

# Logical Space, And A Contradictory Situation

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If one is confronted with a contradictory situation, or a person who seems to make no sense and to contradict himself or herself, you can insert a statement into logical space! This paints a way out of certain dilemmas. Only if one feels bound to the view, bound to the person, who is contradictory, does one become emotionally charged. But if one takes a detached view, yet participatory, then life can again be full of engaged meaning and awareness.

By ‘inserting a statement into logical space’ I mean to refer to Wittgenstein’s statement that logical space is infinite, and you can always insert a point into logical space.[1] This a freeing and enabling idea, and is the case. One can work with this not only in circumstances of apparent contradictions, but also in systems of apparent sound thought. That is, it can serve to refine a strong idea — and when one then concepts this to the actual world, one can develop a realistic philosophy.

It also can serve a check on one’s own reasoning. Given the interplay of the subjective and the objective, one can insert a statement into logical space *as if another person were, from their vantage point, inserting that statement, or a statement like it*. This can also serve a strong sense of identity, where one sees if this or that reasoning works; and can strengthen the standpoint one has, or modify it to a stronger or more aware one.

For example, suppose one has a situation with a problematic parent or teacher, where the contradictions that they set up do not match either logic, reason, or a written record that they’re referring to, or omits evidence that you see, and this might be firsthand, that demands an explanation. Several scenarios might be possible. You could apply cool analysis, insert statements into logical space, and seek an alternate view, a view that does either explain or ask the right questions. Then one can develop one’s own standpoint or wait for further insight. You could seek to explain why the parent or teacher might have come up with his or her view, and this might lead to a sense of identity, and patience; and this all might lead again to statements that one can insert into logical space, refining one’s view. Or you could simply seek to apply wisdom, and wait to see if there is a point to what the parent or teacher is saying. There is another way to approach such a situation, and it’s to work with it with already a deeply aware state, such that one applies this or that basis to various actions and thought and speech, or applies one rule for thought and another for actions and speech, all the while looking to illuminate the situation. The guiding principle here might also be to seek to illuminate vis-a-vis truth, and a deep appreciation for the world, the world that is before one, what is real.

It may be a problematic world that the parent or teacher is trying to describe, and it might be a simplistic view that they are taking on. But true parenting and true teaching will train to work with the reality one sees, and to ask questions that also see the profound and striking world that we live in, the basis for the world, that we can all work with.

Wisdom may come later, insofar as it applies to such a situation, and we can further work with what a parent or a teacher says or does. The value of their words or action might not be readily apparent, or may contradict our expectations. We should be ready for such a situation as this, as well. That is, at a later time it will be shown that what the parent or teacher was saying or doing was in fact sound, that the explanation comes from elsewhere than we had thought.

We should consider all of these possible situations as ones we might realistically encounter. It is only wise and instructive to do so. Our society is complex, and to work with what is before us is something that we as humans have always been working with, to one degree or another, from ancient times through to now. By working with logical space in this way, we can also deepen our appreciation of the world, the arts, and the human condition.

Likewise if parents, or a teacher, then also a psychologist, a psychiatrist, a pastor, an author, a nutrition expert, a health expert, a journalist, a politician, a scientist, and a philosopher; and so forth. It is instructive to work with 'what is before one' in this way, and actually leads to a more deeply felt and freeing and resonant way to live, one that is also etched with meaning. It requires us to live with an immediacy to the logic of those we take on as authorities or leaders or influences, and to really work with who we ourselves are, without a lot of givens and assumptions inherited from others that after all do not yield a sound basis or freedom for creative expression, or acknowledgment of the human condition and the compassion it engenders. I think it leads to reasoning- and psychological- health, to work with things of- the individual in this way. It leads to being able to look around and see more clearly what is available, and to strengthen and make more fluid one's position, being, and everyday practice of whatever it is we find valuable.

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1. Wittgenstein mentions this in *Tractatus Logico Philosophicus*, by Ludwig Wittgenstein.