. And if so, how can this second-level probability be assessed? My first academic paper, "The Analytic, Synthetic and 'A Priori'" (*Scientia* 1979), which is based upon my M.A. thesis, analyzes various attitudes concerning the truth value of the a priori principles. I argued that these principles are synthetic in the sense that they influence the content of our scientific knowledge; hence, there is a sense according to which their cognitive value can be compared.

A major intellectual milestone in my development was the period I spent writing my doctoral dissertation at the University of Chicago. My time in Chicago

contributed enormously to my intellectual development since it was almost the first time in my academic life that I did nothing but study and because during this time I met many admirable scholars. I read avidly at that time and within a brief period, less than 3 years, I completed my doctoral studies.

I went to Chicago because of Stephen Toulmin who I consider to be one of the most important philosophers of the twentieth century. Strauss and Toulmin are both profound thinkers, and both of them have had a huge influence on my philosophical views. Their thinking is marked by a unique combination of a broad outlook on the very profound issues of philosophy (and life), a careful analysis of the details, and the ability to concretize their discussion in everyday issues. Despite such similarity, they came from different backgrounds: While Strauss, like his grandfather Martin Buber, was submersed in the German tradition and his important writings are in German and Hebrew, Toulmin, a graduate of Cambridge University, grew up within the English analytic tradition. Both Strauss and Toulmin were exceptionally clear when explaining their thought, but they did it differently. Strauss' lectures were highly engaging and lucid, but his writings are extremely difficult to read, even for me despite my many hours of discussions with him about these issues. Toulmin's lectures were difficult to follow as he thought while speaking, but his writings are very accessible and clear. Accordingly, Toulmin wrote much more than Strauss did, and his academic recognition is consequently greater. It is of interest to note that since Toulmin was a pupil of Wittgenstein, the latter's views were often coming up in our discussions. I remember a disagreement that I once had with Toulmin concerning the nature of colors; while he was considering my view, Toulmin said that he had a somewhat similar discussion with Wittgenstein whose position was such and such. I was greatly moved by this, since it felt to me as if I was personally discussing this issue with Wittgenstein.

The philosophers whose writings have made the greatest impact upon me are Aristotle, Spinoza, and Kant. It would be impossible to draw up a precise list of the issues in which these scholars influenced me, as their impact is evident in so many matters. I can say, however, that Kant's main influence is most evident in my discussions in epistemology and perception. Aristotle's and Spinoza's impact is more apparent in my discussions of the mind–body problem and particularly in the study of emotions. It is a source of great pride and of humility for me to consider myself as a pupil of these five intellectual giants.

Although I have been influenced by many people, my writings have been done alone. I find writing an enjoyable process, as I like being creative and take pleasure in attempting to arrange the various pieces of the puzzle that underlie the human mind in a more coherent manner. Nonetheless, I devote a lot of thinking to each paragraph and revise and rewrite each many times—and it is difficult to work that way with someone else. However, in three cases I have collaborated with someone else. I wrote a few articles together with Michael Strauss and Keith Oatley and a book with Ruhama Goussinsky. I actually wrote the articles myself, but after long and profound conversations with Strauss and Oately. Working with these two insightful scholars was an exhilarating intellectual experience. Goussinsky was a doctoral student of mine and in writing our book, *In the Name of Love*, each of us wrote our own part—she focused on analyzing the attitudes of men who had killed their wives out of love and I upon a more conceptual analysis of love.

Philosophy, in my view, is not an historical study of various scholars, but rather an intellectual study of profound issues. The study of scholars has significant importance in reaching an understanding these issues, and as such should be thoroughly done. However, as my writings are concerned mainly with general issues, rather than with specific views, I seldom discuss the views of other people critically or in detail, although I refer to them whenever appropriate. While this method has afforded my writing the advantage of focusing more completely on clarifying the issue under discussion, it has given little incentive to others to discuss my own work in detail. Reactions in the academic world are often aroused when you criticize or support a particular scholar, since such criticism or support makes both those who belong to that school and those who are against it consider your writings as relevant, causing them to discuss your views. I believe that in this manner I follow in the footsteps of my great mentors, Strauss and Toulmin, whose main works are also concerned with general issues and not people and who also did not belong to any philosophical school. This is the main reason why neither of them received their due philosophical attention.

Alongside my academic career, I have always devoted time to public affairs within and outside the university. I have been involved in community activities and accepted various positions (such as the secretary of the kibbutz in which I lived or head of the kibbutz's social committee), while always continuing my academic work. Since 1995, I have held key positions in the university administration and invested great effort to continue my academic writing. Indeed, my books on emotions were written while I held top positions, such as Dean of Research (when I completed writing *The Subtlety of Emotions*), Rector (*Love Online*), and President (*In the Name of Love*), at the University of Haifa. Although I had studied and researched some of the material used in these books in previous periods, most of the work was done while I held these posts. This has forced me to be highly disciplined about how I divide my time. I begin my day at about 4.00 AM and devote the next 2 to 3 hours to my academic research. I also devote much of the weekend and vacation time to this research. Living in such a disciplined way does, of course, reduce the time I can spend with my family, but since writing is an intrinsically valuable activity for me, and I derive so much enjoyment from it, my family has been supportive and understanding.

In my books I have tried to approach the educated general public by presenting my academic claims in an understandable and light manner, using language that aims to be accessible and entertaining. This is not an easy task, as one risks losing both types of audiences, the academic and the public, since such a style of writing is not the type to which either audience is accustomed. My books are not advice books on how to cope with emotions—for instance, how to find success in love; rather, the books analyze emotions and provide a conceptual framework for understanding them. Nevertheless, the books may help people to enjoy and better cope with their emotions. My books refer to many everyday sources, such as anecdotes, citations from various people, and love songs. These sources do not intend to prove my claims, but rather to illustrate them and provide them with further support, in addition to the conceptual analysis and empirical evidence that are presented in the books.

Complex Conceptual Tools

The choice of conceptual tools determines the nature of one's explanation. Three such tools, which are evident throughout my writings, are the distinctions between various levels of description, prototypical and binary categorization, and intrinsically and extrinsically valuable activities. None of these distinctions are straightforward and I have elaborated upon them in my various writings; they have greatly facilitated my attempts to capture the complexity of the human mind and the environment in which we live.

In my studies on perception and then in subsequent discussions on emotions and other phenomena, I have emphasized the distinction between various levels of description. Thus, an emotion is a complex phenomenon describable on different levels, such as the neurological, physiological, biological, psychological, sociological, and philosophical realms. In light of the complexity of emotions, it is extremely important to utilize all these perspectives, as well as nonscientific perspectives such as those expressed in common sense and art. My own discussion usually focuses on the psychological and philosophical levels.

This distinction between various levels of description reflects my position concerning the body–mind problem. A level of description expresses a section of reality and the relations between the various levels are those either of support (the lower level, e.g., the neurological one, supports the higher lever, e.g., the mental one) or of realization (the higher level is realized in the lower one). Support and realization are not causal relations between two separate events, but are correlations between different aspects of the same event. A change in the higher-level realm must be realized in a change in the lower-level realm, but a change at the lower level need not be expressed at the higher level. The relation between a higher and a lower level is one of correlation between a whole and its parts. A higher-level system does not violate lower-level regularities; hence the elements of a higher-level system can still be fully described in terms of their own level. The mutual constraints between lower-level and higher-level regularities give some explanatory value to references from one level of description to another.

The above approach to the mind–body problem, which may be termed "the stratification approach," is close to various philosophers, such as Aristotle, Spinoza, and the advocates of the emergent view of mental properties; nevertheless, it has its own original flavor. I discuss this issue in detail when writing about perception, as any explanation of perceptual experiences can scarcely avoid reference to this problem. In my discussions on emotions, I barely discuss the mind–body issue. It seems to me that a study of emotions involves so many other complex issues that require clarification and which are of greater priority than this problem, as they are more unique to emotional experiences. Although my view of emotions is compatible with the above stratification approach, it may be compatible with other approaches to the mind–body problem. Only after conducting extensive research into emotions did I discuss the ontological status of emotions more thoroughly; and then I used the stratification approach more explicitly.

Another useful distinction is that between two major types of categories: "binary" and "prototypical." Binary categories provide a clear criterion that constitutes the

sufficient and necessary conditions for membership. It is usually an all-or-nothing category ("love me or leave me," as Elvis Presley said) with two basic attributes: (a) clear-cut boundaries within which the criterion's conditions are met, and (b) an equal degree of membership for all items. War veterans and eligible voters are examples of binary categories. One cannot be a partial veteran or a semi-eligible voter. Membership in a prototypical category is determined by an item's degree of similarity to the best example in the category: the greater the similarity, the higher the degree of membership. The prototypical category has neither clear-cut boundaries nor an equal degree of membership. Many of our everyday categories are prototypical—for example, weapons, clothes, birds and furniture.

I realized the importance of the above distinction through my discussions with Toulmin; more specifically, the studies of the anthropologist Eleanor Rosch were of great assistance. I believe that prototypical categories are generally more appropriate to the psychological realm, which is complex and has no clear-cut boundaries. Emotions constitute prototypical categories. Hence, there is no single essence that is a necessary and sufficient condition for all emotions, and no simple definition of emotions or even one type of emotion exists. In light of the prototypical nature of emotions, we should frequently use terms such as "usually," "typically," and "often" while characterizing emotions. Various instances of emotions are not as nicely divided and clearly arranged as we would like them to be. Quite often, extreme cases constitute the public image of a category: they are mistakenly perceived to be both typical and frequent, because, like other abnormalities, they are more noticeable than the typical or the common. Indeed, the media are more interested in unique, abnormal cases than in common, normal ones; only the former are exciting to most people. Working with categories having clear-cut and definite boundaries is easier, but they do not adequately represent reality.

A third central distinction that I have often used in my writings is that between intrinsically and extrinsically valuable activities. After somewhat revising this Aristotelian distinction, which I first heard from Strauss, I have used it to clarify phenomena such as happiness, love, sex, flirting, and gossip.

An extrinsically valuable activity is a means to an external goal; its value lies in achieving that goal. This goal-oriented activity is always incomplete: as long as the external goal has not been achieved, the activity is incomplete, and the moment the goal has been achieved, the activity is over. The major criterion for evaluating such activities is efficiency—that is, the ratio of benefits to costs. Time is one of the resources that we try to save when engaging in extrinsically valuable activities Examples of such activities are building a house, paying bills, cleaning the house, attending job interviews, and so forth. In an intrinsically valuable activity, our interest is focused upon the activity itself, not its results. Although such an activity has results, it is not performed in order to achieve these; rather, its value is in the activity itself. Hence, we do not want to complete these activities as soon as possible. Listening to music and intellectual thinking are examples of such intrinsically valuable activities. Most human activities have both intrinsic and extrinsic value and the weight of each characteristic may change.

In addition to profound intrinsically valuable activities, there are also superficial intrinsically valuable activities, such as watching television, gossip, and going to a movie, in which for a brief period of time people enjoy the activity for its own sake,

even though such activities may not contribute much to their development and flourishing. In some cases, superficial intrinsically valuable activities may even have a negative functional value, since we may pursue them instead of engaging in more beneficial activities. Gossip is an example of a superficial intrinsically valuable activity: it is idle, relaxing, and enjoyable talk involving playfulness in which little importance is attached to the given subject. Gossip is typically talking for the sake of talking. It is usually relaxing and effortless and, like games, often relieves people's daily tensions. Those who indulge in gossip do not want to ponder deeply on the content or consequences of what they say.

In *The Subtlety of Emotions* and *Love Online* I emphasize the importance of intrinsically valuable activities for our long-term happiness. In my recent book, *In the Name of Love*, I discuss in some detail the importance of such activities for genuine romantic love. Loving activities are not like the process of consuming food, which can fill us to the point that we do not think about eating for a while; they are more like a continuous journey within an exciting landscape in which we encounter a never-ending series of pleasant and interesting experiences. If intense romantic love is to last for a considerable length of time, it should involve profound intrinsically valuable activities whose satisfaction is not transient, as it involves the optimal development and function of the individual. When activities are perceived as intrinsically valuable, they entail seeking the good of the beloved for her own sake, while at the same time being profoundly satisfying for the lover. Profound love does not stem from subordinating one's activities to those of the beloved, but from considering the activities for and with the beloved as compatible with one's own intrinsically valuable activities. In this case there is much less need "to work" at the relationship, as such "work" is no longer considered work, but rather constitutes a profound pleasurable and satisfying activity. The choice of such activities cannot be arbitrary, as it must be of benefit and compatible with the agent's flourishing. Increasing the ratio of intrinsically valuable activities to externally valuable activities is of crucial importance in establishing and maintaining profoundly satisfying loving relationships. Since love is frequently expressed within a certain social framework, it often requires performing extrinsically valuable chores for maintaining this framework—for example, cleaning the house, ironing clothes, or buying food. Performing these goal-oriented chores and deeds without feeling resentful is one sign of the profoundness of love. Other measures of such profoundness is the extent to which lovers share intrinsically valuable activities and the scope of activities that become intrinsically valuable only in relation to the beloved. In such circumstances, the beloved becomes an intrinsic element of the lover's own identity.

My choice of complex conceptual tools is not accidental—it reflects my belief in the complexity of our environment and the absence of clear-cut readymade solutions. Such an attitude may be less exciting, as it does not provide provocative headlines and easy-to-remember slogans, but it is more appropriate. It is extremely important to realize the presence of other perspectives and attitudes and the grain (or more) of truth in them. Being aware of the standpoint of the others is crucial for behaving morally toward them. Needless to say, such awareness does not imply adopting their perspective or eliminating your own needs. It merely promotes the value of moderation and the need to be considerate of other people. Moderation in human behavior is valuable as it takes serious account of the existence of other people;

similarly, the value of moderation in intellectual thinking stems from taking into account the perspectives of other people. Consequently, I have sought to make moderation a hallmark of my own behavior in which emotions are important but often, mainly in public, are exercised moderately.

Perception

My Ph.D. dissertation, *Perception as a Cognitive System*, examines various aspects of perception, in particular the influence of our cognitive tools upon our cognitive content. As perception is our initial cognitive tool, examining its nature has a particular significance for analyzing the reliability of our knowledge. In this work I reject the prevailing contention that assumes the existence of a pure perceptual stage that mediates between the physical and mental realms; as such, this stage does not include the subject's contributions and so can form the basis for certainty. Rejecting the existence of a pure sensory given poses difficulties concerning the reliability of knowledge. If the initial stage of knowledge is not a direct reception of pure data from the world, but is "contaminated" by the subject's contributions, reliable knowledge seems to be impossible. In dealing with this problem, I have adopted two types of responses. The first one is common—science should not aim at certainty but at greater reliability. In this sense, the ability to give some kind of probability to our a priori principles is valuable. My second response, which is at the center of the dissertation, is more original and refers to the possibility of having direct perception involving the subject's contributions.

In analyzing the constructive (non-pure) and relational nature of the perceptual content, I was greatly influenced by Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason* (1787), and C. I. Lewis' *Mind and the World Order* (1929). In formulating the direct nature of perception, James Gibson's *The Ecological Approach to Visual Perception* (1979) was a significant inspiration. However, Gibson thought that the only way to maintain the direct nature of perception is to admit its purity, that is, its lack of subjective contributions. Despite this disagreement, I have endorsed other basic contentions of this approach, which developed into an established school with its own followers, conferences and publications. This is the only school that I was, for a brief time and in a partial manner, part of in the sense that I participated in some of their gatherings and we followed the work of each other. Like Gibson, his followers were sensitive to conceptual issues and discussions with them were of real use to me.

After completing my doctoral studies, I returned to the University of Haifa and continued my research on perception, trying to elaborate upon the central ideas presented in my dissertation. These efforts culminated in my book, *The Perceptual System* (1993). My starting point is the commonsense attitude of naïve realism according to which perceptual qualities are unaffected by and independent of the perceiver. Although common sense can often be deceptive, it involves profound contentions that are reliable from a certain perspective, as they have developed throughout human history. In his *Philosophical Investigations* (1953), Ludwig Wittgenstein says that the essence of philosophy is not to learn anything new, but "to *understand* something that is already in plain view" (89). This should be done after critically examining the alternatives and the nature of the plain view. This is

what I attempted in this book: I begin by criticizing naïve realism, which is an aspect of common sense, and after a long critical journey, I present the perspective according to which there is some truth to this attitude. In a similar manner, my most recent book about love begins by harshly criticizing the Romantic Ideology, and by the end of the book romantic love is praised and a way to maintain it, despite various psychological and social difficulties, is offered.

I reject naïve realism and believe that perceptual qualities are affected by and dependent on the perceiver. However, I also reject extreme subjectivism, which assumes that such qualities are merely qualities of the perceiver. I believe that these qualities are properties of the perceptual environment. It does no good to strike a quantitative compromise between the above positions and assume that some properties, such as primary qualities, are properties of the objects, while others, such as secondary qualities, are properties of the subject; a more profound proposal is required. I propose that we speak about a relational environment, which presupposes a relation to a perceiver, and its content must be organized in certain relations familiar to the perceiver. The perceiver and the perceptual environment exist as a pair, just as a father and his son exist as a pair. The very same man existed before his son was born, but then another aspect was added to him: that of fatherhood. Similarly, the physical world existed before the emergence of the subject, but then another level of description, the perceptual one, was added. The position I am advocating is a kind of critical realism. Unlike the position of idealism, that assumes that nothing exists independent of the agent (a position that seems to be so bizarre that I doubt if anyone seriously holds it outside the classroom), I assume the independent existence of physical entities, but this does not imply a naïve position in the epistemological dispute of whether these entities are independent of the physical conceptual framework. Within the perceptual environment, perception is direct, as it involves direct awareness of events in the environment, but in light of the relational nature of this environment, perceptual awareness merely provides partial information about the world—that part which is influenced by the subject's characteristics.

The epistemic problem of how our perceptual system works, and specifically how the subject's contributions are expressed in the perceptual content, is more of an empirical issue, but I have nevertheless discussed some major considerations. I have argued that perception is direct in two major senses: it is perception of the objects themselves, not of internal mental representations, and it is not preceded by mediating inferential processes. In my view the distinction between non-constructive (pure) and constructive (non-pure) perception is not equivalent to the distinction between direct and indirect perception. The former distinction refers to the presence of the agent's contributions in the perceptual content, whereas the latter distinction refers to how such contributions are made. I have claimed that perception can be both direct and constructive and suggested considering a schema to be the constitutive cognitive element enabling such kind of perception. A perceptual schema is the way a perceptual experience is organized. The schema is a constitutive element since it is constantly participating in the ongoing state of perceiving—it is the way the perceptual system is "tuned."

Looking back at my work on perception, I still hold the basic views I presented and consider this work, with all due modesty, to be important not merely for

understanding perception but for other mental phenomena as well. The only major issue on which I have some doubts is that of the cognitive mechanism underlying perception. Although I still believe that the notion of a cognitive schematic structure, rather than an intellectual process, is more appropriate for explaining perception (as well as emotions), I now believe that the issue is more complex and relevant empirical findings may require some revisions or fine tuning of this concept.

My book, *The Perceptual System* (1993) received an excellent review in a major philosophical journal (*The Review of Metaphysics*, Sept. 1995) in which the writer, Jack Ornstein, claims that my view is "the only remotely plausible approach" to the mind–body problem: "finally, we have a theory of perception and the mind which any scientifically minded, critical philosopher can live with." Nevertheless, the book did not receive its proper attention. A main reason may be connected to the fact that I did not belong to one of the prevailing schools in the study of perception. My writing style, which does not analyze in detail the views of other scholars, may be another reason for the reduced impact of the book. After completing the book on perception, I hardly wrote or talked about it. In a sense this is unfortunate, as the novel ideas presented in the book were not discussed further. However, I felt that I stated what I wanted to say in this regard, and the rest is of lesser interest to me. Needless to say, some of the basic ideas in this book have been used for my later work on emotions and other issues.

Together with the work on perception, after my studies in Chicago I pursued some related issues in the philosophy of psychology, such as the body–mind problem and memory. I was also engaged in the study of various philosophers, in particular Aristotle and Thomas Reid. These studies helped me greatly in forming my own views. I wrote a detailed interpretation for a new translation into Hebrew of Aristotle's *On the Soul*, which is a most difficult text. I am not an expert in Aristotle's writings, but many times when forming my own view, I realized a similarity to that of Aristotle. The Scottish philosopher Thomas Reid caught my attention when I discovered that he was among the very few who considered perception to be direct. I found his writings most interesting and useful and wrote four articles on his view on perception and emotions. I also participated in several conferences devoted to his thinking. I believe that if he had not been a contemporary of Kant, his writings would have received greater attention, as indeed they recently have.

Emotions

Five years after finishing my dissertation, I began to study the emotions. I did so because I wanted to pursue another topic that would help me to understand the human mind; I chose to study the emotions since they seemed to me to be a highly neglected area of research. As emotions appeared to me then to be relatively simple and clear, I thought that it would take me only a few years to exhaust my interest in this area. The fact that after more than 20 years I am still studying them is indicative of their great complexity.

Unlike Descartes who claimed that because of the complexity of emotions, he was going to write about emotions as if no one had approached this subject before,

my own discussion has gained a great deal from earlier scholars and from many conversations with lay people. In this regard I adopt the attitude expressed by Carl Stumpf ("Uber den Begriff der Gemuthsbewegung," 1899) who claimed that being influenced by previous thinkers may reduce the surprise value of our own theory, but absolute originality in matters that are open to introspection at all times may be a recommendation of the author's inventiveness, but not of his case. As in the book on perception, in my books on emotions I hardly critically discuss previous scholars but present a comprehensive framework for understanding emotions. I refer to other studies when I consider that such reference can throw light on the discussion, either by supporting it or presenting an interesting alternative.

The philosophers who were most influential in forming my view of emotions are Aristotle and Spinoza. I have adopted from Aristotle his analysis of emotions as evaluative attitudes, and from Spinoza his emphasis on the importance of change in generating emotions. The psychological work that has most influenced my thinking on emotions is *The Cognitive Structure of Emotions* (1988) by Ortony, Clore and Collins. Andrew Ortony has become a close friend of mine and we continue to discuss various issues concerning emotions (as well as other topics). Other current scholars who have greatly influenced my thinking on emotions are the philosophers Ronald de Sousa and Robert Solomon, and the psychologists Nico Frijda and Keith Oately. Keith has a somewhat similar intellectual history to mine—he began working on perception and then moved on to study the emotions.

While I still consider my work on perception to be valuable, my greater contribution to understanding the human mind is to be found in my writings on emotions. I have published many articles in this field, as well as three books: *The Subtlety of Emotions* (MIT 2000), *Love Online: Emotions on the Internet* (Cambridge 2004), and *In the Name of Love: Romantic Ideology and its Victims* (Oxford: 2008; written with Ruhama Goussinsky). The immense amount of work I invested in writing *The Subtlety of Emotions*, which took me over 10 years to write, provided me with the conceptual framework and much data for my further discussions in this field. This has enabled me to continue writing on emotions during periods when I have held various administrative posts.

The Subtlety of Emotions is divided into two major parts: the first presents an overall conceptual framework for understanding emotions and the second discusses individual emotions toward others. Part I discusses issues such as typical characteristics and components of emotions, the affective realm, emotional intensity, functionality and rationality, emotions and imagination, regulating the emotions, and emotions and morality. The principal emotions analyzed in Part II are envy, jealousy, pity, compassion, pleasure-in-others'-misfortune, anger, hate, disgust, love, sexual desire, happiness, sadness, pride, regret, pridefulness and shame.

In my first writings on emotions I did not discuss the question, "What is an Emotion?" as I wanted first to be able to better describe the various aspects of emotions. When asked this question, I used to reply that I could not give a short definition and that the answer to this question would need to be derived from a combination of all the features of typical emotions. Only after writing *The Subtlety of Emotions*, and rejecting prevailing answers to this question, did I finally reached an answer with which I feel comfortable: An emotion is a general mode of the mental system. A general mental mode includes various mental elements and

expresses a dynamic functioning arrangement of the mental system. A mode indicates the way in which something occurs or is done; it includes a combination of qualities and relationships. I am still working on developing this approach.

In analyzing typical emotions, I have suggested that the typical cause of emotions is a perceived change, the typical emotional concern is a comparative concern, and the typical emotional object is a human being. Typical emotions are considered to have a few basic characteristics—instability, great intensity, a partial perspective, and relative brevity—and four basic components—cognition, evaluation, motivation, and feeling. Although all characteristics and components are present in typical emotions, emotions cannot be reduced to one of them. Among the above components, the evaluative component is the component through which one emotion is distinguished from another.

A main pillar of my view on emotions is the claim that they typically occur when we perceive significant positive or negative changes in our situation. Like burglar alarms going off when an intruder appears, emotions signal that something needs attention. When no attention is needed, the signaling system can be switched off. We respond to the unusual by paying attention to it. A change cannot persist for a very long time; after a while, the system construes the change as a normal state and it no longer excites us. This claim has profound implications concerning emotions. It raises, for instance, particular difficulties concerning the possibility of a long-term passionate and committed romantic relationship.

A major contribution of my first book on emotions, *The Subtlety of Emotions*, is the discussion of intensity variables. The notion of "emotional intensity" is an extremely complex notion; nevertheless, emotional intensity can be described and predicted. I suggest six major variables of emotional intensity: the event's strength, reality, and relevance, and our accountability, readiness, and deservingness of the event. I propose a clear correlation between emotional intensity and each variable. The behavior of the intensity variables expresses, in a sense, universal rules of the emotional system. Thus, it is always true that the more real the event is, the more intense are the emotions. Personal and cultural differences are expressed in the perceived degree of reality associated with the given event. An important task for future research is to determine the adequacy of the suggested correlations in specific emotions.

In *The Subtlety of Emotions*, I analyze all major emotions. The most significant contributions I make there are, I believe, my analysis of envy and jealousy, pleasure-in-others'-misfortune, and romantic love. I will say a few words concerning the first three emotions and will devote a special discussion to love.

Jealousy and envy were the first emotions I studied. Those were of great interest to me both because of their centrality in our life and their complexity. I suggest that whereas envy involves a negative evaluation of our undeserved inferiority, jealousy typically involves a negative evaluation of the possibility of losing a beneficial human relationship to someone else. Envy and jealousy are concerned with a change in what one has: either the wish to obtain or the fear of loss. The wish in envy is for something one does not have, while in jealousy it is something one fears losing. As the wish to obtain something is notably different from the wish not to lose it, jealousy is typically more distressing, intense, and pervasive; there is less readiness

to compromise in jealousy. As all of us know, it is more difficult to lose than not to win.

Although envy is concerned with inferiority, there is no positive correlation between the intensity of envy and our inferiority. Envy is concerned with a personal relative inferiority that is perceived to be unjust. The comparative nature of envy led me to claim that the process of reducing inequalities would usually lead to a rise in the intensity of envy, since it is easier to compare our situation with those who are close and similar to us. It seems that my view in this regard may be influenced not merely by conceptual considerations concerning the comparative nature of emotions, but also from the fact that I lived most of my life on a kibbutz, which was by and large an egalitarian society whose members spent a great deal of their life together and enjoyed equal standing with respect to basic necessities. Nevertheless, the level of envy on the kibbutz appeared to be greater than in other less egalitarian societies. When differences are small, their meaning is often magnified.

The analysis of jealousy was of benefit to me in my further discussions of love, whereas the analysis of envy, and specifically its comparative nature, has been useful in analyzing other emotions, and in particular in my original analysis of pleasure-in-others'-misfortune. Pleasure-in-others'-misfortune obviously involves our pleasure and the other's misfortune. These features describe a significant conflict between our positive evaluation of the situation and the negative evaluation of the other person. In this sense, pleasure-in-others'-misfortune is close to envy: in both, the comparison to the fortune of the other is crucial. However, contrary to envy, pleasure-in-others'-misfortune allows us to occupy the superior position. I have suggested adding three typical characteristic to the above indisputable features of pleasure-in-others'-misfortune: (a) the other person is perceived to deserve the misfortune, (b) the misfortune is relatively minor, and (c) we are not responsible for generating the other's misfortune. The prevailing evaluation of pleasure-in-others'-misfortune regards it morally evil; pleasure-in-others'-misfortune is often considered to be even less acceptable than envy, which is perceived to be one of the deadly sins. I have challenged such a severe moral criticism by distinguishing pleasure-in-others'-misfortune from cruelty as expressed, for example, in sadism; in my view, pleasure-in-others'-misfortune does not indicate a vicious character. In contrast to sadism, the delight in pleasure-in-others'-misfortune does not stem from the suffering of another person, but from our advantageous position. My discussion of pleasure-in-others'-misfortune illustrates my attitude to many issues: I reject a simplistic analysis, which is often based on the description of extreme cases, and through subtle distinctions clarify the value of the common cases. In this manner, I also indicate the value of gossip and flirting.

Understanding something involves its comparison to related phenomena. In this regard I distinguished between emotions and other affective phenomena, such as sentiments (e.g., enduring love and grief), moods (e.g., being cheerful, satisfied, "blue," and gloomy), affective traits (e.g., shyness and enviousness), and affective disorders (e.g., depression and anxiety). The emotional system can also be compared to the intellectual system. I speak here about differences in basic psychological features, types of information-processing mechanisms, and differences in basic logical principles underlying their operation. My more significant contribution here

is in revealing the unique type of logic (or reasoning) of the emotional system. Intellectual reasoning is broader than emotional reasoning: it refers to a broader scope of circumstances and it has more freedom in the types of perspectives it uses. Compared with intellectual reasoning, emotional reasoning takes a narrower and more involved perspective—change and personal aspects are more crucial in it. As both types of logic are useful in different circumstances, it is of benefit to us to integrate them in an optimal manner. In this regard the popular notion of emotional intelligence, which actually refers to some integration of the two systems, is important. Emotional intelligence is a kind of sensitivity to certain types of higher-level stimuli. I believe that not merely optimal everyday behavior, but also optimal moral behavior is that which combines emotions and intellectual reasoning.

Romantic Love

After I had finished writing *The Subtlety of Emotions*, I deliberated upon my next academic endeavor. I wanted to study a topic that was new to me, but still related to my expertise on emotions. At first I thought I might write about emotions and privacy, and so I read the relevant literature, but finally I decided to write about love on the Internet. Love has always fascinated me since it is so central in our lives and yet so difficult to understand. Consequently it was natural for me to focus on this emotion after I had formulated and presented my conceptual framework for understanding emotions. My discussion on love focuses on the love of an individual person for another person, since people and their attitudes toward other people are of the greatest interest to me and are also the major concern of emotions. Accordingly, I scarcely touch upon other objects of love, such as love for one's country, love of God, love of music, or love of food.

As there was already some discussion on love in *The Subtlety of Emotions*, my aim was to examine the implementation of the conceptual framework laid out in that book. I choose the Internet to test this framework in the realm of romantic love. This rapidly growing realm of romantic relationships had not yet been carefully studied and it offered sufficient differences to enable me to test the general validity of the framework. Indeed, writing *Love Online* was in a sense easy and hardly generated significant surprises; this offered further support for the proposed framework.

My initial discussion of love is presented in *The Subtlety of Emotions*, and my last two books, *Love Online* and *In the Name of Love*, are also devoted to romantic love. The complexity of love constitutes an intellectual challenge and justifies discussing it in such length, while the current dissonances between prevailing sublime ideals and actual reality enhance the emotional interest in doing so. The discussion in *The Subtlety of Emotions* mainly refers to the intellectual challenge, although the above dissonance was mentioned. In *Love Online* the dissonance is applied to the relation between offline and online relationships. In *In the Name of Love* the dissonance between ideals and reality is discussed further and given an even more central place.

The complex experience of romantic love involves two basic evaluative patterns referring to (a) attractiveness of (mainly) external appearance, and (b) praiseworthiness of personal characteristics. Romantic love requires the presence of both patterns. One would be offended if one's partner said: "You are ugly and I am not

sexually attracted to you, but your brilliant brain compensates for everything." One would also be offended if one's partner declared: "You are stupid, but your attractive body compensates for everything." Some people would like to change the relative weight of one of these patterns regarding both the beloved's attitude toward them and their own attitude toward the beloved. Attractiveness has more weight in the short run and praiseworthiness in the long run. In contrast to romantic love, where both evaluative patterns are essential, in sexual desire attraction is far more dominant. Sexual desire is a simpler attitude based more on external appearance and spontaneous responses. No precise borderline between romantic love and sexual desire exists. The latter is usually an essential component of the former. Hence, elements that are typical of the one are often found in the other. Many people think that love and sex can be separated, but would prefer to have them combined.

Online romantic relationships differ from offline relationships in that they attach less weight to external appearance, which is revealed by vision, and more weight to positive appraisals of the other's personal characteristics, which are revealed by verbal communication. Some people may even be offended by a request to send their photo in the very early stages of an online relationship, as it may imply that the other person is more interested in their looks than in their mind. Cyberlove should not, however, be characterized as ignoring attractiveness, but merely as giving less weight to it. Verbal capacities used in cyberlove are more associated with intellectual capacities and seem to be closer to properties essential for enduring romantic relationships. Whereas in offline relationships the prevailing prejudice is that those who are nicer on the outside are also nicer on the inside, in cyberlove, the prejudice is the opposite: those who are nicer on the inside are also handsome on the outside. The latter prejudice appears less harmful. In face-to-face relationships, most people fall in love in response to what they see, and then love is strengthened or weakened as further information is revealed. In online relationships, where self-disclosure is greater and hence intimacy is significant and occurs early in the relationship, most people first get to know each other and only then fall in love. In a sense, online relationships mark a return to this traditional order of falling in love. Like in arranged marriages, cyberlove is the product of a process in which two people come to know each other. This manner of falling in love in cyberspace may enhance the quality of the bond between the two partners.

The only significant surprise I had while writing about cyberlove concerns its great seductiveness and in particular the short time it takes for people to fall in love with such great intensity. People often testify that their online love relationship has been the most intense love of their life and their cybersex the wildest sex they ever experienced. People even claim that before their online love affair, they did not know what love was. Although I was surprised, the explanation falls within my conceptual framework for describing emotions. I claim that the major features responsible for the great romantic seductiveness of cyberspace are imagination, interactivity, availability, and anonymity. Imagination frees people from social and physical constraints and enables them to have the most exciting experiences. In cyberspace people are not merely imagining themselves to be with an attractive person, they are actually interacting with such a person. The interactivity of cyberspace fosters a crucial aspect of romantic relationships: reciprocity. Cyberspace is an alternative, available environment providing us with easy access to many

available and desired options. It is easy and not costly to reach desired partners and easy to perform desired actions. The anonymity associated with cyberspace reduces the risks in online activities. Such anonymity decreases vulnerability and the weight of social norms, and hence makes people feel safer and freer to act according to their desires. In offline circumstances, the fear of harmful consequences is one of the major obstacles to conducting many romantic affairs and to significant self-disclosure in those that are conducted. Because of the greater sense of security, self-disclosure is also more prevalent in cyberspace—this in turn increases intimacy and the seductiveness of online relationships is accordingly enhanced.

The Internet has dramatically changed the romantic domain. This process, which will accelerate in the future, will inevitably modify prevailing social forms such as marriage and cohabitation, and current romantic practices relating to courtship, casual sex, committed romantic relationships, and romantic exclusivity. We can expect further relaxation of social and moral norms. Together with the increase in romantic flexibility, the values placed upon stability and stronger commitment will increase as well. The chaotic and dynamic nature of cyberspace will never replace the more stable nature of actual-space, as we cannot live in complete chaos: like other types of meaning, emotional meaning presupposes some kind of stable background against which meaning is generated. The test of the Internet will be whether it can complement ordinary romantic activities, just as the telephone complements ordinary social activities, or whether it will merely replace them with less valuable activities, as the television frequently does. Society faces a great challenge if it is to integrate cyberspace successfully into our romantic relationships. It also faces great danger for, if we fail to meet that challenge, it will cost us dearly.

In the *In the Name of Love*, I took upon myself (together with Ruhama Goussinsky) the task of further analyzing the psychological dissonances inherent in romantic love and their expressions in modern society where the Internet has growing role. This book is about our ideals of love, our experiences of love, and the disparity between the two.

We yearn to experience the idealized love depicted in so many novels, movies, poems, and popular songs, all of which help to form the "Romantic Ideology." The basic tenets of this ideology include the following beliefs: The beloved is everything to the lover and hence love is all you need; true love lasts forever and can conquer all; true lovers are united—they are one and the same person; love is irreplaceable and exclusive; and love is pure and can do no evil. According to this ideology, love is comprehensive (there are no boundaries to such love), uncompromising (nothing can dilute or impede such love), and unconditional (reality is almost irrelevant to love and has scant impact on it). Romantic Ideology has not been extinguished; in fact, the desire to fulfill it may be increasing. However, the likelihood of realizing such love, in particular within the framework of a committed, long-term relationship, grows ever slimmer. For most people, such ideal love remains beyond their reach. The increasing dissonance between what we want from love and what we actually achieve gives rise to mounting dissatisfaction with our love lives.

A major case study in the *In the Name of Love* concerns men who have murdered their wives or partners, allegedly 'out of love.' How can murdering a beloved be associated with love? Love is generally considered a moral, altruistic, and well-

intentioned emotion; however, this idealized notion of love is far from realistic. Not only is love intrinsically ambivalent, but it can also give rise to dangerous consequences. Our analysis of wife-killing deviates from the prevailing popular understanding and scientific explanations of this phenomenon in two major respects: (a) we believe that in an important sense, these murders are committed out of love, so that an understanding of which components of love play a role in these murders would increase our understanding of the phenomenon of wife-murder; and (b) we believe that whereas wife-murder is undoubtedly the most extreme manifestation of male violence, it is not a "natural" continuation of that violence, nor is it the "inevitable" end of a path of male violence, and it thus should be understood as a phenomenon that is separate to other forms of male violence. These claims offer a new perspective on this terrible phenomenon.

The discussion of Romantic Ideology draws upon two basic issues with which I had previously dealt: imagination and moderation. Our imaginative capacity to go beyond the present circumstances underlies the romantic gap between the ideal of romantic love and the actual situation. Moderation, which I have praised in my discussions of optimal emotional and moral behavior, is also introduced in discussing the ways to cope with this gap.

At the basis of this dissonance is our imagination. I have discussed imagination in all of my four books. In *The Perceptual System*, the discussion was more scattered and referred to imagination as an intentional capacity, going beyond our present perception and involving some ontological issues concerning the content of imagination. In *The Subtlety of Emotions*, there is already a substantial discussion on imagination as an intentional capacity and its role in emotions. *Love Online* examines a whole imaginary environment—that of cyberspace. *In the Name of Love* considers the role of imagination in creating the gap between our present relationship and the ideal one about which we dream. Imagination, which unchains us from the present, chains us to the prospects of the possible. Our great human blessing—our capacity to be aware of possible scenarios—is also our fundamental curse, since it affords us realization of our profound limitations as well as our imminent death. Coping with the mixed blessing of the possible requires us to establish a normative order of priority in the form of ideals and boundaries. As we establish a set of normative priorities, we often find ourselves giving up an ideal or violating a certain boundary. Romantic love is rife with the difficulties associated with fulfilling ideals and maintaining boundaries.

The assumptions underlying Romantic Ideology, like those underlying many religious ideologies, are highly moral and compassionate. However, when such assumptions are placed within a rigid and uncompromising framework that disregards reality, they can give rise to extreme and appalling behavior. People have committed the most horrific crimes in the name of the altruistic ideals of religion and love. One of them, which is discussed in detail in the book, is the crime of wife killing that the perpetrator claims to have committed out of love. Killing the one you love is an example of how love can go wrong when extremism is the guiding principle.

Many testimonies describe situations in which people find themselves hating the person they love. In attempting to explain this, I have suggested that there is a psychological mechanism that underlies love and hate that does not merely evaluate

the object's characteristics as being good or bad, but also gives each characteristic a relative weight. This relative weight expresses the profoundness of each characteristic and accordingly establishes the nature of the emotional experience. As profound evaluations can be directed at different aspects of the person, we can hate (based upon one kind of evaluation) the one we love (from another aspect). (See my article in *Philosophia*, this volume).

The central role I ascribe to change in generating emotions underlies the alliance between passionate romantic love and a committed relationship: change intensifies emotions, whereas commitment is based on stability. Obviously, change is also incompatible with the eternal nature of love postulated by Romantic Ideology. The emotional characteristic of partiality is more compatible with this ideology, since it emphasizes the exclusive nature of love. The difficulties of Romantic Ideology, which are associated with the exclusiveness of the beloved and the eternal nature of true love, are amplified in light of two major developments in modern society: (a) the lifting of most of the constraints that once prevented long-term committed relationships, such as marriage, from dissolving, and (b) the apparent presence of so many attractive alternatives that offer the promise of replacing any given committed romantic relationship. Staying within a committed relationship has become a choice that requires us to constantly reexamine its value in light of, among other issues, the presence of love.

Given the above circumstances, the need for compromise (or moderation) has become urgent in the romantic domain. Using the word 'compromise' in the same breath as 'love' may appear a contradiction in terms—you cannot tell your beloved that you are madly in love with her, even though she constitutes a kind of compromise for you. I distinguish here between compromises and accommodations: When we compromise, we accept certain behavior that we still evaluate as negative, whereas in accommodation, we change our attitudes so that we no longer consider this behavior to be negative. Avoiding the very high cost of invasive romantic partnership requires compromises and accommodations that are in fact already widely applied in modern society. Examples include the acceptance of postponing romantic gratification, declining romantic intensity, reducing the exclusive nature of the romantic relationship by enlarging the scope of activities that are not restricted to the beloved, serial monogamy and loving more than one person at the same time. The presence of such compromises and accommodations is expressed in the generation of new terminology. Thus, instead of the highly negative terms of "adultery" and "betrayal" some people use the more neutral term of "parallel relationship."

Finding an alternative to Romantic Ideology seems necessary for most people. These are indeed "hard times for lovers." Is there anything we can do to alleviate the suffering? In the last chapter of *In the Name of Love*, an initial outline for an alternative, which is termed the "Nurturing Approach," is presented. Although practical implications have been always implied in my philosophical discussions, particularly those concerning moral and emotional issues, this chapter presents the most I have reached in this regard. This chapter, and the book as a whole, is far from being a help book that offers practical advice to lovers, but it nevertheless provides a kind of outline for conducting a loving relationship.

The outline uses various distinctions, some that I have used before, such as intrinsically versus extrinsically valuable activities and promoting versus preventing behavior, and some that I use for the first time, for example, self-validated versus other-validated model of romantic relationships, uniqueness versus exclusivity, and functional harmony versus mechanical fusion. At the basis of the Nurturing Approach lies the assumption that in order for romantic love to be maintained, the lover should not merely ensure that the beloved feels good; it is imperative, too, that the lover is profoundly satisfied with the way in which the relationship enhances her own development and satisfaction. Only a deeply satisfied person can provide love and happiness to another. This self-validated model is by no means a matter of egocentrism. It is not egocentric to attempt to nurture your capacities and genuine needs, while at the same time developing a loving equal relationship with another person. Moreover, the nurturing aspect also refers to nurturing the other. It is argued that while romantic love involves both intrinsically and extrinsically valuable activities, the former are of much greater significance. Similarly, promoting activities, which focus upon nurturing rather than on preventing, are of greater importance in ongoing loving relationships. In romantic love, uniqueness is more significant than exclusivity. Uniqueness focuses on greater nurturing of ourselves and others, while exclusiveness entails curtailing or obstructing others' decisions or pursuits. Accordingly, in love, caring is more significant than prohibiting various types of sexual practices. The closeness between lovers does not depend upon a mechanical amalgamation that involves the loss of each partner's personal identity; rather, it arises from the experience of growing and developing together.

The analysis I propose indicates that the decrease in marital constraints and the increase in the presence of tempting alternatives have enhanced the role of love in our life. Despite greater sexual freedom, genuine love and aspirations for long-term commitment have not disappeared. On the contrary, we are witnessing an impressive comeback of romantic love, which makes it difficult to ignore the whole issue of what we mean by love and how we deal with it. The good news nowadays is that love is everywhere; the bad news is that we cannot run away from it. Like the passionate Hotel California, described by the Eagles, in love "You can checkout any time you like, But you can never leave!"

Moral Behavior

Moral discussions have been of great interest to me throughout my career; two of my first four published philosophical articles concerned moral issues. The first paper deals with G. E. Moore's view on the relation between intrinsic value and human activities, and the second paper discusses the characterization of a rational agent. However, my research on moral issues intensified greatly when I began working on the emotions.

The relationship between one's theoretical moral view and one's actual behavior has been of some interest to me. The English novelist and scholar, Samuel Butler, says that "Every man's work, whether it be literature or music or pictures or architecture or anything else, is always a portrait of himself" (*The Way of All Flesh*,

ch. 14). Various considerations, including harsh criticism of the actual behavior of great moral philosophers, such as that of Kant and Rousseau, lead me to believe that the relationship is a great deal more complex than simply that of a portrait. This is clearly so in politics where the personal behavior of a good political leader is not necessarily moral—sometimes immoral personal behavior may even facilitate the success of a political leader. In philosophy, the connection between the philosopher's actual behavior and theoretical stands may be even weaker than that of the politician's, as the philosopher's focus of concern is upon the theoretical aspect. An ideology, as I show in *In the Name of Love*, is something we may indeed wish to uphold and implement, but we often fail to do so. In my administrative posts, as rector and president of the university, I am so often aware of the great dissonance between the way in which academics (like other people) portray themselves, and their actual behavior. This causes me constant dismay.

In my personal life, I have done my best to reduce the gap between my theoretical stands and actual behavior. There is, I believe, mutual influence between the two; in my personal case the main direction of influence is from the behavior to the theoretical. In many circumstances I put more trust in my emotional reactions, which have been created through many years of evolutionary personal development, than in theoretical considerations, which can be presented in various ways. Writing about theoretical issues has helped me to understand better my own behavior and in some cases to revise it accordingly. The connection between our ideology and ideals and our actual behavior is so complex that we are unlikely to achieve total compatibility; there is always some gap between our ideals and actual behavior. The size and nature of this gap are of greater significance for moral considerations.

One example of the way in which my philosophical views have emerged from my actual behavior concerns the issue of modesty (or humility). I have always believed, and acted accordingly, in the profound value of modesty in human behavior. On the other hand, I do not believe that we should only talk about our failures and that it is inappropriate to discuss our successes with our intimates and friends. I have often applied my sense of humor to situations and people, joking (kindly) about myself and other people in a manner that some people may (erroneously) consider immodest. To address such predicaments, I wrote an article about modesty (which, in all due modesty, I consider to be a very good one). Unlike various cognitive views of modesty, which consider it to be a state of deception or ignorance, I suggest that modesty is essentially an evaluative attitude that rests on a belief in the common nature and fate of human beings and on a belief that this commonality dwarfs other differences. Modesty does not oblige one to deny a superior position within a given evaluative framework—hence it is compatible with realism in self-appraisal—but it does requires one to refrain from exaggerating the value of this framework in comparison with other possible evaluative frameworks. Modesty also requires us not to display our accomplishments in contexts that may promote uncomfortable feelings in other people. Unlike profound human modesty, which is concerned with not overrating one's human worth, local (frequently, professional) modesty is often associated with underrating oneself. There are many cases in which professional modesty is uncalled for but human modesty is still appropriate. Thus, in discussions on professional matters, professional modesty is often inappropriate.

As indicated above, moderation is another aspect that is dominant in my writings and personal behavior. Extreme stands and behavior are typically unacceptable to me. It is of great importance to me to take into account the perspective of the other in my theoretical discussions and in my personal behavior. A sense of humor, which few people ever admit they lack, accords with the trait of moderation in entertaining several different perspectives. Humor is similar to emotions in having a strong element of incongruity or change. Both emotions and humor combine two perspectives—the expected and the unexpected. However, whereas in emotions the simultaneous presence of incongruent perspectives is problematic and hence requires immediate practical action, in humor the incongruity is enjoyable and requires no action. A sense of humor is thus often incompatible with an extreme emotional state. Indeed, extreme people may often lack a sense of humor. The ability to entertain several alternatives is also a sign of mental health. For example, a person who suffers from paranoia denies that alternatives to his position are possible.

A major issue in my moral discussions has been the role of emotions in moral behavior. Many philosophers, such as Kant, assume that the incompatibility between the discriminative, partial nature of emotions and the egalitarian and impartial nature of moral rules prevents the former from having a significant role in moral behavior. Following Toulmin, I believe the contrary to be true: emotions are highly significant in our moral behavior, particularly concerning those who are close to us. With regard to our intimates, preferential emotional treatment is morally required and justified. We ought to treat our intimates with special emotional preference since our commitments toward them are much richer and deeper. General moral rules cannot cover the whole range of activities and attitudes required in personal emotional relationships. As Toulmin claims, "A morality based entirely on general rules and principles is tyrannical and disproportionate" ("The tyranny of principles," 1981). My negative attitude toward the glorification of general rules is compatible with my adoption of the prototypical category and stems from my sensitivity to each individual. We are not the same, and our circumstances are different. Hence, individual treatment is crucial when we have the relevant information.

I develop this view further in *In the Name of Love* when discussing ideals and boundaries. Whereas boundaries limit and curb our desires and behavior, ideals nourish and encourage us to develop in diverse ways. It is evident that we cannot fulfill our ideals entirely. Although less evident, it is also extremely difficult to remain always within the limited zone delineated by our boundaries—only dead fish swim with the stream. The need to establish a set of priorities implies that not all values are compatible and hence we are often required to violate boundaries or values in order to maintain others.

Online relationships, in which various prevailing boundaries are violated, constitute a serious challenge to offline romantic relationships. Developing online emotional ties with other people is not in itself a sin. However, some romantic ties, for instance, that between an adult and a small boy, are improper as they may be harmful in both offline and online relationships. Moreover, since emotional ties consume considerable mental (and often physical) resources, developing new ties may harm existing ones, which typically have moral priority over the new online ties. Thus, our moral commitment toward our offline partner is typically greater than

toward our online partner. There are, no doubt, many risks in online affairs, but it is not evident that these risks are more severe than those associated with offline affairs. Only a better understanding of cyberspace and the limitations of human nature will enable us to cope with the brave new world we are facing. So far, human history has been characterized by our ability to learn how to cope with painful and usually harmful circumstances; it is now time to learn how to cope with the enjoyable and often beneficial environment provided by cyberspace.

Concluding Remarks

The search to understanding the human mind has been at the center of my intellectual thinking. Do I know more about human mind now than I knew 30 years ago, just before I began my doctoral studies? I think I do, very much so. Does this knowledge help me to better understand the people I encounter? I certainly think it does. Do I think that I am closer now to solving the mysteries of the human mind than I was all those years ago? No, I do not. Revealing the complexity and regularities of the human mind merely indicates how far we still have to go along this path. I hope that such an intellectual journey will be my good fortune for the next 30 years as well.