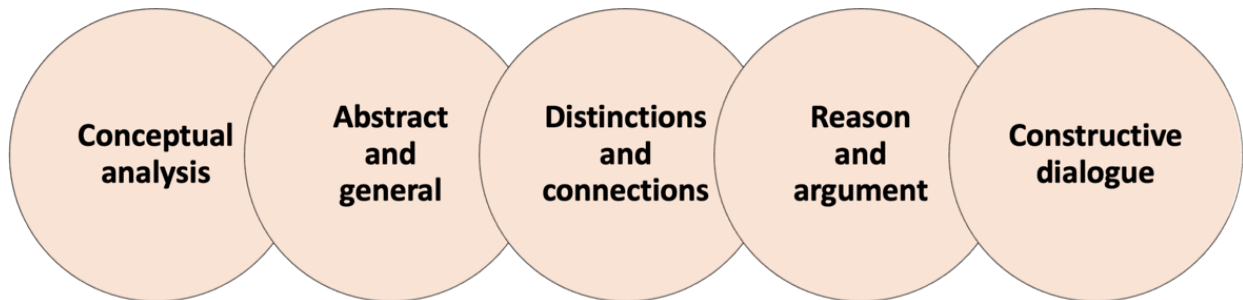


Reading

- Lisa Bortolotti, *Why Delusions Matter*

The Philosophy Toolkit



Delusion

What is delusion? Here is the **clinical** definition of delusion (from the DSM-5):

A false belief based on incorrect inference about external reality that is firmly held despite what almost everyone else believes and despite what constitutes incontrovertible and obvious proof or evidence to the contrary. The belief is not ordinarily accepted by other members of the person's culture or subculture (i.e., it is not an article of religious faith). When a false belief involves a value judgement, it is regarded as a delusion only when the judgement is so extreme as to defy credibility.

Key questions include:

- Is this a good way of understanding what delusions are?
- Does it accord with how you think about delusions, or with how you have encountered delusions (if that applies to you)?
- In philosophy there is debate about whether delusions are **beliefs** – or do delusions fit some other category of mind?
- How do delusions relate to **rationality**? Is a delusion necessarily irrational? What does that mean anyway?

Delusions and Mental Health

It is common to associate delusions with poor mental health, or with conditions which are regarded as mental disorders.

- Should we accept this association?
- Can delusions ever have any kind of positive role for mental health, or well-being? If so, what could that look like?