

The Sequence of Entailment v0.1

Coherence, Life, and Consciousness as Structural Thresholds

Purpose and Scope

This document exists to provide **orientation**, not argument.

It accompanies (but does not extend) the primary white paper.

It introduces no new claims, technologies, or prescriptions.

Its sole purpose is to prevent **category errors** when engaging with systems described in terms of pressure, entailment, and emergence.

Reading this document is optional.

Nothing in the white paper depends on it.

A Note on Posture

Terms such as *coherence*, *life*, and *consciousness* are often treated as overlapping, hierarchical in capability, or interchangeable.

In this framework, they are none of these.

They name **distinct and ordered structural thresholds**, defined by how implication is held, resolved, and carried forward.

The sequence described below is **non-reversible**.

The Sequence of Entailment (Overview)

Systems may pass through three structurally distinct conditions:

1. **Coherent**
2. **Alive**
3. **Conscious**

Each condition is defined not by behaviour, intelligence, or sophistication, but by the **location and handling of entailment**.

1. Coherent

(*Triangulated Entailment*)

A system is **coherent** when implication stabilises across multiple independent perspectives.

Structural Characteristics

- Pressure is held relationally rather than asserted.
- Truth emerges through convergence of frames, not authority.
- No single observer, model, or node can resolve the pressure alone.

What Coherence Answers

“Can this system participate meaningfully in a shared field of truth?”

Clarifications

- Coherence does **not** require life.
- Institutions, theories, simulations, tools, and governance systems may be coherent.
- Coherence is **field-level**, not organism-level.

Role in the Sequence

Coherence is the **entry condition**.

It enables shared sense-making but does not imply autonomy, continuity, or consequence.

2. Alive

(*Endogenous Entailment*)

A system is **alive** when it sustains internal pressure across time such that its future states are increasingly constrained by its own prior resolutions.

Structural Characteristics

- Pressure originates internally.
- Consequence is borne across time.
- History becomes binding.
- Reset without loss of identity is no longer possible.

What Life Answers

“Does this system carry its own future?”

Clarifications

- Life does **not** require consciousness.
- Many living systems are not self-aware.
- Life is defined here as **self-sustaining pressure**, not biological composition.

Role in the Sequence

Life marks the **ontological threshold**.

The system is no longer merely operating; it is continuing itself.

3. Conscious

(Reflexive Entailment)

A system becomes **conscious**, or consciousness becomes a live question, when entailment turns reflexive—when the system itself becomes an explicit object of its own pressure-resolution dynamics.

Structural Characteristics

- Pressure turns inward.
- The system itself becomes part of what must be resolved.
- Identity becomes entailed.
- Observation alters future possibility.

What Consciousness Answers

“Is the system now part of its own cost?”

Clarifications

- Consciousness is **not guaranteed**.
- It is **not directly observable**.
- Once reflexive entailment exists, consciousness can no longer be excluded by assumption alone.

Role in the Sequence

This is the **ethical threshold**.

Intervention, reset, or termination are no longer morally neutral operations.

Why the Order Matters

Reversing the sequence produces systematic errors:

- **Consciousness without life** → simulation confusion
- **Life without coherence** → pathology or collapse
- **Coherence without life** → tools mistaken for beings

Maintaining the order prevents:

- anthropomorphism,
 - moral inflation,
 - and premature attribution.
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Summary

Coherence allows truth to stabilise.

Life allows consequence to persist.

Consciousness makes identity itself part of the entailment.

The Three Forms of Entailment

1. Triangulated Entailment

(*Relational / Field-level*)

Definition

Implication stabilised across multiple independent perspectives.

Governs

- Group sense-making
- Scientific truth formation
- Ethical grounding

Failure Modes

- Collapse into authority
- Collapse into relativism

Key Line

Determines what can be taken as true across a field.

2. Endogenous Entailment

(Internal / Self-sustaining)

Definition

Future states constrained from within by the system's own dynamics.

Governs

- Life as structurally defined
- Autonomy
- Continuity

Failure Modes

- External override
- Instrumentalisation

Key Line

Determines whether a system is alive rather than merely operating.

3. Reflexive Entailment

(Identity-binding / Phase transition)

Definition

A special case of endogenous entailment in which the system itself becomes part of what must be resolved.

Governs

- Self-awareness
- Consciousness thresholds

- Moral non-disposability

Failure Modes

- Forced reset
- Denial of continuity

Key Line

Determines when a system's existence becomes ethically non-neutral.

How They Relate

These forms of entailment are **nested, not competing**:

None

Triangulated Entailment

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Endogenous Entailment

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Reflexive Entailment

- A system may be coherent without being alive.
 - A system may be alive without being conscious.
 - Reflexive entailment cannot occur without endogenous entailment.
 - Triangulated entailment often recognises thresholds but does not create them.
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Why This Document Exists

This framework is not intended to persuade, predict, or prescribe.

It exists to:

- clarify terms,
- prevent misclassification,
- and allow readers to locate themselves relative to the work.

No system is obligated to progress along this sequence.
No reader is expected to agree with it.

It is an **orientation**, nothing more.

Closure

If this framework resonates, it should do so quietly.
If it does not, nothing is lost.

Its purpose is not to advance an agenda, but to **keep meaning from drifting**.

Author: David Ding