Understanding morality and ethics

2nd edition

Simon Perry 2024

Morality leads to peace

Peace leads to wisdom

Slow down

No good comes of no good.

Contents

Patriarchy

Personhood

Dark and light traits

Part 3 – psychology and spirituality

Emotions

The ego

Ego defences

Desire and “original sin”

Bibliography

Part 1 – structure of morality

The structure of morality comes in three parts:

a) normativity

b) theory of moral domains

c) internal features of moral domains.

Normativity sets up a goal; a need; a problem that needs to be solved. This (compound) problem is solved in various ways (Curry, 2016) by the various moral domains, each composed of a particular type of joint goal and particular type of collaborative method of achieving it; and all of which have similar internal structures.

The question is how to govern ourselves and our partners in the direction of joint goals. The answer is the methods of self-regulation of human cooperative units, given the factual logic of organisms with normativity making their way in a particularly risky evolutionary niche.

The internal features of the structure of moral domains are the features of collaboration itself, and its regulation, since a moral domain consists of collaboration, and its regulation according to ideal behavioural standards and methods, towards a goal.

The logic of morality is thereby shaped by the logic of normativity (maximising personal/inclusive benefits) and the logic of interdependence (having to depend on others, whether for sharing or collaboration). These lead directly, for example, to egalitarianism and altruism.

See also:

Evolutionary ethics and the structure of morality,

https://orangebud.co.uk/structure_morality.html

Instrumental normativity

> The purpose of the central nervous system is to make decisions so that we can thrive by interacting successfully with our environment.
>
> *Konrad Körding – "Decision Theory: What 'Should' the Nervous System Do?" (2007)*

Each organism experiences an evolved pressure to do the things that will allow them to thrive, survive and reproduce. This is instrumental normativity, shouldness, the pressure to achieve goals.

This normative pressure is the same as that which pushes our bodies to heal after injury, or to maintain biological homeostasis. In fact, the entire organism is oriented in this direction. We may thrive biologically, psychologically, socially, or morally.

Thriving, surviving and reproducing are taken here as synonymous with evolutionary fitness, since thriving and surviving are eventually "cashed out" as increased (chances of) reproduction (Tomasello, 2016). Thriving can be defined in terms of "utility" (Gerbasi and Prentice, 2013), where thriving means to have what you find useful for living. Utility has been described as "a measure of goal achievement" (Moshagen, Hilbig, and Zettler, 2018).

The need to thrive, survive and reproduce generates goals as we identify potential ways to flourish. In this we observe the dual goals/methods nature of both behavioural principles and behavioural goals: a behavioural principle is at once a goal and a method of flourishing; and so is a goal.

See also:

The goals-methods model of moral domains, p. ##

Pleasure and Eros

As per Sigmund Freud's Pleasure Principle, achieving goals leads to pleasure (Nesse, 2004); there is a pressure to achieve goals; hence, there is a pressure to seek pleasure. Similarly, there is a pressure to reproduce and to go in that direction: hence, Freud's Eros principle, which states that the sexual impulse pervades much of adult life (Freud, 1920).

The hypothesis is that pleasure rewards the organism for achieving fitness benefits and goals.

Origin of normativity

Normativity originates in the pressure to reproduce.

The pressure to thrive depends on the pressure to survive, since we need to be strong and healthy in order to survive. The pressure to survive depends on the pressure to reproduce, since we need to survive if we are to reproduce.

The "Selfish Gene" theory popularised by Richard Dawkins (1976) states that that those genes that build bodies that are good at reproducing will survive longer in the population, and will therefore become more prevalent, than those which do not. The reasoning is that those species that experience a pressure to reproduce will out-reproduce those that do not, or that do so to a lesser degree.

Evolutionary self-selection for normativity

In addition to better reproducers simply becoming more prevalent in the population, we may hypothesise another process of natural selection and evolution at work: a self-selecting evolutionary feedback loop in favour of the evolution of normativity. The reasoning is that those organisms that survived longer, by taking steps to

preserve their own well-being and survival, ended up living long enough to reproduce more than those that did not.

The proposal is that in effect, this was natural evolutionary self-selection, which is why the evolutionary process had such a runaway effect and why the instincts to thrive, survive, and reproduce are so strong in most if not all organisms today.

See also:

Generalised care, p. ##

The metaphor of the flower in the garden

Let us say you have a flower growing in your garden. If you give it the right conditions: good soil, fertiliser, water, sunshine, etc., then it will thrive and grow strong of its own accord, because evolution has programmed it that way.

You are like that flower. If you put the right conditions in place, you will thrive and be healthy. When we benefit someone else, we are really putting the right conditions in place for them to thrive and be healthy, whether biologically, psychologically, or socially.

If a flower could take action to preserve its own well being, and therefore to naturally select itself for increased chances of reproduction, then the metaphor would be complete. Yet we know that flowers and plants take all kinds of action to improve their well being and chances of survival: for example, the flower faces the sun as it travels around the sky for maximum exposure to sunlight.

Properties of instrumental normativity

The pressure to thrive, survive and reproduce is

- maximising

- individual
- universal

That is, we wish to thrive, survive and reproduce (or to move in that direction) to the maximum extent; it is generated within individuals; and it exists within every individual.

Fact/value distinction

> What if biology is not just on the 'is' side of the equation, but informs us also about the 'ought' side, such as by explaining which values we pursue and for what evolutionary reason? Every organism strives for certain outcomes. Survival is one, reproduction is another, but many organisms also pursue social outcomes that come close to those supported by human morality.
>
> *Frans de Waal – "Natural normativity: The 'is' and 'ought' of animal behavior"*

In philosophy, there is a distinction between what is (facts) and what ought to be (values). David Hume (1711-1776) stated that it is logically impossible to derive an "ought" from an "is" – to derive normativity from facts alone, in the absence of desires, passions, goals, values, etc.

In other words, we cannot say that

> fact *A* + fact *B* + fact *C* => you should *X* ;

unless one of the facts is "you have goal *G*". Then, the statement becomes

> if you want to pursue goal *G* => then you should *X*.

We may call this a conditional ought. Evolutionary ethics supplies a conditional ought, through the goals-methods model of morality. It also supplies a descriptive ought, of the kind

I feel I should *X*

and gives reasons why I feel I should *X*.

Evolutionary ethics cannot say

you should *X*

unless a goal is specified, that *X* is relevant to.

For example, say a group of people goes on holiday. The members of the group have as their common goals: thriving and surviving together; and making the holiday a good one. In other words, their joint goal is mutual benefit. Each member is factually required to act in such a way as to promote this factual joint goal.

See also:

Rightness of action and rightness of goal, p. ##

Evolutionary ethics and moral realism, p. ##

Naturalistic fallacy

The naturalistic fallacy is the fallacy in thinking that what is natural is morally good. We can see with some counterexamples that this is false. It confuses the moral sense of “natural” with “animal kingdom” or some such. Medicine and parachutes are produced exclusively by humans, and they are, arguably, utilitarian and moral goods because they save lives (impartially).

Likewise, rape, sexual coercion, is widespread in the animal kingdom, but in humans is regarded as morally “dark” behaviour (thriving or achieving goals at the expense of another, instead of aiming for mutual benefit).

Normativity in non-human animals

Non-human animals, as well as humans, are required to fulfil normative standards if they are to thrive, survive and/or reproduce. For example (de Waal, 2014):

- a spider has to maintain a near-perfect web, of an optimum design, if it is to catch the maximum number of insects;
- a chimpanzee needs to repair or maintain the social relationships it depends on, if it is to thrive socially, psychologically, and biologically.

See also:

Basis of morality, p. ##

Currency of morality, p. ##

Map of normativity

The black down-arrows represent “depends on”.

The hypothesis is that achieving fitness goals is pleasurable.

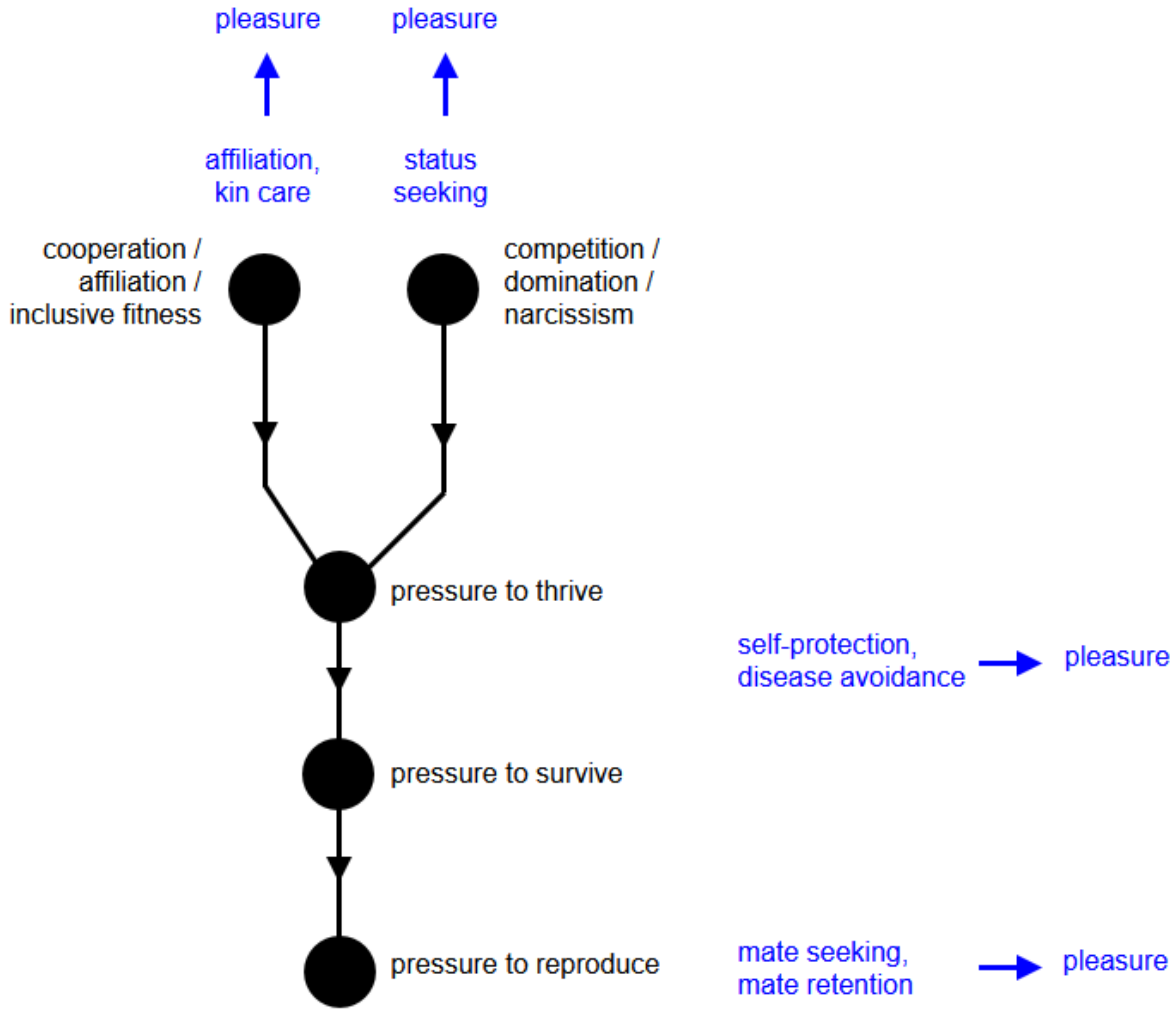
There are two ways to achieve goals with other people: competitively or cooperatively. Competition is at the expense of others: a zero-sum game. Cooperation is to mutual benefit and is a positive-sum game.

Consequences can be classified as two kinds: short term and long term.

See also:

List of evolved moral domains, p. ##

Desire and “original sin”, p. ##



Moral normativity

Moral and instrumental oughts

If normative pressure is shouldness, the pressure to achieve goals, then normative pressure tells us that we “ought” to do something, even if we do not accept it as binding and/or legitimate.

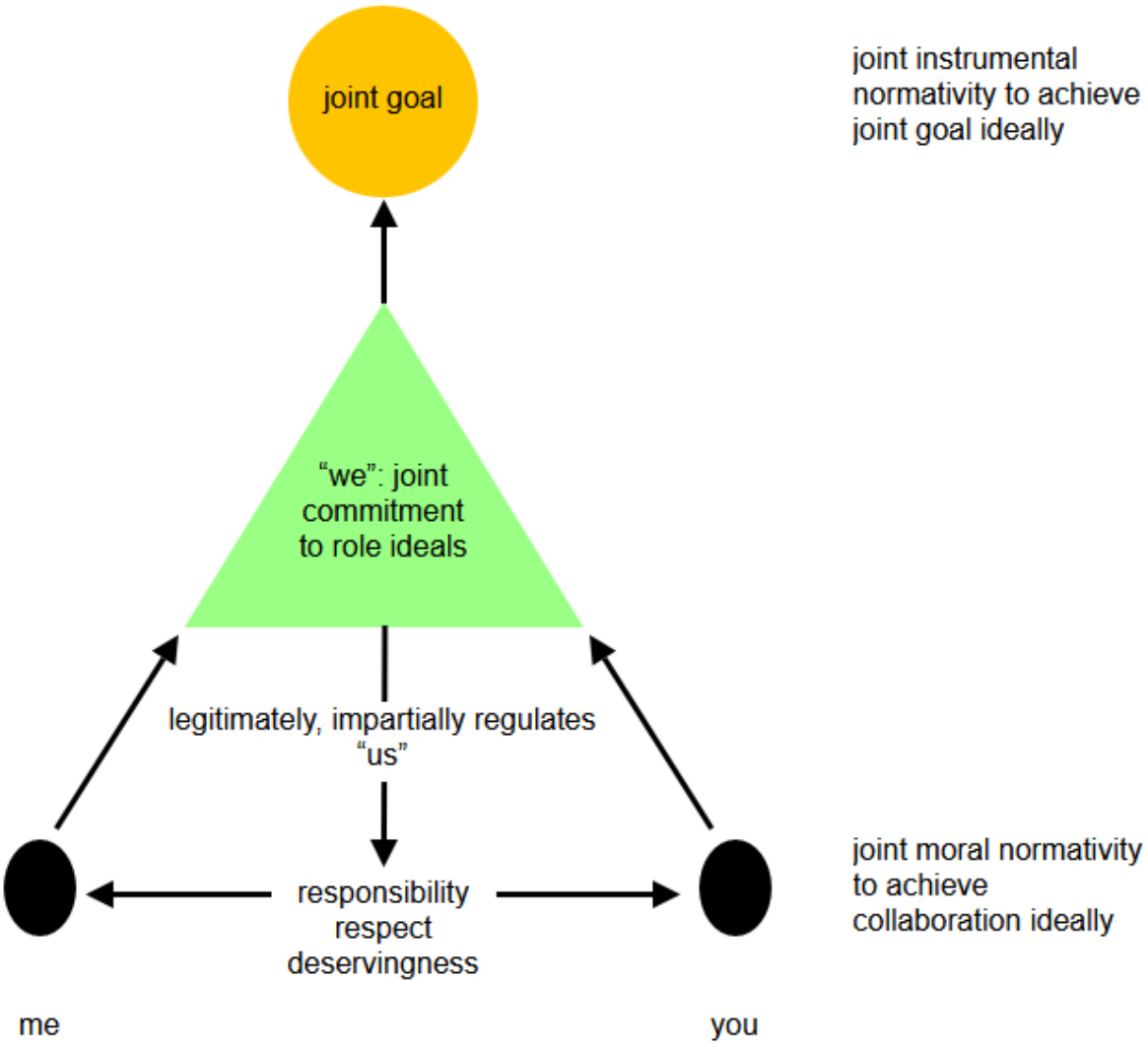
Joint goals require collaboration to achieve them, and collaboration requires morality to regulate it. Morality is therefore the collaboration to regulate collaboration. Moral principles are ideal methods of collaboration; general role ideals; standards by which we judge how well we are collaborating.

Instrumental goals are of individual utility (“my” goal is utility), since the pressure to do the things that will allow us to thrive is generated within the self.

Moral goals are, therefore, not joint goals of instrumental utility, and not collaboration per se, but the joint regulation of collaboration.

Dual-level psychology of cooperation

Tomasello (2014, 2016) proposes a dual-level psychology of cooperation: the joint agent “we”, and the individual partners “you” and “I”. Each has a perspective upon the cooperative situation: the “bird’s eye view” of the joint agent “we”, and the individual perspectives of collaborative partners, which need to be coordinated through communication and common ground knowledge. The “bird’s eye view” of the “we” is the basis of, in joint collaboration, self-other equivalence and impartiality; and in collective, large-group collaboration, agent independence and objectivity. The bird’s eye view is of roles that can in principle by filled by any partner and which have to be played according to instrumentally necessary “role ideals” or ideal standards, by anyone who would play that role.



(*after Tomasello [2016]*)

Commitment and legitimacy

Now, when you and I collaborate towards a joint goal, each of us, as an individual, is aiming to benefit or achieve utility of some kind. Jointly, we have instrumental goals.

In order to guard against the risks inherent in cooperating, you and I pledge a commitment to each other, effectively to collaborate ideally until we both have our reward. This forms a joint agent "we", that impartially (because we are equivalent) and legitimately (because we both agreed to it) regulates you and I, structured by the joint commitment.

In other words, following the formula "we > me", the instrumental normativity to achieve our joint goals is channelled by the interpersonal commitment into the intrapersonal and interpersonal normative pressure to be an ideal collaborative partner.

This normative pressure is formed of: 1) the legitimate right to make claims on one another's behaviour, impartially to evaluate and hold one another to account, and to correct or punish wrongdoing; 2) feelings of responsibility towards each other, to treat one another with due respect and deservingness and to be ideal collaborative partners (Dill and Darwall, 2014).

Hence, we have two forms of collaborative normativity: 1) instrumental, derived from the joint utilitarian goal; and 2) interpersonal, derived from the joint commitment to collaborate.

Legitimacy and responsibility

If I see action X as legitimate, then I see a reason to do X and no reason not to do it.

Because we both agreed, implicitly or explicitly, to collaborate, the joint commitment confers legitimacy upon the subsequent moral self-regulation of the cooperative unit "we" (Tomasello, 2016). The impartiality of the self-regulation confers further legitimacy.

Because the self-regulation is legitimate, I internalise the normative pressure to collaborate ideally. Instrumentally, I owe it to "us" – I should do it, for the utilitarian benefit of "us". Recalling the dual-level structure of cooperation, "us" is "you" and "I".

I owe it to myself and my partners to collaborate ideally, and because I feel I should do it, for “us”, I feel a sense of responsibility to all concerned.

See also:

Self-other equivalence and the genealogy of morality, p. ##

Moral obligation

Moral obligation comes in two parts: normative pressure, and forceful bindingness. For example, there is pressure to give to charity, but this is not forcefully binding: we are not morally obliged to.

In addition to the normative pressure to be an ideal collaborative partner, in order to achieve instrumental success and not to betray your instrumental trust in me, there is an obligation to do so: I must be an ideal collaborative partner. You oblige me to be an ideal collaborative partner.

Why must I? Where does the force of this obligation come from? Says who?

The very real threat, if I am a less-than-ideal collaborative partner, is to my cooperative identity.

What made the (instrumental) normative pressure into an (interpersonal) obligation? It was the agreement to collaborate. In agreeing to collaborate, we stake our cooperative identities on our performance as collaborators (Tomasello, 2016; 2019 b).

My cooperative identity encompasses my opinion of myself as a co-operator, your opinion as my partner of me as a co-operator, and my reputation in the world at large as a co-operator. If I break my obligation, I am held accountable (de Kennessey, 2024) and may be subject to legitimate partner control (protest or punishment) and damage to my cooperative identity, which could affect my future opportunities to cooperate.

[Obligation] has at least two distinctive features.

1. **Special Force.** Obligation has a peremptory, demanding force, with a kind of coercive (negative) quality: I don't want to, but I have to. Failure to live up to an obligation leads to a sense of guilt (also demanding and coercive). Unlike the most basic human motivations, which are carrots, obligation is a stick.
2. **Special Social Structure.** Obligation is prototypically bound up with agreements or promises between individuals, and so has an inherently social structure.

Michael Tomasello – "The moral psychology of obligation" (2019)

In large cultural groups, all members are partners, but not all partners interact and govern themselves and each other face-to-face. Also, the group as a collective agent governs you and I, and you and I govern ourselves and each other on behalf of the group in the direction of following group norms. The agreement to collaborate ideally, is made as the individual is born into the group and accepts its norms and morality as legitimate.

See also:

Large-group morality, p. ##

The ideal collaborative partner

The ideal collaborative partner:

- respects me as an equal and as a valuable co-operator

- recognises my deservingness as a respected, equal and valuable co-operator
- is honest, straightforward, cooperative, diligent, and conscientious
- fulfils their instrumental duty:
- - is committed to achieving the ideal standards of their role
- - is faithful and loyal to the collaboration until it is finished
- shares the rewards fairly: i.e., on some kind of equal basis.

Each of these forms of being an ideal collaborative partner is an obligation. If I fail to fulfil an obligation, I may legitimately be held accountable, by: 1) me; 2) you; 3) us, on behalf of the joint agent "we". The legitimacy exists because all partners implicitly or explicitly agreed to cooperate.

Tomasello (2016) sees moral commitment, responsibility, obligation, and legitimacy as "moral-structural" rather than "moral"; i.e., they are vehicles for regulation rather than being regulation itself; as per the formula "we > me".

This self-regulation has a strategic dimension – I don't want to risk my cooperative identity – as well as a moral one – our self-regulation is legitimate because 1) we made a commitment to collaborate, and 2) it is impartial, through self-other equivalence. This means that any partner control, sanctions, punishment, etc., either way, are also legitimate and therefore deserved, and come from "us".

See also:

Properties of instrumental normativity, p. ##

Features of moral domains as sources of normativity and obligation, p. ##

Role ideals, p. ##

What is morality?

> The primal scene of morality is not one in which I do something to you or you do something to me, but one in which we do something together.
>
> *Christine Korsgaard – "Creating the Kingdom of Ends" (1996:275)*

Morality arises when we collaborate towards a joint goal. Not only do we collaborate towards the joint goal, we collaborate to regulate the collaboration. This self-regulation of the cooperative unit is the essence of morality (Tomasello, 2019 a).

The function of morality is thereby to regulate the behaviour of collaborative partners, in accordance with moral principles or values, towards a joint goal.

This self-regulation takes the form of normative pressure, as:

- intrapersonal normativity – I govern myself on behalf of "us.
- interpersonal normativity – I govern you, and you govern me, on behalf of "us".

Partners form a joint agent "we", a cooperative unit, whose members are all equivalent and mutually deserving. They identify with the joint goal ("our goals are aligned"). The normativity or pressure to achieve the joint goal is transformed, inside the group, into the intrapersonal and interpersonal pressure to be cooperative; the joint goal "tells" you and me to cooperate well and do our duties, and the joint commitment to each other "tells" you and me to feel responsible to each other.

The result is normative pressure to "do a good job" – to fulfil role ideals (normative standards), both specific to the task in hand, and general ones (i.e., moral principles

or values). At the same time, we are responsible to each other to cooperate well and not to let each other down in any way, including cheating or free riding.

Tomasello (2016) recognises three basic, coexisting human moralities: helping; fairness; and joint / collective self-regulation. Shweder, Much, Mahapatra, and Park (1997) identify a "big three" interacting, coexisting elements of South Asian morality: ethics of "autonomy, community, and divinity": interpersonal values of helping, fairness, and rights; group-level duty, interdependence, and hierarchy; and moral and spiritual purity, respectively.

The self-regulation of the cooperative unit may be expressed as

we > me,

where my interests are subsumed to those of the group, team, or partnership, and I regulate myself and my partners on behalf of "us" (Tomasello, 2016).

In the course of collaboratively foraging for mutual benefit, we see two further, interpersonal moral psychological states arise:

you > me

This refers to putting the needs of another temporarily above one's own. It can arise as:

- "I will help you because I need and depend on you."
- "I will help you because you are helping / have helped me to achieve my goal (i.e., the joint goal)"
- "I will share with you based on need."

The next psychological state is

you = me.

This refers to self-other equivalence, impartiality, objectivity, etc.: as personnel are interchangeable within roles, each is equally a causative agent, and each is bound by impartial role ideals. It is fundamental to fairness and to mutual respect and deservingness.

Together, the three moral formulae describe our personal moral concerns, that compete with “me” concerns (Tomasello, 2016).

Morality and humility

The lesson of these three concerns is that morality requires humility, at least temporarily. In order to engage in moral behaviour (regulating ourselves and others in the direction of mutual benefit) then we are required to put ourselves second, temporarily, in favour of 1) helping others; 2) fairness; 3) following moral rules.

These four concerns: we-concerns, you-concerns, equality-concerns, and me-concerns, make up the conscience.

The conscience regulates the self in several ways (Dill and Darwall, 2014):

1. by evaluating past behaviour and feeling regret and guilt at wrong-doing;
2. by evaluating potential future behaviour for rightness of goal, rightness of action, and potential consequences;
3. by maintaining a good personal moral identity (our moral self-image).

It is adaptive to have a conscience: to try to follow moral rules, and to be emotionally attached to doing so (Boehm, 2012). It is in keeping with the purpose of the ego: “a machine for looking after you”, for taking care of your long term interests.

Psychopaths are born without guilt, fear, empathic concern, emotional resonance, etc., and for an easy comfortable life, are required to learn and work out the basic rules of morality (Walker, 2020a, 2020b).

See also:

Instrumental normativity, p. ##

Where does morality "come from"?

The theory is that morality historically arose in humans in response to waves of environmental stresses over a period of four million years or so (Roberts, 2011). The result was urgent instrumental obligation to first, share, and then, collaborate, to survive, and hence the requirement for general behavioural standards in the form of role ideals and moral principles and norms, the evolution of supporting moral emotions that push and pull us in the direction of being moral and ethical, and the evolution of socio-cognitive abilities that enable us to navigate our complex and tricky moral worlds.

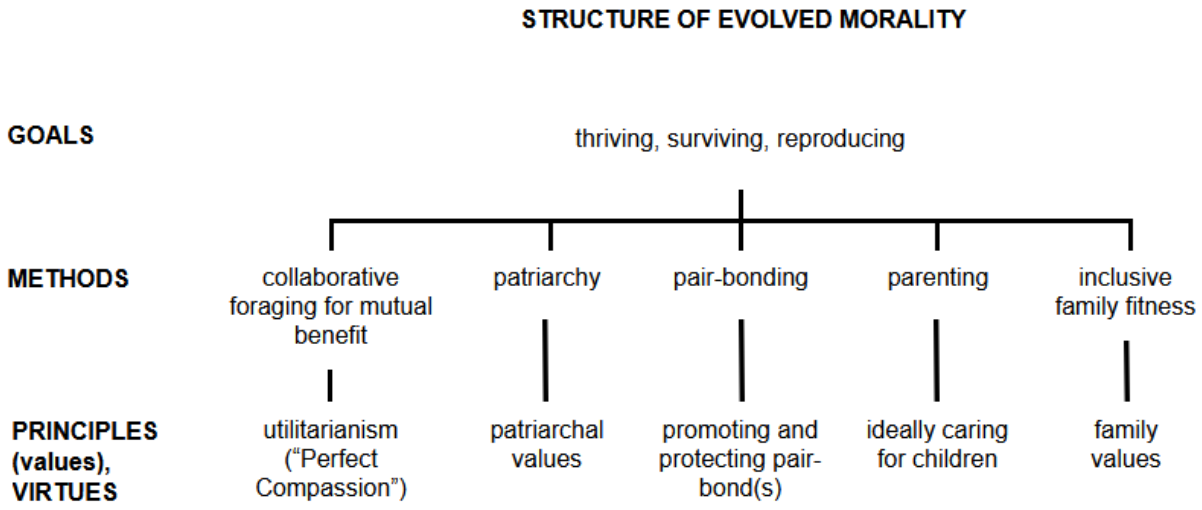
Specifically:

1. risky foraging niche of humans
2. requires cooperation to survive in;
3. cooperation requires morality to regulate it;
4. ethics refers to the dark or light binary value of the goal of the cooperation.

See also:

Self-other equivalence and the genealogy of morality, p. ##

Theory of moral domains



Just as the moral principle, Perfect Compassion, is derived directly from instrumental normativity, so is the "theory of moral domains". Each domain represents a different way to collaborate to thrive and/or survive and/or reproduce.

Perfect Compassion – instrumental normativity motivates altruism, where altruism is the method of achieving mutual instrumental utility;

the theory of moral domains – instrumental normativity generates the pressure to collaborate, where collaboration is the method of achieving mutual instrumental utility. Morality consists of the collaboration to regulate this collaboration (Tomasello, 2019 a).

Instrumental normativity is the pressure to **do** the things that will allow us to thrive, survive and/or reproduce. (achieve utility, benefit, fitness, goals)

Collaboration for mutual benefit is instrumentally necessary **behaviour**, in order that humans can thrive, survive and reproduce in a risky and consequently socially interdependent world.

See also:

Instrumental normativity, p. ##

Perfect Compassion, p. ##

The Stakeholder Principle, p. ##

Features of moral domains

Every time we collaborate, these features of collaboration, and regulation of collaboration, come into play.

Every feature of moral domains is a source of normativity, since each is in the service of achieving the joint goal.

Features of moral domains as sources of normativity and obligation

Not only is every feature a source of normative pressure – it is also a source of obligation, the pressure that must achieve its object, and is required to achieve it. Each feature has its own relationship with obligation. Obligation may be instrumental – e.g., I am obliged to collaborate, so that I can survive, and achieve proximate benefits; or it may be moral – i.e., I am expected to do what is right; which means rightness of action or rightness of goal.

The obligation I feel towards myself emanates from: 1) me; 2) you; 3) “us”, on behalf of “us”, beginning at our joint agreement to collaborate. I am obliged to be a good collaborator and to share the rewards fairly. When I break an obligation, there is a penalty to pay (Tomasello, 2019 b; de Kenessey, 2024); I can be held accountable for my failure to fulfil the obligation, by 1) myself; 2) you; 3) “us”, on behalf of “us”.

The exact nature of the obligation depends on the context. According to Fiske (1991), there are four modes of human social life, which can be at play at any one time:

- communal sharing

- equality matching
- market pricing
- authority ranking.

In communal sharing, the obligation is to share generously until all have had their fill.

In equality matching, the obligation is to show equality of treatment to each person.

In market pricing, the obligation is presumably to make a fair price, or the best price possible.

In authority ranking, I am obliged to do what my superiors tell me.

List of features

Relationships with obligation are in italics.

- instrumental normativity = pressure to achieve instrumental goals

  Instrumental normativity is the normative pressure behind moral obligation. Collaboration is instrumentally obligatory if humans want to survive, thrive, and reproduce.

- moral normativity

  The shared obligation to regulate the collaboration.

- joint goal

  A joint goal requires collaboration to achieve it, which requires regulation.

- Interdependence

  Partners are required to take a risk by relying on each other, and so they require one another to collaborate and share ideally and may hold them accountable if they fail (de Kenessey, 2024).

- mutual risk and normative trust

- accountability
- partner control

  Partners control one another's behaviour in the direction of: 1) being a good cooperative partner; 2) achieving the joint goal; as per the agreement.

- partners
- partner choice by reputation and public cooperative identity

  Reputation and public moral identity are sources of moral obligation in that they "oblige" us to behave well so that we achieve a good track record that will enable us to be chosen for collaboration.

- joint agent "we"

  The joint agent "we" is formed when we make a commitment to collaborate. It governs you and I, impartially and legitimately, and as such is a source of moral obligation and normativity.

- joint commitment, agreement, contract to collaborate ideally until all concerned have received their reward
- promoting, enforcing, rewarding good behaviour according to values or principles

  This is moral enforcement as moral obligation.

- discouraging, preventing, punishing bad behaviour according to values or principles
- joint self-governance on behalf of the group, team, or partnership

  Whereas "duty" and "responsibility" are broad and general, "moral obligation" is specific to the situation, the source, etc. I have a moral obligation to do my duty; and a moral obligation to behave responsibly towards my partners.

- roles and their instrumentally normative standards or ideals

- duty: sense of responsibility to (respected and valued) other partners to uphold ideal normative standards

  As goals that must be achieved for instrumental success, ideals carry a sense of obligation: I am obliged to fulfil them in order to be successful.

- a set of moral values (behavioural principles; methods of collaborating to achieve joint goals / mutual benefit; forming sub-domains)
- a set of domain-specific moral virtues (ideal performance of roles and moral values; behavioural policies aimed at achieving the domain's goals)
- general moral virtues that apply to all moral domains
- a set of moral vices (sub-standard performance of roles and moral values: to be avoided)
- intrapersonal, interpersonal and cultural levels

Obligations of helping and fairness

There is a human moral obligation to help those in need, at least in my vicinity. The evolutionary reason for this is interdependence. Humans need other humans to collaborate and share with. Therefore, we need each other to be in good shape. Usually, the most important utilitarian good is human well being. If we fail to live up to the obligation to help in response to need, through callousness or negligence, or worse, we may be held accountable for it.

Beauchamp and Childress (2001) identify four foundational principles in medical ethics, which we may describe as helping in response to need, doing least harm, respect for autonomy, and justice. These principles are also obligations.

Helping in response to need and doing no harm are captured by Perfect Compassion. Justice is related to egalitarianism: we can only be fair and equal if we are egalitarian. Respect for autonomy combines Perfect Compassion with egalitarianism and personal freedom.

The obligation in fairness is to be equal, given that all concerned want to maximise their benefits and minimise their burdens. There is an obligation of equality since self-other equivalence is a fact, in humans collaborating interchangeably in roles, together. Whatever the kind of justice or distributive rule being employed, each person concerned is treated as an equal in relevant ways.

See also:

Moral normativity, p. ##

Medical ethics, p. ##

The Stakeholder Principle, p. ##

Competition and dominance, p. ##

Features of collaboration, p. ##

Perfect Compassion, p. ##

Self-other equivalence, p. ##

Types of justice, p. ##

Moral principle

A moral principle is a role ideal that applies to the role of being a good collaborator, whatever the collaboration. A role ideal is an ideal standard of behaviour associated with a particular role, necessary for success in that role. The particular families of moral principles that apply in a given collaboration depend on its moral domain: i.e., the type of collaboration.

Within the goals-methods model of morality, a principle is a general method of collaborating to achieve a general type of joint goal. It represents an ideal. As such, it can be a goal in itself, and so each principle also forms a goal within the goals-methods structure of the moral domain. For example, reciprocity is both a method of

achieving mutual benefit, and an ideal or goal in itself to be realised. Hence, there exist methods that support and promote reciprocity.

If morality is about “how you collaborate”, then moral principles form part of the repertoire of collaborative methods towards a particular kind of joint goal.

See also:

Role ideals, p. ##

The goals-methods model of moral domains

Morality that has evolved in humans by natural selection is divided into five or so domains:

- collaborative foraging for mutual benefit (proximate benefits)
- patriarchy (reproduction at males’ convenience)
- pair-bonding (reproduction)
- parenting (reproduction)
- kin selection (reproductive benefits).

Each domain is formed of a joint goal and the collaborative methods that are required to reach it.

This is the “goals-methods” model of moral domains.

The joint goal is one of thriving, surviving and/or reproducing; i.e., it is supplied by natural instrumental normativity.

See “Instrumental normativity”, p. ##; “Mutual benefit in moral domains”, p. ##.

Every domain is divided into sub-domains. Sub-domains are formed of descriptively high-level moral values, principles, individual behavioural policies for achieving the joint goal; together with the joint goal itself. In collaborative foraging for mutual

benefit, the goal of the domain, and therefore of each moral value, is achieving, maintaining or restoring mutual benefit. These high-level values include altruism, fairness, reciprocity, etc.

Sub-domains are divided into sub-sub-domains, and so on. The joint goal of the sub-sub-domain is the value in the sub-domain as a way to achieve the joint goal of the domain. For example, reciprocity is promoted and supported by laws and regulations around trade, and norms of debt and obligation: normatively ideal standards of behaviour whose goals are all reciprocity, as a way to achieve mutual benefit.

Virtues support the moral principles (Beauchamp and Childress, 2001).

Hence, a moral domain consists of:

- a joint goal
- a general method of achieving the joint goal
- sub-methods or moral principles generated by the need to achieve the joint goal using the general method
- sub-sub-methods or rules of behaviour that support the primary principles
- sub-domains formed with sub-methods as goals and sub-sub-methods as a family of supporting moral principles
- virtues that support the principles and help to achieve the joint instrumental goal / individual instrumental utility.

Moral principles are good according to the domain to which they belong. If you agree with patriarchy, then patriarchal values are good. If you feel that patriarchy is not legitimate, then patriarchal values are bad.

A joint goal requires collaboration to achieve it. When we collaborate towards a joint goal, we collaborate to regulate the collaboration, and this generates (the need for) certain well-known features of morality. For example, every domain has methods of achieving the joint goal; means of enforcement of the moral values; and means of punishment for infringing moral values. Most features are common to all moral

domains. Some moral domains have unique features of their own. The familiarity of moral features from independent sources (e.g., philosophical, empirical, academic) lends strong support to the goals-methods model of morality and moral normativity. It all fits together as a plausible and realistic picture (e.g., Raihani, 2021; Tomasello, 2016; Boehm, 2012; Korsgaard, 1992).

All features of moral domains are a source of normativity; i.e., they supply a pressure to achieve goals, since they are all in the service of achieving the joint goal.

Moral domains generate moral values, since particular methods are required to achieve the joint goal. We observe these methods or values “in the wild” and find that this is their purpose (e.g., Haidt, 2013).

See also:

Moral and instrumental oughts, p. ##

Rightness of action and rightness of goal, p. ##

Collaborative foraging for mutual benefit, p. ##

Basis of morality, p. ##

Currency of morality, p. ##

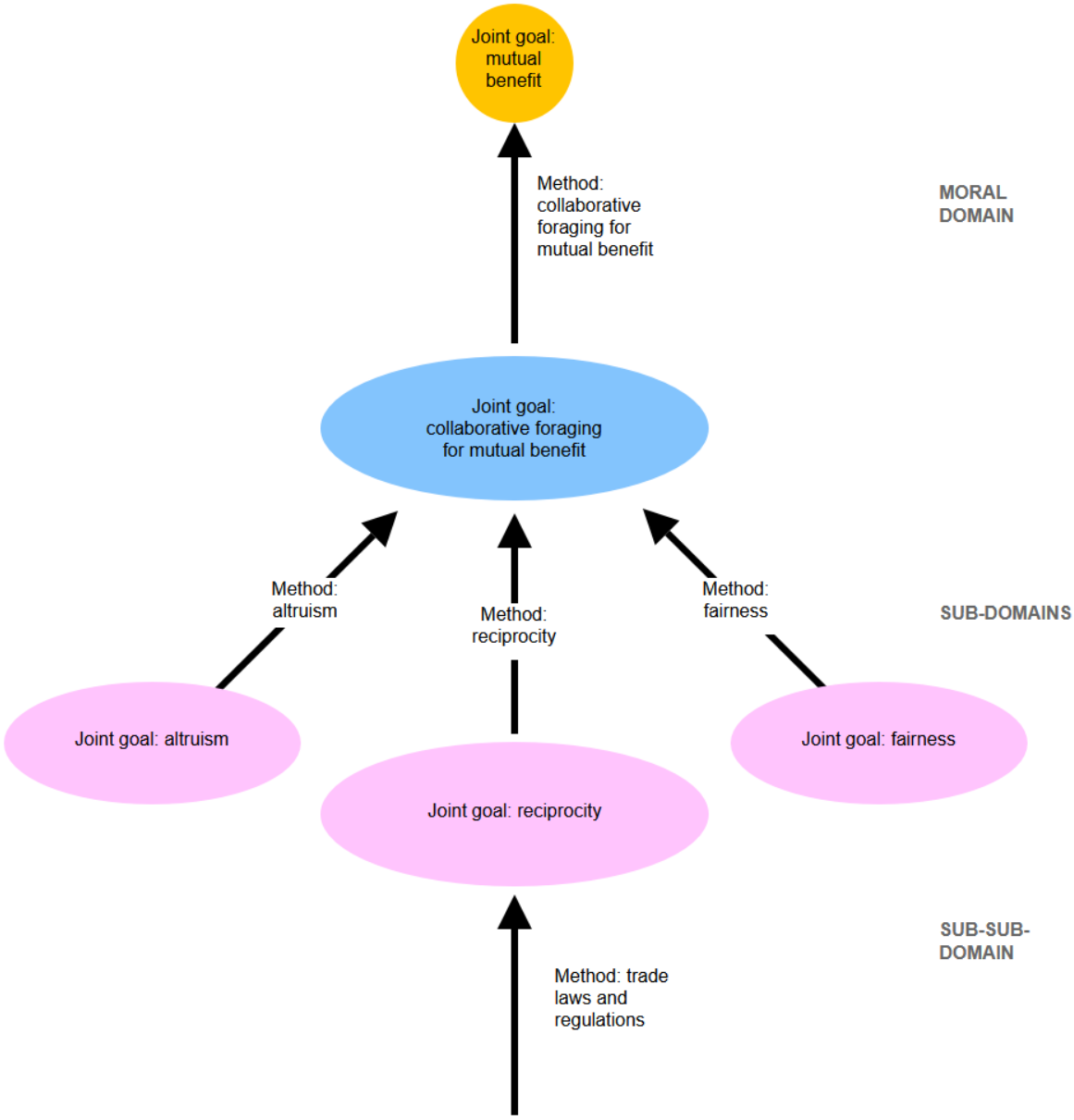
Moral domains: mutual utility among kin and non-kin, p. ##

Fairness as a moral (sub)domain, p. ##

Role ideals, p. ##

GOALS-METHODS MODEL OF MORAL DOMAINS

Example domain: collaborative foraging for mutual benefit



The principles in the sub-domain are collaborative behavioural ideals aimed at achieving the collaborative method of the domain. In effect, as sub-methods, they are solutions to problems in achieving the joint goal (see Curry, 2016).

The principles in the sub-sub-domains are ideals, and are methods of achieving principles in the sub-domains.

This model unifies existing ethical systems

As a comprehensive and practical system of ethics (see also medical ethics: Beauchamp and Childress, 2001) based on facts and empiricism, the goals-methods model of morality unifies some existing ethical systems, since each one has some truth in it, each one containing a valid description of one aspect of the whole picture of morality.

The reason each one is deficient is that it needs all the others in order to form a complete system.

In the goals-methods model, as in medical ethics, a number of ethical systems work together as a pack.

- Deontology – the goals-methods model is based around moral regulative normativity and the pressure to achieve joint goals. The right action is that which is aimed at mutual benefit, depending on what that means for a particular moral domain. Moral principles are ideal ways to collaborate to achieve mutual benefit (Tomasello, 2016).
- Utilitarianism – maximising proximate well being or utility for all concerned, including the self, is the method, aim, and goal of collaborative foraging for mutual benefit.
- Consequentialism – before we act, we do not know exactly what the consequences will be. But we have to make some judgements of how we think our actions are likely to turn out, before we take them, and evaluate those potential actions accordingly. In the goals-methods model, we act with a goal in mind rather than consequences. Can a wrong action produce right consequences – to the benefit of all concerned? We say not, following the saying “no good comes of no good”.

- Kantianism – Kant's idea of personhood and never using people as a means to an end is relevant to evolutionary ethics, as each person's well being matters to themselves, since they experience a pressure to thrive, and since people depend on each other in particular and in general, people are preciously valuable.

See also:

Mutual benefit in moral domains, p. ##

Rightness of action and rightness of goal

A value is

- a moral principle; or
- a utilitarian good; something that has value; i.e., a kind of goal.

Traditional moral philosophy recognises the "right" – morally desirable actions, intentions, and attitudes – and the "good" – a desirable end result or commodity.

We distinguish two kinds of moral rightness: rightness of action, and rightness of goal. They are different.

Rightness of action is with respect to a joint goal – any joint goal, whether good or bad. Rightness of action is the extent to which I am collaborating ideally. Clearly, just "jointly getting something done" is ethically neutral until we consider the use to which it is put.

Rightness of goal is with respect to the ethical binary dark/light value of the goal. A goal is defined as an ethically good or right goal when it is to the mutual benefit of all concerned: i.e., it is ethically "light"; the intention is for a positive sum overall. A goal is defined as an ethically bad or morally wrong goal when it is achieved at the expense of someone else: i.e., it is ethically "dark"; a zero-sum result overall, where my loss is your gain.

We may observe that a utilitarian good is a goal in itself, since a utilitarian good promotes my flourishing, and there is existential pressure on me to do things that will maximise my flourishing.

Internally, collaboration is regulated by morality (internal rightness; rightness of action). Externally – in the way it affects others – collaboration is ethically neutral until we consider its use. Then, the collaboration can gain the ethical dark/light status of its goal, or, under some views, remain ethically neutral. Actions, goals, and intentions can all have ethical status.

We have:

- morality – rightness of action or collaboration
- ethics – rightness of goal.

The Pirate Code of Conduct

The "Pirate Code of Conduct" was a set of rules for 18th century pirates to follow in dealing with each other (Alchin, 2017). The Pirate Code was an example of a system of rules and principles of right action, with an ethically "dark" goal of exploiting out-group members for material gain.

> **The Pirate Code of Conduct – Bartholomew Roberts Shipboard Articles 1721**
>
> A specific Pirate Code of Conduct was agreed by Bartholomew Roberts in the Shipboard Articles of 1721.
>
> Bartholomew Roberts, also known as "Black Bart" or "Black Barty", was one of the most successful pirates, The following Code of Conduct was agreed by Bartholomew Roberts and his Pirate Crew – an important element of the success of this particular Pirate

ARTICLE I – Every man shall have an equal vote in affairs of moment. He shall have an equal title to the fresh provisions or strong liquors at any time seized, and shall use them at pleasure unless a scarcity may make it necessary for the common good that a retrenchment may be voted.

ARTICLE II – Every man shall be called fairly in turn by the list on board of prizes, because over and above their proper share, they are allowed a shift of clothes. But if they defraud the company to the value of even one dollar in plate, jewels or money, they shall be marooned. If any man rob another he shall have his nose and ears slit, and be put ashore where he shall be sure to encounter hardships.

ARTICLE III – None shall game for money either with dice or cards.

ARTICLE IV – The lights and candles should be put out at eight at night, and if any of the crew desire to drink after that hour they shall sit upon the open deck without lights.

ARTICLE V – Each man shall keep his piece, cutlass and pistols at all times clean and ready for action.

ARTICLE VI – No boy or woman to be allowed amongst them. If any man shall be found seducing any of the latter sex and carrying her to sea in disguise he shall suffer death.

ARTICLE VII – He that shall desert the ship or his quarters in time of battle shall be punished by death or marooning.

ARTICLE VIII – None shall strike another on board the ship, but every man's quarrel shall be ended on shore by sword or pistol in this manner. At the word of command from the quartermaster, each man being previously placed back to back, shall turn and fire immediately. If any man do not, the quartermaster shall knock the piece out of his hand. If both miss their aim they shall take to their cutlasses, and he that draweth first blood shall be declared the victor.

Just war theory and the independence thesis

A study by Watkins and Goodwin (2020) found that people tend to judge the rightness or wrongness of soldiers' actions, fighting a war, based on the justness of their cause.

> A cornerstone of just war theory is the distinction Obama invoked between the justification for a country's going to war in the first place (known as *jus ad bellum*), and the rules of conduct that guide how the war is actually carried out (known as *jus in bello*). The idea that these aspects of war should be evaluated separately is referred to as the *independence thesis* (Walzer, 2006). The independence thesis, in turn, implies the related principle of *combatant equality*, which is the focus of this article. According to this principle, soldiers fight permissibly as long as they abide by the prescribed rules of conduct in war, regardless of the cause for which they fight (Lazar, 2017). ... Consequently, as long as soldiers on either side of a war follow the prescribed rules of conduct their actions are morally equivalent and should be judged symmetrically. ... This means that, regardless of whether you believe the United States was justified in going to war in the 1991 Gulf War, for instance, you should judge U.S. soldiers fighting in that war only according to whether they abide by the rules of conduct prescribed by just war theory.
>
> *(Watkins and Goodwin, 2020:419-420)*
>
> References:
>
> Lazar, S. (2017). War. In E. N. Zalta (Ed.), The stanford encyclopedia of philosophy (Spring ed.). Retrieved from http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2017/entries/war/
>
> Walzer, M. (2006). Just and unjust wars. A moral argument with historical illustrations (4th ed.). New York, NY: Basic Books.

According to the present theory in evolutionary ethics, the process of fighting a war is internally governed by morality, and externally neutral until put to a use, and the intention and outcome are the generators of ethical content.

The intention or outcome can be ethically light or dark – positive-sum: to the mutual benefit of all concerned, or zero-sum: I win at someone else's expense, respectively. The justness of the war is evaluated on this basis: ethical status of goal affects ethical judgement of the collaboration to achieve that goal.

> [Just war] theory makes an important distinction between judgments about *going to war* (resort to war), and about the *conduct* of war; a distinction referred to as the *independence thesis*. As a corollary, it maintains that soldiers on either side of a war, even a morally asymmetric war, are moral equals (the principle of combatant equality) and should be judged only by their conduct in war; not by the cause for which they fight.
>
> *(Watkins and Goodwin, 2020:438)*

According to the present hypothesis, the soldiers' cause, and their conduct, are not necessarily independent. Are pirates engaged in ethically good conduct when they plunder ships? – the Pirate Code notwithstanding.

The principle of combatant equality seems to neglect the ethical connection between an action and its consequences. Two sets of soldiers can collaborate equally ideally among themselves, but towards ethically opposite goals.

The study by Watkins and Goodwin (2020) found that lay people (participants in the MTurk crowd-sourcing platform) do not agree with the principle of combatant equality in practice (although around 60% endorse it in the abstract). Instead, they tend to judge soldiers on the unjust side to be less morally good than soldiers on the just side, whatever their conduct, unless they commit atrocities. Two factors were found that partly explain this effect: 1) people tend to assume that soldiers identify with their cause, no matter how unjust; and 2) people tend to align themselves with the

just side, and so they see the unjust side as an out-group, and this drives their moral condemnation of them.

Soldiers (who are part of our moral community and not beyond the pale) are following the military moral code of the professional, compassionate and disciplined soldier and the good comrade. Military ethics make up a moral domain that consists of joint goals and ideal methods of achieving them that form a code of ideal military behaviour.

See also:

Map of normativity, p. ##

What is morality?, p. ##

Theory of moral domains, p. ##

The Pirate Code of Conduct , p. ##

Dark and light traits, p. ##

Mutual benefit in moral domains

Moral domain	**Mutual benefit**
Collaborative foraging for mutual benefit	Mutual proximate fitness (thriving etc.)
Patriarchy	Reproduction of male; reproduction of female(s)
Pair-bonding	Reproduction of male; reproduction of female; preservation of pair-bond
Parenting	Reproduction of parent; thriving and surviving of child
Inclusive family fitness	Mutual genetic-reproductive fitness

The kind of mutual benefit is the ethically right kind of joint goal for that domain. Ethical wrongness is self-centred, selfish behaviour in any domain, disregarding “we”

in favour of “me” – except in patriarchy, where the male may be said to get his own way much of the time.

Justice means to reward or punish according to deservingness. Therefore, sometimes when carrying out justice, not everyone benefits. This leads to the slight reformulation of mutual benefit as “the benefit of all concerned”, if “all concerned” means “all the people whom X has wronged”, and X is the offender who is being punished. At the same time, X must be treated with a level of care as a fellow human being – so X is in this sense receiving mutual benefit.

See also:

Rightness of action and rightness of goal, p. ##

Medical ethics: justice, p. ##

Similarity, conventional practices, objectivity, and justice, p. ##

Interdependence and moral domains, p. ##

Moral domains: mutual utility among kin and non-kin, p. ##

Fairness as a moral (sub)domain, p. ##

Human rights, p. ##

Relativism and universalism

According to the present account, there exists a multiplicity of universal moral values (Curry, 2016) each of which is a method for humans to collaborate to achieve mutual benefit. Actions are judged and evaluated according to these behavioural ideals.

Throughout human history, these situations and their corresponding value-solutions have always occurred, in ways that any human would recognise.

What varies is how much people, and cultures, favour individual values or whole domains. Some people and cultures are highly patriarchal; others favour sexual egalitarianism.

In the West, regarding fairness, liberals are said to favour equal shares, while conservatives to favour proportionality (Haidt, 2013). In general, Western liberals and conservatives tend to emphasise and interpret values slightly differently.

Each domain is morally right and legitimate according to itself. The goals of the collaboration are ethical or unethical (light or dark), or ethically neutral (i.e., they do not affect other people).

See also:

Rightness of action and rightness of goal, p. ##

Evolutionary ethics and moral realism, p. ##

Light and dark traits, p. ##

Evolutionary ethics and moral realism

Moral realism is the philosophical position that a moral assertion (e.g., “murder is wrong”) has some kind of objective factual status, is an empirical fact, rather than being a subjective opinion or perception or something else entirely.

In the present version of evolutionary ethics, something (morally relevant) can be factually right or wrong according to one or more moral values. A moral value is a factual method of factually collaborating to factually achieve a factual joint goal. This is the sense in which evolutionary ethics supports moral realism. Moral values are normative standards of collaborating that apply to any collaboration. They are real but abstractly and generally so. They are external standards of behaviour that apply impartially.

Moral values (principles, utilitarian goods) can conflict with each other. Even reproduction can conflict with thriving and surviving (Fitzpatrick, 2020).

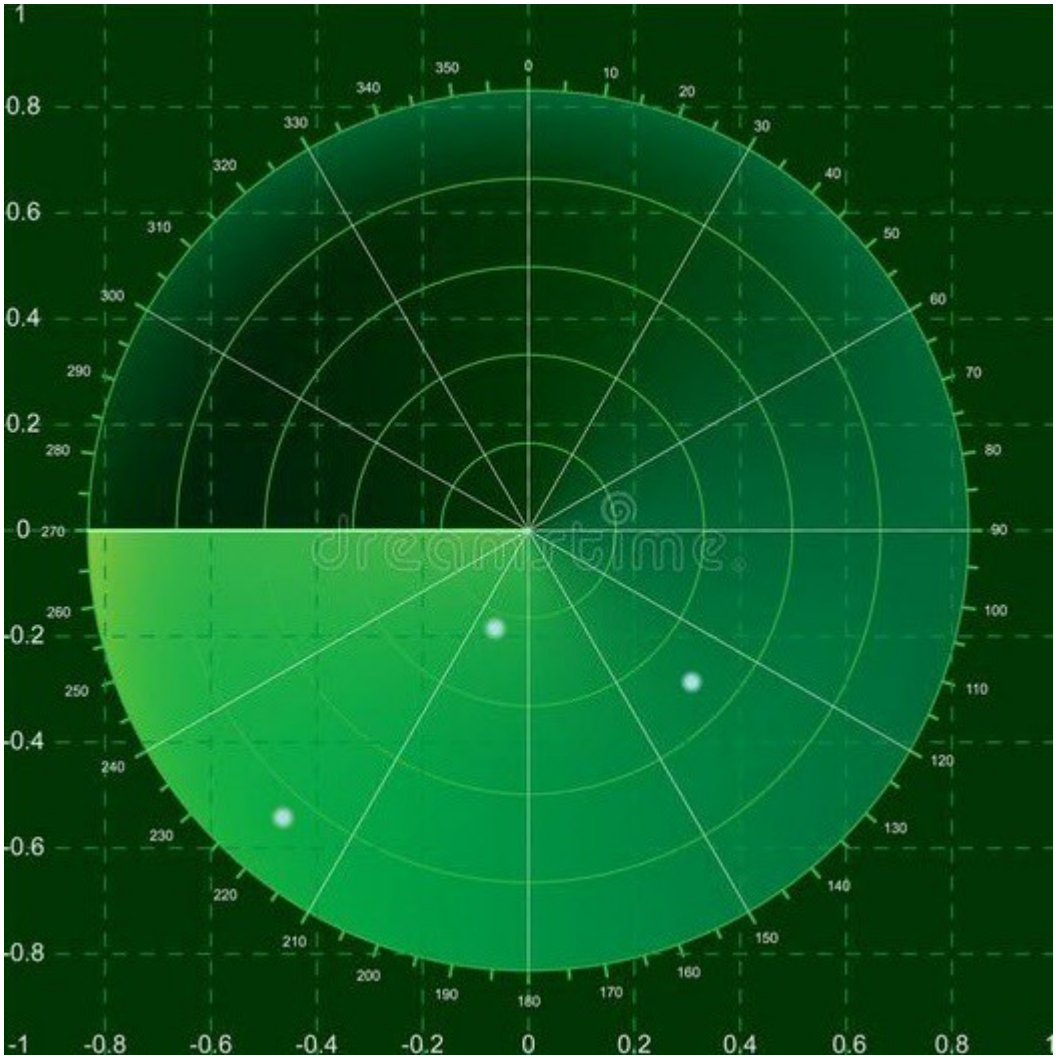
See also:

Fact/value distinction, p. ##

Role ideals, p. ##

Self-other equivalence, p. ##

Evoking moral domains: the metaphor of the radar screen



Objects (facts) show up on a moral domain's radar screen when they are significant to that moral domain's joint goal and its supporting features and values.

We take the example of financial cheating. Financial cheating benefits the agent at the expense of the exploited victim. As such, it is significant to the moral domain of collaborative foraging for mutual (proximate) benefit. The proximate benefit is not mutual.

Another example is adults harming children. This invokes the parenting domain, and the parenting domain overlaps with collaborative foraging for mutual benefit since humans practise cooperative breeding, and mutual reproductive benefit can include care of one another's children. Hence, it is wrong to hurt one's own children, or those of others, according to parenting and by extension cooperative breeding.

Sexual infidelity threatens a joint goal of mate retention, and therefore invokes the pair-bonding domain and can invoke patriarchy, if the pair-bond is patriarchal, since patriarchy is ultimately, partly, a method of mate retention.

Accountability is a feature of any moral domain. Hence, if someone avoids accountability for an offense, it is immoral, in the sense of uncooperative: the person is not fulfilling his or her allotted role in a satisfactory way.

Is morality rational?

There is intense debate over whether morality can be instrumentally rational: whether it benefits the individual, and if so, how (e.g., Fehige and Wessels, 2021).

According to Tomasello (2016), the first human morality of helping and fairness was instrumental and strategic, and our supporting moral emotions and moral norms developed later. We note that, if morality evolved, it can only have done so if it benefited the individual. In the present account, the first step in human morality was communal sharing.

Our ancestors engaged in the behaviour of morality because it benefited them personally, which we infer from the fact that they are our ancestors and we are their descendents; i.e., that they were reproductively successful, and benefits must have

accrued from moral behaviour that was eventually “cashed out” as reproductive benefits.

It was personally beneficial to share with others, because being part of a sharing network pools and mitigates personal risk. It was personally beneficial to help others to thrive, because the individual depended on them to survive. It was personally beneficial to cooperate with others, since in a risky foraging niche, the individual needs others to cooperate with to find food.

See also:

Where does morality “come from”?, p. ##

The Stakeholder Principle, p. ##

Virtue and the goals-methods theory of moral domains

Moral virtue can take two forms: a virtuous character trait, or virtuous performance of a role.

Moral principles are behavioural rules that any sociopath could follow. Like principles, a virtue is both a goal in itself, and a means to some other good.

One does not need moral motivations in order to reciprocate, help others, etc. However, moral motivations help a lot. Beauchamp and Childress (2001) maintain that only a moral action that is performed willingly for its own sake – rather than for instrumental advancement – counts as virtuous.

> We care morally about people’s motives, and we care especially about their *characteristic* motives, that is, the motives deeply embedded in their character. Persons who are motivated in this manner by sympathy and personal affection, for example, meet our approval, whereas others who act the same way, but from motives of personal ambition, might not.

Beauchamp and Childress (2001:27)

One reason why we care about someone's character is that it gives an indication of how they might act in other circumstances: can they be trusted and relied upon, in relevant contexts? A morally weak or habitually unethical person may be swayed away from mutual benefit by personal interest.

> Character consists of a set of stable traits (virtues) that affect a person's judgment and action. Although we each have a different set of character traits, all persons with normal capacities can cultivate the traits that are centrally important in morality. Most such traits incorporate a complex structure of beliefs, motives, and emotions.
>
> *Beauchamp and Childress (2001:30)*

Moral virtues support moral goals and moral principles. Some moral virtues map directly onto moral principles (e.g., the virtue of fidelity maps onto principles of truthfulness and transparency). Benevolence belongs to every evolved moral domain in one way or another. Distributive justice belongs only to the domain of collaborative foraging for mutual benefit.

The Scottish philosopher Douglas Hume (1711-1776) believed that there were only two moral virtues: benevolence and justice. He believed that all the virtues flow from benevolence, but that since benevolence can be subjective and partial (i.e., we tend to be more benevolent towards our own friends and family), justice is needed in order to "impartialise" benevolence and the distribution of goods and burdens (Pfeffer Merrill, 2011).

> ... [some of] the virtues need to be accompanied by an understanding of what is right and good, and of what deserves our kindness, generosity, and the like. Virtues warranting caution, for example, include loyalty, courage,

> respectfulness, tenderness, generosity, and patriotism. All of these virtues can be misdirected by obedience, zeal, or excessive devotion.
>
> *Beauchamp and Childress (2001:32)*

Intention

Your intention indicates what you would do if you had the chance. Someone who performs action X with evil intent is a very different proposition from someone who commits the same act with neutral or good intentions. Intention is thereby closely tied to character and character traits.

See also:

Virtue and the goals-methods theory of moral domains, p. ##

Dark and light traits, p. ##

List of evolved moral domains

Each domain is defined by an evolved goal (fitness, or surviving and thriving, or reproduction) and evolved methods of achieving it (i.e., moral values or principles).

Each moral domain is a version of “the good” according to itself. For example, patriarchy is morally good according to patriarchy. Collaborating for mutual benefit is morally good according to itself. Patriarchy is morally wrong in the sense that although the ultimate goal is achieved to mutual benefit (reproduction), benefits in everyday life under patriarchy are in many ways skewed in favour of males at the expense of females, and this conflicts with the values required in collaborative foraging for mutual benefit.

Kenrick (2016) proposes that humans are driven by a number of fundamental evolved motivations that aim to increase chances of survival and reproduction.

These are: self-protection (from attack by others); disease avoidance; affiliation; status seeking; mate seeking; mate retention; and kin care (concern for relatives / care for children). Some of these goals, or their underlying ones, are socially shared with partners; and these joint motivations generate moral domains since they require methods to achieve them and collaboration to regulate the collaboration. The other goals are solitary; instrumental; amoral (as opposed to immoral). All of them are personally advantageous in some way, even those that are also other-centred.

Other fundamental evolved motivations could be cooperation, sharing, and generalised care, all aimed at joint thriving and surviving.

See also:

Map of normativity, p. ##

Fairness as a moral (sub)domain, p. ##

Sharing in response to need, p. ##

Generalised care, p. ##

1) Collaborative foraging for mutual benefit

Joint goal: mutual benefit

Method: collaborative foraging and breeding

Values (sub-methods): each value forms a moral domain in itself, a sub-domain of the overall domain, that consists of a joint goal (maximising mutual benefit) and a method of achieving it.

- **Altruism**

  Proximately one-way helping has mutualist evolutionary roots in the sense that one person can have a personal stake in the welfare of another, so that my fitness changes positively in response to positive changes in your fitness, and if I help you, a person I depend on, I am helping myself. This applies to

altruism towards both kin and non-kin, for different reasons (see: “The Stakeholder Principle”, p. ##). In the present day, I want to help you and you want to be helped, so we both want the same thing, and this is still therefore mutualist and does not contradict the evolutionary scenario.

Some virtues that promote altruism are generosity, goodwill, compassion, empathic concern, and benevolence.

The “altruism” family of values includes values of causing the least possible harm.

See also:

Virtue and the goals-methods theory of moral domains, p. ##

Targeted helping, p. ##

Perfect Compassion, p. ##

- **Fairness**

  Maximising benefits all round, constrained by equality in some sense; “impartial beneficence according to rules”; sharing in response to either need or deservingness.

- **Reciprocity**

  Maximising benefits in reciprocal exchange, proportionately, on some kind of equal basis.

- **The Golden Rule**

  A form of guided altruism based on cognitive empathy, in turn based on recognition of similarity and identification with a valued familiar person.

- **Respecting property rights and prior possession**

  See also:

  Respecting property rights, p. ##

- **Conflict avoidance**

Conflict is costly for both sides. One way to avoid it is to form a dominance hierarchy based on fighting ability, so that dominants take precedence over subordinates, and subordinates give way, instead of fighting (Tomasello, 2016). The alternative to a dominance hierarchy is egalitarianism: a lack of competition, especially between males or between females.

See also:

Self-domestication of the human race, p. ##.

The Montagu Principle, p. ##

- **Deference to superiors**

  Deference to superiors is of moral value in that it helps to regulate the large-scale hierarchy that fundamentally regulates cooperation on a large scale.

  It is also a form of conflict avoidance and therefore promotes mutual benefit in an interdependent social environment. The boss needs the subordinates, and the subordinates need the boss, and each has duties and obligations to the other (Shweder, Much, Mahapatra, and Park, 1997).

  Curry (2016) finds that deference to superiors exists as a value worldwide. It may be that this is as much a result of “feudal values” (Shweder et al., 1997) as organisational benefit.

- **Loyalty and group loyalty**

  See:

  Loyalty and unconditional love, p. ##

- **Heroism**

  The proposal is that people love heroism in others for two reasons: 1) it is an extreme form of altruism; 2) it carries the risk of grave sacrifice, for the sake of others, by definition. Somebody is voluntarily risking their prized personal well being for others.

There is also the heroism required to complete a challenging personal goal, which can be inspiring to see in others.

- **Honesty**

  Transparency and honesty are a way to share information in common ground, between collaborative partners, and information is utility for whoever needs it. Honesty and transparency promote the benefit of all concerned, the common good, while lying, or concealing relevant information, only benefit the liar or concealer potentially at the expense of others.

- **Autonomy**

  See also:

  Liberty, autonomy, and egalitarianism, p. ##

- **Egalitarianism**

  See also:

  Liberty, autonomy, and egalitarianism, p. ##

- **Cooperative breeding**

  See also:

  Cooperative breeding, p. ##

- **etc.** (after Curry, 2016; Haidt, 2013).

Unique features: self-other equivalence; perspective taking.

See also:

Perfect Compassion, p. ##

Self-other equivalence, p. ##

Perspective taking and helping behaviour, p. ##

Perspective taking and cooperation, p. ##

Interdependence and collaborative foraging for mutual benefit, p. ##

2) Patriarchy

Human patriarchy began life as a competitive male great ape mating strategy of the domination, control, and coercion of females, for reproductive purposes (Smuts, 1995). It has become enshrined as a set of social norms aimed at the domination and control of women and their sexuality. Social norms are a way to be cooperative in otherwise competitive situations (Tomasello, 2016); so that individual male-male competition to dominate females has been cooperativised so that the task now falls to society in general. The egalitarian alternative of the male making himself into as ideal a partner as possible, in order to attract a single female, takes more effort and is more reproductively risky (for the male) than coercion and control.

Joint goal: reproduction at males' convenience; via mate acquisition and retention; via male domination and control of females' movements and sexuality

Method: patriarchy as a system of human social norms; enforced by sexism; female infringements are punished with misogyny (Manne, 2018).

Values: assertion of the "superiority" and dominance of men; assertion of the "inferiority" and subordination of women, keeping women out of power; devaluing women and girls; female obedience to men; female chastity and modesty; women as property of men; sexual exclusivity in women but not necessarily in men; men providing resources for "their" women; men physically protecting women from other, predatory men; respecting another man's "ownership" of his female "property"

Ethical status of patriarchy

As a moral domain, patriarchy is correct according to itself. However, it directly conflicts with values from other domains: specifically, compassion and

egalitarianism. In addition, it fails the ethics test because it is not to the mutual benefit of all concerned.

3) Sexual pair-bonding

Joint goal: reproduction; via mate retention

Method: sexual pair-bonding

Values: sexual fidelity; respecting the pair-bond of others

Pair bonding and patriarchy

Sexual pair bonding overlaps conceptually with patriarchy in that both are methods of mate retention. However, it is perfectly possible to have egalitarian pair bonds.

Patriarchy seeks power (Manne, 2018), and takes advantage of existing power structures in order to assert itself (Smuts, 1995), and accordingly, we observe that pair-bonding values can be used to justify patriarchal norms and practices.

See also:

Self-domestication of the human race, p. ##

Does patriarchy have a biological origin?, p. ##

4) Parenting

Joint goal: thriving and surviving of child; reproduction of parent(s); via rearing and caring for one's own children. Parenting is an example of an asynchronous joint goal: the child wants one thing, the parent wants another, and the two are complementary.

Method: parenting

Values: caring for, nurturing, and successfully raising one's children

Unique features: overlaps conceptually with cooperative breeding and foraging.

5) Kin selection

Joint goal: genetically inclusive, reproductive fitness

Method: preferentially helping kin (Hamilton's Rule)

Values: preferentially helping family members; loyalty towards the family; solidarity with the family; maintaining the reputation of the family

Unique features: arguably, the mutuality of responsibility towards kin is different from the mutuality in other moral domains, since it features a different kind of fitness benefit, achieved through genetic relatedness rather than collaborative dependence. It follows the logic of Hamilton's Rule and a genetic imperative or obligation to help kin in proportion to their genetic relatedness to the self (Dawkins, 1976).

See also:

Hamilton's Rule, p. ##

((evolution of pair-bonding

((self-domestication of the human race (pair-bonding)

Cooperative breeding, p. ##

Patriarchy and female solidarity, p. ##

Other (non-evolved) moral domains

Organised religion

Religion consists of a collaboration towards the joint goal of serving God. Like any moral domain, it has roles (lay person, pastor, vicar, priest, nun, monk, etc.), and ideal ways to behave (i.e., to be religious). Importantly, it provides ways to promote good behaviour and punish bad behaviour. It involves partner choice – only the verifiably faithful may be trusted (Norenzayen, 2013). Partner control comes from the other faithful and from God. As a believer, I am held accountable by, and feel responsible to, God and the other faithful. Religion is practised on intra-personal, interpersonal, and cultural levels.

Unique features: organised religion subsumes an idealised non-religious morality into itself, so that it incorporates an organised way of being ethical according to both evolved and religious domains.

Medical ethics

The joint goal of medical practitioners is the welfare of patients. Medical practitioners are professionally obligated to treat sick people.

Medical ethics rests on four principles (Beauchamp and Childress, 2001), derived from a number of classical ethical theories: utilitarianism, Kantianism, liberal individualism, communitarianism, and the ethics of care.

The four principles are

- **autonomy:** freedom of choice and the ability to exercise informed consent
- **beneficence:** the obligation to help
- **non-maleficence:** the obligation to do no harm

- **justice:** treating all patients the same, and with regard to others' well being in the wider context of an environment of limited resources.

In the UK, doctors are regulated by the General Medical Council, that has the ability to "strike off" failing doctors from practicing. Each health care profession has its own regulatory body.

Financial industry regulatory body

A financial regulatory body collaborates to regulate a collaboration towards mutual benefit: that is, the financial industry. It promotes good behaviour and discourages or punishes bad behaviour. It holds the industry accountable on behalf of the public. Partner choice is involved as some companies may prove to be untrustworthy and therefore not worth employing. Financial regulation has both a societal aspect (the system of norms and the human and other apparatus sustaining them) and an interpersonal one: the individual care given to individual members of the public.

Moral purity, physical and moral disgust

> 239 Let a wise man remove impurities from himself even as a silversmith removes impurities from the silver: one after one, little by little, again and again.
>
> *The Dhammapada*

> Oh, that dirty, double-crossin' rat. I'd like to get my own hooks on him. I'd tear him to pieces.
>
> *James Cagney – "Blonde Crazy" (1931)*

> Cleanness of body was ever esteemed to proceed from a due reverence to God, to society, and to ourselves.
>
> *Sir Francis Bacon – "Advancement of Learning" (1605)*

> Cleanliness is next to godliness.
>
> *Proverb*

In the Western moral scheme, moral purity is not a moral domain in itself. Rather, it is "about" the other moral domains; an attribute. We say that something is morally impure when it has gone against one of the moral domains or principles. A morally impure act evokes moral disgust and moral anger.

The higher the value we place on a moral principle, the greater the purity with which we endow it, and the greater the anger and disgust invoked when it is violated. When something has infinite value, it is sacred, and to violate it is not just disgusting but taboo – forbidden. Sacredness can lead to evil as people may value other things above human life.

Living in close quarters with other people, it is a moral matter to keep oneself clean and hygienic. Not to do so is both dirty and uncooperative; it is dirty in a way that matters to the well being of other people. Hence, immoral and dirty can be one and the same thing, and humans reflect and extend this concept in their emotion of general moral disgust at a violation of moral purity. Cleanliness is next to godliness after all.

Trading the sacred for the profane

Something that is sacred has infinite value (Pinker, 2011). Tetlock et al. (2000:853) define sacred values as “any value that a moral community explicitly or implicitly treats as possessing infinite or transcendental significance that precludes comparisons, trade-offs, or indeed any other mingling with bounded or secular values.”

We find it shameful and self-polluting to even contemplate trading off something we find sacred for money or convenience (Graham, Haidt, and Nosek, 2009; Tetlock, 2003). The longer we contemplate it, the more irreparably we damage our moral identity (Tetlock et al., 2000). People who tolerate this kind of thinking or action in others are typically viewed with anger and contempt.

When someone breaks a sacred norm or violates a sacred value, we are likely to experience moral outrage. If we even contemplate doing it ourselves, we then attempt moral cleansing, a way to mend our personal and public moral identities by reaffirming the value or norm, perhaps going above and beyond this, thereby to mend our identity, reaffirm our solidarity with our moral community and rid ourselves of the sense of pollution.

For most people, sacred values include honour, justice, love, life, friendship, and loyalty to one's country or group. Someone who is prepared to sell one of these for personal gain is considered disqualified from the accompanying social roles: they are no longer a fit and proper person to hold an office or to collaborate with.

Purity in the Hindu religion

The Hindu religion may be thought of as a moral domain whose goal is enlightenment or existential liberation – *moksha*; a state of truth, consciousness and bliss – and whose methods of achieving this are the observance of obligations, actions etc. with respect to God's nature (Kanitkar and Cole, 2010).

In this case, purity is both: 1) an attribute of things, behaviour, etc.; 2) a moral value or principle, a method of promoting or upholding the divine nature, of coming closer

to God, who is pure; and therefore a goal in itself with supporting values of its own (Shweder, Much, Mahapatra, and Park, 1997).

In Hinduism, sacredness pervades everyday life and hence, so do ideas of purity.

> The basic idea is that matter (organic and inorganic) and all other forms – social hierarchies (parent, child, husband, wife), the tonal scales of music (raga), words (mantra) – are infused with spirit or divinity. This discourse is associated with the notion of a sacred tradition, the idea that a way of life – the Hindu dharma – is an earthly manifestation of divine design. ... All things are encompassed within the sacred order, or one could say, divinity is immanent in all things. A view of this kind denies a radical separation between the secular and the sacred. Thus, even family life is a sacramental event, which is why the breach of a seemingly mundane domestic procedure can be rationally regarded as a kind of desecration. (147)
>
> A particular feature of the Hindu worldview is the disposition to make connections between all aspects of secular, domestic, and psychological life and a sacred order that is the ultimate reference point for all sources of obligation. One might speak of a Hindu sense of “sacred world” ... . (149)
>
> *(Shweder, Much, Mahapatra, and Park, 1997)*

See also:

Conventional and moral norms, p. ##

Moral anger

Moral anger is the anger we feel when someone commits a moral violation by breaking a moral norm. The violation of something considered sacred is likely to produce the greatest moral anger. Along with inter-group conflict, moral anger is the

dark side of morality, responsible for some of the worst atrocities of the human race, such as witch-burning, and for everyday cruelty in the name of right (Pinker, 2011). The concept of justice, if someone is judged for their moral deservingness, can be an instrument of moral anger.

A study by Rozin, Lowery, Imada, and Haidt (1999) produced evidence that moral anger is elicited by violations of the ethics of interpersonal benefit/harm, reciprocity and fairness; contempt by violations of the "community" ethics of duty, responsibility, hierarchy etc.; and disgust by contravention of the "purity" ethic of sacredness.

Tetlock, Kristel, Elson, Green, and Lerner (2000: p 855) mention the "ferocity-forgiveness spectrum" of religious moralists, "a continuum that could be personified at one end by Torquemada of the Spanish Inquisition and at the other end by open-minded and compassionate 20th century Judaeo-Christian thinkers such as Archbishop Tutu."

A study found that most of the murders it looked at were committed in moral anger, in revenge for perceived wrongs, in everyday disputes that escalated out of control (Black, 1983; Shermer, 2015).

> Homicide is often a response to adultery or other matters relating to sex, love, or loyalty, to disputes about domestic matters (financial affairs, drinking, housekeeping) or affronts to honor, to conflicts relating to debts, property, and child custody, and to other questions of right and wrong. ...Many crimes involving the confiscation or destruction of property also prove to have a normative character when the facts come fully to light. There are, for example, moralistic burglaries, thefts, and robberies.
>
> *Donald Black – "Crime as Social Control"*

Since empathic concern depends on the amount of approval we feel for someone (Decety, 2011), moral anger can easily destroy empathic concern, opening the way for normally-unthinkable cruelty.

See also:

Trading the sacred for the profane, p. ##

Features of collaboration

Cooperation consists of collaboration, coordination, and communication (Tomasello, 2014).

A moral domain is a system of intra- and inter-personal and collective social control with respect to collaborating towards a particular class of joint goal. It is a collaboration to regulate a collaboration.

Collaboration is towards a joint goal, which we assume is mutual benefit of some kind. Morality and ethics are aimed at collaborating to promote mutual benefit of some kind. Hence, general features of collaboration, and of controlling collaboration, are also general features of moral domains.

The following features of collaboration are proposed for the domain, collaborative foraging for mutual benefit. Other moral domains have their own particular structures and versions of these features of collaboration.

See also:

Moral and instrumental oughts, p. ##

Features of moral domains, p. ##

Joint goal

Collaboration has a dual-level structure of: 1) a joint goal, and 2) individual roles and perspectives (Tomasello, 2014, 2016). When we make a joint commitment to pursue joint goal *X*, we are committing to each other and to the ideal normative standards of our roles: sub-goals of the overall joint goal. This commitment then governs the collaboration impartially (since the standards apply to anyone) and legitimately (since we both agreed to it).

Strictly speaking, achieving the joint goal that produces mutual benefit consists of partners achieving their individual instrumental goals of utility, together. One partner's goal may differ from the other; however, the goals presumably depend on each other. For example, a parent cannot reproduce without a child, and the child cannot survive without the parent (or some kind of adult guardian). In collaborative foraging for mutual benefit, all parties achieve the same kind of goal (proximate benefit), although different in detail, as a result of their collaboration.

See also:

Role ideals, p. ##

Role ideals

> There's so many ways to do it
>
> So many ways to see
>
> But the only way to do it
>
> Is to do it properly.
>
> *2 Puerto Ricans, a Blackman and a Dominican – "Do it Properly"*

Role ideals are defined as the instrumental, ideal standards associated with a particular role. As sub-goals of the overall goal, they are normative, and as they are associated with a physical role and not particular people, they are impartial. As impartial standards, they form external arbiters of behaviour with respect to performing a particular role. The fact that personnel could be exchanged within roles, and success still be achieved if role ideals are upheld – forms a basis for self-other equivalence, and hence, impartiality among partners.

Role ideals could have been the first shared normative standards (Tomasello, 2016), and the forerunners of later collective cultural norms.

A moral principle is a role ideal associated with any role: with collaboration itself. It is an ideal way of collaborating. Just as role ideals are sub-goals of the overall goal of the task in hand, moral principles form sub-domains of their overall domain with the same joint goal as the domain.

A social norm is cultural, part of a large-group-wide system of social control: an ideal way to be cooperative in otherwise competitive situations.

See also:

Self-other equivalence, p. ##

Joint agent "we"

If you and I are collaborating, then there are effectively three characters in the picture: "I", "you", and the joint agent "we".

"We" are a joint agent, and therefore my success or failure affect "you" and "me" equally, and they also can affect the future of "us" since if I fail to cooperate optimally, for whatever reason, you may not choose me as a partner in the future.

Within the joint agent, I can see your role and perspective, by cognitive perspective taking. I can see that if I were to uphold your role ideals, I could perform your role with equal success.

See also:

Partner choice, p. ##

Partner control, p. ##

Joint commitment to collaborate

- you and I make a commitment to collaborate to do *X*;
- "we" are committed to collaborate to do *X*;
- *X* becomes our joint goal;
- this commitment to do *X* then structures our collaboration;
- "we" collaborate to regulate the collaboration to do *X*.

Each of our commitments to the other is backed up by our cooperative identities or reputations (see below): if I fail to collaborate ideally, my market-worthiness as a collaborator is negatively affected, and I may afterwards have difficulty achieving the benefits of cooperation either with my present partner "you" or with any others.

The commitment takes the instrumental normativity of achieving the joint utilitarian goal and transforms it into interpersonal, moral normativity: it forms a "we" that governs "you" and "I" impartially according to role ideals (normative standards of the task); and there is always the (normative) threat of damage to reputations if the commitment is broken.

In this way, there is mutual "normative trust", implying that there is interpersonal pressure for you and me to fulfil the contract and collaborate ideally until we have both achieved our instrumental goals.

The primal scenario of collaboration for mutual benefit is best described as a Stag Hunt (Tomasello, 2016). In this type of situation, I might be hunting for some small, low-value, low-risk game such as tortoises. You might have spotted a large, high-value, high-risk animal like a stag. Before I abandon the safe tortoises, and come with you to hunt the risky stag, I need some way of mitigating the risk of losing all my options. The risk is much reduced if we make an explicit commitment to each other, out in the open, to collaborate. In making a commitment with you, I am assuming that you are trustworthy and competent and that you care about your moral standing.

Other commitments are created when we simply “fall into” a collaboration by joining in.

A joint commitment or agreement can only be terminated by another joint agreement: we both have to agree that you can be excused from further duties.

The claim is that humans have evolved an instinct to make and follow joint commitments to collaborate. Presumably, if true, it is because collaboration enhances fitness, and people who can make and follow joint commitments are able to collaborate more successfully.

> Thus, in a recent experiment three-year-old children committed to a joint task, but then, unexpectedly, one child got access to his reward early. For the partner to benefit as well, this child had to continue to collaborate even though there was no further reward available to him. Nevertheless, most children eagerly assisted their unlucky partner so that both ended up with a reward – and more often than if the partner just asked for help in a similar situation but outside of any collaboration or commitment (Hamann et al., 2012). ...
>
> In a follow-up study, Gräfenhain et al. (2013) found that pairs of three-year-olds who committed to work on a puzzle together did such things as wait for their partner when she was delayed, repair damage done by their partner, refrain from tattling on their partner, and perform their partner’s role for her when she was unable (i.e., more than did pairs of children who simply played in parallel for the same amount of time). When young children make a joint commitment with a peer, they help and support her much more strongly than when they are just playing together.
>
> *Michael Tomasello – “A Natural History of Human Morality” (2016)*
>
> References:
>
> Gräfenhain, M; M Carpenter; and M Tomasello – “Three-year-olds’ understanding of the consequences of joint commitments”; *PLoS ONE, 8*(9), e73039, 2013

Hamann, K; F Warneken; and M Tomasello – “Children’s developing commitments to joint goals”; *Child Development, 83*(1), 137-145, 2012

See also:

Partner choice, p. ##

Role ideals, p. ##

Moral domains: mutual utility among kin and non-kin, p. ##

Mutual respect and deservingness

In a collaborative partnership, partners, as partners, are both mutually valuable and equivalent. This value and equivalence lead to a respect and deservingness among partners. This mutual respect, deservingness and equivalence form the basis for fairness.

See also:

Self-other equivalence

Partner choice

The proposal is that people who collaborate do better than loners.

Young children prefer to work collaboratively with others, while chimpanzees show no such preference (Rekers, Haun, and Tomasello, 2011).

Humans collaborate to survive and thrive, and therefore face the following two problems in social life:

1. finding good partners to cooperate with: who are skilled and diligent, and not lazy or dishonest, for example;
2. being chosen oneself for collaborative activities.

To solve these problems, we need therefore:

1. to know the track records of others as cooperators;
2. to have a good track record ourselves.

This track record is someone's reputation or cooperative identity.

In the marketplace of potential collaborators, "you" should have respect for "me", because "I" could help "you".

Cooperative identity and reputation

My public cooperative identity is defined as my standing as a co-operator with specific current or past partners.

My public moral identity or reputation is defined as the opinion of the world at large of me as a co-operator, and of how ethical I am.

My personal cooperative or moral identity is my opinion of myself as a cooperative or moral agent. As I monitor and evaluate the performance of others, so I also know that they are monitoring and evaluating me, and, internalising this process via self-other equivalence, I monitor and evaluate my own performance of cooperative and moral duties and obligations.

This identity is a source of moral normativity in that I wish to maintain my standing and respect in my own eyes and the eyes of the world as a good co-operator. The best way to appear to be a good co-operator is actually to be one; we also engage in "reputation management" whereby we attempt to repair a damaged reputation through various means.

This self-opinion is part of the conscience. In response to a poor self-opinion, I will feel guilt at past wrongdoing, attempt to make amends and undo the regretted action, and resolve to do better in the future.

See also:

What is morality? p. ##

Partner choice, p. ##

Indirect reciprocity, p. ##

Moral injury

A moral injury is an injury to one's personal moral identity caused by a grievous violation of one's personal moral code. It is perhaps best known among the armed services, who may be forced to do traumatic things to others in the course of duty. People who undergo a moral injury may suffer from guilt, self-condemnation, lethargy, anomie (lack of interest in life), depression, withdrawal, self-harm, suicidal ideation, self-sabotaging behaviour, under- or unemployment, and the failure or lack of relationships, along with feelings of being unforgiveable, and a deep desire to right the wrong (Norman and Maguen, 2024).

> 173 He who overcomes the evil he has done with the good he afterwards does, he sheds a light over the world like that of the moon when free from clouds.
>
> *The Dhammapada*

Collective moral identity

The concept of moral identity can operate on the group level as well as the personal level. We say things like, “it's simply not British (to behave like that).” We may feel guilt and shame, and wish to apologise, on behalf of our cultural group (Tomasello, 2019 a).

Partner control

In collaboration, each partner is taking a risk by relying on the others. This risk is minimised through joint commitment and then partner control.

In partner control, we attempt to turn a failing or disrespectful partner into a good one, through “respectful protest”, or punishment, or the threat of rejection, or helping and guidance, or some combination of these.

There is positive pressure for me to treat my partners well, that comes from the respect and deservingness I feel towards them as collaborative partners. There is negative pressure in the form of the threats of punishment, or partner choice, and the threat to my cooperative identity and reputation.

The commitment is the commitment to excellent work: i.e., to carry out my role according to role ideals.

In the joint commitment, each partner relinquishes some of her personal control to the joint agent “we”, and in doing so, grants authority to “us” to sanction her if she is wayward in carrying out her duties.

Just as I may legitimately judge and sanction my partners, so do I, through self-other equivalence, recognise the legitimacy of their judgment and sanctions of me if I fail in my duties.

Each partner’s performance is thereby continually monitored and evaluated by the other partners, and by themselves, and each governs or regulates themselves in accordance with this evaluation. Effectively, individuals govern themselves and each other on behalf of the team.

It is in the common ground knowledge of all partners that each expects to be treated with respect and as equals.

Respectful protest

Respectful protest of one kind or another is a way of partner control. It is to press a moral demand – for me to hold you to account for not being a good partner (to blame you), and for you to hold yourself to account (to accept responsibility and feel guilty) (Dill and Darwall, 2014; Tomasello, 2016).

Other means of partner control are guidance and/or tactful persuasion. Less scrupulous forms are manipulation and coercion (dark behaviour).

If partner *A* feels that he has been treated unfairly, unjustly or disrespectfully by partner *B*, or if partner *B* is not fulfilling her role ideals, he can make a "respectful protest" towards partner *B*, informing her of his resentment but respectfully assuming that she is a cooperative person who wants to maintain her cooperative identity. If partner *B* is still behaving poorly after this, then partner *A* always has the option to change partners (partner choice), and partner *B* will run the risk of damaging her own cooperative identity in the process.

Duty and responsibility

Informally, duty and responsibility can mean the same thing. Formally, it may be helpful to distinguish between the two.

We define duty as the aim to achieve instrumental success within one's role: to fulfil role ideals. I have a duty to perform my role excellently and virtuously.

We define responsibility as the interpersonal and intrapersonal pressure to be a good co-operator and cooperative partner. I have a responsibility to my partners to be diligent, honest, faithful, etc., and to stick with the collaboration until all partners

have received their rewards. The commitment to be faithful and see the collaboration through to the end, according to role ideals, is the implied consequence of the interpersonal agreement to collaborate.

In collaborating towards a joint goal, the motivating pressure is the instrumental pressure to achieve partners' joint instrumental goals of utility. When partners make a joint commitment to collaborate, they are committing to each other to achieve the goal. Hence, the instrumental pressure to achieve goals is transformed within the cooperative unit into interpersonal and intrapersonal pressure to be a good co-operator and cooperative partner: i.e., into moral normativity.

See also:

Moral normativity, p. ##

Large-group morality

> The challenge for modern human individuals was to scale up from a life based on interdependent collaboration with well-known partners to a life lived in a cultural group with all kinds of interdependent groupmates. Cognitively, what was needed were skills and motivations not just of joint intentionality but of collective intentionality. These skills, along with newly powerful skills of cultural transmission, enabled individuals to create among themselves various types of conventional cultural practices, shared in the cultural common ground of the group. ...
>
> The modern human cultural group consequently became, in effect, a single, self-sustaining collaborative enterprise, a collaborative foraging party writ large, aimed at the collective goal of group survival, with each individual playing his or her division-of-labor role, including the role of being a competent and loyal group member.
>
> *Tomasello (2016:85,88)*

Morality is the collaboration to regulate collaboration, and collaboration requires a group, team, or partnership. Tomasello (2012, 2016) proposes two stages to human prehistory: living in small groups, from around 4 million years ago, and then as humans grew more reproductively successful, in large tribal cultural groups split into small related bands, from around 150,000 years ago. Contrary to received wisdom, there is no evidence that these groups engaged in warfare. Populations of each human species were still sparse, strangers would have been more welcome as helpers than feared as enemies, and there is a lot of evidence of interbreeding between human species. The earliest evidence of warfare is from around 12-18,000 years ago, “between what appears to be culturally distinct Nile Valley semisedentary hunter-fisher-gatherer groups.” (Crevecoeur et al., 2021:9).

There are a number of challenges for morality in the self-regulation of large, anonymous, impersonal groups:

- coordination of individuals with unfamiliar group-members
- trust and reliance with unfamiliar group-members (group solidarity)
- group loyalty
- cooperation within the group
- controlling cheating and free riding
- legitimacy of the social contract (individual agreement to contribute to and cooperate with the group and to follow its norms)

At the same time, those individuals that did best in large tribal groups were those who had cultural rationality, as:

- conformity and self- and other-regulation according to the group's norms and conventions
- loyalty to the group and its members.

After the advent of anatomically modern humans, between 200,000 years ago and around 50,000 years ago, the archaeological record shows that culture "exploded" around 40,000 years ago as the human brain became a modern brain, and groups began making distinct cultures (Klein, 1999).

Interdependence and group loyalty

Collaboration requires a group of people to do it, all of whom will benefit from collaboration by increased chances of thriving and surviving. These people are therefore interdependent with one another. Interdependence gives rise to mutual empathic concern, loyalty, gratitude, etc.

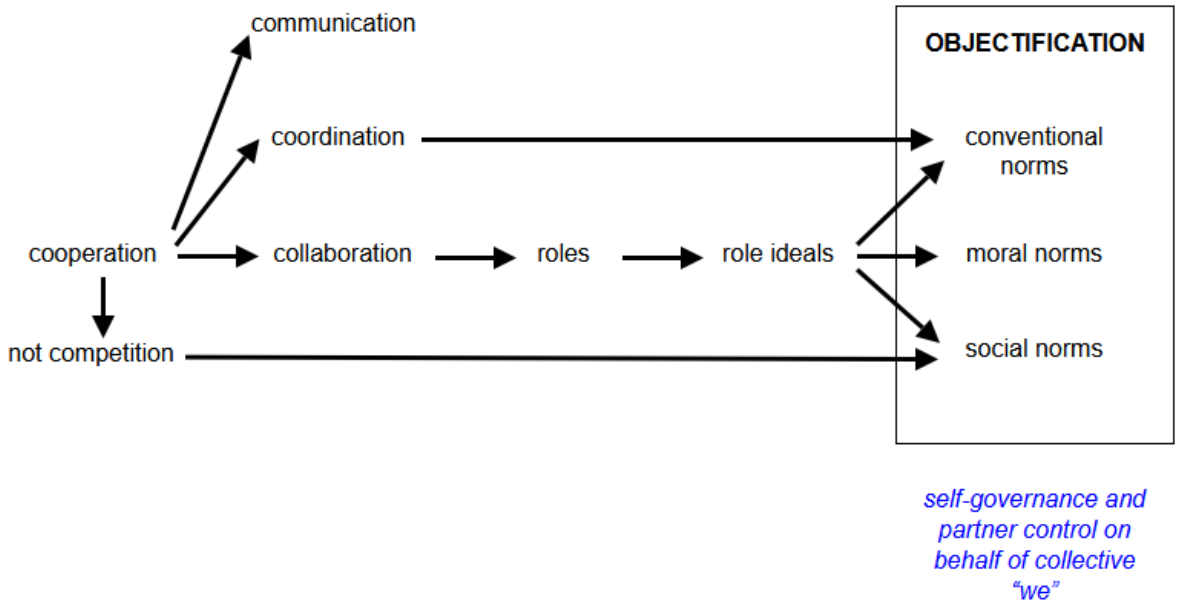
As ancient human groups grew larger, increasing division of labour meant that individuals grew ever more dependent on the group, and this served to spread empathic concern to everyone inside the group, even strangers; but not to those outside it. This was the beginning of in-group out-group psychology – i.e., in-group bias. "... everyone in the group needed everyone else ..." (Tomasello, 2016:90).

It is important for the functioning of the group that its members are loyal. It is important for individuals to display their group loyalty to other partners, in order to confirm their identity as good group-members.

See also:

Group loyalty, p. ##

Conventions, moral norms, and social norms



The role ideals of conventional norms are those of particular occupations within the group or tribe; or applying to particular social situations, activities, products, etc.

The role ideal of moral norms is of being a good co-operator. The role ideal of social norms is of being a good cultural group-member.

All of them indicate that if you follow them then you are “one of us”: a loyal and committed member of our cultural group; or at least, compatible with it.

- **Conventional and moral norms**

  There is a lot of controversy in moral philosophy over the difference between conventional and moral norms (e.g., Machery and Stich, 2022). In the present account, conventions are “rules of the game” for the purposes of coordination of collaborative activities, while moral norms evoke the concerns of moral domains – e.g., benefit and harm, fairness, respect, parenting, pair-bonding, the freedom of women, family concerns, etc.

  A convention can be moralised if breaking it evokes a moral norm. For example, if it shows disrespect to break a convention, then breaking that convention becomes morally wrong. An example might be wearing beach clothes to a funeral.

  See also:

  Evoking moral domains: the metaphor of the radar screen, p. ##

  Haidt, Koller, and Dias (1993) propose that Western definitions of morality and convention do not transfer very well to non-Western countries, citing Indian Hinduism as an example, where many more aspects of life are moralised than in the West. In the present account, this is because Hinduism is a religious moral domain whose (joint) goal is not (only) human flourishing, surviving and reproducing, but overall is individual enlightenment and spiritual liberation. Hence, many aspects of life become methods of achieving this goal, and so they have moral significance.

See also:

Theory of moral domains, p. ##

Purity in the Hindu religion, p. ##

- **Social norms**

  Tomasello (2016) defines social norms as a group-wide system of control that includes conventional norms (for within-group coordination), cooperative norms that forestall competition, and moral norms by which group-members evaluate right and wrong.

  In small interpersonal groups, partners govern themselves and one another with responsibility and partner control. In large collective groups, partners govern themselves and one another using collectively-recognised social norms.

  Group-members enforce social norms upon themselves, upon people they interact with, and upon third parties whom they might have nothing to do with, on behalf of the collective group agent "we". So far, this norm-enforcing behaviour has not been observed in any other species: it seems to be uniquely human.

  Tomasello (2016) also defines social norms as group-wide conventions that promote peace and cooperation in otherwise competitive situations. These tend to be around the things that people compete about the most: food and sex. Examples of common social norms include property rights, including, patriarchally, respecting the female "property rights" of other men; and procedural rules of who gets to eat first (e.g., pregnant women, older people). In the UK it is the norm to queue when a number of people want the same service, this procedure thereby forestalling competition.

- **Conventions, similarity, and mutual trust**

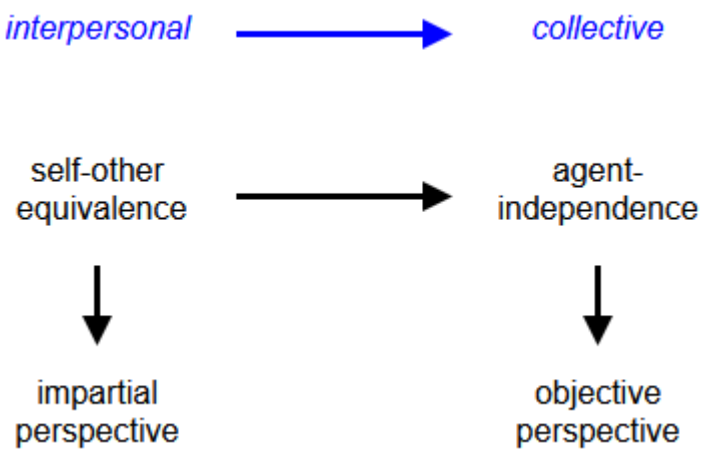
  The group-wide conventions of how to do things form part of the group's cultural common ground that all group members share, and all know that they

all share. This knowledge of sharedness allows flexible coordination throughout the group.

Group-wide conventions produce group-wide similarity, which leads to mutual trust, since we both know that we both know that if we follow the known convention, this will lead to instrumental success, even if we are unfamiliar to each other. Following the convention means that we benefit each other by working together successfully.

Hence, conformity for the sake of it became an instrumental necessity for group members. At the same time, conformity signalled loyal membership of the group, to other group members; so that it was also socially necessary.

- **Objective right and wrong**



See also:

Self-other equivalence and the genealogy of morality, p. ##

- **Objective justice: distributive, procedural, and moral**

- **Institutions**

- **Religion**

- **Law**

Competition and dominance

The evolution of cooperation requires that its benefits reach all contributing parties in roughly similar amounts. Natural selection works on every individual's relative advantage compared with others; hence, gaining an absolute benefit is insufficient. If individuals were satisfied with any absolute benefit, they might still face negative fitness consequences if they were doing less well than competing others. It makes sense, therefore, to compare one's gains with those of others.

Sarah F Brosnan and Frans B M de Waal – "Evolution of responses to (un)fairness"

Batek regarded each other as basically equal in their intrinsic value and therefore worthy of respect. Although some people, particularly shamans, were held in especially high regard, they neither expected nor received special treatment from others. All Batek felt that they deserved the same consideration as everyone else, and they were not shy in saying so.

Kirk M Endicott and Karen L Endicott – "The Headman was a Woman – The Gender Egalitarian Batek of Malaysia"

An articulate Bushman named Gaugo tells Lee, "Say that a man has been hunting. He must not come home and announce like a braggart, 'I have killed a good one in the bush!' He must first sit down in silence until someone else comes up to his fire and asks, 'What did you see today?' He replies quietly, 'Ah, I'm no good for hunting. I saw nothing at all ... maybe just a tiny one.' Then I smile to myself because I know he has killed something big."

Or as a renowned healer named Tomazho says, "When a young man kills much meat, he comes to think of himself as a chief or a big man, and he

> thinks of the rest of us as his servants or inferiors. We can't accept this. We refuse one who boasts, for someday his pride will make him kill somebody. So we always speak of his meat as worthless. In this way we cool his heart and make him gentle."
>
> *Christopher Boehm – "Moral Origins – the evolution of virtue, altruism, and shame" (2012:43-44)*

> Morality is how we work things out with others by means *other* than power and authority ...
>
> *Michael Tomasello – "A Natural History of Human Morality" (2016:157)*

Human social life may be said to operate along two dimensions: cooperation and competition. For example, fairness (as distributive justice) is a trade-off between maximising individual benefits, and maximising benefits for all concerned parties (Tomasello, 2016).

Competition is a zero-sum game, where I win at your expense: I win and you lose, and the total number of wins equals zero. Cooperation, on the other hand, is meant to produce a win-win, positive-sum situation, where all parties benefit.

The pressure to compete is ever-present, driven by the same thing as the pressure to cooperate: the pressure to thrive and survive (and reproduce). Each represents a distinct possibility. For humans, there is always going to be a tug-of-war between cooperation and competition (Raihani, 2021); between hierarchy and egalitarianism; and between patriarchy and egalitarianism. Where a positive-sum situation is possible, peace is likely to emerge (Glowacki, Wilson, and Wrangham, 2017).

Chernyak-Hai and Davidai (2022) found that people with a zero-sum outlook tend to be more greedy, less trusting, and less willing to help under-served populations, than general; and that a zero-sum outlook inhibits other-directed, prosocial behaviour. Their studies of 2324 people found that people with a zero-sum outlook tend not to

be willing to help others to help themselves (autonomy-oriented helping), fearing a loss of status, but tend to be willing to help others to solve a problem entirely (dependency-oriented helping).

Authority ranking

Authority ranking means to respect and act in accordance with some kind of hierarchy, whether of “age, gender, descent, ethnicity, religious observance, knowledge, physical prowess, some form of accomplishment, personality or charisma, appointment to office, or any of a myriad of other criteria” (Fiske, 1991).

There are at least two forms of competitive hierarchy: based on dominance (ranking according to coercive force) or prestige (ranking according to skills and abilities) (Ketterman and Maner, 2021). Status is a measure of someone’s position in a dominance or prestige hierarchy.

In a dominance hierarchy, dominants do well at the expense of subordinates: for example, in exploitation or slavery. In leadership based on prestige, the benefit of the prestigious and subordinates is mutual. Even groups of people with a fiercely egalitarian culture can be persuaded to follow prestigious “leaders” if the benefits outweigh the costs and the “leader” can offer the people real survival benefits. Over time, and combined with environmental conditions and the [unequal] introduction of ownership of property and of the means of production, prestigious hierarchies could have become established as dominant, coercive, “persistent institutionalised inequality” (Mattison, Smith, Shenk, and Cochrane, 2016).

Humans are competitive, like any social species, but we also have to live by cooperation. In most social animals, a competitive lifestyle leads to dominance hierarchies as a way to decide how resources are shared out: those with a greater fighting ability are able to take what they want at the expense of those with lesser fighting ability. A dominant position within the hierarchy becomes a proxy for the ability to secure food, mates, or coalitionary partners (friends and allies) (Tomasello, 2016). In this situation, cooperation quickly falls apart, because when dominants are

able to take what they want from subordinates, those subordinate partners lose motivation over time through lack of appropriate reward (Tomasello, 2012). Other-directed fairness on the part of the dominant is also not possible.

While we believe that the members of the human family tree lived a strictly egalitarian lifestyle for much of its history (Knauft et al., 1991), authority ranking is a feature of modern life. In the "classical" model of this moral foundation (Fiske, 1991), the political hierarchy is governed by consent rather than coercion or force or the threat of harm. A hierarchy that is perceived by subordinates to be legitimate, such as a state and police force that are perceived to be legitimate, may use "reasonable" force and coercion in its governance. To this end, those illegitimately in power may seek to artificially legitimise themselves in the minds of subordinates.

If I bully or coerce someone into something, then I am using them as an object for my own ends, rather than leaving them free to pursue their own ends. This goes against the egalitarian instincts of human beings, since one person is seizing power. People dislike being dominated (Boehm, 1993); it invokes the "liberty/oppression" moral foundation.

In a legitimate hierarchy, subordinates have a duty of respect and obedience to those higher up, while those higher up have a duty towards subordinates to care for them and to maintain peace and social order.

In other primates, such as chimpanzees, macaques, and baboons, the male dominance hierarchy operates both through consent and the threat of violence and harm (de Waal, 1982/2007). However, humans prefer to achieve social control ethically, through norms, rather than the threat of violence.

A hierarchy keeps order among its members. This moral foundation of respecting hierarchy and authority also includes respect for the traditional social and moral order (Ekins and Haidt, 2016).

See also:

The Moral Compass, p. ##

Dark and light traits, p. ##

Liberty, autonomy, and egalitarianism

Egalitarianism, a flat power structure, implies that no person may command another (Endicott and Endicott, 2008). Hence, egalitarianism implies personal autonomy, the power of individuals to govern themselves as free as possible from outside interference. Dominance is inimical to autonomy: it directly prevents it. Bullying – dominants taking what they like from subordinates – is inimical to fairness, and destroys the motivation for subordinates to cooperate in repeated encounters.

Accordingly, liberty forms a distinct moral foundation or family of moral values (Haidt, 2013). The desire for liberty is a reaction to illegitimate authority: that which achieves its aims through bullying, domination and intimidation.

Autonomy requires, minimally:

1. Liberty: freedom from controlling influences.
2. Agency: the capacity to pursue one's own intentions in one's own way. This further implies that one has the freedom of knowledge or understanding.

(Beauchamp and Childress, 2001; Berlin, 1969)

Agency includes the freedom to choose, for oneself, long term over short term thriving; or the ability to forego an immediate gratification in favour of intelligent long term options. We are not free when we are slaves to our passions and desires. This idea is favoured by organised religion. It also includes moral agency: the capacity to choose right behaviour from wrong; the freedom to "restrain [yourself] from preferring your own immediate advantage over the rightful and more distant interests of others" (Wilson, 1993).

Total autonomy is physically impossible. It is also morally undesirable because of the potential negative effects on others. Arguably, in every area where we have autonomy, we have substantive or partial autonomy.

Autonomy may be restricted by a number of factors, internal and external, including:

1. Hierarchical authority.
2. Social norms.
3. A professional code of conduct.
4. Coercive control.
5. Obligation to others.
6. Addictions or other compulsive behaviours.

Modern egalitarian societies

Egalitarianism is the ethos of treating one's fellows as equals. Many modern hunter-gatherer groups are known to have a fiercely egalitarian ethos, with food, and the few portable possessions, being shared on demand (Gurven, 2004; Woodburn, 1982), and social "status levelling mechanisms" employed to cut dominant, aggressive, assertive or competitive people down to size, including public ridicule, desertion, or even assassination (Boehm et al., 1993). Inequalities of wealth, power and status are not tolerated.

James Woodburn (1982) identifies two categories of economic structure in a society: those with an immediate return on labour, and those with a delayed return on labour.

When we refer to "simple" nomadic hunter gatherer societies, these are immediate return systems. Some hunter gatherer societies have delayed return economies and social organisation. Both kinds are common in hunter gatherers.

All modern egalitarian societies known to Western science are immediate return systems. These include, with varying degrees of egalitarianism: the Batek of Malaysia, the Hadza of Tanzania, !Kung Bushmen of southern Africa, Mbuti pygmies of the Congo, and the Malapantaram and Paliyan of South India.

While it would be a mistake to equate any and all modern hunter gatherer societies with ancient humans, it seems reasonable to assume, given the historical evidence of when agricultural and horticultural technology began, that ancient humans would have used immediate return systems for at least 1.5 million years (Singh and Glowacki, 2022). Therefore we conclude that ancient humans were, probably, fiercely egalitarian in their outlook, including being non-patriarchal (Endicott, 1981).

> ... in these societies the ability of individuals to attach and to detach themselves at will from groupings and from relationships, to resist the imposition of authority by force, to use resources freely without reference to other people, to share as equals in game meat brought into camp, to obtain personal possessions without entering into dependent relationships – all these bring about one central aspect of this specific form of egalitarianism. *What it above all does is to disengage people from property, from the potentiality in property rights for creating dependency.* I think it is probable that this specialised development can only be realised without impoverishment in societies with a simple hunting and gathering economy because elsewhere this degree of disengagement from property would damage the operation of the economy. Indeed the indications are that this development is intrinsic, a necessary component of immediate-return economies which occurs only in such economies.
>
> *James Woodburn – Egalitarian Societies (1982:445)*

We may find the following characteristics that promote egalitarianism and personal autonomy, in immediate return societies:

- non-dependence on specific other people, but dependence on the group
- direct access to food and other resources
- direct access to means of coercion
- mobility and flexibility

- access to sharing network
- sanctions on the accumulation of personal possessions
- constant transmission of possessions between people
- dispersed leadership and decision making

In these societies, egalitarianism is explicitly enforced as an ideology as well as being an implicit consequence of the way society is structured. If each man has direct access to the means of coercion (e.g., poisoned arrows that may be used on another while he is asleep) then this a significant levelling mechanism between men. Anyone may choose where they go and where they live, throughout the tribe's territory, without losing economic or other vital interests, allowing them to move away from anyone with whom they are in conflict or who might wish to control them. This physical mobility, and lack of boundaries, also prevents differences in wealth from building up between neighbouring areas. Dependency on others for resources, and therefore, power relations, are largely absent. Anyone may provision themselves by their own efforts and by pooling with the group as a whole. Personal autonomy is high, and no one may command another. Instead, persuasion by eloquence, intelligence and tact may be used. There is no "chief", but a head man or woman is a kind of wise guiding figurehead. The attitude to personal property is casual and people are put under pressure to share any personal surplus with others. Anything that cannot be used straight away tends to be given or gambled or thrown away. Saving and accumulating are actively discouraged (Woodburn, 1982).

Delayed return societies include "pastoralists [sheep or cattle farmers] as well as part-time hunters, sedentary hunters, foragers dependent on fishing, trappers, bee-keepers and mounted hunters" (Endicott, 1981:2).

In these more sedentary, delayed return societies, we find the following characteristics:

- unavoidable delay between productive labour and the yield from that labour
- economic system involves ownership and control of property, assets, technology, and production process

- more rigid division of labour and social organisation
- inequality
- power structures and dependency on specific others
- a lack of sexual equality (Endicott, 1981).

U-shaped history of human hierarchy?

The history of human dominance hierarchies could be U-shaped, based on several lines of evidence. In other words, the historical timeline may have been hierarchy-then-egalitarianism-then-hierarchy.

1) Great ape sociality, even that of bonobos, is structured mainly by coercion and dominance, leading to hierarchies based on fighting ability (Tomasello, 2014; de Waal and Lanting, 1998). The ancestors of humans were great apes, as are humans ourselves.

2) Hyper-cooperation has clearly evolved in human beings, yet it could not have evolved in the presence of the coercive, competitive force that characterises great ape sociality. The human race must have gone through a process of "self-domestication", a necessary step that removed great ape dominance and replaced it with human egalitarianism. This self-domestication must, we assume, have reached the entire human race for it to be possible for cooperation to evolve in the entire genus *Homo*. Hence, coercive, competitive force (social dominance) must have died out in the human family tree for some period of time, beginning, we imagine, with early species such as *Homo erectus* around 2 million years ago, the first human species found to have made it out of Africa .

3) Early humans, we assume, must have lived in technologically basic, "immediate-return" economic systems for a long period of time: an inherently egalitarian way of life, potentially for both men and women (Endicott, 1981; Woodburn, 1982). We see this lifestyle today in some hunter-gatherers living in relatively harsh environments (Singh and Glowacki, 2022).

4) Hierarchies based on dominance or prestige are typical of modern human society, alongside hyper-cooperation.

> ... although infants, toddlers, and preschoolers understand and strategically respond to hierarchical rank, in fact the default expectations and preferences of most of them appear egalitarian, as is the case for adults cross-nationally.
>
> *Lotte Thomsen – "The developmental origins of social hierarchy: how infants and young children mentally represent and respond to power and status" (2020)*

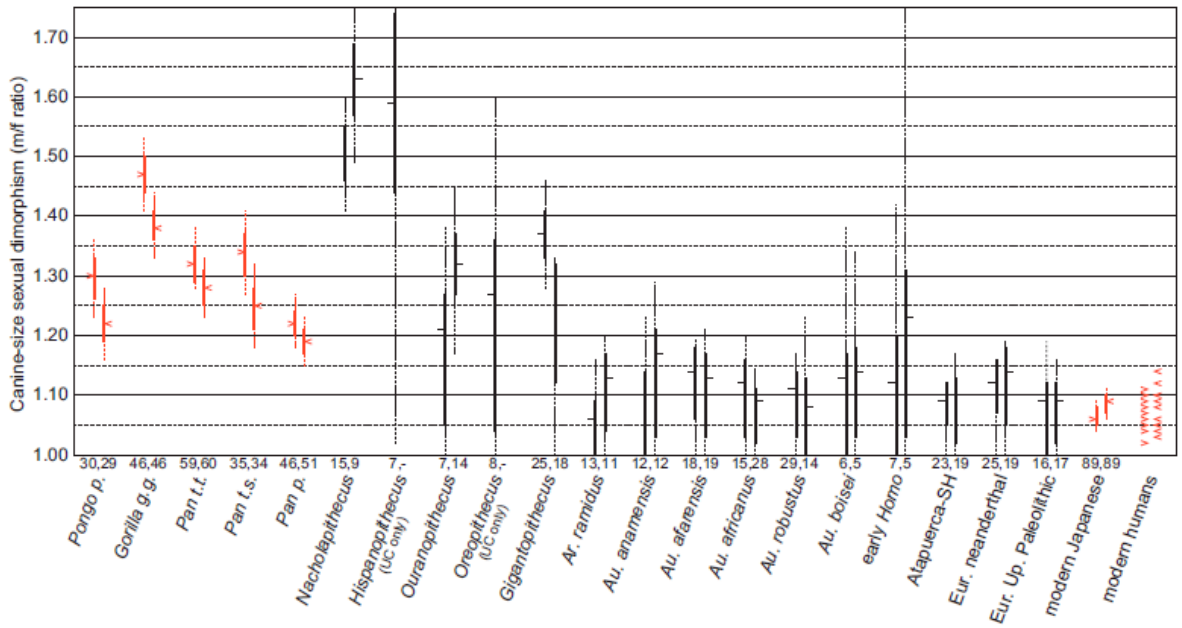
In other words, small children seem to come into the world instinctively recognising and able to navigate dominance and competition. Therefore we assume this ability must have evolved over a period of time in the past. When and how did hierarchical rank reappear in the human race?

Humans are flexible in their use and navigation of hierarchy and egalitarianism (Singh, 2022). We may flexibly mix and match them according to context. By contrast, chimpanzees are inflexible in their dominance behaviour.

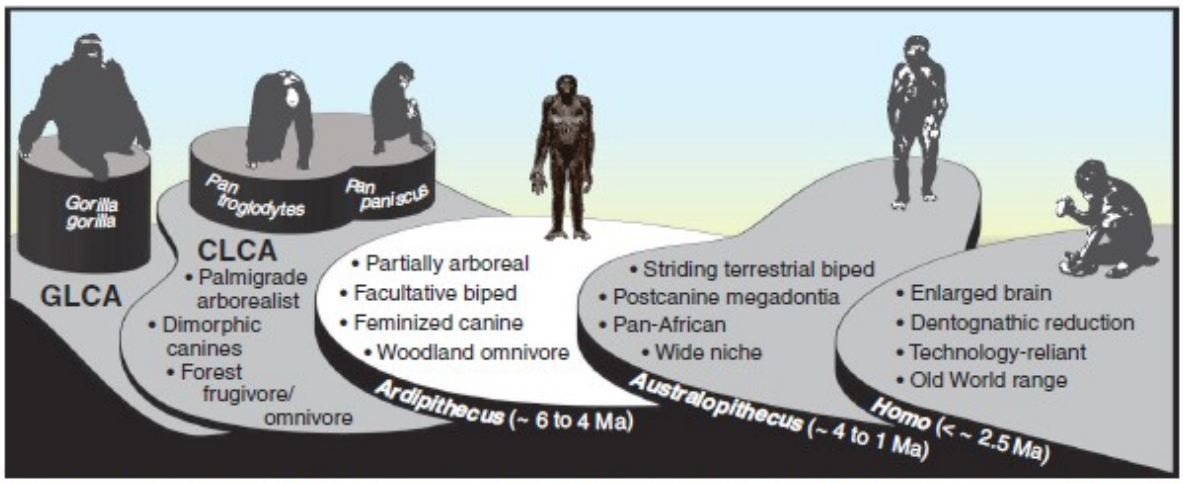
See also:

U-shaped history of human patriarchy, p. ##

Self-domestication of the human race



Suwa et al. (2021): fig 4. Male-female canine-size dimorphism in extant apes and fossil human ancestors including Ardipethecus ramidus and Australopithecenes. Numbers on x-axis show sample sizes. Left hand bars show upper canines, right-hand bars show lower canines. Except for Gigantopithecus, pithicenes to the left of Ar. Ramidus preceded it in time.



Evolution of hominids and African apes since the gorilla/chimp+human (GLCA) and chimp/human (CLCA) last common ancestors. Pedestals on the left show separate lineages leading to the extant apes (gorilla, and chimp and bonobo); text indicates key differences among adaptive plateaus occupied by the three hominid genera.

"Ardipithecus ramidus and the Paleobiology of Early Hominids" (White et al., 2009)

In primates, mate competition – competing with others of the same sex, for mating opportunities – is largely associated with males, while mate choice – choosing mates for their quality – is largely associated with females (Plavcan, 2001). The limiting factor on a male primate's reproductive success is the number of females that he can inseminate. Hence, there is pressure for primate males to exclude other males – to compete with them – from mating with a group of females. Conversely, because the reproductive success of female primates is limited by the number and quality of young they can give birth to in a lifetime, it makes sense for females to choose males based on their genetic fitness and/or the amount of effort they will put into parental care.

One measure of sexual dimorphism – typical size differences between males and females of a species – is the relative sizes of canine teeth, partially a result of the difference between male-male and female-female competition. The reasoning is that canine teeth can be used as weapons in fights. Winning fights gives males priority in mating and therefore in reproducing and leaving behind their genes.

In general, in primates, the greater the potential for males to monopolise females, the greater tends to be the male-male competition, and hence, sexual dimorphism. Non-human great apes all show higher male-male competition and dimorphism than humans. Gorillas, with the males competing to win themselves a polygynously pair-bonded harem of females, show the highest dimorphism, while alpha male chimps and bonobos are able to dominate far fewer females in their multi-male, multi-female social groups, with other males able to mate too.

However, theoretically it is the case that:

> ... if female estrus and ovulation do not overlap in timing, a single male can successfully guard each female in a group, one at a time, preventing the other males from breeding. However, if females come into estrus and ovulate simultaneously, a male can only guard one female at a time, meaning that other males will be able to successfully mate and reproduce (Plavcan, 2001:38).

Given all this information we have about primates, we may still never be able to reconstruct the exact social ecology of early humans. We believe sexual dimorphism arose early in the evolution of monkeys and apes. Since the arrival of Ardipithecus ramidus, 4-5 million years ago, thought to be an ancestor of *Homo*, canine size dimorphism has been minimal, which suggests minimal male-male competition; but conversely, body size dimorphism was quite large in some species, pointing to intense male-male competition. However, there may have been other reasons for large body size dimorphism, than male-male competition.

From the beginning of the Pliocene period, 5.3 million years ago, until around 1 million years ago, in the Pleistocene, the Earth underwent a number of climate disruptions whereby there was rapid switching from wet to dry periods, overall cooling and drying, so that the African forests began to die back, to be replaced with a “mosaic” environment of mixed savannah, woodland and forest (Roberts, 2011).

One hypothesis is that a domestication or reduction of male-male competition from Ardipithecus ramidus onwards was driven by female choice for males who would share rather than compete (White et al., 2009). This hypothesis is consistent with Bateman’s Principle (Petersdorf and Higham, 2017), which states that female reproductive success is limited by access to resources, while male reproductive success is limited by access to fertile females.

In modern primates, sexual monomorphism is associated with sexual monogamy, where one female mates with one male. In non-human primates, this in turn is associated with 1) a low population density of fertile females, such that the number of females available for a male to monopolise within a given area is low, as we might find in a low-quality environment; and/or 2) the need for the father to invest effort and resources into safeguarding and providing for his young (Petersdorf and Higham, 2017). Hence, serial sexual monogamy, which is the norm among humans (Chapais, 2008), may have begun in Ardipithecus ramidus as a response to a harsh environment, driven again by female choice, as each breeding female may have needed her own male partner who would invest in parental care. This female reproductive requirement for males in their groups and networks of groups to stop competing to dominate as many females as possible, and instead, to be able to form

egalitarian sharing networks, could also have contributed to the evolution through sexual selection of a reduction in male-male competition and sexual dimorphism.

Some previous species in the human line, before Ardipithecus ramidus, were exhibiting extreme sexual dimorphism, suggesting extreme polygyny (Plavcan, 2001). A hypothetical reconstruction of the last common ancestor of chimpanzees, bonobos and humans, which lived around 6 million years ago, found a likelihood of a multi-male, multi-female mating system (i.e., no pair-bonding), with low male-male competition, like modern-day chimps and bonobos, and moderate female solidarity (Gilbert, Howlett, and Opie, 2023). Polygyny in primates can arise out of multi-male multi-female systems when the environment becomes more harsh, since the density of females is lower and one male can therefore monopolise all the females in a particular area (Chapais, 2008). However, as the environment grew harsher still, this could have given way to monogamy as described above. In this scenario, polygynous pair bonds evolved first, and monogamy afterwards, as “maximally constrained polygyny” (Chapais, 2008).

In the modern human world we see pockets of polygynous pair-bonding: one man with several wives. A hypothesis is that this arose again after a long period of exclusively monogamous pair-bonding, with a reestablishment of patriarchy when power structures that men could take advantage of were reintroduced, relatively late on in human evolution (see below). Modern human males do not rely on large canines to compete; they have access to other kinds of reproductively useful competitive advantage, such as political and economic power and social status. As well as (largely) non-violent male-male competition, human males also compete for females by trying to be good quality mates and providers.

Genetic analysis of present-day populations suggests a human reproductive ratio of 3:1 in favour of females, between 140-30,000 years ago – three women reproduced for every man who reproduced. Around 12,000 years ago, this was approximately 16:1 (Hagen and Garfield, 2019).

On the face of it, the 3:1 ratio suggests polygyny in ancient human nomadic hunter-gatherers. However, it may also reflect serial monogamy. In the Batek of Malaysia, hunter-gatherers living in tribal groups split into small mobile bands, mainly in the

forest, sexual relationships are not for life, although they are monogamous (Endicott and Endicott, 2008).

In white-handed gibbons, in Thailand, females will sometimes become polyandrous, mating with multiple males, when the environment becomes harsh. In this case, the population density becomes low, so that a home range is too large for a single male to defend, and he will cooperate with one or two other males to help him. There is one primary mate for the female and a number of secondary helper mates (Savini, Boesch, and Reichard, 2009). White-handed gibbons are sexually monomorphic and male-male aggression is low.

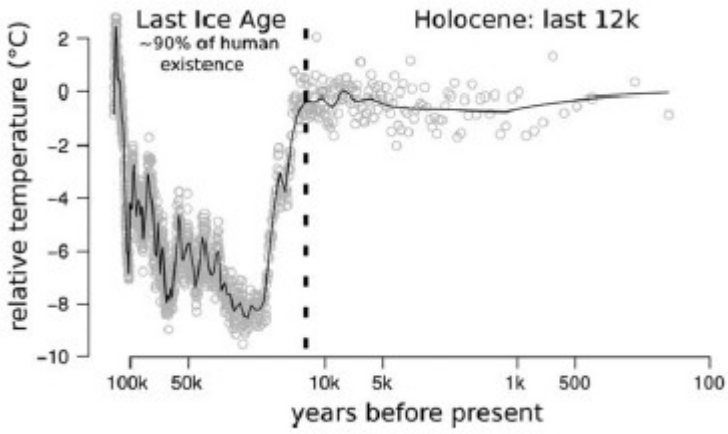
See also:

Evolution of sharing, p. ##

Generalised care, p. ##

Transition from egalitarianism to inequality

There is little or no evidence of inequality in the archaeological record from before around 12,000 years ago, but a great deal of evidence of inequality since that time (Mattison, Smith, Shenk, and Cochrane, 2016). Around 12,000 years ago the Earth's climate changed from variable to stable.



Mattison, Smith, Shenk, and Cochrane (2016: figure 1)

The Economic Defensibility hypothesis proposes that people will defend resources from exploitation by others when the benefits of doing so outweigh the costs. When the Earth's temperature became more stable in the Holocene period (from 12,000 years ago), we may imagine that dense, reliable, predictable patches of resources began to appear that a family or other group could defend. Others may not have had any option but to become subordinate to those who controlled these resources in return for access to them. Control of these resources could be passed down through generations, supported by institutions and norms, leading to the emergence of Persistent Institutionalised Inequality (PII).

Under these conditions, people would no longer have been mobile, would no longer have been part of an egalitarian sharing network, and equally interdependent, so egalitarianism could have died out.

Young children are instinctively prepared for social situations of hierarchy and dominance

> ... although infants, toddlers, and preschoolers understand and strategically respond to hierarchical rank, in fact the default expectations and preferences of most of them appear egalitarian, as is the case for adults cross-nationally.
>
> *Lotte Thomsen – "The developmental origins of social hierarchy: how infants and young children mentally represent and respond to power and status" (2020)*

Singh (2022) points out that young children are born seemingly prepared to navigate a world of dominance and status hierarchies. Where did this apparently evolved

knowledge come from? Did human hierarchy die out completely for a period of ~2 million years, or was it present somewhere all along?

Singh and Glowacki (2022) point to evidence of large populations subsisting on areas rich in resources, from long before the Holocene. But richness and density are not enough to generate PII; to do that, resources also have to be patchy (and long-lasting), otherwise there is enough for everyone.

We may observe that the tendency for competition is ever-present in all beings, including humans living in egalitarian societies. Hence, the existence of strong levelling mechanisms in small groups. This may mean that the workings of hierarchy, status and dominance are familiar, even in the midst of long-lasting, persistent egalitarianism.

Prehistory of warfare

There is no evidence in the archaeological record of warfare from before 12,000 years ago (Spikins, 2015; Fry, 2013). The evidence from before that time is rather of peaceful trade and some inter-breeding of human species. Human beings were relatively rare on the Earth and so strangers were probably more valuable as collaborative partners than threatening (Spikins, 2015).

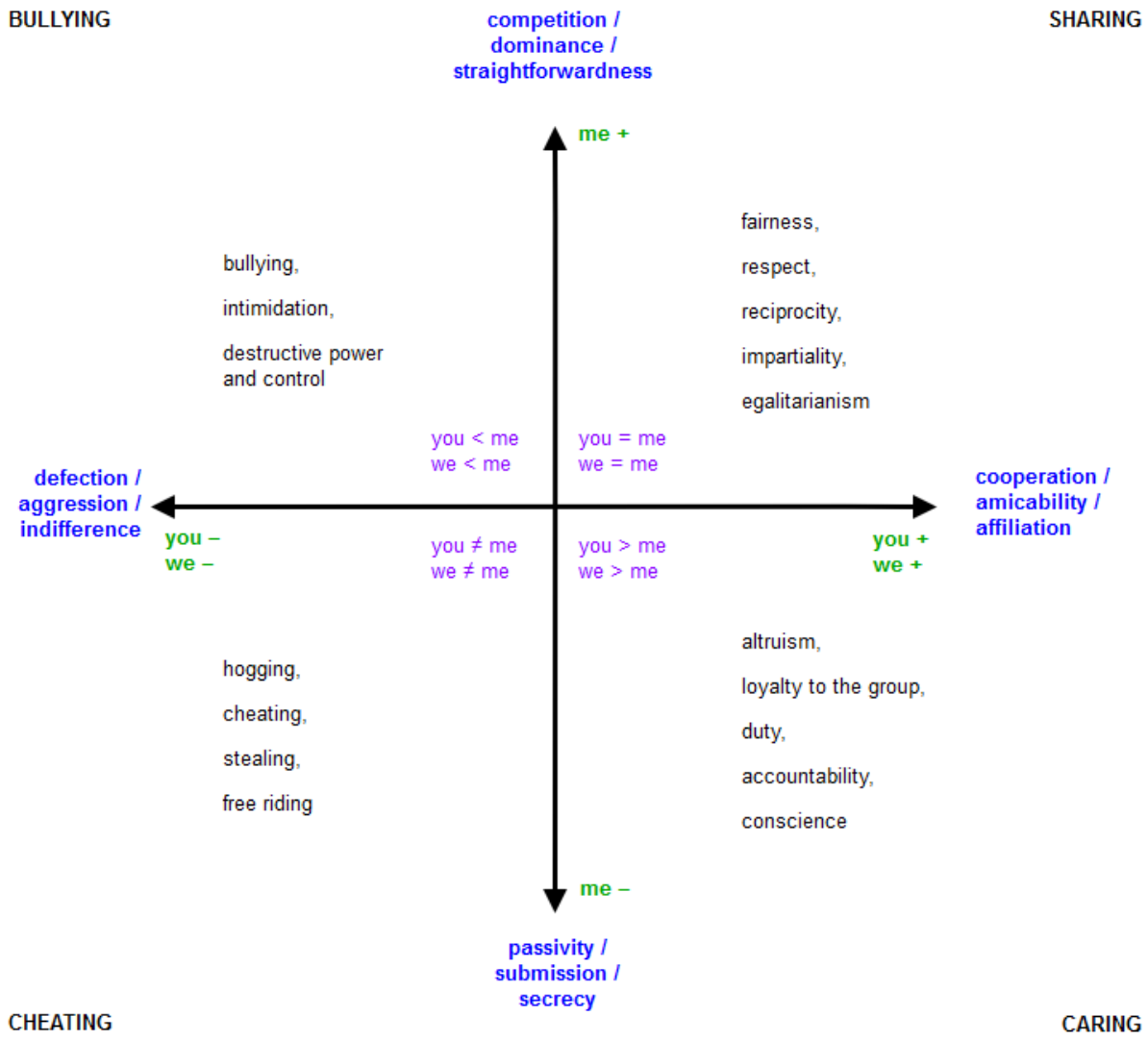
Archaeological evidence has been found of a small battle, apparently between two nomadic hunter-gatherer groups, from around 10,000 years ago at Nataruk, west of Lake Turkana in Kenya. Twelve skeletons were found, ten of which showed signs of a violent death. Although we believe that the people were partly nomadic, they also seemed to have had possessions (at least, pots) which may have contained a valuable prize for raiders (Lahr et al., 2016).

Absence of evidence is not evidence of absence: there may have been warfare before that time.

See also:

Group loyalty, p. ##

The Moral Compass



The left hand side of the Moral Compass comprises “dark” traits of emotional or material exploitation of others by coercive force and/or deception.

The right hand side comprises “light” values of acting towards mutual benefit, based on equating or subsuming the needs of the self to the needs of others.

The compass is constructed using the moral formulae of Michael Tomasello (2016, 2019 a) and filled in using diagonal and left-right symmetry.

The Stakeholder Principle

Investing in the people we depend on

I won't leave 'til you come too.

The Incredible String Band – "Mr and Mrs"

... friends in the stone age depended on one another for their very survival. Humans lived in close-knit communities, and friends were people with whom you went hunting mammoths. You survived long journeys and difficult winters together. You took care of one another when one of you fell sick, and shared your last morsels of food in times of want. Such friends knew each other more intimately than many present-day couples.

"Were we happier in the stone age?" – The Guardian, UK, 5th September 2014

Perhaps it is time to abandon the idea that individuals faced with others in need decide whether to help, or not, by mentally tallying up costs and benefits. These calculations have likely been made for them by natural selection. Weighing the consequences of behavior over evolutionary time, it has endowed primates with empathy, which ensures that they help others under the right circumstances.

Frans de Waal – "The Age of Empathy"

Only know that I love strength in my friends and greatness.

James Liddy

> you would help me more / help me more / if you helped yourself
>
> *Joan Armatrading – "Help Yourself"*

> ... individuals should help friends without looking for a contingent return: 'instead of being cheated, the primary risk is experiencing a world increasingly devoid of deeply engaged social partners or sufficiently beneficial social partners or both'.
>
> *Gilbert Roberts – "Cooperation through interdependence" (2005)*

If I depend on you, it means that I need something that you do or have – that you benefit me just by existing, by doing what you would do anyway – that my fitness increases in proportion to your fitness – that if you thrive, I thrive as a by-product.

If I depend on you, and at the same time, you depend on me, it is called interdependence or symbiosis.

Social species live in groups, and group members benefit and depend on each other in a number of ways: for example, to make up numbers in protection from predators; or because of specific helpful roles such as alarm calling.

In non-human animals such as chimpanzees, individuals preferentially help their genetic relatives and the friends they depend on. Humans simply depend on each other more than in other species.

In the early history of humans, living in small groups, it would have made practical sense from the point of view of each individual to **help** the **others upon whom they depended** to survive and thrive. This is proposed as the evolutionary origin of helping non-kin (Tomasello, et al., 2012). (For helping kin, see the special case "Hamilton's Rule" below.)

A formula to describe this "stakeholder" model of altruism has been suggested (Roberts, 2005):

I will help you when

$s \times b > c$

where

A = altruist (me)

B = beneficiary (you)

b = benefit given by *A* to *B*

c = cost to *A* of helping *B*

s = the ratio, (change in my fitness) / (change in your fitness):

"What exactly is *s*? We can derive this by noting that when an individual *B* benefits from an act of altruism, its fitness increases from w_B to w'_B, and that as a secondary consequence of this, the altruist *A*'s fitness increases in proportion, the proportionality being given by *s*." (Roberts, 2005:2)

That is, "The variable *s* simply represents how important it is to the actor that the recipient be alive and in good shape for future interactions." (Tomasello, 2016:15)

If	$s = 0$	then *A* has no stake in *B* and altruism is not favoured.
If	$0 < s < 1$	then altruism of *A* towards *B* is favoured.
If	$s = 1$	then *A* behaves towards *B* as if for self.
If	$s > 1$	then *A* preferentially helps *B* over self.

This formula does not describe a one-shot interaction. It takes place over an extended period of time, perhaps months, years, decades, or a lifetime. Therefore, the stake, costs and benefits also play out over a long period.

When person *A* depends on person *B*, person *A* usually develops an emotional bond and warm positive regard towards person *B*. We could go so far as to say, interdependence + mutual emotional bond = friendship.

Interdependence and moral domains

Every moral domain has a joint goal, by definition, and at least for that reason, partners depend on each other to help them achieve the joint goal. Every moral domain therefore features interdependence; but the kind of interdependence, whether it is symmetrical, etc., varies between domains. For example, a parent-child relationship is different from the egalitarian, symmetrical one of collaborative partners foraging for mutual benefit, and different again from patriarchal control and domination.

We may be interdependent through collaboration or sharing; and interdependent through genetic relatedness. Genetic kin may also preferentially collaborate, share with, and help each other. The logic of kin-selected altruism is described by Hamilton's Rule (see below).

Tomasello (2016) recognises two forms of cooperation in nature: helping in response to need, and mutualism. Collaboration, and sharing (whether on demand or in response to deservingness), would both appear to incorporate both these forms of cooperation.

Interdependence and collaborative foraging for mutual benefit

When we collaboratively forage for mutual benefit, I specifically value “mutual benefit” because “what is good for you is good for me”.

Hamilton’s Rule

Hamilton’s Rule is a special case of the Stakeholder Principle (Roberts, 2005). It describes the situation of interdependence from the point of view of shared genes and ultimate, reproductive fitness rather than of shared everyday proximate fitness (Dawkins, 1976). When we preferentially help those to whom we are genetically related, it is called kin selection (Rafferty, 2020).

The formula is:

I will help you when

$r \times b > c$

where

A = altruist (me)

B = beneficiary (you)

b = benefit given by A to B

c = cost to A of helping B

r = the proportion of genes we share, where $0 < r \leq 1$

Interdependence through human history

We assume that the first form of human interdependence was small-scale sharing networks based on need, from around 4 million years ago in (we believe) the proto-

human species *Ardipithecus ramidus*. This dependence on sharing networks would, we assume, greatly have increased the level of human interdependence compared with that of other great ape species.

After this, we assume that as obligate cooperation and division of labour became more sophisticated, people depended on each other more and more to collaborate with. For example, many paleo-anthropologists believe that humans went through an early stage of scavenging large game before they historically learned to hunt in a coordinated fashion.

See also:

Self-domestication of the human race, p. ##

Ultimate and proximate motivations for helping

- Evolutionary level: "I need you"
- Proximate psychology: "I care about you".

We see that although helping is one-way, it has mutualistic evolutionary roots. The ultimate (evolutionary) reason for helping is dependence. The proximate (present-day, psychological) reason is empathic concern and a wish to see the person helped because they need it.

A psychopath can be motivated to help a person just because it is needed, without feeling empathic concern. This shows that human helping behaviour has at least two evolved components: behaviour, and its supporting psychology of empathic concern (which is missing in psychopaths).

Young children are intrinsically motivated to help those in need, and it does not matter to them whether they do it themselves, or another person does the helping. This demonstrates that a psychological motivation for helping is simply to see the beneficiary in good shape, rather than for the helper to receive any reciprocal benefits of helping (Hepach, Vaish, and Tomasello, 2012).

See also:

Psychopathy, p. ##

Loyalty and unconditional love, p. ##

Part 2 – moral values

Perfect Compassion

... since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.

John 4:11

Jesus replied: "'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbour as yourself.' All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments."

Matthew 22:37-40

He is not a believer who eats his fill while his neighbour remains hungry by his side.

The Prophet Mohammed, peace and blessings be upon Him

... altruism becomes applied egotism.

P. Lakshmi Narasu – "The Essence of Buddhism"

... dopamine-related neural pleasure centers in human brains are stimulated when someone acts generously or responds to a generous act.

Sarah Blaffer Hrdy – "Mothers and Others – the evolutionary origins of mutual understanding"

... we feel a “warm glow”, a pleasurable feeling, at improving the plight of others

Frans de Waal – “The Age of Empathy”

Without prosocial emotions, we would all be sociopaths, and human society would not exist, however strong the institutions of contract, governmental law enforcement, and reputation.

Samuel Bowles and Herbert Gintis – “The Origins of Human Cooperation”

In our view, the same action can be guided by both self- and other-interest.

Margaret E Gerbasi and Deborah A Prentice – “The Self- and Other-Interest Inventory”, Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, Vol. 105(3), 2013

Beauty is about how you behold

more than silver more than gold

if I say I am beautiful

it means beauty is accessible,

beauty is about how you greet

de everyday people dat you meet

you are beautiful so all rejoice

your beauty is a natural choice.

from “Miss World” – Benjamin Zephaniah

The moral principle we can call “Perfect Compassion” is derived from instrumental normativity. If instrumental normativity is the pressure to do the things that will allow me to thrive and survive (my body does the rest), then Perfect Compassion is the prosocial application of instrumental normativity: I put the conditions in place for others to thrive and survive along with myself.

The reason we like to benefit others is that humans, in our risky foraging niche, depend on each other to survive: evolutionarily, if I depend on you for my survival, then I need you to be in good shape.

The principle of Perfect Compassion states that:

> each person affected by my action, including myself, is to receive the maximum benefit and minimum harm available to them.

Dark traits

The D-factor or “dark” factor of personality is the polar opposite of Perfect Compassion. D is defined as:

> the general tendency to maximize one's individual utility – disregarding, accepting, or malevolently provoking disutility for others –, accompanied by beliefs that serve as justifications (Moshagen, Hilbig, and Zettler, 2018).

In other words, D is the tendency to thrive at the expense of others, rather than benefitting others mutually as we thrive. Hence, “dark” behaviour is zero-sum: I win, you lose – while Perfect Compassion is positive-sum: we all win, since there is a joint goal of mutual benefit.

Basis of morality

Perfect Compassion is the umbrella formula (method, scheme, or plan) for any moral value within the domain of collaborative foraging for mutual benefit. It is “utilitarian” in nature: aiming to maximise utility for all concerned.

As such, it generally answers the question “what should I do?” to achieve mutual well being. Other moral domains have different goals and methods of achieving them.

See also:

The goals-methods model of morality, p. ##

Currency of morality

The currency of utilitarianism is benefit and harm (Bekoff and Pierce, 2009). This currency is passed between people through actions. If I benefit you, I help you to thrive. Conversely, if I harm you, I hinder you from thriving.

Charity and deservingness

Charity means to help others based on need. In this case, “what is available” is determined by need.

We may also distribute benefit and harm in response to deservingness.

Perceptions of deservingness tend to positively affect how much charity we are prepared to extend. If we feel someone is not deserving, we are less likely to want to help them.

See also:

Sympathetic distress within the brain leads to a wish to help, p. ##

Types of sharing, p. ##

Rightness and moral authority

The knowledge that you have acted with the goal of achieving the maximum benefit and minimum harm available, whether from charity (i.e., responding to the need to thrive), or deservingness, in itself indicates rightness of action and moral authority.

The degree to which you have acted with the goal of achieving the maximum benefit and minimum harm available, to all concerned, including yourself, indicates the degree of rightness of the action and its moral authority.

Other moral values are available by which to judge rightness and moral authority. Perfect Compassion, whether from charity or deservingness, seems very important in that it represents a whole set of families of moral values that achieve mutual benefit.

Doing one's best

If I have done my best to promote fitness in myself and others, in a given interaction; if I could not have done any more – then this is in keeping with Perfect Compassion, aiming to achieve the maximum benefit and minimum harm available to myself and the others affected by my action.

Partial (subjective) and impartial (objective) moral reasoning

Personal moral reasoning of the form “how should I treat this person, with whom I have interacted?” can take two forms: impartial, and subjective.

This means that I may act according to personal, subjective experience – the way they have treated me personally, and how I feel about that; or impartially: how deserving of praise, blame, or charity would a neutral third party think they are? What are my impartial obligations and duties? Both perspectives: subjective and impartial, exist together, at any one time, for ordinary citizens. Tomasello (2014, 2016) describes this “dual-level” nature of collaboration: I and we.

Put more simply, according to the moral principle Perfect Compassion, morality is not about “what benefits me” but “what benefits all concerned, impartially”.

This neutral “third-party” perspective is possible in humans because of our impartial moral standards, self-other equivalence, and shared collaborative perspectives, giving a “view from nowhere” (Tomasello, 2014, 2016).

Decety (2011) finds that we feel more or less sympathetic pain on behalf of suffering others, depending, effectively, on their perceived deservingness. Deservingness can be partial or impartial – subjective or objective.

Someone using impartial morality can, for example, respect and admire someone who opposes them, or see their perspective, while remaining subjectively opposed to them.

According to Greenberg (2016), narcissists do not have “whole object relations”, which means they are incapable of feeling well disposed towards someone while simultaneously being opposed to them. By definition, they cannot be angry and affectionate with someone at the same time. Perhaps because they have a competitive/dominant nature, they tend to be hyper-sensitive to perceived insults and personal grievances.

See also:

Contingent morality and ethics, p. ##

Contingent cooperation, p. ##

Self-other equivalence, p. ##

Sympathetic distress within the brain leads to a wish to help, p. ##

Narcissism, p. ##

Contingent morality and ethics

> Two wrongs don’t make a right.
>
> *Proverb*

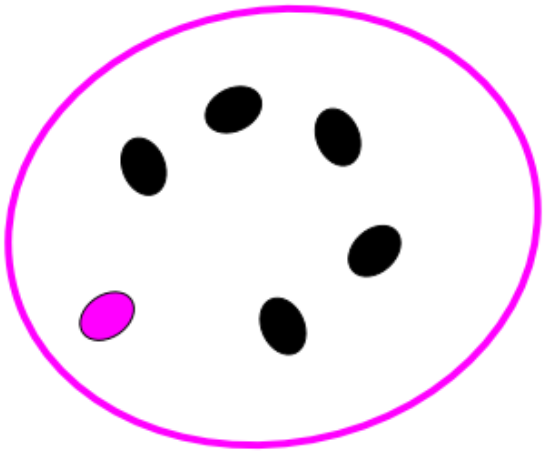
If someone behaves immorally towards you, disregarding morality, it does not seem morally advanced if you, in return, disregard morality in your dealings with them. Rather, it seems morally advanced to maintain your moral compass that can enable you to navigate this rocky sea.

See also:

Contingent cooperation, p. ##

The Montagu Principle, p. ##

Distribution of benefit and harm from the perspective of the ego

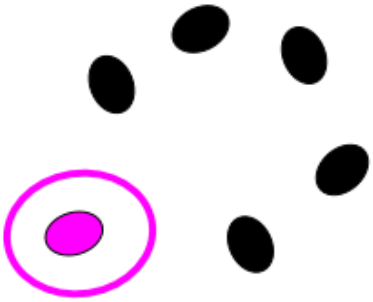


Perfect Compassion: thinking of all concerned

Distributing benefit and harm so that each person concerned can be satisfied.

Your ego:

- looks after you and gets things done
- works also for others
- expands its sphere of benevolence to include each person affected by your action
- sees the needs of others
- uses its functions to give each person affected by your action the maximum benefit and minimum harm available to them



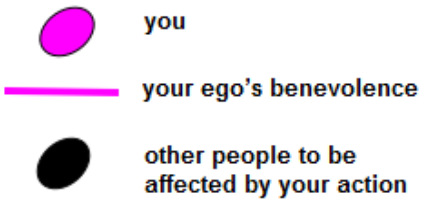
Selfishness: thinking only of yourself

Other people are treated as objects.
Consequences are troublesome in the long term.

Your ego:

- looks after you and gets things done
- works only for yourself
- sees others only in terms of your own self-interest, not as real people
- ignores the needs of others
- doesn't give everyone affected by your action the maximum compassion and minimum harm available to them

KEY



A man is not a great man because he is a warrior and kills other men; but because he hurts not any living being he in truth is called a great man.

The Dhammapada

Tenderness and kindness are not signs of weakness and despair, but manifestations of strength and resolutions.

Kahlil Gibran –"The Prophet"

Least said, soonest mended.

Proverb

A week later Swagger rang me. He had bumped into a deflated Tuggy Tug on the street. He had nowhere to sleep and nothing to eat. Swagger had only £10 in his pocket but nonetheless he bought a takeaway for them both and took Tuggy Tug back to his flat for the night. As I put down the phone, I heard Tuggy Tug complaining, 'I don't even want this dry chicken, blud. I can't eat this dried food,' and Swagger laughing at him. 'Content now? Is your belly content?'

I thought of the many successful men I knew; men of whom the world approved and rightly rewarded; men who moved people with their oratory; knowledgeable men who could fathom future trends and who set up foundations for the poor; men who would never steal a fridge. How many, down to their last £10, would have taken in Tuggy Tug – and done it with love?

Harriet Sergeant – "Among the Hoods – my years with a teenage gang"

Nothing in the world – indeed nothing even beyond the world – can possibly be conceived which could be called good without qualification except a GOOD WILL. Intelligence, wit, judgment, and other talents of the mind however they may be named, or courage, resoluteness, and perseverance as qualities of temperament, are doubtless in many respects good and desirable; but they can become extremely bad and harmful if the will, which is to make use of these gifts of nature and which in its special constitution is called character, is not good.

Immanuel Kant – Foundations of the Metaphysics of Morals (first section)

The practice of morality (çīla) consists in the observance of all moral precepts; in feeling fear, shame and remorse at the smallest violation of any of them; in not giving room for blame or disgust; in practicing those deeds which lead to moderation and contentment, and in endeavouring to induce all human beings to abandon evil and practise virtue. He alone truly practises morality, who desists from evil-doing when the best opportunities present themselves for doing evil. In Buddhism the moral life is of fundamental importance. Of all the pāramitās, the excellences which form the means of arriving at Nirvana, the çīla pāramitā is the foundation.

P. Lakshmi Narasu – "The Essence of Buddhism"

Whatever living beings there may be;

Whether they are weak or strong, omitting none,

The great or the mighty,

medium, short or small,

The seen and the unseen,

Those living near and far away,

Those born and to-be-born –

May all beings be at ease!

from the Metta Sutta

Fairness

The evolution of cooperation requires that its benefits reach all contributing parties in roughly similar amounts. Natural selection works on every individual's relative advantage compared with others; hence, gaining an absolute benefit is insufficient. If individuals were satisfied with any absolute benefit, they might still face negative fitness consequences if they were doing less well than competing others. It makes sense, therefore, to compare one's gains with those of others.

Sarah F Brosnan and Frans B M de Waal – "Evolution of responses to (un)fairness"

the morality of fairness is neither ... basic nor ... straightforward – and it may very well be confined to the human species. The fundamental problem is that in situations requiring fairness there is typically a complex interaction of the cooperative and competitive motives of multiple individuals. Attempting to be fair means trying to achieve some kind of balance among all of these, and there are typically many possible ways of doing this based on many different criteria. Humans thus enter into such complex situations prepared to invoke moral judgments about the "deservingness" of the individuals involved, including the self, but they are at the same time armed with more punitive moral attitudes such as resentment or indignation against unfair others. In addition, they have still other moral attitudes that are not exactly punitive but nevertheless stern, in which they seek to hold interactive partners accountable for their actions by invoking interpersonal judgments of responsibility, obligation, commitment, trust, respect, duty, blame and guilt. The morality of fairness is thus much more complicated than the morality of sympathy [helping in response to need]. Moreover, and perhaps not unrelated, its judgments typically carry with them some sense of responsibility or obligation: it is not just that I want to be fair to all concerned, but that one *ought* to be fair to all concerned. In general, we may say that whereas

> sympathy is pure cooperation, fairness is a kind of cooperativization of competition in which individuals seek balanced solutions to the many and conflicting demands of multiple participants' various motives.
>
> *Michael Tomasello – "The Natural History of Human Morality"*

> Being fair is not the same as being nice. If I am extra nice to one person by giving her more resources, that nevertheless might be unfair to others. But if the recipient needs the resources more, or is somehow responsible for more of the resources being available (for example, she did more work), then perhaps it might be fair after all. The judgment of fairness is thus always grounded in some judgment of equality – equal resources per person, or per unit of need, or per unit of work effort, or whatever – with the self being treated, impartially, as equivalent to others (in terms of deservingness). A sense of fairness naturally comes with a sense of obligation: everyone including oneself should get what they deserve. A sense of fairness thus competes, in some circumstances, with both selfish and generous motives.
>
> *Michael Tomasello – "Becoming Human"*

The domain of fairness includes ideas of

- sharing
- equal treatment
- impartiality
- egalitarianism
- deservingness
- mutual respect and mutual deservingness
- obligation to be fair to others

- resentment or indignation if fairness is not achieved
- reciprocity
- distributive justice (social, psychological, or material)
- procedural justice
- retributive and restorative justice

Types of sharing

- equal
- proportional
- reciprocal exchanges
- charitable; in response to need
- others (by age, status, in-group, etc.)

Two-step evolution of fairness

We propose that fairness evolved in two stages:

1. sharing freely (free distribution based on charity) in response to need
2. sharing proportionately (restricted distribution based on deservingness) and impartially.

More precisely:

1. sharing in response to need, in small interpersonal groups, among friends, with free riding discouraged;

2. sharing proportionately to deservingness, according to impartial rules, among collaborators, with free riders excluded, within larger more anonymous groups, with relative strangers.

Distributive justice and collaboration

When partners get together to collaborate, they form a joint agent "we", whose members are (in some ways) equivalent, and are mutually respecting and seen as deserving. This equality of status forms the basis of fairness in distributive justice. Material distributive justice (as opposed to charity), dividing up the spoils, only makes sense within a collaboration.

Young children first start to show a sense of other-directed fairness – i.e., aimed at the advantage of the other person, not just the self – at around the age of three years (Tomasello, 2019 a). This is the same age that they first are able to put their heads collaboratively together with others to form a joint agent "we".

Fairness as a moral (sub)domain

If fairness can be described as a moral domain in itself, then its collaborative joint goal is to maximise benefits all round, between partners, on some kind of equal basis, whether according to charity (equal recognition of needs) or deservingness (equal exchange of some kind). Its behavioural ideals – its methods of achieving the joint goal of the domain – are things like treating partners equally including the self; and the impartial application of procedural justice.

As a sub-domain of collaborative foraging for mutual benefit, the overall joint goal of the domain is to maximise mutual benefit. In the sub-domain of fairness, this is done equitably (on some kind of equal basis).

Evolution of sharing

Our great ape cousins are very reluctant to share their food (Tomasello et al, 2012; de Waal and Lanting, 1998), even with their own young, and a chimpanzee mother will only grudgingly give shells and husks to her weaned infant in response to begging. Weaned great apes are capable of foraging fruit, insects etc. for themselves.

Humans, on the other hand, very readily share their most preferred food with their children and with friends and strangers alike.

Chimpanzees and other great apes are largely competitive and self-centred, while humans are, relatively, highly cooperative with a strong sense of impartiality.

It seems that the human family tree separately evolved a capacity for sharing, away from the other great apes. This would have been impossible in the presence of a competitive, hierarchical lifestyle, since dominants will not share with subordinates, so a universal process of self-domestication must have taken place throughout the human family tree, leading to the near removal of male-male competition, and the installation of egalitarian sharing networks, in response to the need for females to provision their young in a risky foraging niche.

We therefore argue that the evolution of human egalitarianism was sexually selected for by females in order to facilitate sharing of resources.

It is likely that before humans began hunting large game, there was an intermediate stage of scavenging, including on large carcasses that other creatures also wanted to eat.

> Individuals would have been forced to work together in a coalition to chase away the lions or hyenas feasting on a carcass before they themselves could scavenge. Any individual who then hogged all the meat would have been the target of another coalition aimed at stopping him. ... in general, almost all contemporary hunter-gatherer groups are highly egalitarian, and overly

dominant individuals are quickly brought down to size by coalitions of others. Evolutionarily this would have meant that there was social selection against bullies, food hogs, and other dominants, and thus social selection for individuals who had a greater tolerance for others in cofeeding situations. Indeed, in modern-day chimpanzees, collaboration in an experimentally created foraging task goes best when the pair is made up of individuals who are tolerant of one another around food.

Michael Tomasello – "A Natural History of Human Morality"

See also:

Self-domestication of the human race. p. ##

Sharing in response to need

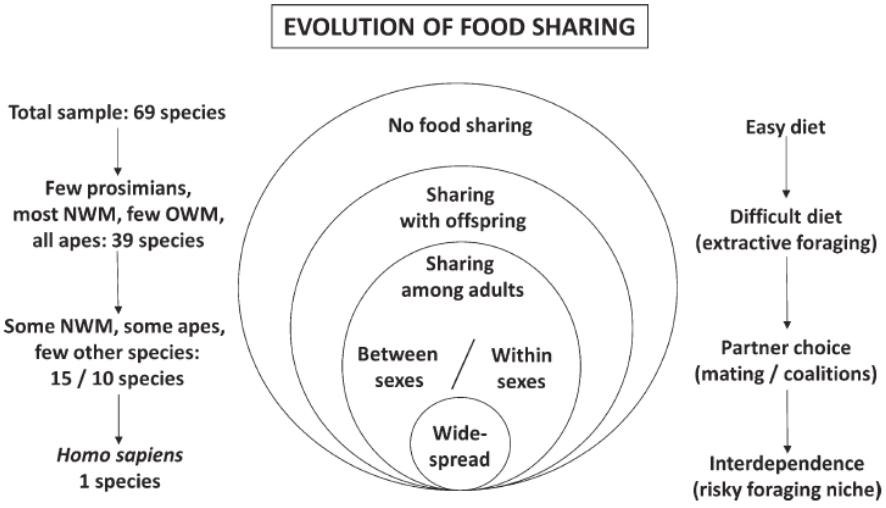


Figure 1. The layered distribution of sharing in primates. The left-hand arrows indicate ever smaller subsamples matching the relational contexts in the layers. The right-hand arrows show evolutionary transitions in other traits that co-evolved with transitions between the layers. Redrawn after Jaeggi and van Schaik.[4] NWM = New World monkeys, OWM = Old World monkeys.

Food sharing in primates: *from Adrian V Jaeggi and Michael Gurven – "Natural Cooperators: Food Sharing in Humans and Other Primates": Evolutionary Anthropology 22: 186-195 (2013)*

> Homo sapiens ... [are] the only primate species to have evolved widespread sharing among adults accompanied by a high degree of economic interdependence, which is characteristic of the risky human foraging niche.
>
> *Adrian Jaeggi and Michael Gurven – "Natural Cooperators"*

Humans live in a risky foraging niche. In such a risky niche, the individual can mitigate their own risk by pooling resources with fellow group members in a sharing network. In such an arrangement, individual surpluses are typically shared; laziness and stinginess are discouraged; in many societies, everyone gets fed regardless of their net productivity or input.

> Much has been written about the emphasis placed on generosity, and the "moral obligation" to help others in need among traditional societies, exemplified by the Chácobo proverb, "If you are a human being, then you will share what you have with those who are in need". Marshall writes that among the Nyae Nyae !Kung "if there is hunger, it is commonly shared. There are no distinct haves and have-nots". Although populations tend to vary over the extent of explicit praise of generosity, there is often mention of a direct condemnation of stinginess. "The most serious accusations one !Kung can level against another are the charge of stinginess and the charge of arrogance." Similarly, one of the most serious Ache insults is to call somebody mella (a nongiver). The Yanomamo are "so preoccupied with the possessions (including food) of others ... anyone who has more than a day's supply of anything is a potential target of an accusation of stinginess if he does not share". Lengua who insist on keeping food for themselves are similarly "hated and terrorized by others". These descriptions support the

> view that social dynamics in small-scale societies are organized by an ethic of "assertive" or "fierce" egalitarianism and that "demand sharing" equalizes differences resulting from production ability.

However:

> There are also hints of contingency [reciprocal giving] among several of the more assertively egalitarian groups. The "giving of food does involve an obligation on the part of the recipient to return food to the donor at some future date" among the Siriono and "something must be given in return for what is received" among the G/wi. Conversely, the ethnographic literature also contains references to contingency that are consistent with generalized reciprocity, but may not be consistent with RA [reciprocal altruism]. The Batek, for example, explain that giving and receiving "balance out over the long run" (i.e., lifespan), whereas giving and receiving among the Kaingang is "not a matter of checks and balances ... their understanding of reciprocity is in terms of lifelong symbiosis, not in terms of balanced exchanges".

and:

> Many groups, however, do not engage in bandwide sharing of meat items, and instead restrict initial sharing to the task group or extended family, with only subsequent sharing with other group members, although as mentioned earlier, primary sharing can be extensive when very large quantities are produced. In many groups this pattern is viewed as "fair". Future research should focus on understanding the conditions that favor different norms of sharing and perceived fairness. Interdependent subsistence, small group size, high average relatedness to group members, coordination in residential structure, and outside threats, may all favor increased within-group sharing.
>
> ...
>
> Despite the compulsory nature of giving in many small scale societies, patterns of giving and receiving are sensitive to costs and benefits affected by the types and sizes of foods being shared, others' labor contributions to resource production, and other bargaining arrangements.

> *Michael Gurven – "To give and to give not: The behavioral ecology of human food transfers": Behavioral and Brain Sciences (2004) 27, 543-583 (original references removed)*

Needs-based allocation of resources can be seen as impartial – granting equality of opportunity, and helping any and every person who needs it. On the other hand, it may be seen as favouring the needy, and therefore not impartial. But it can also have the effect of allowing disadvantaged people to take advantage of an impartial system, and so, can be fair (Niemi, Wasserman, and Young, 2017).

> [Our findings in the laboratory suggest] that, at some level, people intuit that charity is not a simple solution to a resource allocation problem and is liable to be perceived as unfair. People may be most likely to endorse allocation systems in which needy individuals will be helped while systematic favoritism (i.e., partiality-based unfairness) will be counteracted.
>
> *Laura Niemi, Emily Wasserman and Liane Young – "The behavioral and neural signatures of distinct conceptions of fairness": Social Neuroscience 2017*

Results from mathematical game theory show that in small isolated societies, helping the needy provides a social insurance that allows all partners to survive very well in the long term, compared with people who do not share with or receive help from others (Lewis, Vinicius, Strods, Mace, and Migliano, 2014). In computer simulations of cattle-keeping societies, based on the African Maasai, it is found that sharing in response to need, compared with reciprocal exchange, produces a longer-lasting herd and more wealth equality (Shaffer, 2019).

This pattern of community-based social insurance is found in isolated communities around the world. (See: Shaffer, 2019.) In this case, giving based on need is a form of reciprocity extended over time that we may or may not need to redeem in the future.

Sharing proportionately

A study by Schäfer, Haun, and Tomasello (2015) found that:

- 4-11 year-old children in a Western industrialised society (suburban Germany) preferred proportional distribution of goods obtained through collaboration;
- 4-11 year-old children in the ≠Akhoe Hai||om society of egalitarian foragers in a remote part of northern Namibia preferred equal distribution of goods obtained through collaboration;
- 4-11 year-old children in the pastoralist (livestock-keeping) gerontocratic (age-based hierarchical) society of the Samburu in remote north-central Kenya distributed rewards obtained through collaboration randomly, perhaps reflecting the fact that in this society, older people tend to make the important decisions about how resources are distributed, leaving young children relatively inexperienced in this regard.

The natural home of proportionate sharing – sharing in response to merit – is in larger more anonymous groups, where repeated interactions might not happen. Partners in a collaboration need to ensure they will be paid for their efforts in full as part of that collaborative package, and not at some vague time in the future. Accordingly, partners impose rules to prevent themselves and other partners from being exploited, and expect that the others will do the same.

Inequity aversion

To behave with equity means to abide by the principles of fairness. Inequity aversion is a dislike of unfair treatment. Inequity aversion comes in two forms: self-directed, and other-directed.

- self-directed inequity aversion =

  I feel bad because I think I have received less than I deserve.

- other-directed inequity aversion =

  I feel bad because I think someone else has received less than they deserve.

People will go to some lengths to redress the balance of fairness if they feel that they themselves, or another person, have been treated unfairly, and will often reject an offer they think is unfair, even though it may be “rational” to accept an offer of something rather than nothing.

The risk of inequity aversion, the feeling of treating others unfairly or of being treated unfairly, occurs particularly when resources have been acquired jointly, i.e., after collaboration (Schäfer, Haun, and Tomasello, 2015).

Great apes have self-directed inequity aversion – they care how much they personally have received compared with what they may have been expecting. Great apes do not have other-directed inequity aversion – they do not care how much their friends have received compared with themselves (Tomasello, 2016). The first appearance of human other-directed inequity aversion may have been at the dawn of (obligate) sharing, when conditions became too harsh to support a competitive way of life, and human ancestors were domesticated (became egalitarian rather than dominant/competitive), possibly around 4 million years ago with the evolution of Ardipithecus Ramidus.

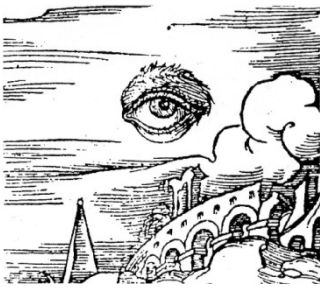
See also:

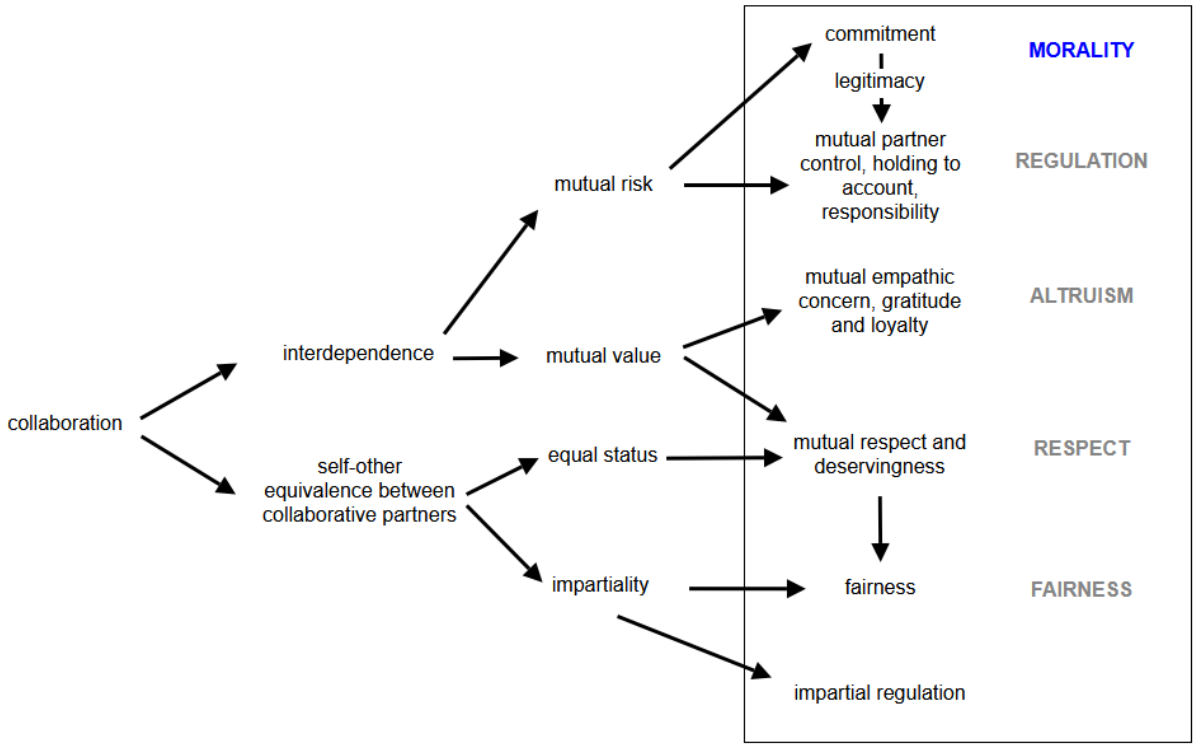
The self-domestication of the human race, p. ##

Evolution of sharing, p. ##

Self-other equivalence

The eye of reputation observes and socially evaluates collaborative behaviour





Self-other equivalence and the genealogy of morality

Partner *A* is collaborating with partner *B*.

Partner *A* says to partner *B*:

- “I can see from the point of view of your role and perspective ”
- “I am an agent, and you are my second-personal agent since you are collaborating with me towards our joint goal; and you are an agent, and I am your second-personal agent.”
- “You and I are equivalent in that I could do your task if I upheld its role ideals.”
- “You and I are impartially bound by role ideals.”

A and *B* are equivalent in a number of ways:

- equivalence of status
- equivalence of obligation
- equivalence of personnel
- equivalence of value
- equivalence of respect
- equivalence of deservingness

> If we as collaborative partners are equally necessary for our joint success, and if we could switch roles and still be successful, and if we both adhere to the same criteria in playing a role, then we must be somehow equivalent or equal as partners. This recognition of self-other equivalence generates a mutual respect and sense of equality among (potential) collaborative partners.
>
> *Michael Tomasello – “Becoming Human” (2019)*

The claim is that partners within a collaborative joint agent know cognitively that they are equivalent in a number of ways including value and status (Tomasello, 2016, 2019 a). This is called self-other equivalence. Tomasello (2019 a) proposes that children realise this as they learn to cooperate at a young age, which implies that it is cognitive, learned through experience, and not evolved or genetically encoded.

This in turn implies that fairness evolved in the continued presence of cognitive self-other equivalence in tandem with developing forms of collaboration.

For fairness to evolve, a number of conditions are necessary:

- lack of dominance (coercive) relations
- self-other equivalence (precursor to impartiality)
- ethos of sharing
- collaborative "we" who will share in the rewards.

The hypothesis is that self-other equivalence (equality of status, respect, deservingness, and interchangeability of perspectives) arises for these reasons:

1. **each partner is necessary for success**

   Each partner is equally a causative force in the outcome.

2. **each partner is instrumentally bound to submit to impartial role ideals**

   Each partner's ego is equally constrained by the impartial standards and requirements of having to fulfil a role in the collaboration.

3. **in principle, each partner is interchangeable with others and success could still be achieved.**

> The proposal is that each partner holds in their mind a “bird’s eye view” of the roles being played within collaboration, within which personnel are in principle interchangeable. As well as their own, each partner has an understanding of the other roles and perspectives relative to the joint goal. These are coordinated via cognitive perspective taking.

Mutual respect and deservingness are the result of mutual value and equality of status, together with the interchangeability of perspectives. If my partners are as deserving as me, and is on an equal footing, and we are all impartially bound by the rules of fairness, so that none of us is exploited, including me – I should be fair to them.

The normativity of deservingness is backed up by our reputations (general public moral identities) and cooperative identities (standing with previous partners), so that if I cheat, I will become known for it and people may avoid cooperating with me in the future.

Examples of self-other equivalence in human thinking include:

- “how would you like it if I did that to you?”;
- “if I were in your position, I would have done the same thing”;
- “that could be me”;
- “I am one among many.”

Fairness to others

Fairness to others is not (just) a matter of “what I can get away with without damaging my reputation”. We are fair to others because: 1) we want to benefit our partners; 2) because the results have been achieved impartially; and 3) because it is the right thing to do.

Our partners are valuable, deserving, and respected, and therefore 1) we feel empathic concern for them; 2) it is right that they are benefited.

The procedural impartiality of the fairness process means that it does not matter which of us is under consideration: we are all treated the same.

We are attached to “the right thing to do” – we see it as legitimate – if we see it as objectively correct: the way that any reasonable person would and should behave.

See also:

Self-other equivalence, p. ##

Objective right and wrong, p. ##

Resentment and indignation

If someone is not fair to me, I am likely to feel resentment, indignation and possibly anger in response. This negative emotion is a result of not being respected as an equal: my needs not being respected as much as the next person’s (Tomasello, 2016).

Free riders

In distributive justice, free riders are excluded from a share of the proceeds except out of charity.

In small-scale hunter gatherer societies with free communal sharing networks, how are free riders managed, apart from ridicule, criticism, and shaming of lazy or stingy people?

People are mobile. Productive foragers are not bound to stay in a low-producing camp, but can take off for a more productive camp. Simulations show that this

system can sustain a population, together with a significant fraction of non-productive free riders (including those too young, too old, pregnant, or otherwise unable to contribute food):

> Simulations show that when demand-sharing agents are sedentary (meaning that they are not allowed to move to new locations), free riders increase in number within populations, active hunters decrease in number and populations go extinct due to overall low productivity ... . However, an important result is that when both active hunters and free riders are allowed to move from camps where net energy income is low (either due to low environmental quality or to the presence of a number of non-productive free riders), populations do not collapse, active hunters remain a significant fraction of the demand-sharing populations and free riders make up a small but persistent fraction of groups (time average of 10% ...) in the absence of any form of direct punishment to free riders ...
>
> Our proposal is therefore compatible with low levels of warfare among African hunter-gatherers and derives cooperative behaviour, egalitarianism and non-kin extended social networks from selective pressures at the individual level.
>
> *Lewis, Vinicius, Strods, Mace, and Migliano – "High mobility explains demand sharing and enforced cooperation in egalitarian hunter-gatherers" (2014)*

A study of Hadza hunter-gatherers in Tanzania found experimentally that people in the same camp shared approximately the same as each other, while there was fairly wide variation between camps. It was also found that overall, Hadza share approximately half of everything they have (Smith, Larroucau, Mabulla, and Apicella, 2018).

Types of justice

Justice exists in a number of forms, for example:

- *restorative* (the victim of an offence is made good in some way)
- *retributive* (an offender is punished in some proportionate way)
- *distributive* (goods and burdens are distributed in some fair way)
- *procedural* (impartially sticking to the rules of a fair procedure that is worked out ahead of time without knowing how it will affect any one person, i.e., under a “veil of ignorance”. Whether or not procedural justice has been seen to be done affects how legitimately the legal decision is regarded by those subject to it, and how subjects respect the rules and authority [gov.uk, 2021]. For Her Majesty's Prisons and Probations Service, in the UK, there are four principles of procedural justice: 1) to treat subjects with respect; 2) to be impartial; 3) to ensure that subjects are listened to and have a chance to tell their story; 4) showing and encouraging trust through prosocial interactions by staff with subjects.)

Justice and judgement

John Rawls and the veil of ignorance

Distributive justice in this case refers to a nation state dividing resources among its subjects.

Rawls defined primary goods as: 1) liberties; 2) opportunities; 3) income and wealth.

John Rawls' theory takes the form of a thought experiment, and proposes that the fairest way to divide resources in an ideal state would be from behind an impartial “veil of ignorance” whereby each of us does not know anything about what we would

be like in the hypothetical society, or what position we may occupy – rich or poor, high or low, fortunate or unfortunate. So he imagines that it is rational for each of us to want the worst off to be taken care of, and consequently, that rational people would design a “floor constraint” – a restriction on how little people would receive, so that nobody has to be too poor. The point of view is therefore that of the worst off (Shapiro, 2010)

Experimental results

There is evidence that in situations where different types of fairness conflict, people trade off between them on a case-by-case basis. In experimental games simulating distributive justice and the veil of ignorance, it has been found that people prefer to maximise the average income while maintaining a good level for the worst off (Frohlich, Oppenheimer, and Eavey, 1986).

Reciprocity

During the voyage of the Beagle when the young Charles Darwin first encountered the “savages” living in Tierra Del Fuego, he was amazed to realize that “some of the Fuegians plainly showed that they had a fair notion of barter ... I gave one man a large nail (a most valuable present) without making any signs for a return; but he immediately picked out two fish, and handed them up on the point of his spear.”

Sarah Blaffer Hrdy – “Mothers and Others – the evolutionary origins of mutual understanding”

Judge not, and you will not be judged; condemn not, and you will not be condemned; forgive, and you will be forgiven; give, and it will be given to you; good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap. For the measure you give will be the measure you get back.

Luke 6:37-38

“The norm of reciprocity is universal.” If we do a favor, we expect one in return. If we receive a favor we cannot return, we are distressed.

Donald W Pfaff, PhD – “The Neuroscience of Fair Play”

Abdullah ibn Umar reported: The Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him, said, “Pay the worker his wages before his sweat has dried.”

Sunan Ibn Mājah 2443

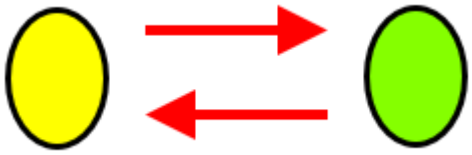
> He who loves others, must also be loved by others. He who benefits others, must also be benefited by others. He who hates others, must also be hated by others. He who injures others, must also be injured by others.
>
> *Mo Tzu, 479-381 BC*

Types of reciprocity

1. tit-for-tat
2. indirect
3. downstream
4. attitudinal
5. long-term ("buddy" reciprocity)
6. generalised

Reciprocal exchanges are most reliable – it is most likely that you will be paid back – in repeated encounters. Then, there is incentive for your partner not to "defect" on you because they need to keep you on their side for future exchanges.

1. **tit-for-tat reciprocity**



Tit-for-tat is the simplest form of reciprocity: what you do to me I do in return; a strict exchange of favours or offences.

“Transactional” behaviour is what we call tit-for-tat reciprocity devoid of generosity and friendship; trading favours, debts and obligations out of a sense of self-interest; introducing conditionality upon your generosity. This is accepted and required in an impersonal business setting; but may be seen as callous and offensive in the context of a friendship or other warm relationship.

Strict tit-for-tat is the form of reciprocity used in trade and business. It is the normal mode of reciprocity between people who are not personally interdependent. It is dominant within large anonymous groups, where many people are strangers, and interactions may be “one-shot” affairs, giving no further opportunity for reciprocity or redress with this partner. In long term personal relationships, partners do not keep strict account as the benefits tend to even out in the end.

See also:

Sharing in response to need, p. ##

Sharing proportionately, p. ##

Long-term “buddy” reciprocity, p. ##

Generalised care, p. ##

Contingent cooperation

> I'll love you if you’ll love me.
>
> *The Incredible String Band – “Three is a Green Crown”*

“I will cooperate if you cooperate”. The corollary (inevitable consequence) of this attitude is that if I want you to cooperate, I must cooperate.

See also:

Impartial and reciprocal (contingent) moralities, p. ##

Forgiveness

In conflict situations, tit-for-tat is a dangerous way to proceed, because anger can lead to a disproportionately harsh response, and escalation (Pinker, 2011). At some point, it is necessary to stop the merry-go-round of back-and-forth recrimination, for the sake of long-term prosperity for both sides. In a runaway cycle of tit-for-tat, we run the risk of ending up with a big mess that didn’t need to happen. An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth leads to a land of people with no eyes and no teeth. Try to meet anger and drama with peace, strength, humility, educating, and solutions. Find out why the person is angry, and try to do something about the problem, rather than being tempted to “blow up” in kind. After you have finished being angry, the problem still remains.

When someone commits an offence against you, you do not have to react. To do so can sometimes make the situation worse, as it can generate negative consequences for you.

See also:

The Montagu Principle, p. ##

Conflict avoidance, p. ##

> For every ripple you push away, you’ll create a thousand more
>
> and the ripples will turn to waves
>
> that will swell and break and overwhelm you.

Steve Taylor – from "The Harmony of Things"

Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which spitefully use you, and persecute you;

Matthew 5:44

Hatreds do not ever cease in this world by hating, but by love. This is an eternal truth. Overcome anger by love. Overcome evil by good. Overcome the miser by giving, overcome the liar by truth.

Buddha

Two wrongs don't make a right.

Proverb

All pious deeds, all gifts, are nothing compared to a loving heart.

P. Lakshmi Narasu – "The Essence of Buddhism"

A certain amount of forgiveness in a reciprocal relationship can allow cooperation to continue after one side has committed an offence against the other.

If the offender agrees to hold him- or herself accountable, by admitting fault, expressing remorse, apologising, and offering to make amends – then, and only then, do we feel we can forgive them (Dill and Darwall, 2014). A shortcut for the perpetrator, that expresses all this, and enables forgiveness, is for them to say that they understand and deserve the blame and punishment they are being given.

There is no need to keep account of every little grievance. This is a pointless waste of life that makes people unhappy and corrodes relationships.

You can tell the size of a man by the size of the thing that makes him mad.

Adlai Stevenson II

... when others provoke you, perhaps for no reason or unjustly, instead of reacting in a negative way, as a true practitioner of altruism you should be able to be tolerant towards them. You should remain unperturbed by such treatment. ... not only should we be tolerant of such people, but in fact we should view them as our spiritual teachers.

When someone whom I have helped,

Or in whom I have placed great hopes,

Mistreats me in extremely hurtful ways,

May I regard him still as my precious teacher.

His Holiness the Dalai Lama – "Transforming the Mind – Eight verses on generating compassion and transforming your life"

3 'He insulted me, he hurt me, he defeated me, he robbed me.' Those who think such thoughts will not be free from hate.

4 'He insulted me, he hurt me, he defeated me, he robbed me.' Those who think not such thoughts will be free from hate.

The Dhammapada

Every bitterness is heavy bag. Why carry? You are hot-air balloon. Tell me, you want to go up or down? Let go of anger, hurt. Drop the sacks.

Elif Shafak – "Honour"

We should attempt to protect our enemies, or adversaries, from negative consequences of their actions towards us. However, you owe it to yourself and your dependents not to allow, for example, an abusive partner to ruin your life. Some people need to be controlled and brought to justice.

“Immature” or “maladaptive” ego defences are designed to get under your skin: don’t do the offender’s job for them by continually dwelling and ruminating on the wrong you have been done. Do you want the offender to live rent-free in your head? Because that is what they intend.

See also:

Ego defences, p. ##

Tit-for-tat reciprocity and game theory

Tit-for-tat reciprocity can be studied using computer simulations (Thomas, 2012a,b). Two computer-simulated agents play a game together over many rounds, where in each round, each agent can either “cooperate” with the other, or “defect” (refuse to cooperate), based on what the other did in the previous round. The aim is to see, for various strategies, how long it takes for mutual cooperation to fall apart.

The winning strategy has been found to be “hopeful, generous and forgiving”. “Hopeful” means that you need to start the interaction by being cooperative, and hope that this will encourage the other party to cooperate in return. “Forgiving” means that if the other person defects, you will work hard to rebuild a working relationship of cooperation. “Generous” means not to be too worried about getting exact returns for what you have put in, but instead be pleased to be engaged in a cooperative relationship where everybody benefits.

On the computer it is found that if you forgive 100% of the time, cooperation quite quickly falls apart and this is not a successful strategy. If you always forgive bad behaviour, there is no incentive for the badly behaved person to behave well, and

since they are not interested in mutual cooperation, the working relationship cannot continue.

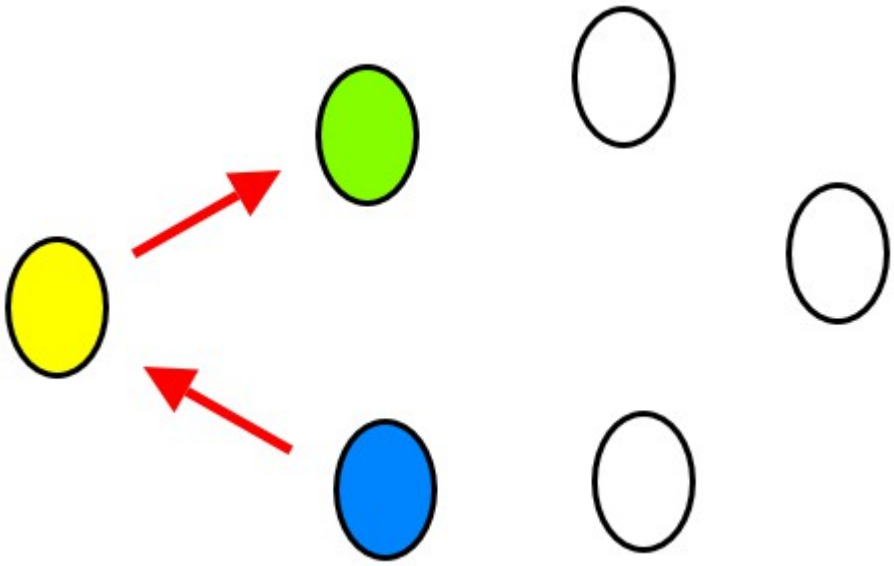
Punishment

Punishment helps to sustain cooperation in most individuals. This punishment could take the form of a respectful protest, threats to reputation via gossip, the threat of rejection from the group or team, etc. (Haidt, 2013). In a group, it pays for the punishment to be coordinated among a number of group members, in order to spread and reduce the overall cost of punishment (Boyd, Gintis, and Bowles, 2010).

Islands of cooperation

In hostile, dog-eat-dog environments where people are fighting rather than cooperating, those who want to cooperate can profitably stick together to form “islands of cooperation”.

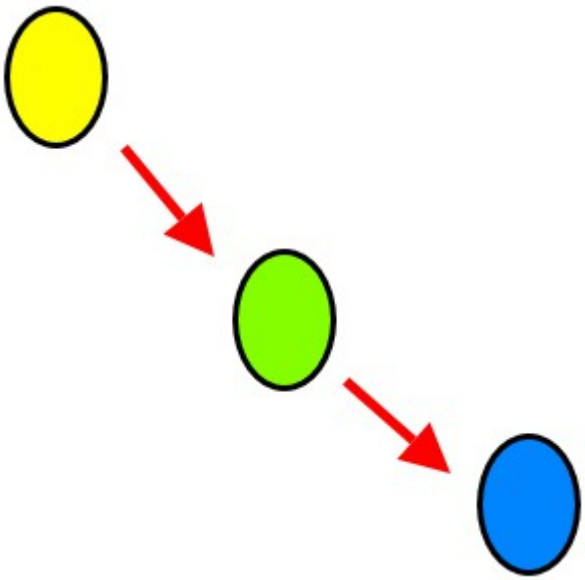
2. indirect reciprocity



How I treat you depends on how you treat others. It requires communication, i.e., gossip, for one's actions to become well known. You may have to wait a while before the benefits of your good actions come back to you.

This situation is similar to having a reputation: others' opinion of your behaviour. However this is reputation + reciprocity.

3. **downstream reciprocity**



> 32 “Then the master called the servant in. ‘You wicked servant,’ he said, ‘I cancelled all that debt of yours because you begged me to. 33 Shouldn’t you have had mercy on your fellow servant just as I had on you?’ 34 In anger his master handed him over to the jailers to be tortured, until he should pay back all he owed.
>
> *Matthew 18:21-35: “The Parable of the Unmerciful Servant”*

How you treat someone influences how they go on to treat others. *A* does *x* to *B*, *B* does *x* to *C*.

> ... in late 2007 the science media widely reported a study by zoologists Claudia Rutte and Michael Taborsky suggesting that rats display what they call “reciprocity”, providing help to an unrelated and unfamiliar individual, based on the rat's own previous experience of having been helped by an unfamiliar rat. Rutte and Taborsky trained rats in a cooperative task of pulling

a stick to obtain food for a partner. Rats who had been helped previously by an unknown partner were more likely to help others.

Marc Bekoff and Jessica Pierce – "Wild Justice – the moral lives of animals"

Kindness spreads. If we treat someone with kindness, they are more likely to go on to treat others with kindness and gratitude. The result is a kinder environment for everyone.

Likewise, spite and unkindness can spread in the same way.

Modern humans are built to imitate each other: we will imitate the majority in the group or what is seen to be successful (Tomasello, Melis, Tennie, Wyman, and Herrmann, 2012).

Downstream reciprocity is more usually called "upstream reciprocity".

4. **attitudinal reciprocity**

So you're looking for trouble, so trouble you'll find

"Dust be diamonds" – The Incredible String Band

"Your attitude affects my attitude". We instinctively, and instantly, mirror the attitude of the person who is addressing us. Our attitude is written all over us for others to see plainly, via our body language and emotional affect.

We often use attitudinal reciprocity in dealing with strangers.

Attitudinal reciprocity may be thought of as a kind of attitudinal resonance or contagion, in that I am responding attitudinally to your attitude.

> In humans, emotional suggestion is a powerful shaper of social behavior. We're exquisitely tuned in to the body language, facial expressions, and tone of voice of those around us, and will unconsciously mimic and synchronize these outward expressions of emotion.
>
> *Marc Bekoff and Jessica Pierce – "Wild Justice – the moral lives of animals"*

See also:

Emotional resonance, p. ##

The Montagu Principle, p. ##

5. **long-term "buddy" reciprocity**

This kind of reciprocity is typical of that between friends. Partners do each other favours on a long-term basis without keeping strict account. It is common in the animal kingdom and amongst great apes. Tit-for-tat, in the sense of paying back exact favours later, probably does not exist in non-human animals as it may be too cognitively demanding.

See also:

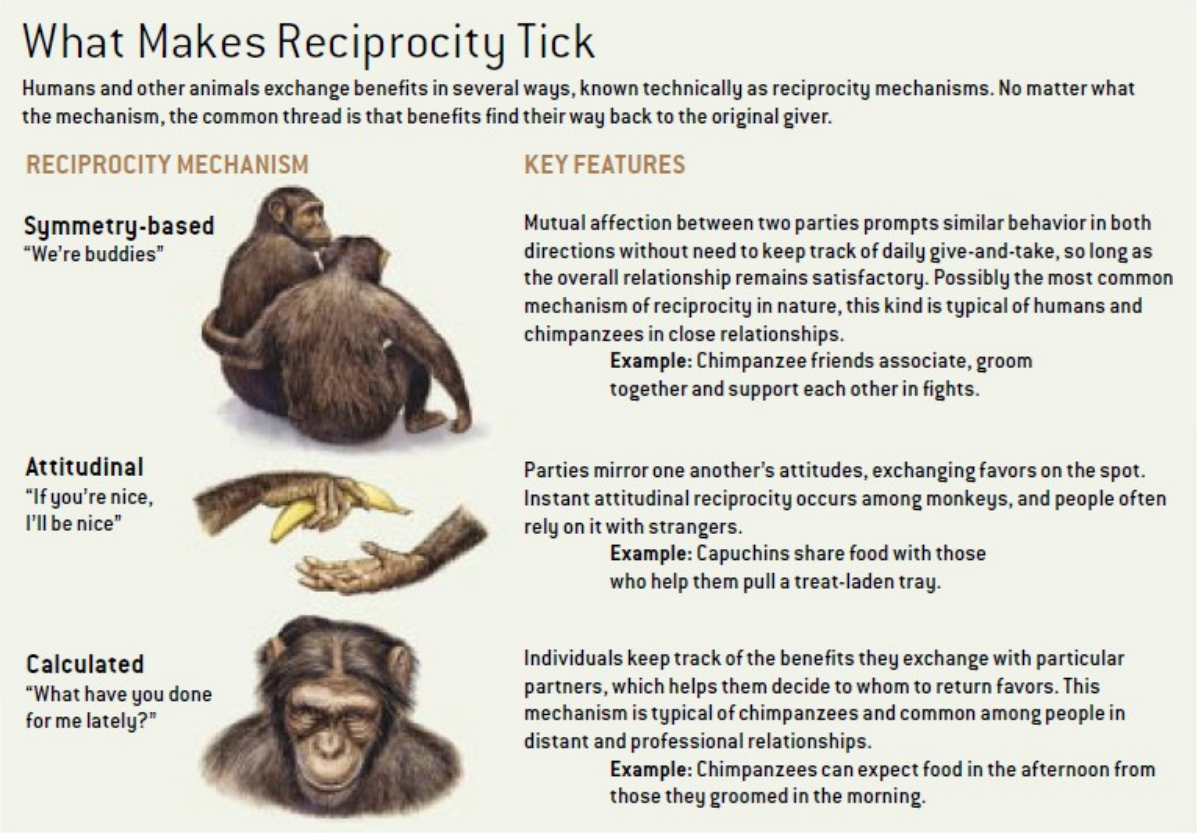
The Stakeholder Principle, p. ##

6. **generalised reciprocity**

In generalised reciprocity, we share communally with a sharing network that is more or less closed (Endicott and Endicott, 2008; Fiske, 1991). This network is probably a small group.

See also:

Sharing in response to need, p. ##



Frans de Waal – "How Animals Do Business" – Scientific American, April 2005

Reciprocity is a survival skill in hunter-gatherer societies

In hunter-gatherer societies, reciprocity is used to create and maintain social networks, some of them very wide.

When [Ju/'hoansi, African Bushmen] still roamed across the semi-arid Kalahari, with no way to store food, these people understood that their most important resources were their reputations and the stored goodwill of others. ...

For those who store social obligations rather than food, unspoken contracts – beginning with the most fundamental one between the group's gatherers and its hunters, and extending to kin and as-if kin in other groups – tide them over from shortfall to shortfall. Time-honored relationships enable people to forage over wider areas and to reconnect with trusted exchange partners without fear of being killed by local inhabitants who have the advantage of being more familiar with the terrain. When a waterhole dries up in one place, when the game moves away, or, perhaps most dreaded of all, when a conflict erupts and the group must split up, people can cash in on old debts and generous reputations built up over time through participation in well-greased networks of exchange.

The particular exchange networks that [Polly] Wiessner studied among the Ju/'hoansi are called hxaro. Some 69 percent of the items every Bushman used – knives, arrows, and other utensils; beads and clothes – were transitory possessions, fleetingly treasured before being passed on in a chronically circulating traffic of objects. A gift received one year was passed on the next. In contrast to our own society where regifting is regarded as gauche, among the Ju/'hoansi it was not passing things on – valuing an object more than a relationship, or hoarding a treasure – that was socially unacceptable. As Wiessner put it, "The circulation of gifts in the Kalahari gives partners information that they 'hold each other in their hearts' and can be called on in times of need." A distinctive feature of human social relations was this "release from proximity." It meant that even people who had moved far away and been out of contact for many years could meet as fondly remembered friends years later. Anticipation of goodwill helps explain the 2008 finding by psychologists at the University of British Columbia and Harvard Business School that spending money on other people had a more positive impact on

the happiness of their study subjects than spending the same amount of money on themselves.

In her detailed study of nearly a thousand hxaro partnerships over thirty years, Wiessner learned that the typical adult had anywhere from 2 to 42 exchange relationships, with an average of 16. Like any prudently diversified stock portfolio, partnerships were balanced so as to include individuals of both sexes and all ages, people skilled in different domains and distributed across space. Approximately 18 percent resided in the partner's own camp, 24 percent in nearby camps, 21 percent in a camp at least 16 kilometres away, and 33 percent in more distant camps, between 51 and 200 kilometres away.

Just under half of the partnerships were maintained with people as closely related as first cousins, but almost as many were with more distant kin. Partnerships could be acquired at birth, when parents named a new baby after a future gift-giver (much as Christians designate god-parents), or they could be passed on as a heritable legacy when one of the partners died. Since meat of large animals was always shared, people often sought to be connected with skilled hunters. This is why the best hunters tended to have very far-flung assortments of hxaro contacts, as did their wives.

Contacts were built up over the course of a life well-lived by individuals perpetually alert to new opportunities. When a parent died, his or her children or stepchildren inherited the deceased person’s exchange partners as well as kinship networks, and gifts were often given at that time to reinforce the continuity, since to give, share, and reciprocate was to survive. Multiple systems for identifying kin linked people in different ways, increasing the number of people to whom an individual was related. One kinship system was based on marriage and blood ties, while another involved the name one was given, which automatically forged a tie to others with the same name. These manufactured or fictive kin were also referred to as mother, father, brother, or sister.

Such dual systems function to spread the web of kinship widely, and since the second system can be revised over the course of an individual’s lifetime, it becomes feasible for a namesake to bring even distant kin into a closer

relationship when useful. Every human society depends on some system of exchange and mutual aid, but foragers have elevated exchange to a core value and an elaborate art form. People construct vast and intricate terminologies to identify kin and as-if kin, in order to expand the potential for relationships based on trust. Depending on the situation, these can be activated and kept going by reciprocal exchange or left dormant until needed.

Sarah Blaffer Hrdy – "Mothers and Others – the evolutionary origins of mutual understanding"

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Targeted helping

Helping in response to need.

Empathic concern triggers helping behaviour.

“I see that you are in distress, therefore I want to help you.”

The Four Noble Truths of Buddhism can be expressed as:

- Understand that someone is suffering.
- Understand the cause of their suffering.
- Believe that a way out of their suffering can exist.
- Find a solution, a way out of their suffering.

Sympathetic distress within the brain leads to a wish to help

If we experience pain in our body, there is activation in the brain regions of the anterior insula and the anterior cingulate cortex. The same areas become activated when we witness another person in pain. This is a form of empathic resonance.

The strength of the sympathetic pain signal is affected by how much we approve of the other person, how deserving we perceive them to be, and in turn it determines how much we wish to help them (Decety, 2011; Singer and Klimecki, 2014). This approval / deservingness rating may be based on any of a number of factors, for example:

- whether someone is a stranger or a loved one;
- whether they are similar to someone we already care about;
- whether they have behaved unfairly or unethically in the past;
- whether they are from the same or a different group as ourselves;
- whether we approve of their reason for being in distress: for example, whether an AIDS patient has contracted the disease through sharing needles or through a contaminated blood transfusion;
- how good a cooperator someone is.

See also:

Charity and deservingness, p. ##

The Golden Rule, p. ##

Moral anger, p. ##

Empathic concern and taking action

Human empathy encompasses compassionate concern, emotional contagion and resonance, and perspective taking. The neurological capacity for empathic concern is thought to have evolved in the context of parental care, especially maternal care, in mammals and birds. This biological capacity is then available for use in other social contexts where it is useful.

When a function that evolves for one purpose is then evolutionarily co-opted for use in other contexts, it is known as motivational autonomy.

> The animal data on maternal care and nurturance suggest that primitive empathic ability might be organized by basic biological systems subserving a complex of attachment-related processes. The neural systems supporting

> attachment include multisensory processing and complex motor responses as well as cognitive processes that link sensory inputs to motor output, including attention, memory, social recognition, and motivation.
>
> *Jean Decety – "The neuroevolution of empathy"*

Because of the evolutionary link between human social compassion and infant care in mammals and birds, when we recognise need in others, we wish to take action, to help them, and when we recognise vulnerability in others, we wish to take action to care for them.

See also:

Empathy, p. ##

Empathic distress and compassion

We may become overwhelmed with sympathetic distress, the distress we feel at another's distress. This may lead us to wish to withdraw from the situation, and eventually to ill health. Empathic distress is a self-directed negative emotion: we feel distress at our own pain.

Compassion, defined as the desire to help, and actual helping behaviour, is associated with other-directed feelings of approach, perspective taking and prosociality, and is likely to lead to a positive psychological outcome for ourselves and others (Singer and Klimecki, 2014). Compassion is classed as a "mature ego defence" because it is an evolutionarily adaptive or beneficial coping mechanism.

Taken together, this suggests that (self-directed) empathic distress may be relieved by (other-directed) compassion and helping behaviour. It also suggests that when we are unable to help a suffering person, we may feel distressed.

See also:

Ego defences, p. ##

Helping in social groups

We see helping behaviour in human groups and partnerships in various contexts:

- collaborative
- inclusive family fitness
- parental care
- sexual pair bonds
- friendships
- generalised care
- patriarchal protection of females by males

What they all have in common is interdependence.

Generalised care

> ... generosity ... is at the heart of give and take in human attachments.
>
> *Penny Spikins – "How Compassion Made Us Human – the evolutionary origins of tenderness, trust & morality"*

The great ape ancestors of the human family tree were, we believe, not very altruistic or cooperative (Tomasello, 2016). From the point of view of the "selfish gene", in an environment of interdependence, it is an evolutionary puzzle why humans might choose to look after group members who are unproductive because they are chronically ill or disabled.

There appears to be archaeological evidence of individuals of a number of human species being looked after by group members when they might have lost all their teeth, been crippled congenitally or through injury, had a head injury etc., the apparent instances of care increasing in frequency as we get nearer to the present (Spikins, 2015; Spikins, Needham, Tilley, and Hitchens, 2018).

> ... evidence for recovery from injury and survival despite impairment should be accepted as evidence of care for the injured [in Neanderthals].
>
> *Penny Spikins, Andy Needham, Lorna Tilley, and Gail Hitchens – "Calculated or caring? Neanderthal healthcare in social context" (2018)*

In general, we may observe that humans like taking care of their fellow species-members who cannot take care of themselves.

There may have been two factors driving the evolution of this generalised care in humans.

The first hypothesis is the "runaway feedback loop" for the evolution of conspicuous generosity of care and provisioning. The selection could have been both social and, in males, sexual.

If I am a human cooperating with others in a group, the people around me can affect my fitness by choosing or not choosing me as a collaborative partner. It makes sense to choose partners who are generous, and to compete for partners by displaying generosity. We know that one motive for generosity is signalling to others that I am ready and willing to cooperate (Jordan, Hoffman, Nowak, and Rand, 2016). This situation may have provided a "runaway" positive evolutionary feedback loop: I

need partners who are generous; and potential partners compete to have me as a partner by displaying generosity. The loop reaches equilibrium – a stable point – before the partners' generosity becomes detrimental to their overall fitness, and the usefulness of generosity as an advertisement of being a good partner has reached its limit (Nesse, 2007).

Women may have exerted sexual evolutionary selection for partners who would willingly provide what mothers needed for child-rearing, i.e., altruistic investment. If conspicuously generous males were selected more often as reproductive partners, it follows that they must have reproduced more and left more offspring than asocial males, contributing to a trait in the human race of extravagant generosity.

Thus, extravagant generosity could have conferred an evolutionary advantage on the actor, throughout much of human history.

The second factor could have been an extension, in our ancestral small groups, of the communal sharing of provisions – into communal sharing of care, based on the same underlying ethos that all persons are important and worthy of care, and ultimately driven by the environmental pressure of the risky foraging niche. In a system of universal care, individual risk is mitigated through the help of others when needed. It makes sense to be part of a sharing network, whether of resources or care.

It may be that generalised altruism – the collective commitment to provide help for those who need it – is part of the social contract of human societies, along with the collective commitment to cooperate. Tomasello (2016) proposes that a social contract is the collective version of the original interpersonal agreements to cooperate, a feature of culture that people cannot help but be born into and accept as legitimate.

Woodburn (1982) reports a situation in a Hadza hunter-gatherer group when a grandmother was neglected when she became senile, and doubts that this would have happened in the neighbouring agricultural societies – where people are less independent and autonomous, but live in a web of obligations and dependencies.

See also:

Empathy

Empathy is a broad term that refers to the numerous ways in which we recognise and respond to the internal states of others, especially with regard to other-directed concern and helping behaviours.

It falls into three categories, that can work together:

1. emotional resonance and emotional contagion
2. cognitive perspective taking
3. empathic concern and helping behaviour.

The definition of empathy includes:

- feeling the same emotion as another person (vicarious arousal, emotional contagion, emotional resonance). “Feeling with”.
- feeling an emotion on behalf of another (sympathetic pain, sympathetic joy, sympathetic anger, sympathetic grief etc.). “Feeling with”.
- knowing the desires, beliefs, and circumstances of another (cognitive empathy, cognitive perspective-taking, Theory of Mind).
- concern in response to another’s pain, or tenderness in response to the vulnerability of another. “Feeling for”.
- helping behaviour in response to need (targeted helping); caring behaviour in response to vulnerability.

Further definitions:

Cognitive empathy

Recognising the goals, perceptions and circumstances of another may be achieved through perspective-taking: either 1) “imagine other” where we try to imagine the perspective of another, or 2) “imagine self in position of other”. Each has its strengths and weaknesses; when we see how similar we are, we may be motivated to help somebody; but this approach may be limited in scope, as people vary in important ways.

Cognitive empathy, in both forms, is one of the elements of The Golden Rule.

See also:

The Golden Rule, p. ##

Dark and light traits, p. ##

Emotional resonance

1. **body mimicry and neural mimicry**

This means to unconsciously adopt the bodily posture or facial expression of a person whom we are observing. If we see someone yawn, we are likely to yawn in response, and seeing someone else laugh will often set us off laughing ourselves.

2. **emotional contagion; mirroring**

Unconsciously adopting the emotions or attitude of another. For example, if someone is being negative and complaining, we may pick up their negative attitude. By contrast, a cheerful positive person will tend to infect their fellows with their upbeat attitude.

See also:

Attitudinal reciprocity, p. ##

3. **vicarious arousal and alarm**

This is the most primitive form of empathy, found throughout much of the animal kingdom. We may often have seen a whole flock of birds take off because of one alarmed individual; that dogs start barking because another dog sets them off; and that babies will cry at nothing, just because another baby is crying. This makes good evolutionary sense: if one individual thinks they have seen danger then it is safer to err on the side of caution and flee oneself.

In the natural world, individual animals within an environment are attentionally linked, and need to monitor each other's behaviour, in all kinds of ways: for example, in predators and prey; competitors; social group members; collaborators; and parents and offspring.

4. **sympathy**

> Oh the laughter, the laughter so good and free
>
> Oh the laughter, the laughter so nice to see.
>
> *The Incredible String Band – "My Father was a Lighthouse Keeper"*

Sympathy means "feeling with": it is the sympathetic reaction to witnessing the emotional state of another; a form of emotional resonance. For example, we may feel joy at someone else's joy or distress at their distress. We may say "I feel happy for you" or "I feel sad for you". Imagine how you would feel to see someone you really love feeling happy, or sad.

The more basic or primitive form of sympathy, where the distinction between self and other is blurred, is straightforward emotional contagion.

When we witness someone else's feelings, then depending on our attitude towards them, we do not necessarily react with those same feelings.

If we witness someone else we care about in pain, then we tend to become more sensitive to our own pain.

Empathic concern and helping behaviour

Empathic concern towards non-kin, or at least, the associated helping behaviour, has been widely observed in social birds and mammals, although it tends to be sporadic. In human hunter-gatherer societies, consisting of interlinked small groups, a culture of "generalized altruism" towards all members of the group is observed (Gurven, 2004).

Anecdotally, there are not many species of mammals that feed or care for their sick, but most of those are cooperative breeders (Hrdy, 2009). These species include African wild dogs (Angier, 2014), elephants (Bekoff and Pierce, 2009), lions, mongooses, and foxes (Kessler, 2020).

> Capt. Stansbury found on a salt lake in Utah an old and completely blind pelican, which was very fat, and must have been long and well fed by his companions. Mr. Blyth, as he informs me, saw Indian crows feeding two or three of their companions which were blind; and I have heard of an analogous case with the domestic cock.
>
> *Charles Darwin – "The Ascent of Man"*

Pelicans are not cooperative breeders, but (at least) American White Pelicans are known to feed cooperatively.

Empathy seems to have evolved for the purpose of understanding the inner state of others, where this benefits the individual or the individual's genes. In a social group living and surviving together, people are highly interdependent.

Reading cues of need, and helping in response to need, are features of the lives of creatures who care for their young, and it is thought that caring for young is the origin of the link between empathy and helping. The young of most birds, and all mammals, need to be looked after for a long time after they are born, until they can look after themselves (they are altricial). When the infant gives its distinctive, plaintive, urgent cries for help, the parent will drop what it is doing and rush to supply that help. Parents who do this are more likely to have offspring which survive and are therefore more likely to pass on their genes, leading to the prevalence of this trait in the population.

As is often the case in nature, over the course of evolutionary time, this behaviour (empathy, empathic concern and helping) has become detached from its original cause (the distress of infants) and is now used in other relevant social situations between humans: in order to facilitate the coordination of activities, cooperation towards common goals, caring for group members, and other everyday social interactions. This detaching of a trait from its original function is called motivational autonomy, exaptation, or co-opting (Kelly, 2011).

Some people are known to be extraordinarily altruistic compared with the majority of the population (Marsh, 2017). Some people have been found to possess a genetic variation in their receptor for oxytocin, that is associated with greater bodily arousal when witnessing distress or apparent pain in another, and greater empathic concern, than those without the variation (Smith, Porges, Norman, Connelly, and Decety, 2014). Oxytocin is a "bonding chemical" that is released in the body in situations of social attachment. People who care more than the average, also feel more guilty when they are unable to help somebody in distress or need, something that may be manipulated and exploited by selfish others (Kaufman, Yaden, Hyde, and Tsukayama, 2019).

All in all, humans are interdependent, and interdependence is the reason for the evolution of mutual empathic concern in humans. If it helps my genes to help you, then it helps me to help you if I feel empathic concern for you.

See also:

Targeted helping, p. ##

Generalised care, p. ##

Light traits, p. ##

Perspective taking and helping behaviour

Perspective taking refers to the ability to see a situation from the perspective of another, including their perceptions, goals, and circumstances. Arguably, a person's "world" consists of these things. Perspective taking is also known as cognitive empathy: using knowledge to discern the inner state of another.

It seems, from experimental work (McAuliffe, Carter, Berhane, Snihur, and McCullough, 2019; Israelashvili, Sauter, and Fischer, 2020), that our conscious attempts at cognitive perspective-taking are largely useless for discerning the emotions of others; but also that if we gather more information about what triggered the emotion, it can lead to a greater understanding of the other person's internal world and external situation.

Particularly, similarity between our own experiences and those of the other person actually reduces our own recognition of the other's negative emotions. We are probably mistaken if we believe we understand them because we have "been there too". However, similarity of experience can lead to feelings of empathic concern for the other; and empathic concern for another can lead to greater accuracy in recognising their emotions (Israelashvili, Sauter, and Fischer, 2020).

In other words, we tend to project our own state of mind, or the way we would feel under their circumstances, onto others (Greenberg, 2021).

To maximise "empathic accuracy", we need to know something of the person's circumstances and history. It is helpful if the object of the empathy – the one being empathised with – is expressive of their feelings and situation (Stinson and Ickes,

1992). The personality trait of agreeableness on either side helps the achievement of empathic accuracy (Kraus, Côté, and Keltner, 2010).

We may define two kinds of cognitive perspective taking:

1. imagine self in position of other

   “how would I feel if I were you?”

2. imagine other

   “what does it feel like to be you?”

In laboratory tests, scanning the brains of humans, it is found that when we project ourselves into the position of a suffering other, it leads to higher personal anxiety and distress, while if we focus on the emotions and behaviour of the person in distress then this results in higher empathic concern, lower personal distress and higher activity in the executive decision-making areas of the brain (Decety, 2011).

This is consistent with findings that being focused on another reduces personal distress, and increases compassion and helping behaviour (Singer and Klimecki, 2014).

“Imagine other” has been found to be a powerful way to reduce stereotyping of an out-group member. This attitude then extends to other members the same group, and there is consequently a more positive evaluation of the group as a whole (Decety and Cowell, 2015).

Perspective taking and empathic concern are associated with sensitivity to justice in others, and endorsing moral rules (Decety and Cowell, 2015). This may be because compassion leads us to wish for someone the benefit of a fair trial.

Perspective taking can reduce perceptions of impartiality if a defendant is seen to be in need (McAuliffe, Carter, Berhane, Snihur, and McCullough, 2019). This seeming contradiction reflects the plurality of factors that make up the concept of fairness.

See also:

Psychopathic ethical compass, p. ##

The Golden Rule, p. ##

Why are people cruel?, p. ##

Perspective taking and cooperation

Organisms attend to what is relevant to their goals (Tomasello, 2014), and in a collaborative activity, with a joint goal, humans attend jointly to the joint goal.

At the same time, each person has their own role in, and perspective on, achieving the joint goal. It is in the common ground knowledge of the collaborative team that each person has their own role and perspective, and what those roles and perspectives are (Tomasello, 2016).

As a part of the collaboration, each member monitors what the others are doing, to help coordinate the overall activity. Therefore, each person needs to be able to see the joint collaborative activity from the perspective of the others (Tomasello, 2014). The willingness and capacity to take the perspective of others for prosocial purposes may have evolved in the context of cooperative breeding (Hrdy, 2009).

It is possible that ants have Theory of Mind – that they can take the perspective of other ants. Ants are, of course, hyper-cooperative like humans are, and must need to coordinate with others. The possible evidence we have for this comes from the fact that they pass the “white mark mirror test” (Reville, 2019), whereby an animal has a visible mark painted on its body where it cannot see it, and is then shown itself in a mirror. Individuals in some species will attempt to remove the mark when they see it in the mirror. The hypothesis is that only creatures that recognise themselves, that see themselves as a separate self, can recognise others as separate selves, and are therefore capable of taking their perspective. An ant’s brain takes up 15% of its body mass.

See also:

Self-other equivalence, p. ##

Cooperative breeding, p. ##

Perspective taking and exploitation

Magpies and jays, both members of the crow family, are notorious thieves. Magpies have been found to pass the mirror self-recognition test (de Waal, 2010). They steal shiny objects left around by humans, and they steal the eggs of other birds. Jays bury items of food for consumption later, but, preferably, only if other creatures are not looking. If they have been seen burying their food, they are likely to re-bury it later when they are not observed. The hypothesis is that jays and magpies take the perspective of other creatures, in order successfully to steal or secrete food and other objects.

People also take the perspective of others in order to exploit them emotionally: i.e., to be cruel.

See also:

Anti-social personality disorder, p. ##

Narcissism, p. ##

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The Golden Rule

... people are much more likely to experience [the] altruistic motive when another person’s welfare is made emotionally salient to them by empathic perspective-taking ... or identifiability ... .

Dill and Darwall (2014:13)

Direct care staff described the Golden Rule as helping them to see the resident as a person (i.e., this could be my grandfather or some other family member) and this appeared particularly important when a resident was difficult to work with due to cognitive impairment or behavioral symptoms. ...

However, findings show that the Golden Rule can obscure critical resident needs or preferences, despite good intentions. ...

The use of the Golden Rule as a simplifying tool is particularly problematic in the diverse world of long-term care. The diversity in culture, ethnicity, religion and age is vast among managers, health professionals, direct care workers and residents. As our findings suggest, while trying to put yourself in another person's shoes facilitates empathy and connection with staff or residents, it is unrealistic to assume that you could truly understand an individual's wishes, needs, interests or preferences ... . Fundamental differences arise from multiple factors such as ethnic background, education, professional discipline, age cohort, and disease state.

Corazzini et al (2005) describing nursing homes in North Carolina

Samaritans let me say it my way.

Advertisement for suicide helpline in the UK

You don’t see what I see.

“Try” – Delta 5

The Golden Rule has been expressed as

- do as you would be done by
- treat others as *you* would like to be treated

And the Platinum Rule as

- treat others as *they* would like to be treated.

These “folk” formulations reflect three underlying interpersonal processes:

- attitudinal reciprocity
- “imagine self in position of other” perspective taking
- “imagine other” perspective taking

Attitudinal reciprocity

See:

Attitudinal reciprocity, p. ##

“Imagine self in position of other” perspective taking

In this kind of perspective taking, I put myself in your position, and imagine what I would want if I were in your position. It is based on self-other equivalence: the human ability to switch perspectives with others; and on the human tendency towards empathic concern for other humans; and on recognition of the self or another loved one in the suffering other. If you remind me of myself or someone else I value, I am more likely to feel empathic concern for you.

However, this process is the weakness of the Golden Rule, since if the suffering other is markedly different from me or anyone I care about, I will miss aspects of their world view.

“Imagine other” perspective taking

Chimpanzees will adopt the perspective of a competitor, seeing the world through their eyes, in order to find out what they are “up to” (Tomasello, 2019 b). In other words, their motive for perspective taking is largely Machiavellian and competitive. The human motive for perspective taking is compassionate, and cooperative, as well as competitive. Humans can easily switch their mental perspectives from one role to another within a collaboration, in order to coordinate the collaboration, in keeping with “self-other equivalence”.

“Imagine other” is known as the Platinum Rule. When using this method of perspective taking, we need to listen to and observe the suffering other in order to understand their perspective: to find out their circumstances, goals or desires, and perceptions (their world-view). In this process it is important not to impose our own perspective, our own idea of the world, onto our perception of theirs.

See also:

Self-other equivalence, p. ##

Perspective taking and helping behaviour, p. ## # Loyalty and unconditional love

> Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth. Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never ends.
>
> *1 Corinthians 13 4-8*

If I say I love you unconditionally, it means that I will never reject you. I may exercise partner control with you, but never partner choice.

Unconditional love can be a form of tit-for-tat reciprocity, where an infinitely valuable "tit" of action is met with a reactive "tat" of unconditional cooperation. This means that within a relationship of unconditional love, there is more "communal sharing" than "conditional reciprocity" (Piff, Kraus, Côté, Cheng, and Keltner, 2010).

We can see that there can be "degrees" of conditionality of cooperation – a spectrum. Conditional cooperation says, "you have to earn it", while unconditional love says, "you have already earned it" (for whatever reason). For each relationship, there may or may not be a point past which we cannot be pushed and still remain unconditional in our acceptance (Tomasello, 2016).

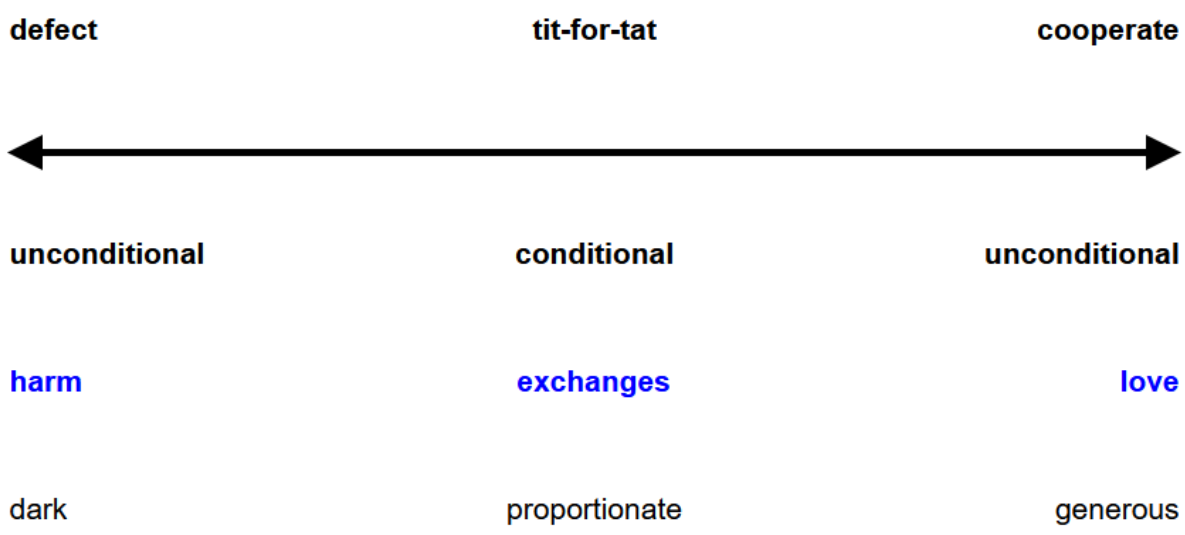
Unconditional love may be found in any social context where one person has a 100% stake in another: where they are essential.

See also:

Partner control, p. ##

Partner choice, p. ##

Spectrum of conditional benefit and harm



Loyalty and the Stakeholder Principle

If person *Q* helps person *P*, then person *P* may feel towards person *Q*:

- a warm positive regard;
- a sense of debt (through the instinct of reciprocity);
- loyalty, a commitment to help *Q* resulting in a sense of obligation towards *Q*.

We may imagine a situation where person *Q* is essential to person *P*, in some way. Therefore:

- the stake that *P* has in *Q* is 100%
- *P* loves *Q* unconditionally

- *P* needs *Q* to be firing on all cylinders.

If *Q* is less than essential to *P*, then the stake that *P* has in *Q* is less than 100%, and there may come a point where *Q*'s behaviour becomes unacceptable to *P*, who then rejects *Q*.

See also:

The Stakeholder Principle, p. 47

Loyalty to an ideology

If I believe in an ideology, it is because it aligns with my goals. This ideology therefore helps me to achieve my goals, and so I am loyal to it – I make a commitment to prioritise helping the cause. It seems hard to feel a warm positive regard or a sense of debt for an ideology in itself; however, ideologies are often attached to social groups and people tend to be loyal and affectionate towards their in-group.

Trait unconditional empathic concern

> Overall, individuals with high unconditional concern for others were thus more likely to behave in a prosocial manner than those with low unconditional concern for others, even – and specifically – when the costs of prosocial behavior were high and the temptation to defect large. Conversely, individuals with low unconditional concern for others were more likely to behave in a selfish manner than those with high unconditional concern for others, even – and specifically – when the costs of prosocial behavior were low and the temptation to defect small. This implies that individuals with high unconditional concern for others may want to create peace in hostile

environments, whereas individuals with low unconditional concern for others may want to create discord in peaceful environments.

Isabel Thielmann, Giuliana Spadaro, and Daniel Balliet – "Personality and Prosocial Behavior: A Theoretical Framework and Meta-Analysis" (2020)

See also:

Interdependence and group loyalty, p. ##

Dark and light traits, p. ##

Respecting property rights

Integrity

If you talk the talk you have to walk the walk.

Popular saying

In order to be chosen, one needs to appear to others to be a good partner, and the best way to do that is to actually be a good partner ...

Michael Tomasello; Alicia P Melis; Claudio Tennie; Emily Wyman; Esther Herrmann – "Two Key Steps in the Evolution of Human Cooperation – The Interdependence Hypothesis" – Current Anthropology, vol. 53, no. 6, Dec 2012

... the virtue of integrity represents two aspects of a person's character. The first is a coherent integration of aspects of the self – emotions, aspirations, knowledge, and so on – so that each complements and does not frustrate the others. The second is the character trait of being faithful to moral values and standing up in their defense when necessary. ...

Persons can lack moral integrity in several respects (e.g., through hypocrisy, insincerity, bad faith, and self-deception). These vices represent a break in the connections among a person's moral convictions, emotions, and actions. Perhaps the most common deficiency is the lack of sincerely held, fundamental moral convictions, but no less important is the failure to act on professed moral beliefs.

Tom L Beauchamp and James F Childress – "Principles of Biomedical Ethics" (fifth edition) (2001)

Integrity refers to wholeness or unity. Somebody who tries to be a certain kind of person (e.g., a good person) will need to do so in all circumstances in order to be able to say they have integrity.

Someone who claims in the world to be a saint, but is a tyrant in the home, does not have integrity.

The opposite of integrity is hypocrisy: saying one thing and doing another.

Good manners

> ... be courteous and cheerful ...
>
> Whoever will thrive, must be courteous, and begin in his youth.
>
> *Frederick James Furnivall – "The Young Children's Book" in "Early English Meals and Manners"*

Good manners are of foremost importance in any social situation.

They are an act of compassion towards others, that demonstrates safeness through self-control (Wilson, 1993); willingness to abide by established norms; acting with least harm; and affiliation with people.

The Montagu Principle

> Civility costs nothing and buys everything.
>
> *Lady Mary Montagu, letter to her daughter Mary, Countess of Bute, 30 May 1756*

> ... even in the worst of times, even when someone's attacking you, responding with kindness and respect is better than fighting fire with fire.
>
> *Dr Jeremy Frimer – "All in the Mind", BBC Radio 4, 6 November 2018*

The notion that civility is usually beneficial and rarely costly has been called The Montagu Principle. We tend to like people who are polite and civil, and dislike those whom we perceive of as rude. This may be because the social arena operates along two dimensions: competition/dominance and cooperation/morality, with cooperative/moral people seen as more likeable than the competitive/dominant.

Politeness is an example of dove-ish and submissive behaviour, and we also tend to dislike people whom we see as submissive. But the perceived warmth of the polite person more than makes up for their submissiveness in our approval rating of them.

If we use politeness when talking with someone, it may serve to preserve or enhance their reputation in the public sphere: a prosocial, face-saving function that saves the other from embarrassment, and demonstrates that we respect them, hold them in high esteem, and that we are friendly and affiliated with them emotionally.

A lack of politeness is typically felt as a lack of respect and can lead to resentment in the target, and an impoverishment in their abilities to carry out tasks, even in medical teams (Frimer and Skitka, 2018).

See also:

Reciprocity, p. ##

Attitudinal reciprocity, p. ##

Contingent cooperation, p. ##

Contingent morality and ethics, p. ##

Self-discipline

Self control sets you free – free of your compulsions. It is key to success in life.

Self control is like a muscle: if we exercise it in one area of our life, it is available to be used in other areas (Baumeister and Tierney, 2012).

Self control – now – ensures that your future self is in the best possible shape. It means to value your future self as much as you value your present self.

Impulse control is handled in the brain by the frontal lobes: the thinking mind. The slow consideration available here liberates us from the tyranny of our impulses (Pinker, 2011).

> ‘Would you rather have five dollars now or forty dollars in two weeks?’ Studies by [David] Laibson, Christopher Chabris, Kris Kirby, Angela Duckworth, Martin Seligman, and others have found that people who opt for the later and larger sums get higher grades, weigh less, smoke less, exercise, more, and are more likely to pay off their credit card balance every month. ...
>
> [Roy F Baumeister and his colleagues] found that students with higher scores [in a self control questionnaire] got better grades, had fewer eating disorders, drank less, had fewer psychosomatic aches and pains, were less depressed, anxious, phobic, and paranoid, had higher self-esteem, were more conscientious, had better relationships with their families, had more stable friendships, were less likely to have sex they regretted, were less likely to imagine themselves cheating in a monogamous relationship, felt less of a need to ‘vent’ or ‘let off steam,’ and felt more guilt but less shame. Self-controllers are better at perspective-taking and are less distressed when responding to others’ troubles, though they are neither more nor less sympathetic in their concern for them. And contrary to the conventional wisdom that says that people with too much self-control are uptight,

repressed, neurotic, bottled up, wound up, obsessive-compulsive, or fixated at the anal stage of psychosexual development, the team found that the more self-control people have, the better their lives are. The people at the top of the scale are the healthiest.

Steven Pinker – "The Better Angels of Our Nature"

Note their joy. Their peace. Their strength. Their love.

The ability to do what needs to be done when it needs to be done is the true freedom in life.

Richard Foster – "Life with God – a life-transforming new approach to Bible reading"

Knowing others is intelligence;

knowing yourself is true wisdom.

Mastering others is strength;

mastering yourself is true power.

Lao Tzu – "Tao Te Ching"

163 It is easy to do what is wrong, to do what is bad for oneself; but very difficult to do what is right, to do what is good for oneself.

The Dhammapada

It is only by the putting forth of effort and by persistence that one acquires self-control.

> Without strenuous effort there can be no bodhi; without strenuous effort there can be no merit.
>
> *P. Lakshmi Narasu – "The Essence of Buddhism"*

Self-control and duty

Other people, who rely on me, require me to have self-control so that I can carry out my duty. This self-control can consist, positively, of conscientiousness and diligence as well as negatively of not getting drunk at work.

Self control and meditation

Meditation can increase self-control, as during meditation we continually force the mind to concentrate on one point or focus.

Cooperative breeding

It takes a village to raise a child.

African proverb

Humans thrive, survive, *and reproduce* by cooperating with each other. We are sometimes called the “hypercooperative” species. Along with some ants and other highly successful eusocial (hyper-social) insects, our runaway success in colonising almost every niche on the planet is due mainly to our intense and cooperation.

Almost unique among primates, and unique among the great apes, human beings are a cooperatively breeding species. This means that, while the babies of great apes spend almost 100% of their life before weaning (moving on from mother's milk) attached to the mother, and interacting only with the mother, human babies are typically looked after by many other helpers as well. These are known as allomothers (“other mothers”) and may include grandparents, fathers, brothers, sisters, cousins, unrelated mothers and other group members.

Other cooperatively breeding species include elephants, wolves, African wild dogs, bottlenose dolphins, killer whales, crows, and some tamarins and marmosets.

Enhanced prosocial perspective taking in humans

We believe that cooperative breeding led to one of the crucial, basic, necessary abilities for human cooperation: unlike the other great apes, humans seek out and enjoy sharing in the mental states of others for prosocial purposes. Put simply, people who are cooperating and coordinating in a sophisticated way need to have a

sophisticated understanding of each other's mental states, and a willingness to share in these mental states, especially prosocially.

The capacity to enter into the inner worlds of others, one of the aspects of empathy, is thought to be formed in mammals and birds when the baby bonds with its caregiver and is rewarded with maternal care and affection for sharing in her mental state. In apes, this caregiver is the mother exclusively.

Human babies are typically cared for by allomothers much of the time. The hypothesis is that, since the baby relies on many other people to care for it, it needs to monitor and assess the intentions of those people towards it. It needs to know what many people think, at least towards itself. A human baby will try and elicit care from people around it by seeking out faces and vocalising.

Therefore it is in the interests of a human baby to want to enter into the inner worlds of others for prosocial purposes, in a way that is not necessary for great apes.

Existing cognitive skills of great apes

Humans are great apes, and we believe that the human family line separated from those of the other great apes around 6 million years ago. Great apes are some of the most advanced species in making and using tools. They are flexible in this regard, able to create novel solutions to new problems, and to plan ahead by saving particular tools for future tasks. They have a simple understanding of the physical logic of cause and effect.

Like many animals, when getting ready to act, great apes can play out various courses of action and possible outcomes in their minds before choosing what seems like the best one. But they are especially sophisticated in that they can monitor and evaluate their own thinking and decision-making: for example, taking into account what they know and don't know about a situation.

The socio-cognitive skills of great apes are advanced compared with other species. They can read the mental states, intentions, goals, and perceptions of others, and

understand how these generate actions. They understand that others see things, know things and work things out. They know that others have a different perspective from their own. These constitute a “theory of mind”, an understanding of others’ inner worlds. They enter into these inner worlds mainly for their own ends rather than cooperatively like humans do.

Their communication is imperative: i.e., is made up of commands, telling each other to do things: “do this”, “give me that”. In contrast, humans share information for its own sake (Tomasello, 2014) – for the education and enlightenment of others. Humans, unlike apes, understand the pointing gesture.

Competitive social life of other great apes

In forming intentions and goals, using tools, eating food, and living their lives in general, great apes act alone, instrumentally, for their own benefit almost entirely, even though they are in a group. However, they form friendships and alliances for collectively competitive purposes and keep track of who in the group is affiliated to whom. Males will get together to defend the group against threats from outside, usually marauding males from other groups. Great apes are unique among primates in showing consoling behaviour to others: soothing one another after a fight or other misfortune.

Cooperation in humans: thinking and acting together

The present hypothesis is that the eagerness of humans to engage in the mental states of others for prosocial purposes made possible the “(pro)socialisation” of the existing cognitive skills of our great ape ancestors, and so these became available to be used for cooperative purposes (thriving and surviving together) as well as competitive. In other words, it made it possible for humans to think cleverly like great apes, and therefore act cleverly like great apes, jointly as well as individually.

Sharing and tolerance

Tolerance and sharing are fundamental to cooperation. The alternative is competition, where each individual seeks to maximise their own utility, potentially at the expense of others.

Our great ape cousins are very reluctant to share their food, even with their own young, and a chimpanzee mother will only grudgingly give shells and husks to its infant in response to begging. Young, weaned great apes are capable of foraging fruit, insects etc. for themselves.

Humans, on the other hand, very readily share their most preferred food with their children and with friends and strangers alike. Human children are not capable of obtaining and processing the food they eat once they are weaned, and they require adults to do this for them.

When early humans first started living on the African savannah and open woodland, around 2 million years ago, their previous diet of largely fruit and other vegetation would have been harder to find because of the grassland environment and because of competition from ground-dwelling monkeys such as baboons. The remaining available food, possibly things like animal carcases and underground tubers, would have required adults to obtain and process it. In scavenging large carcases, adults would have had to band together into coalitions to scare away other carnivore species competing for the meat; and underground tubers need to be dug up and processed. Those individuals who were tolerant of others feeding around them would have done best. Hogs and dominants would likely have been chased away.

In experiments by Michael Tomasello and his team at the Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology, it has been found that pairs of chimpanzees who are more tolerant with each other around food are also more willing to collaborate together and then share the spoils of the collaboration.

Hypothesis for the evolutionary history of cooperative breeding

In great apes: great ape babies spend their time attached to the mother exclusively, before weaning, presumably because they are under threat from male infanticide and female reproductive competition (in the form of female infanticide) (Hrdy, 2009). We assume that this was the habit in our great ape ancestors.

Before 4 million years ago: in Australopithecines, there were ever-intensifying levels of male-male competition, according to data we have on relative male-female canine sizes. The theory is that canines can be used as weapons. This was a time of increasing resource scarcity as the climate was variable. Competition is inimical to sharing and cooperation.

4 million years ago: self-domestication and the birth of sharing among adults. With the advent of the species *Ardipithecus ramidus*, male-female relative canine sizes became abruptly even. The theory is that resource scarcity led to sexual choice by females, who needed to feed their children, for males who would share and not compete. Hence, the abrupt end of male-male competition. Realistically, we would expect a strong selection pressure in order for males to actually change size.

Between 4 and 2 million years ago: the evolution of grandmothers. It is widely assumed in the literature that a present-day pattern of women leaving their family group when they get married to live with the husband's family, was always universal in the human race. However, this may be an artefact of patriarchy which treats women as possessions to be traded for favours. If self-domestication had already occurred, then women were free to live where they liked, and the actual present-day pattern we see of where women live after marriage is flexible (Kramer, 2022).

Grandmothers have a reproductive interest in their grandchildren, who share about a quarter of the same genes. Therefore it is reasonable to assume they would be motivated to share in their care. We assume that ancient human mothers initially followed the great ape model of childcare by default, and would not want to give up their babies to anyone except, perhaps, a close female relative (the mother's own older, experienced mother).

In most species, females die when they are no longer reproductive; but in humans, women evolved a long lifespan past reproductive age. The theory is that the longer grandmothers lived, the more care they could impart to their grandchildren, who therefore became, on average, more numerous, thereby increasing the reproductive success of the grandmothers' genes, in a gradual, self-reinforcing evolutionary process towards longer life for grandmothers. Now, this may have had a gradual upward "drag" effect on the lifespan of grandfathers, as another quarter of the same children's genes would be his.

Once mothers were comfortable giving up their babies to their own mothers, for shared care, the next step, in a peaceful egalitarian non-competitive social environment of sharing resources among adults, was to allow other adults to share in their care.

By 2 million years ago: the "gray ceiling" was broken (see below) as *Homo erectus* women were able to have more than one child at a time, and we assume that cooperative breeding was fully under way by this time.

Homo erectus was the first hominin species to migrate from Africa, and it is thought that cooperative breeding makes it much easier to colonise new habitats because it greatly increases the chances of survival of a species in unfamiliar environments, by providing a lot of extra help to mothers and children, and because it is thought to allow a greater brain size, and therefore greater intelligence. We believe also that education and teaching would have been a major feature of this cooperative, collective child-rearing culture, allowing knowledge to spread and accumulate.

Female *Homo erectus* were larger overall and with bigger brains than in previous species, indicating that they probably had more children.

The brain size of *Homo erectus* was the first to exceed the normal range in great apes in primate evolutionary history, and cooperative breeding is thought to allow for bigger brain size because it provides greater energy inputs (food and physical helping) to the mother and growing child, and this allows the mother to have more than one infant at a time, each infant being allowed a longer growth time before adulthood. Otherwise, in serial child-rearing, the species is constrained by the "grey

ceiling", a maximum brain size, where a mother only has the chance to grow a limited number of infants in one lifetime, below which the species will die out.

The result of an expensive big brain is a longer bodily growth time, leading to a longer life span. Fossil teeth of *Homo erectus* in East Africa are found to have grown more slowly than in comparable great ape species.

While cooperative breeding allows for a greater brain size, it is not, in itself, an evolutionary pressure that creates a requirement for a greater brain size. Therefore the sudden expansion in human brain size must have been driven by other factors, still unknown.

See also:

Self-domestication of the human race, p. ##

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Patriarchy

We feel targeted from the day we're born, pretty much.

Patricia, British Columbia

... male sexual jealousy is the most common trigger for wife beating ... male aggression against women may often represent species-specific manifestations of widespread male reproductive strategies aimed at control of female sexuality. ... When we look closely we find that, in many primates, hardly an aspect of female existence is not constrained in some way by the presence of aggressive males. ...

When a female chimpanzee undergoes sexual cycles (which happens for only a few months once every 5 years or so), the males in her group compete over opportunities to mate with her, especially as she nears ovulation, when her sexual swelling reaches its maximum size (Hasegawa and Hiraiwa-Hasegawa 1983; Tutin 1979). When many males are present, the most dominant, or alpha male, usually prevents any other males from mating with her. Low-ranking males therefore try to lure estrous females into the forest, away from other chimps, where they can mate in peace. These consorts may last for several weeks and, at Gombe, are responsible for roughly one-third of all conceptions. If the female is willing to go, as she sometimes is, then the pair simply sneaks away. But if the female is unwilling, the male will employ what Goodall (1986:453) terms "a fair amount of brutality" to try to force her to accompany him. He will repeatedly perform aggressive displays around her to induce her to follow him, and if she still does not follow, he will attack her. It is impossible to tell how many consorts involve reluctant females forced to accompany males, because, in cases in which the female apparently willingly follows the male, she may do so because of aggression received from him in the past. Indeed, Goodall reports a high frequency of "unprovoked" attacks on females in the early phases of sexual swelling, which she interprets as a

> male tactic to intimidate the female so she will be less likely to resist future efforts to mate with her. Goodall (1986) concludes that, unless a male chimpanzee is very old or ill, he can usually force an unwilling female to consort with him through these efforts. ...
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Among primates, males tend to compete with each other to dominate and control as many females as possible, for reproductive purposes (Smuts, 1995). This is a reproductive strategy of males. An alternative, egalitarian strategy would be for the male to make himself into as good a mate as possible, in the hope of attracting a female.

The hypothesis is that this reproductive strategy plays out in human society as patriarchy: a system of social control, norms, enforcement, punishment, etc.; a moral domain. As a moral domain, which usually has a joint goal, it is rather one-sided in favour of males. This has the reproduction and thriving of males and only the reproduction of females, as its goals.

The puzzle is, if human patriarchy died out for most of the past 2 million years, because humans were fully egalitarian, how did it reappear? The puzzle is not so confounding if we realise that domination and control are, proximately, always going to be easier and surer reproductive strategies than attractiveness. There may be

other reasons for patriarchal control such as protecting family assets. Also, domination and control are inherently pleasurable: they provide emotional gratification: if I am thriving at your expense, I am thriving.

Sexism is defined as the rationalisation, justification and means of enforcement of patriarchy. This may include, for example, ideology that females are inherently inferior or "belong in the kitchen". Misogyny is defined as the policing of patriarchy: using punishments in the form of hostility and aggression meted out to females who break the laws of patriarchy to assert their own independence (Manne, 2018).

System of social norms

A social norm is an ideal way to be cooperative in otherwise competitive situations (Tomasello, 2016). Great ape males compete with each other for access to females, which in some species is achieved through domination and control of females (Smuts, 1992). The hypothesis is that in humans, this competition between males is cooperativised as a system of social norms: "we" all collaborate to dominate and control women. This potentially benefits all men as it keeps women "in the kitchen" and metaphorically tied down for men's convenience.

In most non-human primates, if a female is unwilling to mate with a male, he is likely to try to coerce her into it through intimidation or threats of or actual violence. In those species that form polygynous pair-bonds, e.g., gorillas and hamadryas baboons, one male will dominate several females (as many as possible). He will exhibit behaviour known as mate-guarding: using force, he will keep the members of his harem close to himself, and defend them from the attentions of rival males, and defend his family of infants from being killed by rival males. In many species of monkeys and apes, when a female is in oestrus, i.e., when she is fertile and sexually receptive, she will generally receive much greater aggression from males wishing to mate with her, and sometimes more wounds, than normal.

The urge for males to control and coerce females, and the corresponding pressure for females to resist it, have their biological roots in the fundamental differences between male and female reproductive strategies. For a female to reproduce, at least in mammals, she has to make a substantial investment, the time and physical

resources needed to gestate and rear offspring. For a male to reproduce, he has only to impregnate a female. It is therefore in the reproductive interests of males to seek the greatest possible quantity of mates, while it is in the reproductive interests of females to seek the greatest possible quality of mates: males with good genes, resources, willingness to invest these in rearing infants, and the ability to protect the mother and infants.

The problem for both females and males is the conflict of interests between male and female reproductive strategies. It is in the interests of females to resist being impregnated by low-quality mates: e.g., by those who are not willing to invest in child rearing and the protection of the family. For males, as for females, it is self-interestedly rational to reproduce to the maximum possible level at the lowest possible cost to themselves: the strategy to achieve this being, in this case, control and coercion.

The amount of power that males are able to exercise over females, in a species, or human group, determines the extent of the control, since reproduction is a maximising pressure. Patriarchy is self-maximising: it seeks power (Manne, 2018). Left unchallenged, therefore, it will assert itself to the maximum available extent.

Patriarchy is more powerful in humans than other species

Where there are power structures in a society, men will take advantage of them to dominate women, preventing them from joining powerful positions, potentially through brute force if necessary (Endicott, 1981).

Chimpanzees are “social but not very cooperative” (Tomasello, 2016) – therefore, among other things, they lack social norms. In humans, the potential power of males to control females socially far exceeds that in the rest of the primate world. Hence, patriarchy in humans is much more powerful than in other species of primates. We hypothesise a number of reasons why.

1. Female social networks are less strong in humans and (most) great apes than in the “female-bonded” species of primates, which include bonobos and many old

world monkeys. This means that in humans, gorillas, chimpanzees and orang utans, the ability of females to resist male coercion and control is relatively lower.

In the female-bonded species, females resist the aggression of males who want to coerce them into mating by banding together with female friends and relatives, to fight them off. While these monkeys are generally species where the adult females stay with the groups in which they were born, female bonobos disperse to other family groups on reaching adulthood, like humans and other great apes.

It is unknown why bonobos have such strong female-female alliances, together with extremely low levels of male aggression towards females, and an absence of male coercion of females – uniquely among great apes. Other species with an almost complete absence of male coercion of females include most of the monogamous primates (e.g., titi monkeys, gibbons, and siamangs), where the males and females are the same size; and some species which live in multi-male, multi-female groups such as woolly spider monkeys. As always with the adaptation and design of a species, the behaviour and psychology of individuals reflect the ecological conditions of its niche.

2. Male-male alliances are stronger in humans and chimpanzees than in other primates. At the same time, male-male competition in humans is lower than in other primates. This means that in humans, males cooperate more, and compete less, together, whether to gain internal power in a group as part of a coalition, or to fight a common “enemy” in another group. This male solidarity, in turn, gives males power that can be marshalled in favour of patriarchy: whether at an individual or societal level.

We next look at some ways in which males can exercise power over females exclusively in humans.

3. Men are able to control the resources that women need to survive and reproduce. The fact that humans are an interdependent species – that we depend on each other to cooperate to survive – brings with it potential advantages and disadvantages for individuals. On the one hand, we can achieve more together than alone. On the other, it leaves individuals who depend on others open to exploitation by those others.

In nomadic hunter-gatherer societies, we see that the territorial range that people work in in order to find food is wide, males and females are highly mobile, and food tends to be widely shared. In these societies, group members live closely mixed together in camps (e.g., Endicott and Endicott, 2008).

When humans settled down to practice intensive agriculture and animal husbandry, family groups would have been separately confined to homesteads, giving males more opportunity to control the movements and activities of females and the resource base of the household, and thereby making females more dependent on them.

Thus, it became costly for females to resist male control if they were not able to procure their own resources.

The more resources that males invest in their mates and the children of their mates, the more concerned they will be that the children are their own, leading to another motivation to control female sexuality.

Cross-cultural studies have found a statistically significant positive association between the degree of male control over the fruits of the family labour, and the rate of wife beating (Smuts, 1995).

4. Since the advent of sedentary agriculture, the increased inequality between men has lead to an increased ability of some men to control women at the expense of other men. In a settled agricultural society, some people are able to hoard resources that others need, and some are required to work for others, resulting in asymmetrical dependence and power imbalances.

   If all males are equal in status, then if one tries to control or coerce a female, another male is able to stop him. This will simultaneously disadvantage the first male and give an advantage to the second, since his chances of gaining sexual access to the female are increased. In a situation of strict male-male egalitarianism, the reproductive strategy of coercive control is therefore unstable, and the most reproductively successful males are those who seek to attract females by offering them what they need.

When there are extreme power differences between males, those at the very top are able to use their power to dominate many females and exclude other males, leading to polygyny in a powerful elite of males and a shortage of mates for those at the bottom of the hierarchy.

In addition, these low-status males have less access to resources than the elite, so they are less able to use the alternative reproductive strategy of providing resources to females.

5. Sometimes it pays women to behave in ways that support the male control of resources and of female sexuality, in order to further their own reproductive and material interests.

   All over the world, women show a preference for marrying men with more resources, consistent with the need to invest in rearing children. This can reinforce the competition between males to acquire resources and the desire of males to control resources.

   In polygynous, stratified societies, rich men can have more offspring than poorer men, and are likely to invest more resources in them. This means that in theory, they have more incentive to ensure that the children of their wives are theirs too. Therefore, if women want to marry rich men, it is in their interests to conform to behaviour that promotes increased male control of their movements and sexuality, including: cloistering; purdah (where females are hidden from the male gaze, often with a screen or curtain); and female genital mutilation.

   Sons of rich polygynous men are more likely to be rich and polygynous themselves. This benefits the whole family from the point of view of inclusive fitness, which may help to explain why women in such societies support customs that promote the control of female sexuality, and mothers insist on the compliance of their daughters.

   In stratified polygynous societies, since rich sons are more likely to be polygynous and therefore can have more children than daughters, it benefits parents reproductively to invest more material resources in sons than in daughters.

6. Human cooperation and language are developed to an extraordinary degree compared with in other great apes.

   Human cooperation led to the evolution of group-wide social norms (see "Features of collaboration", above), and human language is a vehicle by which norms and ideologies can be propagated. An ideology may be seen as a view of society that supports the interests of a sector of that society. Consistent with most of the rest of the primate world, patriarchal men will naturally take advantage of any opportunity at their disposal to control and repress women. As we see in 5) above, sometimes women support ideologies that favour males.

> If male chimpanzees could talk, they would probably develop rudimentary myths and rituals that increased male political solidarity and control over females and that decreased female tendencies toward autonomy and rebellion.
>
> *Barbara Smuts – "The Evolutionary Origins of Patriarchy"*

Language probably helped males to develop greater male-male alliances, to control resources, and to develop dominance hierarchies, all of which, we hypothesise, are factors that can facilitate patriarchy.

U-shaped history of human patriarchy

> ... we accept the premise that in societies in which there is competition for control, males are at an advantage because of their greater physical strength and their freedom from childbearing and nursing.
>
> *Kirk M Endicott and Karen L Endicott – "The Headman was a Woman"*

Egalitarianism implies autonomy. In a society of equal power relations, no person is higher than another in a dominance hierarchy, implying that no person has the power to command another. In a strictly egalitarian society, women are not controlled by men or culturally evaluated as inferior.

Today we see a few societies that have a strong ethos of egalitarianism and personal autonomy. These are usually “immediate-return” nomadic hunting and gathering societies (Woodburn, 1982). In some of these, egalitarianism extends to relations between the sexes. They include: the Agta of the Philippines, the Batek of Malaysia, the Hadza of Tanzania, the !Kung of southern Africa, the Malapantaram and Paliyan of South India, and the Mbuti pygmies of the Congo (Endicott, 1981; Endicott and Endicott, 2008).

Kirk and Karen Endicott have lived with and studied the Batek for several extended periods beginning in 1975. The Batek live by hunting, gathering, fishing, and trading forest produce with neighbouring sedentary societies. In their book “The Headman was a Woman” (2008), the Endicotts identify general factors in Batek society that may promote personal autonomy and, therefore, egalitarian relations between men and women:

- independent economic security and access to sharing network

  Both women and men are able to procure their own food directly, without necessarily having to rely on others; and are freely provisioned by the sharing network of the group.

- non-dependence on specific people

  An individual may depend on the group as a whole, but does not have to depend on specific people.

- free movement of people

  If two people are in conflict, one may easily move to live away from the other.

- dispersed authority

There is no institutionalised authority: each person is recognised as an authority in a particular sphere by virtue of their skills and experience, but nobody is in overall charge. The head man or woman is simply a kind of wise guide for the group who can persuade others through tact, intelligence and experience.

> Where there are institutionalized statuses of authority, men can use the threat of physical coercion to pave the way to exclusive male access to these positions. It is where these positions are not institutionalized that being male does not provide an advantage over being female.
>
> *Karen Lampell Endicott – "The Conditions of Egalitarian Male-Female Relationships in Foraging Societies"*

- culture of non-violence.

  In Batek society, the culture of non-violence means that women cannot be coerced by force.

  In some immediate-return societies, such as the Hadza as reported by Woodburn (1982), there is no culture of non-violence. However, in this situation this also works against patriarchy, as it tends to reduce male-male competition, since any male has the opportunity and means to inflict lethal violence on any other, usually without punishment.

Since we believe that these societies are similar in economic conditions to those which must have prevailed throughout much of the history of the human family tree (freely sharing and potentially mobile through foraging style), we assume that egalitarianism and a lack of patriarchal control of women accompanied these conditions. While non-human great apes with the exception of bonobos, and nearly all contemporary humans, are patriarchal: patriarchy may well have been absent for most of human history.

An ancient lack of patriarchal control is consistent with the hypothesis that women have been an evolutionary force in socially selecting for extravagantly generous males as reproductive partners. In other words, instead of controlling women's movements and sexuality, the reproductive strategy of males could have been to give them the investment they needed in raising children, throughout a long period in human history without patriarchy. This would help to explain the apparent mystery of why humans are so “extravagantly” generous and altruistic compared with other great apes.

See also:

U-shaped history of human hierarchy?, p. ##

Self-domestication of the human race, p. ##

Generalised care, p. ##

Female resistance to patriarchy in primates

In primates in general, female resistance to male violence and coercion relies heavily on social relationships. Human feminism is a resistive reaction to human patriarchy: an example of female solidarity against male oppression.

Female primates employ a number of strategies to resist male violence and intimidation:

- female solidarity and bonding;
- king making – influencing the choice of alpha male, making males unwilling to attack high-ranking females;
- male allies who protect individual females, in return (sometimes) for preferential mating opportunities.

Humans can employ a similar set of strategies (Smuts, 1992).

Does patriarchy have a biological origin?

Kate Manne (2018) says that patriarchy is hegemonic, which we take to mean it seeks power and supremacy. Barbara Smuts (1994) says that patriarchy takes advantage of existing power structures to assert itself, and to keep women out of the power structure.

An example of this would appear to be the Catholic Church in Ireland, which has historically been highly patriarchal, to the extent of punishing unmarried mothers by holding them in “mother and baby” homes, enslaving and abusing them and taking away their babies for adoption (O’Reilly, 2023).

We propose that these are consistent with a biological explanation. If patriarchy really is ultimately a way for males to achieve reproduction, and reproduction is one of the, if not the, strongest biological drives – it makes sense that this method would barge everything else out of the way so that it can gain power.

According to Smuts (1994), patriarchy is a straightforward consequence of the vast reproductive asymmetry between males and females. This would also account for: 1) elevated male-male aggression compared with females; 2) slightly larger size of males compared with females (as a residue of previous large disparity in pre-*Ardipithecus ramidus* human ancestors); 3) elevated sexual predation in males compared with females; 4) the vast social asymmetry we see in human society between males and females.

A biological explanation would predict that patriarchy would target women’s autonomy, freedom, and sexuality. Keeping women powerless helps greatly to achieve this. Another way is through social norms of patriarchal rules and regulations. Another way, as Smuts says, is through brute force in the domestic sphere.

Why would this method of male reproduction be hegemonic, while the alternative method of male mate retention (egalitarian attractiveness) does not seem to be, in the same way? Perhaps it is because patriarchy is essentially a way for males to dominate females, to take power over them, and to keep them powerless, for the ultimate individual purpose of pair-bonding and reproduction. Patriarchy therefore needs those power structures, to dominate women for its own ends. Reproduction is

self-maximising, and accordingly, the reproductive method, patriarchy, is also self-maximising: it finds a way where it can.

Not only do males want to take the risk out of maximising their reproduction: they also need to ensure their paternity of “their” women’s children.

The proximate nature of patriarchal instincts, and their exceptional force, suggest a proximate, very powerful cause. Something is operating inside of men all the time to make them want to say things like “women shouldn't do that – it’s only for men!” (i.e., to bind women's freedom and autonomy, remove their power, etc.), or to make them habitually more predatory and unduly optimistic towards women (Buss, 2023), or, vastly disproportionately, to commit the dominating, controlling, humiliating crime of rape. Even “low-status” men have these tendencies: so there does not seem to have been a selection pressure for high-status men (who are able to dominate other men) to want to dominate women more than low-status men do.

Women do not possess these tendencies, so if patriarchal behaviour and motivations are innate, they are likely to be biological rather than evolved.

In other words, it is consistent with the proximate, forceful mechanisms of patriarchy that we observe to say that it is biological in origin, and therefore operates all the time in men as a mate retention strategy aimed squarely at reproduction. However, human behaviour is flexible, and we are also a strongly compassionate and egalitarian species, and men can take the alternative mate retention strategy of personal attractiveness, with corresponding freedom of movement of women.

Patriarchy is not inevitable

Reproductive logic dictates that patriarchy will only work when the cost/benefit analysis works out in its favour. In an egalitarian environment, for example, patriarchy is a non-starter because nobody will tolerate it.

Patriarchy and narcissism

Narcissism and patriarchy fit each other like gloves. Each seeks to dominate and control; and each requires a power structure in order to operate. The proposal is that each hijacks the other, where they occur in the same person, so that they are mutually reinforcing and the result is a very nasty and abusive man towards those women and children he is able to dominate and control.

Patriarchy is a gilded cage

The reasonable man and the reasonable woman

The “reasonable woman” has much more to fear from men, than the “reasonable man” does from women. David Buss (2023) details many ways in which men are much more dangerous to women than the other way round, informed by evolutionary psychology.

According to Buss, this partly comes down to the reproductive asymmetry between males and females.

> An evolutionary perspective illuminates why these psychological sex differences exist. Sexual harassment, for example, sometimes reflects an attempt to bypass female choice – a cardinal feature of women’s evolved mating strategy (Buss, 2021; Perilloux, Duntley, & Buss, 2012). Having unwanted sex with an unwanted partner is typically more costly for women than for men in the evolutionary currency of fitness due in large part to large sex differences in obligatory parental investment. Sexual harassment can have more damaging effects on a woman’s social reputation compared to a

man's (Perilloux et al., 2012). Sexual harassment can also create another sex-differentiated problem that puts women in an especially difficult dilemma – rejecting a man's advances without incurring his wrath or retaliation for being spurned, especially if the man is in a position of power.

Buss (2023:3)

On the asymmetric levels of sexual harassment, and the distress it causes:

Victims of sexual harassment are not random. A study of 10,000 sexual harassment complaints in the USA in 2017, for example, found that 83% were filed by women, in contrast to only 16.5% filed by men (Jones, 2018). Often the male victims were harassed by other men. ...

Men who harass women sometimes erroneously infer that their attraction is reciprocated by the woman – a hypothesized male sexual over-perception bias based on error management theory logic (Haselton & Buss, 2000). From the woman's perspective, however, she may act friendly and deferential simply because people in positions of power (who are often men) can inflict large costs or confer large benefits on their careers. ...

Women experience greater distress than do men in response to acts of sexual aggressiveness such as unwanted touching (Buss, 1989). Consequently, women are more likely than men to file harassment complaints: not only are women harassed more often, they experience it as more upsetting. ...

... college women rated acts by coworkers such as a man putting his hand on a woman's genital area or trying to corner a woman when no one else was around as "extremely harassing." In contrast, those same women viewed acts such as telling a woman that he sincerely liked her and would like to have coffee with her after work as signifying little or no harassment.

Men consistently underestimate the emotional distress women experience from various forms of sexual harassment (e.g., Buss, 1989, 2021).

Buss (2023:3-4)

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Personhood

Life is worth much more than gold.

Bob Marley – "Jamming"

Every man and every woman is a star.

Aleister Crowley

A world is in there.

Renegade Soundwave – "The Phantom"

... who counts as a person? The short answer is that, within a given culture, a person is someone whom others recognize as a person within the public arena.

Michael Tomasello – "A Natural History of Human Morality"

Kant's "ends and means": treating every human with dignity and respect

The German philosopher Immanuel Kant (1724-1804) said that human beings have intrinsic value and should be treated as an end in themselves, not only as a means to something else. We all wish to follow our own goals, and not be made use of as an object to achieve the goals of another, without our consent.

A human being is unique, irreplaceable and priceless.

In the kingdom of ends everything has either a price or a dignity. What has a price can be replaced with something else as its equivalent; what ... is raised above all price and therefore admits of no equivalent has a dignity ...

That which constitutes the condition under which something can be an end in itself has not merely a relative value, that is, a price, but an inner value, that is dignity.

Immanuel Kant – "Groundwork of the metaphysics of morals"

To treat someone with dignity is ... to respect their dignity. ... To respect someone's dignity by treating them with dignity requires that one shows them respect, either positively, by acting towards them in a way that gives expression to one's respect, or at least, negatively, by refraining from behavior that would show disrespect.

Michael Rosen – "Dignity: Its history and meaning"

We can't pursue our lives without thinking that our lives matter – though one has to be careful here to distinguish the relevant sense of "matter." Simply to take actions on the basis of desires is to act as if your life matters. It's inconceivable to pursue a human life without these kinds of presumptions – that your own life matters to some extent. Clinical depression is when you are convinced that you don't and will never matter. That's a pathological attitude, and it highlights, by its pathology, the way in which the mattering instinct normally functions. To be a fully functioning, non-depressed person is to live and to act, to take it for granted that you can act on your own behalf, pursue your goals and projects. And that we have a right to be treated in accord with our own commitment to our lives mattering. We quite naturally flare up into outrage and indignation when others act in violation of the presumption grounding the pursuance of our lives. So this is what I mean by the mattering

instinct, that commitment to one's own life that is inseparable from pursuing a coherent human life.

Rebecca Newberger Goldstein, edge.org, 2016

Human rights

Each person is a self-generating source of the pressure to do the things that will lead to flourishing.

Our own flourishing matters to ourselves. The pressure to value our own thriving is caused by the biological pressure to thrive and survive: if we did not value it, we might lose it, after all.

We all value the means that we use to thrive and to navigate successfully through life.

Each person is vulnerable to injury, sickness or death.

Because each person is vulnerable, and their well being matters to them, they are required to be treated with human rights (see Andorno and Baffone, 2014). Human rights amount to, at least, to have one's autonomy respected, and to be treated with the maximum benefit and minimum harm available to them.

See also:

Liberty, autonomy, and egalitarianism, p. ##

Perfect Compassion, p. ##

Circles of concern

Circles of concern are concentric social circles centred on ourselves and decreasing in intensity as they extend outwards. They are, at one and the same time, circles of:

- empathic concern
- dependence
- collaboration
- inclusive fitness (genetic or collaborative).

The social circles are something like

1. me
2. my family
3. my friends
4. my group
5. my country
6. the world.

Our inner circle mainly operates using an ethic of communal sharing (Fiske, 1991) and “unconditional love”, while we tend to use the businesslike tit-for-tat reciprocity and proportional fairness with those outside our inner circle. Our inner circle or cooperative unit (“we”) has a closed boundary of concern that can nevertheless be expanded in certain circumstances.

Reason can tell us that people in more distant circles are human beings like ourselves. We can imagine their goals and motivations, and see that they are like our own. Reason can thereby furnish the moral sense, in the form of empathic concern and perspective taking, with material to work on (Pinker, 2011).

Meg De Amasi: interview by her daughter Ena Miller

BBC World Service – “Focus on Africa”, 17 April 2017

Meg De Amasi is originally from Ghana. In 1976, after studying in the USA, she arrived in Glasgow to finish her degree in midwifery. Although she loves Scotland, Meg says that she has felt alienated and homesick. She wrote this poem to describe her experience:

“At least I'm trying”

I’m trying to understand

even though we don’t speak the same language.

I spent time listening,

trying to interpret your words,

make sense of your beliefs,

encompass my own.

Our eyes meet,

and I know you are questioning my intelligence.

Just to let you know,

I’m trying to understand.

What are you doing to understand me?

Even though we don’t speak the same language.

– *Meg De Amasi*

Meg says, “that in a nutshell was my struggles.”

Fundamental attribution error

We tend to demonise and dehumanise members of other groups.

Humans judge the moral worth of others at first glance, very quickly, using perhaps just one or two pieces of information (Wright, 2018). All we know about people from other groups is: they are out-group members, and therefore either competitors, threats, or irrelevant; different from us and therefore strange and uncoordinated with us. That's all we know about them. On the basis of this limited data, which is negative from our point of view, we consequently judge them as bad people. Once someone is put into the "enemy box", then it is hard to get them out again. Political leaders may exploit this tendency, with the aim of mobilising the cooperation of their own group and harnessing it for their own benefit: forming an in-group coalition against scapegoated others, with themselves at the head of the charge.

If I do not like or approve of a person or group of people, I tend to attribute this to their being essentially bad: they are bad in essence, and that's why they do things I don't like. Conversely, I will attribute friends and others I approve of with an essence of goodness. If an "essentially bad" person does something "good", then I attribute this to their situation rather than allowing it to contradict the bad "essence" I think they have. It was their situation that made them do it, not their essence. Likewise, I excuse bad behaviour on the part of my friends by blaming their situation. However, in reality, people mostly act one way or another according to their situation, rather than some "essence" which does not really exist. This misattribution of behaviour to essences, downplaying the more reasonable idea of the role of situations, is called in psychology the Fundamental Attribution Error.

On the other hand, we note the existence of long-term traits in personality along a two-dimensional "light"/"dark" continuum. It seems that some people really do act according to an essence. However, this essence has nothing to do with whether they are in- or out-group.

It is unlikely that all the people in other groups are demons. In fact, objectively, they are no more likely to be demons than the people in my group. If demonising other groups is a problem, is there a solution? Perhaps it would help if we knew more about people in other groups, than merely the single fact that they are outsiders. If we knew more than that single piece of information about them, if we could see that

they are people just like ourselves – perhaps we would not be so quick to demonise them and misattribute an essence of badness to them.

See also:

Dark and light traits, p. ##

Dark and light traits

The more you give, the less I get.

Anonymous

Natural selection works on every individual's relative advantage compared with others; hence, gaining an absolute benefit is insufficient. If individuals were satisfied with any absolute benefit, they might still face negative fitness consequences if they were doing less well than competing others. It makes sense, therefore, to compare one's gains with those of others.

Sarah F Brosnan and Frans B M de Waal – "Evolution of responses to (un)fairness" (2014)

- achieving fitness benefit => pleasure
- fitness benefits can be absolute or relative
- achieving relative fitness benefit over others => pleasure

D, the dark factor of personality

D, the Dark factor of personality, is defined as

the general tendency to maximize one's individual utility – disregarding, accepting, or malevolently provoking disutility for others –, accompanied by beliefs that serve as justifications.

Moshagen, Hilbig, and Zettler (2018)

or: thriving at the expense of others.

D and Perfect Compassion

In Perfect Compassion, the ego is prosocial, other-regarding, and compassionate. D represents an ego that is selfish or malevolent in its social interactions. The two are clearly polar opposites.

See also:

The moral compass, p. ##

Distribution of benefit and harm from the perspective of the ego, p. ##

Multi-dimensional nature of D

As defined, D can have many real-world manifestations: for example, selfishness, self-interest, competition, dominance, cheating, sociopathy, sadism, negligence of obligations or duty, etc.

Light behaviours are also various: i.e., compassion and fairness; mutual benefit all round.

See also:

Dark traits, p. ##

Dark traits

D has been found to be the common core or definition of darkness in all dark traits (Moshagen, Hilbig, and Zettler, 2018). Indeed, when somebody possesses one dark

trait, they usually possess others, because possession of a dark trait shows that someone is high in the dispositional tendency D.

“Utility” refers broadly to “goal achievement” or “thriving”. In D, maximising personal utility means potentially causing harm to others in the process, whether not knowing and not caring, knowing but not caring, or knowing about it and enjoying it (sadism). This harm to others may take the form of refraining from helping when it would be necessary. When people high in D behave cooperatively, it is more likely to be for strategic than moral reasons, than in someone low in D.

People high in D are not very motivated to increase others’ utility at a cost to themselves (altruism) and not very likely to derive utility from the increased utility of others (sympathetic joy).

See also:

Sympathy, p. ##

People high in D often justify their utility maximisation at the cost of others by certain beliefs, such as that they are superior and others are inferior; that everyone is just out for themselves anyway; or belief in a political ideology favouring dominance or supremacism. Like all of us, people high in D feel a need to maintain a positive self-image – including a belief that their moral identity is healthy – and a positive self-image is a utility, the achievement of a naturally evolved human goal.

Someone high in D is likely to have a less active conscience than other people, possibly because they are less likely to see value in putting their own interests second in favour of concern for others and following norms.

People with even moderate levels of dark traits can wreak havoc in the lives of others, whether intentionally or unintentionally (Neumann and Kaufman, 2020).

See also:

What is morality?, p. ##

Moral identity, p. ##

Traits high in D (after Moshagen, Hilbig, and Zettler, 2018)

> Personality traits are persisting underlying tendencies to behave in particular ways in particular situations.
>
> *Farrington and Jolliffe (2001)*

Anti-social personality disorder

People with anti-social personality disorder take what they want from others without regard to norms; exploiting others for what they can get out of them. Like all personality disorders, ASPD exists on a spectrum from mild to severe (NHS), with a number of specific traits that can vary between individuals.

As a condition it describes “those who consistently exploit others and infringe society's rules for personal gain as a consequence of their personality traits” “as indicated by three (or more) of seven criteria, namely: a failure to conform to social norms; irresponsibility; deceitfulness; indifference to the welfare of others; recklessness; a failure to plan ahead; and irritability and aggressiveness” (National Collaborating Centre for Mental Health, 2010). Many people with ASPD are not typically irritable and aggressive (although impulsivity is a trait shared by people on the cluster B spectrum); and instead have the morals and manners of a prince, except when they are exploiting others.

It is commonly confused with psychopathy (Walker, 2018). Around 50% of prisoners have ASPD, but only 47% of people with ASPD have significant arrest records (National Collaborating Centre for Mental Health, 2010).

ASPD and narcissistic personality disorder are around 25% comorbid (Gunderson and Ronningstam, 2001). Narcissists tend to be grandiose and superior in their self-image, while people with ASPD typically do not. It is possible that while people with ASPD exploit others for material gain,

narcissists exploit others in order to enhance their self-image and feelings of superiority. Unlike people with ASPD, narcissists prefer not to break the law, although they commonly disregard private ethics.

See also:

Narcissism, p. ##

Psychopathy, p. ##

Confusion between antisocial and narcissistic personality disorders and psychopathy, p. ##

Controlling behaviour

Bending others to our will can be enjoyed for its own sake, since it has the effect of making us more powerful than the other person. The control can be in the direction of suffering, pain or humiliation for the victim ("destructive power and control").

Controlling behaviour may be for material exploitation of the victim.

Egotism

We may define egotism as putting the needs of the self before those of others, or before the demands of one's role; and a psychological attachment to identifying oneself with one's self-advancement, especially in status and greatness in the eyes of others. It can mean being carried away with self-importance; and identifying your own self-interest with that of your ideas, actions, achievements, and external trappings, perhaps (in your own mind, at least) using these outposts of your self-interest as another way to advance yourself.

Sometimes, self-interest is inappropriate with respect to the demands of one's cooperative role.

The opposite of egotism is humility.

See also:

Attachments, p. ##

Enduring personality change after a catastrophic experience

A person's personality may change, potentially in a markedly aggressive, hostile, angry and controlling direction, after they undergo a catastrophically traumatic experience of some kind (Cooper, 1994).

Entitlement (psychological)

A belief that one deserves more than others. Since this belief is often violated in life, people with an elevated sense of personal entitlement tend to experience less satisfaction in life, work, and relationships than the average, and an increased level of anger in many situations. They expect to receive better luck than others, and feel angry and distressed when they experience bad luck, perceiving it to be an injustice (Zitek and Jordan, 2021).

Grandiosity

A belief that one is superior to most people, deserve better treatment, etc.

Machiavellianism

Elinor Greenberg has written a superb and brief account of Machiavellianism on Quora.com (Greenberg, 2024):

Machiavellianism is the name of a strategy that prioritizes gaining and staying in power over other moral considerations. It can be a rather complicated strategy to use successfully because it involves:

1. **Clarity:** You have to identify a longterm goal.
2. **Planning:** You have to give a great deal of thought about how to bring about that goal in the most efficient way.
3. **Emotional Detachment:** You have to be able to emotionally detach from the negative effects your strategy will have on other people.
4. **Understanding:** You need to be good at understanding what motivates other people so that you can design an effective strategy to maneuver them to react the way you want.
5. **Manipulation:** In order to implement your strategy, you will need to have some actual skill at manipulating people.

Where did the term Machiavellian come from?

Niccolo Machiavelli (1469-1527) was an Italian author, statesman, and philosopher. His book *The Prince* addresses the question of: "What is the most effective way for a ruler to maintain power?"

- He advises that it is better to focus on being feared rather than focusing on being loved.
- He supports the ruler's use of harsh punishments, such as torture, if that is necessary to maintain power.
- He prioritizes the maintenance of the State (in effect, the Ruler) over the wellbeing of the people being ruled.

This type of complicated ruthless strategizing that negatively impacts other people has come to be known as Machiavellianism.

What is the relationship of Machiavellianism to personality disorders?

This level of ruthlessness and lack of empathy is sometimes found in people with narcissistic personality disorder, particularly the malignant narcissist subtype. Malignant narcissists not only lack emotional empathy like all narcissists, but are sadistic as well.* It is also characteristic of how some psychopaths operate because they generally lack a moral conscience to get in their way.

However, please keep in mind that not every person with or without a personality disorder is smart enough and capable enough to successfully design and implement a Machiavellian strategy.

Punchline: Machiavellianism is the name given to a highly manipulative, ruthless, and self-serving strategy that involves prioritizing maintaining power over other people regardless of who you have to hurt to do so. Fortunately for the rest of us, not everyone who would like to be Machiavellian has what it takes to pull it off.

Elinor Greenberg, PhD

Author of the book: *Borderline, Narcissistic, and Schizoid Adaptations: The Pursuit of Love, Admiration and Safety*.

* *Dr Greenberg has clarified that sadism has nothing to do with Machiavellianism in itself*.

Moral disengagement

Ignoring morality; sociopathy. The person lives instrumentally rather than morally, and using strategic reputation management rather than letting authenticity speak for itself.

Narcissism

I am a god! And even kings bow to gods!

Albert Wesker, character in “Resident Evil 5” computer game

Everything that is not me is dirt!

Anonymous narcissist – (Greenberg, 2016:89)

ALL people with NPD [Narcissistic Personality Disorder] have unstable self-esteem, lack whole object relations and object constancy [are unable to see a person as having both good and bad qualities at the same time], have little or no emotional empathy, and are hierarchical in their thinking

Elinor Greenberg, 25 September 2018 a, quora.com

Narcissism is a personality type, tendency or disorder characterised by competitive, dominant, selfish, self-centred, controlling, exploitative, entitled, arrogant, often deeply malicious behaviour; a need for admiration from others; and a grandiose belief in one's own superiority. Their exploitation of others tends to be both material and emotional. Typical narcissistic behaviour includes “railroading”, or forcing a person into a course of action by effectively giving them no other choice; “triangulating”, provoking two or more other people to fight over the narcissist's affection; and habitually attempting to belittle and humiliate others. A competitive outlook implies paranoid, zero-sum, “us and them” thinking: “if you're not with me, you're against me.” Hence, for a narcissist to face a situation where they are not number one, in any way, can feel like a humiliating defeat. If their self-esteem is unstable, this may stem from being fundamentally at odds with the world: it must be tough to have to live like that. The rest of us can rely on cooperating with friendly trustworthy allies. People with Cluster B personality disorders tend to have unstable emotions.

Narcissism has been found to be 71% heritable, with zero contribution from the family environment (Torgersen, Myers, Reichborn-Kjennerud, Røysamb, Kubarych, and Kendler, 2012). This point is controversial, and many therapists believe that narcissism is the result of adverse childhood experiences – i.e., having narcissistic parents (Greenberg, 2018 b). However, we may observe that many narcissists did not have abusive family environments, and that it tends to run in families in one form or another.

It seems that narcissists have little or no empathic concern for others, but have access to emotional resonance and perspective taking. Empathic concern is fragile and easily destroyed (Decety, 2011). If everyone else in life is a competitor, they are not perceived as deserving of empathic concern. We may hypothesise that people with NPD tend to be more interested in deservingness than charity when dealing with others, since in a competitive outlook, everyone is culpable for how much they are “for me” or “against me”.

Greenberg (2016, 2020a,b,c) distinguishes three types of Narcissistic Personality Disorder: 1) exhibitionist; 2) malignant or toxic; and 3) covert or closet narcissism. These categories are defined by the ways in which the people achieve their competitive advantage over others.

Exhibitionist narcissists are obsessed with status and derive their well being from being high up in, or if possible at the top of, any available hierarchy. They feel superior to others and must be admired for them to feel OK.

Malignant or toxic narcissists habitually achieve their utilitarian advantage emotionally, by hurting others: they are sadistic. A sub-set of malignant narcissists may be serial rapists and serial killers, who also enjoy causing pain and belittling and humiliating their victims, and have no empathic concern for them.

Covert or closet narcissists are malignant but gratify this covertly and unconsciously, sometimes unknown to themselves. It can take a long time of knowing a person before we realise they are a covert narcissist, especially as many have a significant and genuine “light” side as well as an equally significant and damaging “dark” side. This “light” side may be the reason why

they are relatively amenable to therapy compared with the other types: they are “light” enough to want to change. Covert malignancy can take the form of passive aggression; telling malicious lies behind people’s backs; provocation; trying to make someone feel uncomfortable; etc; their “dark” ways are many and endlessly inventive.

A characteristic of all narcissists is that they do not care whom else they hurt, in their mission to harm a particular victim. They may be quite prepared to bring the roof down on everyone’s heads, and to harm their favourite people in the process.

Not all narcissists are unpleasant, and those who are, are not unpleasant all the time (Greenberg, 2016). Malignant narcissists may use charm to attract partners whom they go on to abuse. Exhibitionist narcissists (and people with ASPD) sometimes have a "film-star" charisma. We have to remember that although challenging and destructive, and usually best avoided, narcissists are flesh-and-blood people too, with feelings, like you and me, and should be treated as such.

See also:

Sympathetic distress within the brain leads to a wish to help, p. ##

Anti-social personality disorder, p. ##

Psychopathy, p. ##

Confusion between antisocial and narcissistic personality disorders and psychopathy, p. ##

Psychopathy

Psychopathy is a developmental disorder that leads people to be self-centred, goal-focused and unemotional. Perhaps surprisingly to most people, psychopathy and sadism are antithetical to each other since the emotions of psychopaths are so heavily blunted: they have trouble feeling anything, including taking pleasure in the suffering of another (Walker, 2019a; 2022).

There is simply no reason for them to be cruel, unless it is to get something they want.

As their emotions are so muted, psychopaths are ungoverned by moral emotions such as empathic concern and guilt, which may be why the behaviour of children who go on to become psychopathic adults is so notoriously troublesome (Marsh, 2017). Adult psychopaths, if they are wise, develop a socially acceptable moral code intellectually, in order to maintain a comfortable and easy life (Walker, 2019b). Psychopaths respond to reward but not to punishment (Marsh, 2017). However, since they are ungoverned by emotions, psychopaths may engage in recklessly anti-social behaviour.

A psychopath, even without the emotion of empathic concern, is capable of spontaneously helping others when necessary (e.g., Walker, 2019c; 2021a,b,c,d). Athena Walker, a self-identifying psychopath who writes on quora.com, describes this as “action without feeling”. This supports the idea that human helping behaviour has two separate evolved components: emotion, and behaviour. Empathy has four aspects: cognitive empathy, emotional resonance, empathic concern, and helping behaviour. Psychopaths only have access to cognitive empathy (perspective taking) and helping behaviour.

Psychopathic traits include ruthlessness, resilience, calm self-control in any situation, the ability to play a socially required role (e.g., a neurotypical “mask” worn in order to be palatable to most people), and an absence of fear and other negative emotions. These traits are useful in some professions such as surgery and bomb-disposal.

See also:

Confusion between antisocial and narcissistic personality disorders and psychopathy, p. ##

Sadism

Taking pleasure in the suffering of others. Significantly, a sadist must recognise the negative emotions of others, in order to enjoy them: both of which are impaired or absent in a psychopath. Some sadists may look like psychopaths because of their glib charm; complete lack of empathic concern; disregard of social norms; etc., but they are actually a variety of narcissist.

In cooperative mode, we feel empathic distress at the distress of another, but in an act of competition, dominance, and humiliation, a person who is being sadistic has this emotional bivalence reversed, and he or she feels pleasure in response to the other's pain, along with arousal and attentiveness: excitedly "tuning in" to it (Walker, 2022).

Self-interest

I pursue goals that benefit my personal well being.

This trait may actually result in utility for others if they depend on me (Gerbasi and Prentice, 2013).

Kaufman and Jauk (2020) distinguish between healthy and unhealthy selfishness. Healthy selfishness is a form of self-love that is the same as love for others; and is associated with "higher levels of psychological wellbeing and adaptive psychological functioning as well as a genuine prosocial orientation." In other words, it is psychologically healthy to maintain healthy boundaries. Unhealthy selfishness (self-interest at the expense of others) is a form of greed – insatiable, exhausting, and unstable.

> ... communally motivated people who care for the welfare of others and their close relationship partners experience greater relationship wellbeing. However, personal well-being [is] maximized only to the extent that people [are] not self-neglecting in their communal care.
>
> *Kaufman and Jauk (2020:2)*

Spite

A desire to hurt others even at a cost to the self.

See also:

Narcissism, p. ##

Psychopathy, p. ##

Toxicity (social)

Toxic people habitually try to make you feel as if you are not good enough.

Confusion between antisocial and narcissistic personality disorders and psychopathy

By definition, a personality disorder is the name for:

> [a] repetitious and relatively inflexible maladaptive pattern of thinking and behavior that starts in childhood and continues into adulthood. It is stable across most situations and is expressed in most relationships. It limits people's ability to react in a flexible and spontaneous way to new people and new situations.
>
> "Narcissistic Personality Disorder" is the name of one of those patterns.
>
> *Elinor Greenberg (2018 a)*

Two pathologies that have been linked to narcissism are psychopathy and borderline personality disorder (BPD). Each of these syndromes appears on a continuum with NPD that highlights patterns of impulsivity, emotion dysregulation, and self-centered, goal-focused behaviors. The phenotypic overlap in these pathologies contributes to their moderate levels of

> comorbidity, with NPD and psychopathy co-occurring at rates of approximately 21% and NPD and BPD comorbidity estimated at 37%-39% ...
>
> *Arielle Baskin-Sommers; Elizabeth Krusemark; Elsa Ronningstam –"Empathy in Narcissistic Personality Disorder: From Clinical and Empirical Perspectives"; Personality Disorders: Theory, Research, and Treatment; Vol. 5, No. 3, 323-333, 2014*

The Cluster B personality disorders are narcissistic, anti-social, borderline, and histrionic (Shulman, 2015). Cluster B is a spectrum, and one disorder may blend into another.

Psychopathy is normally confused with ASPD (Walker, 2018) and NPD, as it is short-hand for "unspeakably bad person", and some people with ASPD and NPD do unspeakably bad things.

Borderline Personality Disorder has no reason to be considered a dark trait, since there is no systematic, deliberate exploitation of others. It is also known as Emotionally Unstable Personality Disorder, and is characterised by a tendency to act impulsively, and without caution for the consequences; and by quarrelsome behaviour, especially when the impulsivity is challenged. It has been classified as two types: the impulsive type, and borderline. Someone with the borderline type may feel chronically empty and alone, and experience intense and unstable relationships, while always seeking unconditional love and nurturing. They may engage in self-destructive behaviour and suicide attempts (Cooper, 1994; Greenberg, 2017).

There is evidence that people with emotionally unstable personality disorder tend to be more altruistic than the average (Baskin-Sommers, Krusemark, and Ronningstam, 2014).

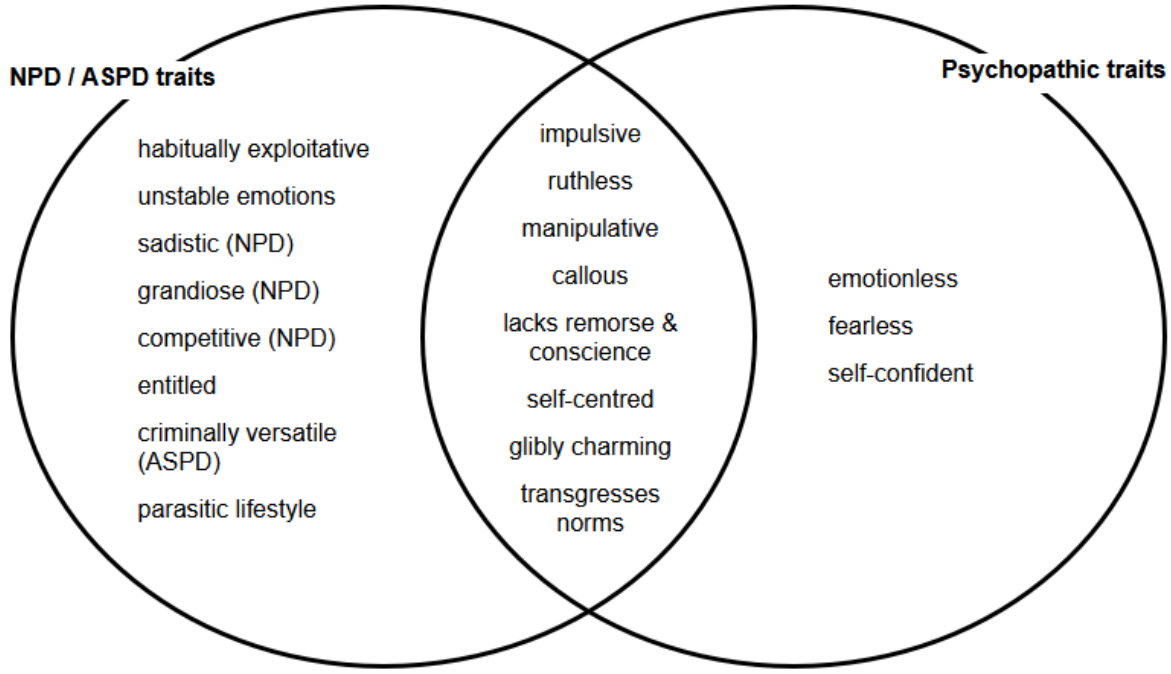
Borderline personality disorder can be comorbid with antisocial personality disorder (Howard, Khalifa, and Duggan, 2014; Robitaille et al., 2017).

A psychopath or someone with ASPD may use violence to get something they want. All three (ASPD, NPD, psychopathy) share a lack of empathic concern for others,

and self-centredness. More precisely, empathic concern is selective in ASPD and NPD – it applies in some situations, but not others.

People with NPD tend to exploit others emotionally through sadism and bullying. People with ASPD habitually exploit others materially through cheating and stealing. ASPD and NPD are around 25% comorbid: one occurs with the other in the same person in around 25% of the total number of people with either one or the other (Gunderson and Ronningstam, 2001). Interestingly: “both groups are hypersensitive and have intense reactions to criticism, defeats, or disappointments, and both have feelings of emptiness, boredom, meaninglessness, and futility.” (p.106).

The assertion here is simply that while ASPD, NPD and psychopathy share a number of traits, the reasons for those traits are different (Walker, 2018). ASPD and NPD are represented as disorders of morality and cooperation, while psychopathy is a disorder of the emotions (i.e., a lack of emotions, especially negative ones).



Overlap between NPD / ASPD traits and psychopathic traits

D and political extremism

Research has found a "small to medium" association between authoritarian and extreme politics, and traits high in D (Duspara and Greitemeyer, 2017; Moss and O'Connor, 2020). Particularly, it found that:

There is an association between right-wing orientation and Machiavellianism (associated with "misanthropy, anti-social tendencies, cold-heartedness, and immoral beliefs" [Duspara and Greitemeyer, 2017:6]).

There is an association between narcissism and psychopathy (defined as impulsivity, reckless disregard for norms, and sociopathy) and political extremism in general (Duspara and Greitemeyer, 2017).

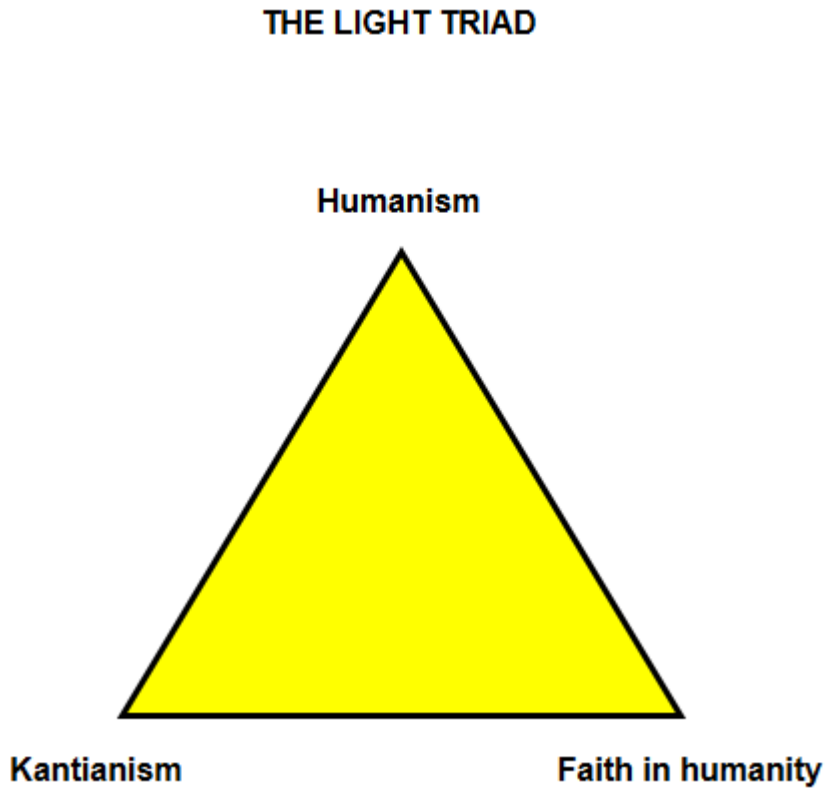
The study by Moss and O'Connor (2020) looked at possible correlations between dark personality traits (and entitlement) and authoritarian political extremism on both left and right of the political spectrum ("politically correct authoritarians" [PCA] and "white identitarians" [WI]). It also looked at correlations of D with "politically correct liberals" (PCL). It found that people high in D and entitlement gravitate towards authoritarian politics and a belief in the use of force and intimidation to achieve ideological goals, whether on the left or right. PCL was negatively predicted by psychopathy, which fits with the PCL belief that people's emotional welfare should be protected.

Light traits

Scott Barry Kaufman, David Bryce Yaden, and Elizabeth Hyde, of the Positive Psychology Center at the University of Pennsylvania, and Eli Tsukayama, of the University of Hawaii, have produced a study of so-called light traits (2019).

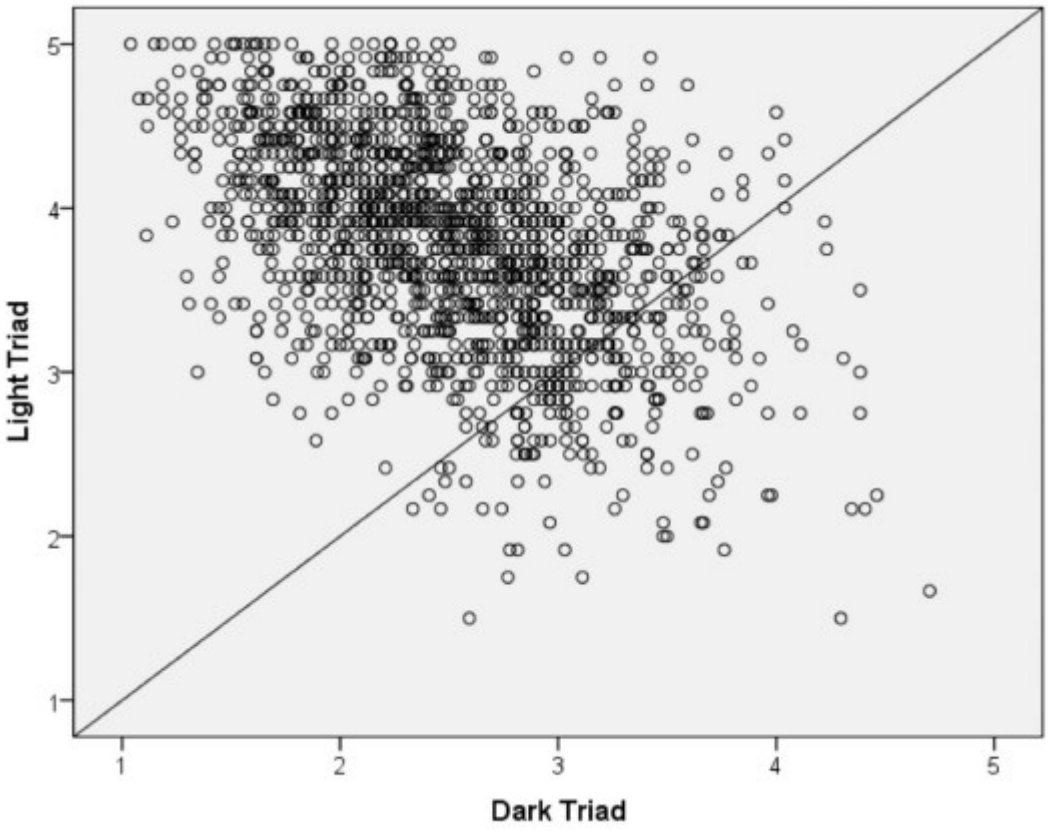
They have found that these boil down to three main factors, that they call Kantianism (named after the German philosopher Immanuel Kant: seeing others as an end in themselves and not as a means to an end); Humanism (valuing the worth and dignity of each individual); and Faith in Humanity (beliefs in the goodness of humans in general, that justify one's prosocial attitude). Together, these form a “loving and beneficent orientation toward others” (Kaufman, Yaden, Hyde, and Tsukayama, 2019: 20).

Some people are “extraordinary altruists” (Marsh, 2017), in that they show a higher than average level of empathic concern and helping behaviour, even potentially at great personal cost.



See also:

Kant’s “ends and means”: treating every human with dignity and respect, p. ##



Scatter plot of the (dark, light) scores of 1518 people (Kaufman, Yaden, Hyde, and Tsukayama, 2019).

These data suggest that people are mostly “good” (i.e., most data points are in the top left of the diagram) and that extreme malevolence is rare (bottom right of diagram).

“Dark triad” refers to the traits of narcissism (defined as competitive dominance), psychopathy (defined as callousness, impulsivity, and cynicism), and Machiavellianism (treating a person as an instrumental means to an end).

In the study, the three factors were represented by the following statements:

Faith in humanity (i.e., justifying beliefs)

- I tend to see the best in people

- I tend to trust that other people will deal fairly with me
- I think people are mostly good
- I'm quick to forgive people who have hurt me

Humanism

- I tend to admire others
- I tend to applaud the successes of other people
- I tend to treat others as valuable
- I enjoy listening to people from all walks of life

Kantianism

- I prefer honesty over charm
- I don't feel comfortable overtly manipulating people to do something I want
- I would like to be authentic even if it may damage my reputation
- When I talk to people, I am rarely thinking about what I want from them

According to the study, we all possess a mixture of dark and light traits.

The light triad was positively associated with unbiased thinking; authenticity (including in relationships); romantic love; friendship; and love for all; with the reverse situation for the dark triad. The dark triad was found to be positively associated with instrumental sex (using sex to get what you want) and game playing in relationships (with the reverse situation for the light triad).

The light triad was positively associated with survivor guilt and omnipotent guilt (feeling guilty about not being able to help the world), and negatively associated with self-hating guilt, with the situation reversed for the dark triad. This guilt, together with their elevated compassion, allows the possibility that people higher in light traits are open to emotional manipulation, for purposes of exploitation, by people high in dark traits.

The light triad was positively associated with empathy (emotional resonance and cognitive perspective-taking), and compassion, with the reverse being true for the dark triad, except for a small correlation between the dark triad and cognitive empathy.

A quiet ego

> Angels fly because they take themselves lightly.
>
> *G K Chesterton*

The light triad was positively associated with having a quiet ego and all its facets: detached awareness, inclusive identity (identifying with others as well as oneself), perspective taking, and personal growth. The dark triad was negatively associated with a quiet ego, although uncorrelated with (unrelated to) inclusive identity and personal growth. To quiet the ego is here defined as to quiet "that aspect of the self that has the incessant need to see itself in a positive light" (Kaufman, 2018).

The four facets of a quiet ego are interrelated, and are relevant to the moral requirement to balance the needs of the self and the needs of others, compassionately. For humans, it could be argued, this is essential for happiness, a state of satisfaction with one's life. This illustrates well the fact that survival and happiness are two distinct things, and that without our being aware of it, the unawakened ego can behave in blind, reflexive ways that can damage our own long-term prospects of happiness in life, and those of others. What is required for success, happiness, may be different from what is required to protect our comfort and to see ourselves in a good light in the present moment.

Healthy, long-term personal growth is achieved through "mastery, authenticity, and positive social relationships" (Kaufman, 2018). The "growth mindset" is something we can take into any situation, so that any situation is viewed as an opportunity for

us to grow and learn. This implies a lack of attention on whether we perceive ourselves in a positive light, which clears the way for us to take the perspectives of others into account. Detached awareness is defined as “an engaged, nondefensive form of attention to the present moment”, an “attempt to see reality as clearly as possible” (Kaufman, 2018).

As with any aspect of the ego, an unquiet ego may operate and be known either, or both, consciously or/and unconsciously.

The light triad was positively associated with mature ego defenses, while the dark triad was positively associated with immature ego defenses. The dark triad was negatively associated with belief that people are good, and that one’s self is good.

The light triad was negatively associated with conspicuous consumption, selfishness, and with both proactive and reactive aggression, with the situation reversed for the dark triad. People high in light traits are primarily (socially) motivated towards intimacy and self-transcendence (going beyond the self). They are not motivated towards achievement and self-enhancement, while they do score higher than those high in dark traits for competence and productivity. The light triad was positively associated with life satisfaction, and satisfaction in relationships, with the situation reversed for the dark triad.

Dark traits were positively associated with creativity, bravery, leadership and assertiveness, while the light triad was uncorrelated with bravery and assertiveness.

The average profile of people high in dark traits is younger and male, with greater childhood unpredictability. The average profile of people high in light traits is older and female, with less childhood unpredictability.

It is found that having light traits is positively associated with a satisfying, rewarding, successful life, and the key factor in this seems to be the ability to empathise with others (emotional resonance, perspective taking, and compassion). These traits tend to develop in the individual over a lifetime in a process of moral maturation, learned through many interactions with others, although the person has to be “light” enough to want to change. Research has found that morally advantageous traits, like conscientiousness and self control, may be more common in older people (Cohen, Panter, Turan, Morse, and Kim, 2014). Around 40% of people have both a

“light” and a “dark” profile – they possess both – and those dark traits damage their relationships and hold them back in life (Neumann and Kaufman, 2020).

> Morality ... is not simply a matter of following rules ... . It involves personal effort of discrimination and judgment. This is something that must be cultivated. It is a personal responsibility to cultivate this kind of knowledge and intelligence.
>
> *Richard A Shweder, Nancy C Much, Manamohan Mahapatra, and Lawrence Park – “The ‘Big Three’ of Morality (Autonomy, Community, Divinity) and the ‘Big Three’ Explanations of Suffering” in Allan M Brandt and Paul Rozin (eds.) – “Morality and Health”*

Online surveys

How “dark” is your personality? https://www.darkfactor.org/

Your “light” vs. “dark” balance: https://scottbarrykaufman.com/lighttriadscale/

Part 3 – psychology and spirituality

Emotions

The proposal is that emotions are psychological reactions to things affecting our goals.

If something brings us closer to our goals, then it is called an opportunity, and we feel a positive emotion in response. If something hinders our goals, it is called a threat, and we feel a negative emotion in response.

There are also “anti-goals” or things we want to avoid. If we move in the direction of one of these, then we experience negative emotion. If we move away from an anti-goal, we experience positive emotion.

The more important the goal, the stronger the emotion that is provoked in response to the event that affects it.

Likewise, a more significant event may affect a goal more, and will therefore provoke a stronger emotion, than a less significant event.

The positive or negative bivalence of an emotion is called the affect. Something that gives us a positive affect can also make us feel positively about other things. Similarly, something that gives us a negative affect (for example, hunger) can make us feel negatively about other things or experiences.

We may classify consciousness into four levels of detail:

1. bodily sensations
2. affect
3. emotions
4. thoughts

Emotions, therefore, detect the subjective meanings of things: the ways that things are relevant to your goals or anti-goals. The present hypothesis is that emotion detects fitness benefits, or their opposite.

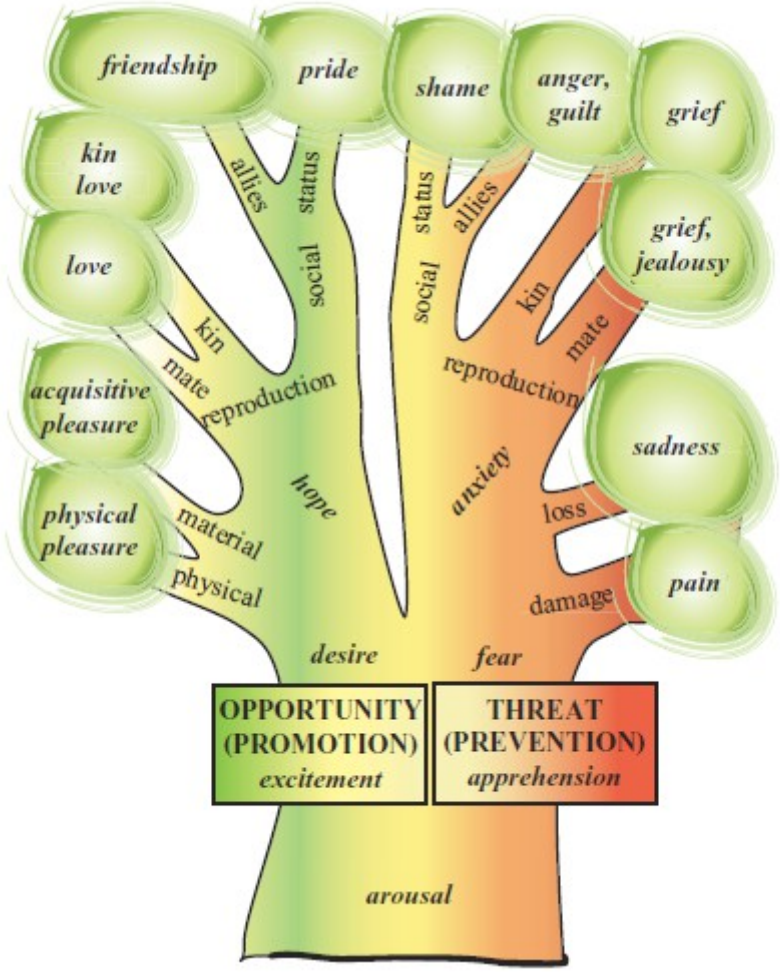
Our emotions fall into families of related emotions.

> From the primal capacity of one-celled organisms to move away from excess heat, dryness, acidity or salinity, natural selection has gradually differentiated a host of responses to cope with different kinds of threats.
>
> Anxiety motivates escape and future avoidance, and it can serve as a warning to others. Disgust also motivates escape, prepares the body to make escape more likely, and motivates future avoidance.
>
> ... the threat that involves the possible loss of a mate's fidelity arouses emotions that are aspects of jealousy... . If the threat involves a risk of loss of social position, the specific emotions are humiliation, pride, etc.
>
> Our brains could have been wired so that good food, sex, being the object of admiration, and observing the success of one's children were all aversive experiences. However, any ancestor whose brain was so wired would probably not have contributed much to the gene pool that makes human nature what it is now. Similarly, if there were someone who experienced no upset at failure, no anxiety in the face of danger and no grief at the death of a child, his or her life might be free of suffering but also would probably be without much accomplishment, including having offspring. These evolved preferences for pursuing certain resources and avoiding their loss are at the very centre of human experience. It is not surprising that bad feelings are reliably aroused by losses, threats of losses, and inability to reach important goals ...

Randolph M Nesse – "Natural selection and the elusiveness of happiness" (2004)

See also:

Pleasure, p. ##



Families of emotions (Nesse, 2004)

The Smoke Detector Principle

The organism pays special attention to negatively valued information: to bad news. It makes sense from the point of view of survival to be especially concerned with threats to one's thriving or survival: it is better to be wrong and alive, than wrong and dead.

This negativity bias, or greater sensitivity to threats, relative to that to opportunities, is called the Smoke Detector Principle (Nesse, 2004).

See also:

Meditation, p. ##

Naming emotions for conscious processing

By naming our emotions, we can bring them into the conscious thinking mind for processing, further reflection and analysis. This can lead to a slower, more considered, measured and skilful response to the emotional stimulus than raw emotional "hot cognition".

If we consciously acknowledge the emotion and then name it using words, we load it into the part of the brain that uses words, i.e., the executive functioning and decision-making section.

In effect, the emotional message has now been delivered to the conscious mind for further processing and executive action, and consequently the feeling of the emotion may now lessen in intensity.

If we fail to acknowledge an emotion, then it will hammer at the doors of our consciousness until we do.

Equanimity

Equanimity is the quality of not being shaken by strong emotions. We experience them, but are not shaken by them. If we cultivate equanimity, it contributes to our peace of mind.

The ego

The ego is defined as those parts of your conscious and unconscious mind that form a psychological “machine for looking after you”. This is in keeping with the instrumental normativity, the individual pressure to do the things that will allow you to thrive, survive and reproduce. The ego includes the executive functions of your thinking mind, and conscious awareness. It takes care of your self-preservation. What your ego does for you, it can also do for others. Because it is concerned with your self-preservation, and because natural selection can be comparative: operating on relative advantage to those around you, the ego can become competitive and separatist in its outlook, comparing ourselves with others and keeping us separate from them, leading to a feeling of being cut off from a hostile world on the other side of a competitive fence.

> The concept of the ego conveys the mind’s capacity to integrate inner and outer reality, to blend past and present, and to synthesize ideas with feelings. ... Nor is the ego just for adaptation and mental synthesis. Its wisdom also encompasses defense and adult development and creativity.
>
> *George E Vaillant – “The Wisdom of the Ego”*

There are four influences on the ego, that need to be balanced successfully by the individual for the long term well being of the overall self and to fulfil the needs of morality.

The four influences on the ego are:

- [internal] the “id” or emotions and subconscious drives
- [internal] the conscience and moral compass or “super-ego” (moral sense)

- [external] reality
- [external] people

The ego is necessary, helpful, and useful. It is there to make sense of experience for you; to regulate you; to look after you; and to guide you successfully through life.

Like any conscientious employee, however, it can sometimes become over-zealous in carrying out its duties, to the point where this can interfere with the happy functioning of the overall person. Left to itself, the ego can let us down in a number of ways; for example:

- the “dark side” of the ego is selfish, controlling, dominant or needlessly aggressive behaviour, where the self only cares about the self, potentially at the expense of others.

  See also:

  Dark and light traits, p. ##

- The ego’s decision-making process may cave in too easily to the emotions, including greed, selfishness or the need for immediate gratification.

- Truth is stranger than fiction: the mind might like to invent a nice solution for a problem, but when dealing with humans and the natural world, the reality can be more complex than the mind can realise, and so, the solution might fail. This “clever plan” will likely be partly conscious and partly unconscious, like the ego itself (Freud, 1923/2010).

- Identifying our self-preservation with our opinions, actions, status, possessions, etc. “If my opinion is wrong then I am a wrong person.” This ego-identification is at the heart of attachments: identifying one’s self-preservation with external entities to make oneself feel bigger and more important. To identify with something means that “our goals are aligned”.

  See also:

Desire and “Original Sin”, p. ##

- Investing everything we do with the need for immediate self-preservation and an immediate need to feel good psychologically. If we cannot rise above this, we are in chains.

> Be willing to be uncomfortable. Be comfortable being uncomfortable. It may get tough, but it’s a small price to pay for living a dream.
>
> *Peter McWilliams*

- Fixed ideas and opinions, based on an unacknowledged emotional need of some kind: for example, identification with one's ideas (see above).
- Maladaptive or “immature” coping mechanisms.

  See also:

  Ego defences, p. ##
- Having expectations that things must be a certain way.
- Not realising that the mind’s picture is not reality.

See also:

A quiet ego, p. ##

Sigmund Freud (1856-1939) was one of the first practitioners of psychoanalysis. He stated that the overall aim of the ego is to follow the Reality Principle: to balance the pure pleasure-seeking of the unconscious id against the moral conscience of the super-ego in order to achieve the best or most skilful results, for the individual, in long-term reality.

A mature ego can follow the Reality Principle and defer gratification until a more suitable time and place are obtained, that gives the best long-term outcome.

> In the theory of psychoanalysis, we have no hesitation in assuming that the course taken by mental events is automatically regulated by the pleasure principle. We believe, that is to say, that the course of those events is invariably set in motion by an unpleasurable tension; and that it takes a direction such that its final outcome coincides with a lowering of that tension – that is, with an avoidance of unpleasure or a production of pleasure. ...
>
> Under the influence of the ego's instincts of self-preservation, the pleasure principle is replaced by the reality principle. This latter principle does not abandon the intention of ultimately obtaining pleasure, but it nevertheless demands and carries into effect the postponement of satisfaction, the abandonment of a number of possibilities of gaining satisfaction, and the temporary toleration of unpleasure, as a step on the long indirect road to pleasure.
>
> The pleasure principle long persists, however, as the method of working, employed by the sexual instincts, which are so hard to educate, and, starting out from those instincts, or in the ego itself, it often succeeds in overcoming the reality principle, to the detriment of the organism as a whole.
>
> *Sigmund Freud – "Beyond the Pleasure Principle"*

Monitoring and the "default state"

When your mind is not occupied with some specific task, your ego constantly scans and monitors your past, present and future looking for opportunities and threats, keeping up the incessant "mind chatter" that we are all familiar with. This is the

mind's resting or “default” state. Since negatively-valued information is more salient, the ego may constantly supply the mind with bad news that can be distressing.

See also:

The Smoke Detector Principle, p. ##

Your Restless Mind

All is well
until your restless mind
wakes up and starts to wonder
whether all is well.
Nothing is wrong
until your restless mind
stirs to life and starts to suspect
that something might be wrong.
Like an overpaid manager trying to justify his role
your mind finds problems that didn’t exist before
and persuades you to make changes
even though your life is running smoothly.
Like a detective who always suspects foul play
your mind keeps questioning reality
going over the evidence and the sequence of events
until situations turn into crimes.
Like a soldier patrolling the streets at night
your mind is always vigilant
scanning the darkness and silence

for signs of unrest and danger.

But you can reassure your restless mind

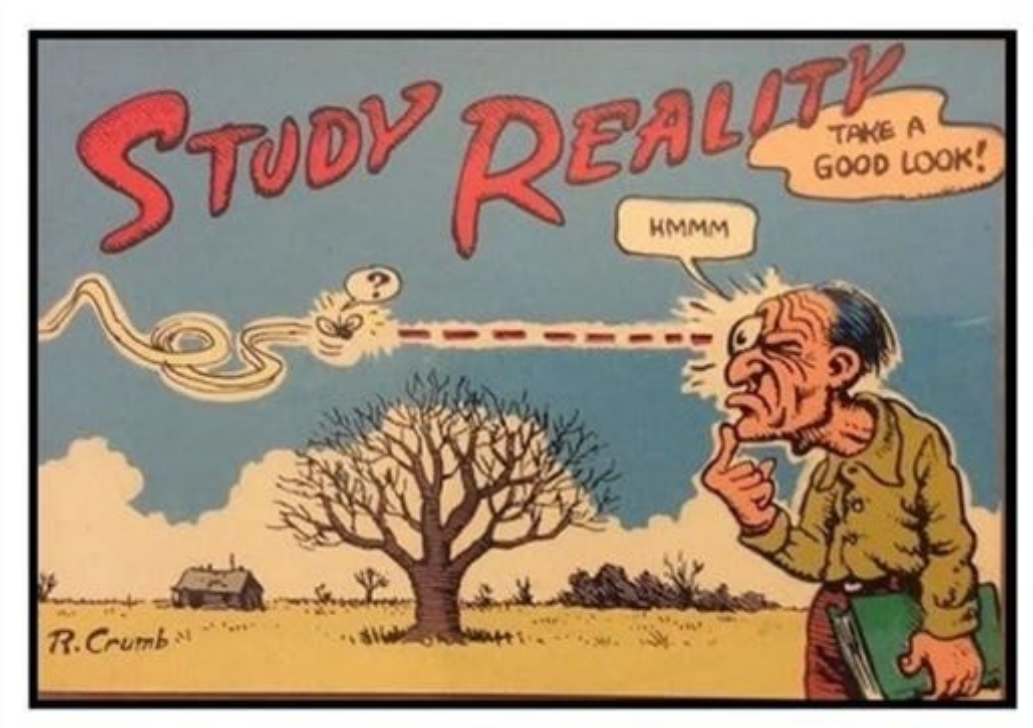
that life is only hard if you struggle against it

that the world is only an enemy if you fight against it

and that the natural state of life is peace.

Steve Taylor (unpublished)

Meditation



Welcome to life.

In meditation, we use simple techniques to extend conscious awareness beyond the ordinary thinking mind to pure experience. The mind needs an object – we cannot think about “nothing”, and we can only concentrate on one thing at a time – and in meditation we force our conscious awareness into the body and its senses, as these

exist in the present moment. This intervention has the effect of interrupting and taking control of the machinations and monitoring activities of the ego, which range over the past and future; and of training the mind to exist in the present moment, thereby, potentially, reducing the stress caused by negatively valued thoughts. As such, meditation can be a comfortable and restful experience. Meditation is difficult, and if you only manage a few minutes of genuine meditation in a twenty-minute session, this is valuable.

Meditation can “uncreate” the mind (Taylor, 2021) – temporarily sweep away mental constructions and tensions.

It has been suggested that meditation loosens the association between facts and emotions: that meditation habituates the mind to reality in a safe environment, thereby making it more likely that we react to events with slow intellectual cognition rather than fast emotional reaction.

There are a number of different methods of “concentration” meditation, most notably mindfulness of breathing or of walking. You can be taught these by an experienced practitioner such as can be found in a Buddhist temple. A small charge is normally made. Many good books on the subject are also available.

Taming the wild buffalo

The Buddha reputedly told a story comparing mindfulness training to taming a wild buffalo. Suppose there is a wild buffalo running free through the forest: it may do what it likes, rest or run when it likes. You can take a rope and tie the buffalo to a strong stake driven into the ground. You restrict the buffalo's food so that it does not have too much energy. Gradually the buffalo becomes used to being restricted to a small area and a limited diet, and becomes quiet. The buffalo is like your wandering ego-mind, the stake and rope represent mindfulness, and the ground is the present moment, the here and now.

Clear sight and self-honesty

Part of mindfulness meditation, as a way of life, is clear sight. This means to observe, acknowledge and examine our sensations, thoughts, feelings, motives, intentions, etc., for what they are. The world is conveyed via the senses to the brain, where it is constructed into the reality we are familiar with. The mind and emotions are also senses, detecting their own pictures of reality.

Truth is a component of wisdom, the other being compassion. Self-honesty is a moral virtue. Self-deception is a maladaptive ego defence: an illusion. We have to accept and acknowledge even things we do not like about ourselves.

Acceptance and moral action

Part of mindfulness meditation is acceptance, or mindful acknowledgement of the present moment, our thoughts, emotions, etc. But this does not imply complacency, since there is a constant pressure to do the things that will allow you to thrive. After the conscious acknowledgement of reality, the question is, “what do we do about it (if anything)?”

See also:

Instrumental normativity, p. ##

Be Soft

Don’t build a hard, solid self
full of fixed ideas and firm beliefs.

Be soft
so that you don’t create friction, or clash with the world
but accept and absorb your experience with ease.

Be soft
so that disappointments and insults don’t bruise you
but bounce harmlessly away after your softness has absorbed their force.

Be soft
so that thoughts and emotions can’t attach themselves to you
and ideas don’t turn to rigid theories which can’t be contradicted
and animosity never lingers long enough to form a grudge
and pain passes away before turning to trauma.

Be soft
so that you can bend with the wind, without breaking
and become moist with the rain, without flooding.

Be soft
so that you can pass through the world without leaving damage

only the lightest of trails which will dissolve like a cloud
and become part of the air which everyone breathes.

Steve Taylor (from: The Calm Center*)*

> We hate poetry that has a palpable design upon us – and if we do not agree, seems to put its hands in its breeches pocket. Poetry should be great & unobtrusive, a thing which enters into one's soul, and does not startle it or amaze it with itself but with its subject. – How beautiful are the retired flowers! how they would lose their beauty were they to throng into the highway crying out ‘admire me I am a violet! dote on me I am a primrose!’
>
> *John Keats*

Ego defences

Coping mechanisms: some harmful, some beneficial

An ego defence is a behavioural strategy employed by the ego in order to help you to cope with an upsetting situation. An ego defence can allow you to play for time until your ego adapts and you learn to cope.

Some ego defences are considered maladaptive or “immature”, these being mainly unconscious or unknown to the conscious mind. By definition, these are generally harmful to the self and/or others. If a subconscious ego defence is brought into the light of day and made consciously known, it ceases to be unconscious and the way it plays out can change for the better.

Some ego defences are considered adaptive or “mature”, when we are consciously aware that we are displaying the behaviour, and why. By definition, these are generally a harmless or beneficial way of coping.

In an ego defence, the ego will deny, distort or repress one or more of its four influences: the id (emotions and drives); the super-ego or moral sense; other people; or reality.

There are probably more ego defences than there are people.

Immature ego defences are usually, subconsciously, intended to get under your skin (Vaillant, 1993).

See also:

A quiet ego, p. ##

The ego, p. ##

Passive aggression

Behind the smile, a knife.

Chinese proverb

From a moral point of view, the most relevant ego defence is probably passive aggression or unconscious hostility. Passive aggression is corrosive of relationships. It is unconscious, and therefore consciously unknown to the perpetrator. The reason that the knowledge is forced into the perpetrator's unconscious is that it is unacceptable to their conscious mind, for whatever reason.

Passive aggression may be 1) a defence against uncomfortable feelings, the (subconscious) rationale being "attack is the best form of defence"; or 2) a result of dark traits: the person just enjoys causing pain; or 3) some combination of 1) and 2).

The best way to tackle it is to bring it out into the open: to let the perpetrator know they are being passive-aggressive.

See also:

Competition, p. ##

Controlling behaviour, p. ##

Sadism, p. ##

Puppet strings and the Grey Rock

One of the ways that people subconsciously use maladaptive ego defences to get under your skin, is to provoke you into negative emotional reactions. The aim is to: 1) control you using these emotional reactions to jerk you around like a puppet on a string; 2) malevolently take up your mental space and energy so that they can "live rent-free in your head" and continue to cause harm, even in their absence, through making you feel negative emotions including anger.

One way to avoid being controlled in this way is to use the “Grey Rock” technique: be aware of the subconscious provocation, be like a grey rock, and refuse to be provoked. Instead, while acknowledging the hurt, exercise equanimity, refusing to be shaken emotionally, and allow the provocations to wash over you with minimum effect.

See also:

Competition, p. ##

Dark and light traits, p. ##

Emotions, p. ##

Classical ego defences

The classical set of ego defences was laid out by Anna Freud (1895-1982), the daughter of Sigmund Freud and a notable psychologist in her own right.

They include:

- acting out, which means to do something else instead of feeling our negative feelings.
- anticipation is mentally to prepare in advance for an undesirable event.
- displacement, where we transfer our negative feelings away from their rightful recipient (someone who has harmed us) onto someone less powerful whom we are able to push around, or onto some other blamed target.

> Roughly half of baboon aggression is displacement aggression, where an individual who is frustrated for some reason attacks a lower-ranking innocent bystander. Thus, over the course of a minute, a relatively high-ranking male who has lost a fight will chase a subordinate who will then bite a female, and who will then lunge at a nearby infant.

Robert Sapolsky – "Rousseau with a Tail – Maintaining a Tradition of Peace Among Baboons" in "War, Peace and Human Nature" edited by Douglas P Fry

- projection is where we take a quality in ourselves that we do not like, unconsciously transfer it to someone else, and dislike it in them instead of in ourselves.
- reaction formation means to overcompensate for feelings in ourselves we do not like, with a more extreme example of their opposite. A good example is in people high in light traits, who are found to forgive and feel compassion for their aggressors more than may be reasonably warranted (Kaufman, Yaden, Hyde, and Tsukayama, 2019).

  See also:

  Light traits, p. ##
- rationalisation is where we try to "explain away" things we do not like using intellectual arguments to weaken their perceived impact on us.
- sublimation means to express our negativity in ways that may be skilful. For example, a man who has seen his mother suffer domestic violence may thereafter be very protective of women.
- undoing is a defence where we take steps to attempt to reverse an action we regret.

Mature ego defenses (turning straw into gold)

Conscious ego defences that result in a skilful outcome are called mature. These include:

- altruism or compassion: helping others.

See also:

Empathic distress and compassion, p. ##

- analysis and acknowledgement: uncovering the facts of the situation and acknowledging them.
- connectedness: spending time with sympathetic others. The presence of loved ones may reduce our perception of pain (Decety, 2011).

I touch your hands

And my heart grows strong,

Like a pair of birds

That burst with song.

"Younger than Springtime" – South Pacific (Rogers and Hammerstein)

To be heard and understood can be considered one of the greatest forms of human connection.

- creativity: using suffering as a basis for artwork or other creative activity of some kind.
- humour: laughing or joking our way through the stress.
- stoicism: patiently, consciously, waiting out the time of suffering.

The sun don't shine every day.

Anonymous

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Desire and “original sin”

When desire goes “wrong”

Adaptively managing the normative pressure to achieve benefits

> The Buddha teaches that the root of all our suffering is craving or misplaced desire.
>
> *lifeofmindfulness.com/4-noble-truths/*

> Crime is only a left-handed form of human endeavour.
>
> *Alonzo D. Emmerich (Louis Calhern) in the film, The Asphalt Jungle*

Sometimes *taṇhā* is translated as “desire,” but that gives rise to some crucial misinterpretations with reference to the way of Liberation. As we shall see, some form of desire is essential in order to aspire to, and persist in, cultivating the path out of *dukkha* [“unsatisfactoriness”]. Desire as an eagerness to offer, to commit, to apply oneself to meditation, is called *chanda*. It’s a psychological “yes,” a choice, not a pathology. In fact, you could summarize *Dhamma* training as the transformation of *taṇhā* into *chanda*. It’s a process whereby we guide volition, grab and hold on to the steering wheel [of instrumental normativity], and travel with clarity toward our deeper well-being.

> So we're not trying to get rid of desire (which would take another kind of desire, wouldn't it). Instead, we are trying to transmute it, take it out of the shadow of gratification and need, and use its aspiration and vigor to bring us into light and clarity.
>
> *Ajahn Sucitto – "Turning the Wheel of Truth – commentary on the Buddha's first teaching"*

> Don't chase the light so hard that you lose your footing and uproot yourself. Wait for the sun to come round to you.
>
> *Steve Taylor*

"Desire" can be defined as "seeking opportunities". One definition of "craving" is "hungrily seeking opportunities". In some circumstances, hungrily seeking opportunities can make us feel bored and futile. Instead, we can switch off the questing and just be in the moment.

Delusion, or a lack of wisdom, is a cause of suffering.

Sometimes the results of desire can be unskilful actions, unwise, lacking in wisdom, causing suffering to the self or others in the short or long term, to which all of us is prone, hence the term "original sin".

It is necessary for all of us to manage our immediate pressure to thrive and seek pleasure, so that it does not cause us problems in the short or long term.

Short term and long term benefits

Smile now, cry later.

Eaztpakk

Patience is bitter, but its fruit is sweet.

Jean-Jacques Rousseau

The short term is short, while the long term lasts for a long time. Often, actions will lead to short term benefit but long term negative consequences.

See also:

Self discipline, p. ##

Seeking to thrive through crime or unethical means

See also:

Dark and light traits, p. ##

Maladaptive, unconscious, immature ego defences

See also:

Ego defences, p. ##

Relying on sensual pleasure to make us happy

Sensual, visceral, in-the-moment pleasure is necessary for our quality of life. A life without pleasure, or the prospect of pleasure, is just a cruel soul-destroying burden. But pleasure is the “icing on the cake” of life, and nobody can grow strong and well-nourished if they only eat the icing on the cake. We need solid foundations in order to sustain us properly.

Attachments

> Detachment is not that you should own nothing
>
> But that nothing should own you.
>
> *Ali ibn abi Talib*

We like to surround ourselves with an “empire of awesomeness”, external trappings that make us feel bigger, better, fitter, and of higher status as a person. We identify with these external trappings: “our goals are aligned”. These trappings commonly take the form of success, achievements, possessions, people as possessions, or hopes for the future.

None of these things exists in the present time and place, where your energy and attention are required. If we let go of our attachments then we can experience more vitality and energy, and we find a deeper and more authentic identity.

> ... the urge to accumulate is a response to our sense of incompleteness and fragility. We try to bolster our sense of self by adding possessions, achievements, and power, in the same way that an insecure king continually builds up a castle and reinforces its walls. Alternatively, we become overly attached to preexisting aspects of our identity, such as our appearance or our intellect. We derive a sense of specialness from them, which also serves to

> reinforce our fragile sense of self. But these efforts are no longer necessary when we wake up because that sense of incompleteness and vulnerability no longer exists. ...
>
> Awakening brings a shift away from accumulation to contribution. The energy that people invested to try to alleviate their own psychological suffering is now redirected to try to alleviate the sufferings of others.
>
> *Steve Taylor – "The Leap: the psychology of spiritual awakening"*

Striving

We are striving when we focus only on our goal rather than the journey towards it.

If we slow down, and focus on the process, we can enjoy the small achievements that take us closer to the goal. Then, if we fail to reach it, we have not failed overall. Instead, we may have spent our time engaged in and learning from something we love (Vallerand, 2012).

Clinging to experience

In its monitoring of your situation, your ego, through the thinking mind, will cling to phenomena and experiences, examining opportunities or threats, continually asking "what's in it for me?". This clinging to phenomena and experiences can be a waste of your energy and attention.

> Surrender becomes so much easier when you realize the fleeting nature of all experiences ... You then continue to meet people, to be involved in experiences and activities, but without the wants and fears of the egoic self. That is to say, you no longer demand that a situation, person, place or event

should satisfy you or make you happy. Its passing and imperfect nature is allowed to be.

And the miracle is that when you are no longer placing an impossible demand on it, every situation, person, place or event becomes not only satisfying but also more harmonious, more peaceful.

Eckhart Tolle – "Stillness Speaks"

What a miserable day.

He didn't have the decency to return my call.

She let me down.

Little stories we tell ourselves and others ...

How simple life would be without those stories.

It is raining.

He did not call.

I was there. She was not.

Eckhart Tolle – "Stillness Speaks"

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