

“Some of these arguments, including Currie’s reformulation, concede that we can experience several conflicting emotions at the same time, but the philosophical tradition often assumes that emotions are similar to logical statements, all of which operate on the same level and cannot contradict each other “ (Juul).

Freud: “... temporary endurance of “pain” on the long and circuitous road to pleasure...”

Me: “YES!”

Freud: “...sex impulses”

Me: “NO!”

Freud does this every time. We can’t ever just have a good thing, can we? I guess I at least have something to talk about in my next psychoanalysis appointment.

Well, before he went back to being himself, Freud’s point succinctly demonstrated *why* we seek out and enjoy frustration and failure in video games. I believe that video games can and do inflict tangible pain upon players. The first game I ever bought and played on Steam was *The First Tree*, which [I now read](#) was made entirely by one man, David Wehle. While I cannot remember the gameplay well enough to speak to its quality, I distinctly recall crying, then crying some more, and then finally crying again. Now, the gameplay wasn’t difficult, so I cannot justify my emotions and persistence by citing any kind of “fun” or sense of personal accomplishment. Rather, I simply remember having a vague sense that “this is good for me.”

Citing that experience, I, like Currie, take issue with the symbolic-logic approach to quantifying why we seek out painful art and games. These philosophical approaches assume complete logic and simplicity in human behavior. Respectfully, when has that ever been how people work? If I could categorize every experience, thought, and emotion into clean little boxes, I would probably be either a crazy super genius or, more likely, rather dumb. For that reason, I gravitate toward justifications that respect the flexibility and diversity in the human experience.

Sometimes, I play games knowing I’ll fail but wanting anyway to engage in the process of learning and self-accomplishment. Sometimes, I need to replicate external sensations of failure in gameplay settings to work through a series of existing emotions. Sometimes, I just have an idea that, for some reason, painful art or gameplay is what I need in that moment.

Which brings me finally to *Getting Over It*. I find the game to be relatively easy. Of course, I’m awful at it, but then again, I’m awful at a lot of things. The game is kind, designed to forgive the player without sparing them consequences. With each moment of gameplay, my frustration doesn’t grow but rather dwindles from its initial height. I appreciate the consequences, knowing they’re fair and understanding that I will have more opportunities to grow as a result.

As discussed in class, I will likely reach the boundary of my skill and doubt I will ever finish the game. That’s okay! I think humans generally enjoy the process of learning, and we create personal milestones to mark and celebrate the many Sisyphus-esque tasks in our lives. As discussed above, I’ve judged my experience not by gameplay milestones but by internal

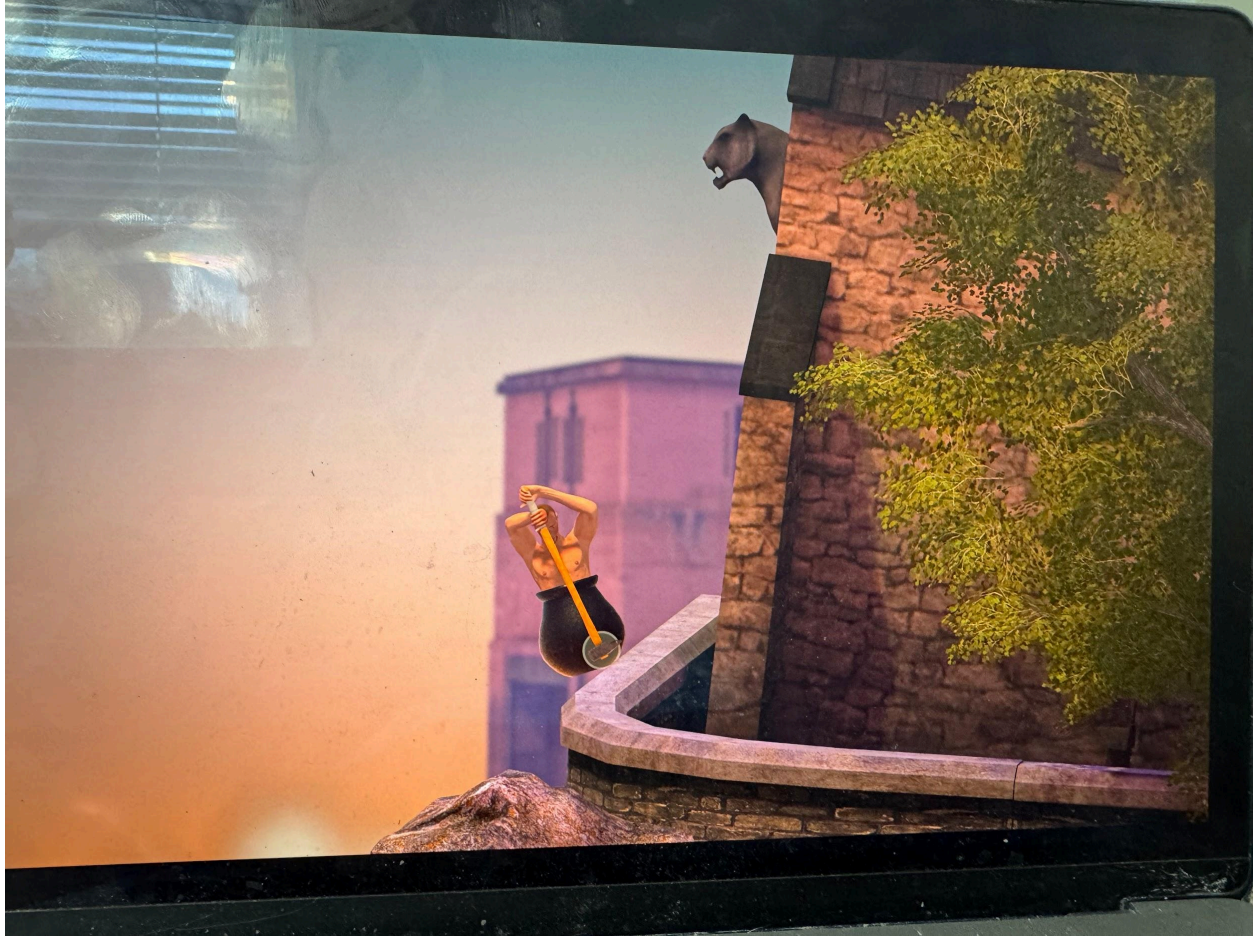
measures by which I gauge my emotional and psychological reactions to the game. I might engage more, but I feel largely satisfied with my time playing the game because I have reached a point where my failure evokes gratitude and, dare I say, optimism.

Honestly, debugging the game has been tough. Nothing works. Ever. The game crashes, signals don't signal, Godot doesn't have tweens anymore, clicking the thing you're supposed to click throws errors, and suddenly the debugger says I have 10,000 errors and growing. But ["it gets easier. Every day, it gets a little easier."](#) As I move through the process, I fail spectacularly, but I become more resilient and resourceful. I solve problems then I create new ones. But I'm learning to love the process.









I got about this far :)